

PSF Supports a New Endeavor

Josh Divoky is a reading teacher at Prairie Point for students at the 8th Grade level and he is the sponsor for Prairie's Ag Club. One of the classes Josh teaches at Prairie Point is Information Literacy. He has four classes each year and teaches up to 28 students per class. They focus their study on agricultural subjects including food production, livestock issues, and management techniques.

Not all of their learning takes place in the classroom however. They have toured a 2500 cow dairy operation in Blairstown, and another activity included milking goats and then processing the milk. Josh has an incubator in his classroom and that allows students to witness the birth of baby chicks. Another project is the creation of posters that follow the steps in producing a variety of foods like chocolate chip cookies.

The Ag Club meets during the months of October through March. The Prairie School Foundation provided \$3,000 to launch the Ag Club for the 2018-2019 school year and \$5,000 for the 2019-2020 school year.

The Club is open to 7-9th graders at Point and meets one night per week. Typically there are 6 to 25 students in attendance at these meetings. The Club utilizes the Prairie Point greenhouse, funded by the Prairie School Foundation, for a variety of projects and experiments. They've had fun raising vegetables out of season including herbs and tomatoes in January. The students are encouraged to taste the variety of herbs raised. Another interesting project is the hand pollination of Zucchini, raising it to maturity and then tasting the vegetable once prepared. Many other vegetables have been raised at the same time paying attention to the planting directions on seed packets and testing several methods of watering the plants. Josh and his students are currently working with Amber Osterkamp at Prairie High School starting plants in the Point greenhouse that will be transplanted during a spring project at Prairie View.

The Ag Club is the first step toward a full time Ag Education/FFA Program scheduled to begin in the 2020-2021 academic year. The Prairie School Foundation is also supporting that initiative.

