

East Middle School



January 2017

Leah Gonyeau, Principal | Larry Padgett, Assistant Principal | Selestina Sandoval, Secretary | Ruth Burkhart, Secretary

Important Dates

Rock-A-Thon

January 14, 2017 9:00 am
@ EMS Gym

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 16, 2017

Challenge Program Information Meetings

January 23, 2017
4:30 pm and 6:00 pm
@ EMS Cafeteria

Challenge Program Information Meetings

January 24, 2017
4:30 pm and 6:00 pm
@ EMS Cafeteria

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A Message From Principal Leah Gonyeau

Dear East Middle School Families,

I hope this newsletter finds that you had a very restful and rejuvenating Winter Break. This year, we are thankful for the many gifts that surround us, especially our community and the support you have shown. Though our District and school are going through some positive changes, it can also be difficult on all of us. I would like to highlight some things that are on my mind for the second semester of the school year.

As you may know, we are a demonstration site for Performance Based Learning. There are a lot of things going on behind the scenes that we feel will best prepare us and the students for this transformative change. Last year, we focused on the Habits of Mind, those dispositions that help students tackle the challenges they face with learning new or difficult topics. Although we are continuing to learn about those 16 habits, we are turning our efforts towards student efficacy. Student ownership of their learning will be our focus and are dedicating our professional development efforts towards maximizing. Our school goals focus on two things; improving the Professional Learning Communities of our school, and increasing student ownership in their learning. We aim to accomplish both of these goals through the structures we initiated this year to implement Student-Led Conferences. As a staff, we are continuing to make learning targets transparent and meaningful. We are doing this through our PLCs and every teacher is focusing on essential learnings - aligned to standards - that every student must master to be successful. You will see the aggregate lists in our building in the coming month. Students will be gathering evidence to showcase their learning in homerooms during the month of January, to share with you during their student-led conference in February. Save the date now, February 8th and 9th, from 3-7, will be our next round of conferences. Students will be tasked with culling from their work to find the most relevant examples of learning to share. Homeroom teachers will be assessing their presentations with a speaking and listening rubric. These skills, identified as essential by the Common Core for communicating in middle school include; making

(Continued on next page)

consistent eye contact, speaking clearly, audibly, and at an appropriate pace, use of appropriate and respectful tone, communicating ideas in an organized and coherent manner with appropriate and precise vocabulary, and sharing examples and evidence from specific assignments in each academic subject. Students will be working on these learning targets in homeroom as they practice for the upcoming conferences. Your student's homeroom teacher will be contacting you to schedule a 20 minute conference on one of the two days in February.

We are also continuing to refine our school's shared vision. Our Building Leadership Team, facilitated by our school's teacher/librarian Becky Johnson, and Challenge Coordinator Tina Sleight, have taken community input, teacher and student feedback and are narrowing down the ideas into common themes. We should have a draft of our vision for your inspection by the conferences in February. We are excitedly anticipating this finished product as it has been two years in the making. If you remember, we began this process last February by hosting a community meeting, facilitated by members of the District #51 Foundation.

I would also like to make you aware of the new assessment window that will assist you in planning for scheduling student appointments. All assessments will be computer-based and require strategic scheduling of technology. A more specific assessment schedule will be coming in the months ahead, but just wanted to alert you so you could plan around those dates. The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) will be taken in the window from March 27th - April 28th, while the Colorado Measures of Academic Success falls within a shorter timeframe in that window. This year, we are accountable for 7th grade Social Studies assessment, and 8th grade Science assessment. This is considerably less impactful than the schedule was last year! I'm hoping that we will have the participation rate that the state is requesting. Thanks for supporting your student and East Middle School, so that we can all do our best during these assessments to demonstrate the great learning that takes place here!

We are currently looking at a new reporting system to support Performance Based Learning. A Learning Management System, Schoology, is being implemented in your students' classrooms. We are in different stages of use, but will be conducting some learning opportunities for families as we continue to strive to communicate as best we can, around student learning. More information to come regarding parent login and training opportunities. Have a safe and prosperous beginning to the new year!

Sincerely,
Leah Gonyeau, Principal

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From the Yearbook Committee

Parents, Students and Teachers

We have made an exciting change and are using Picaboo yearbooks for the 2016-2017 school year! There are a lot of new features that are very exciting such as free online yearbook personalization and a mobile app. Students, parents and teachers can submit photos for yearbook consideration using the mobile app called Skipple. You can learn more at getskipple.com. Send us photos of sporting and academic events! Purchase your yearbook for \$25 through the main office with Mrs. Sandoval. If you do not have a yearbook purchased then you will not receive one for the end of school yearbook signing party. Time is running out!

~Yearbook Staff

Sing-cereely Yours, Mrs. Quinn

The year is half over!! Where did the time go? Please remember that Rock-a-Thon \$\$ donations are due Thursday, January 12. Parents, please bring prize donations to the final music parent meeting on January 9. Solo/Small ensemble paperwork is due this month! Honor choir students and All State students will have extra rehearsals this month! "E" Time Honor Choir will begin January 25. Please check ParentVue/Emails for any upcoming announcements and, as always, encourage your students to turn in all written work ON TIME. January/February events calendar:

January:

- 9 – Music Parent Meeting, 6:30pm
- 14 – Rock-A-Thon, 10-5pm, Gym
- 25-27: CMEA/MENC Conference (Mrs. Quinn Gone)

February:

- 24-25: Solo/Small Ensemble Festival, GMMS

Until next time.....Stay Tuned!!!!!!!

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Cut Back and Get Kids Active -- Without a Fight continued...

"You have to watch what you do," says Paul Ballas, DO, a child psychiatrist and medical director of the Green Tree School Clinic in Philadelphia. "Parents who have limited TV habits tend to raise kids who will have limited TV habits." In short, if you set household screen-time rules, you also need to follow them.

Remind teens to limit screen usage. Banning electronics completely isn't realistic these days, but it's important to let your teen know you're paying attention to how much time she's on a screen. "Sometimes, you need to give them a gentle reminder like, 'Hey, I think you've used enough technology for now -- it's time to get off and do something else,'" O'Keeffe says. "These kids were born digital, so it's up to us to remind them that there's an unplugged world."

Motivate your teen to exercise. Many kids drop out of sports programs during the teen years. Your teen will be more motivated to move if you let him choose the type of activities he wants to participate in. For example, you may want him to play baseball, but he may prefer swimming at the gym. Show your support for his choice by providing transportation. You can even coordinate schedules so you can work out together.

Another way to help your teen be more active is to use his screen time as a motivation to move more. There are plenty of exercise videos and active video games available that are fun to do and can get his heart rate pumping. Encourage him to play with friends, or get the whole family involved in a little healthy, active on-screen competition.

Encourage activities that involve socializing. Look for activities and clubs that engage your teen socially, so he will get out and be with other people, O'Keeffe says. If you can't convince him to join you at social events, suggest activities related to his interests that involve other kids, such as school or church groups or volunteer work.

Create screen rules together. You'll be more likely to get your teen's buy-in if you come up with screen-time rules as a family. Together you can write up a contract that outlines clear house rules with rewards and agreed upon punishments. Here are some suggestions for rules to implement together:

- No texting during meals, either at home or a restaurant
- No TV during meals
- No TV until after homework and chores are done
- The TV gets turned off at a set time at night
- The computer stays in a public room in the home





Jenna Kastrup
Taken by Cade Moseley



Cade Moseley Photography Class
Levitation Photography by Jenna Kastrup

Welcome Mr. Rob Moore to EMS!

Mr. Moore joined us this year as the 6th grade Science teacher. We feel very fortunate to have him at our school and asked him to tell us a little bit about himself:

I was born in Southern California, but grew up mostly in Colorado Springs. I'm the oldest of 6 kids. After high school, I played a year of Junior College basketball at Northeastern Junior College. There wasn't much mountain biking on the Eastern plains of Colorado, so I headed over to Mesa State and finished my degree in History.

With my degree in History I ended up working at a few bike shops in town and joined the Army. I spent 8 total years in the Army, did a tour in Iraq from 2004-2005, and decided to become a teacher after my tour. I've taught for 9 years, mostly 4th and 5th grade.

Other than that: I have two kids, Fred's 10 and my daughter River is 5. I love getting outside with them in my free time. I also spend my time mountain biking, rafting, and fly fishing.



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East Middle School's 13th Annual Enrichment Day

East Middle School is very excited to offer our 13th Annual Enrichment Day which will be held in May. We will have a morning session from 8:45 – 11:15 on May 3, 2017. Enrichment Day offers students the opportunity to choose from a wide variety of interesting, unique and hands-on activities. This day is always a success because of community and parent volunteers, so if you or anyone you know would be interested in presenting a session or volunteering to help out, please contact our main office at 254-5020 or e-mail Mrs. Sleigh at tina.sleigh@d51schools.org. Thank you for your support of this popular day!



GT News:

Mrs. Sleigh is currently working with 8th grade GT students during electives. Next quarter, Mrs. Sleigh will have 6th grade GT students. The 8th grade students are researching college and careers while learning about the Growth Mindset by Carol Dweck and playing games that challenge different learning styles.

Challenge Program News:

Applications for the 2017-2018 school year will be available beginning January 23rd. Visit our site at <http://emschallengeprogram.wikispaces.com/> if you want to learn more. We will accept applications until 2:45 on February 24, 2017.



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