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Graves Middle School

School Newsletter



Principal's Corner

I want to take the time to welcome you to a new school year at GMS. We have introduced some new and exciting things for the 2014-2015 school year that we want to share with you.

You will read about our AVID program, but we also want to share with you the new after school art program and the expansion of our band program. We are partnering with THINK Together to offer an art program. In the near future we may also include chorus, cheerleading, film making, and STEM in our after school program. We want to encourage your kids to join us for these great classes.

We also expanded our band program to include two orchestra classes. Mr. Shiffermiller will be directing both our traditional band program and the orchestra program too. We are happy to expand the arts program for our Panthers. As I have said before, "Come see the difference at Graves Middle School!"

Work Hard, Be Nice! Our 8th Grade Promo Policy/Intervention Program Update

Last year the staff of GMS and our students had great success with our promo policy/intervention program. Nearly 100 of last year's at-risk 8th graders remediated their grades and met our rigorous requirements. Although some did not make it, we saw tremendous strides in all of our students last year. We want so ensure that our kids have a successful middle school experience so they are ready for high school and beyond. Mr. Dan Honeycutt (AVID/History) will continue to serve as our Intervention Coordinator and Ms. Amanda Riisager will serve as our Assistant Intervention Coordinator so they can orchestrate resources in order to assist our at-risk students, which we know will help our seventh and eighth graders.

Save the Date!

Parent/Teacher
Conferences
December 9th-12th
Please make an appointment with your child's teachers. Minimum day schedule, students released at 1:20 pm

Trimester 1 Ends
11/5/14
Our first trimester ends Nov. 5th, so please be on the lookout for all advisory cards and report cards shortly after Nov. 5th.

School Site Council
11/12/13
Join us for the SSC meeting in the Parent Center from 2:50-3:50 pm.

GMS's AVID Program Grows and Expands

We are excited to share information about the growth and expansion of our AVID program. GMS added the AVID Excel program for our college bound students who are designated as English Learners. We are also piloting an iPad 1-1/BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) program with some of our 7th grade AVID students.

Graves is on the cutting edge with the AVID Excel program, as we are one of the only Excel programs in the Los Angeles area. We are happy to share that we hired Ms. Lucy Cervantes, a veteran Language Arts/ELD teacher, to teach the two Excel classes. The Excel students attended summer school and took Excel and math, took a field trip during summer school, and then they started the 7th grade Excel class. They took another field trip, are enjoying the help of our college tutors, and the six computer stations in their classroom. We know they'll do great things in the future.

We are also on the cutting edge as we pilot the 1-1/BYOD program with our 7th graders. The program has gotten off to a great start and our kids are enjoying 21st Century educational tools every day. As a result, we are also partnering with Biola University to conduct a research study on instruction and the use of technology under the Common Core Standards. We know that these things make a difference for our kids.



Promo/Intervention Update cont.

Again, here are the requirements for our 8th Grade Promo Policy/Intervention Program:

- 1) 2.0 cumulative GPA for each trimester
- 2) No "F's" for each trimester
- 3) No more than 10% absences for the year
- 4) No serious or persistent disciplinary problems (no more than 2 "N's" or "U's" in citizenship marks)

We want to make sure that we always communicate our expectations to you early in the school year and we will communicate with you frequently about your child's progress. We also want you to know that our aeries.net system allows you to see your child's grades, attendance, and assignments from any web-enabled device at any time, in real time. In addition, every three weeks we have academic advisory, so your child will be bringing home her advisory card with her current GPA and possibly a remediation plan if she is at-risk of not meeting our rigorous requirements. As you can see, we are continuing with our strong commitment to your child's academic success at GMS. We look forward to working with you and your child.



Panthers Ready to Battle

Our fall sports program is beginning and our football and volleyball teams are gearing up for a competitive season. Our 7th and 8th grade football teams are practicing hard in spite of the hot weather and they are ready to do battle with our league rivals. We start the season against Lake Center on the road and then we will battle Edwards at home and then East Whittier on the road. Our coaches have been pleased with our kids' effort and look forward to the upcoming season. Go Graves Middle School footballers!

Our 7th and 8th grade volleyball teams have also been working hard as they approach the new season. We had a large number of kids try out for the 8th grade volleyball team and we have quite a few returning players. We are very excited about the season ahead of us, so please come out and support our kids as they look forward to their upcoming opponents, Lake Center and East Whittier on the road, and Edwards at home. All of our sports teams, the students and the coaches, would like to encourage you to come out and cheer on our school as we vie for the league championship this season. You will notice that our kids exhibit good sportsmanship, give great effort, and work hard. We look forward to a great season, go Panthers!

