

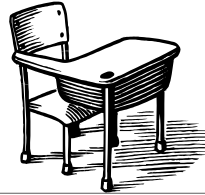


SGMS Newsletter

Sidney Gutierrez
Middle School

August 2009

Issue 1



From the Principal's Desk

After a summer of rest and renewal, we are back at SGMS, and that always means changes and introductions. New students, new staff, new classes and teaching assignments will take a little getting used to, but I know that the changes will bring good results. Mrs. Jessica McGuire has joined our teaching staff as the science teacher and Science Olympiad coach. Her enthusiasm and depth of knowledge of the subject area promise a wonderful year of science for the students. Talented and energetic Nancy Fleming will be working with the 7th graders on art. Newly adopted standards and benchmarks in content areas will have us revisit our curriculum. We are also introducing instruction in handwriting, career counseling, and Odyssey of the Mind. Despite all the changes, our primary focus on academics and student performance has not changed, and our traditional high standards in academics will continue.

The results of the Standards-Based Assessments were released by the State Department of Education on Aug. 3, and, once again, we met the proficiency goals for reading and math. In math, 71.4 percent of our students were proficient or advanced, and in reading, 91.1 percent of our students scored proficient or better. In order to make Annual Yearly Progress, 41 percent of students must have passed math and 57 percent reading. Clearly our hard work and focus on performance have paid off. We are committed to continued success and even better outcomes for this year.

J. Andreis, Principal

SGMS Governing Council

President,
Robert Carroll

Secretary,
Cymantha Liakos

Members
Karen Carson
Michael Trujillo

PTO Co-Presidents
Maureen Olguin
Kathy Latimer
School Phone
347-9703
School Fax
347-9707
School Website
www.sgms.us

Meet the New Science Teacher

We welcome Jessica McGuire to SGMS. She will teach science to all 3 grades and will coach Science Olympiad. She graduated from New Mexico State University with her BA in elementary education. She is highly qualified to teach science, language arts, and social studies. Her experience includes teaching in the Las Cruces Public School District and at the Mesilla Valley Corn Maze. She plans to teach science as it is practiced—through hands on learning opportunities. The students will broaden their view of who can be a scientist and will work together in cooperative groups.



Mrs. McGuire
joins SGMS
Faculty.

Staff News

Mrs. Bell, who is working on her PhD dissertation, has joined the faculty of New Mexico State University, Grants Campus, where she will teach an on-line class on educational professionalism.

Ms. Aguilar, along with SGMS alum Sienna Fleming, has published a children's book titled, *Down Under in Australia*, which can be purchased at Hastings.

PTO News

The first PTO meeting of the year will be held on Monday, Aug. 17, 5:30 at the Anderson Museum. Due to budget cutbacks and increasing costs, particularly related to field trips, the role of the PTO in fundraising is more important than ever. Please attend our meetings and participate in our activities. Parent involvement is the key to our school's, and our children's, success!



Sidney Gutierrez Middle School

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Home of the Falcons

**No school on Labor
Day, Mon. Sept. 7**

**Note that regular lunch now costs
\$2. Reduced lunches are 40 cents.**

School Trips and Activities



Our yearly luncheon for the firefighters at Fire Station #4 will be held on Friday, Sept. 11. Look for information in the next week or so on what we need the students to bring.

The 7th grade field trip to Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument is tentatively scheduled for Friday, Sept. 25. We will need parent chaperones for this trip to Gran Quivira and Abo. We will be hiking, digging, and climbing hills, so consider this if you plan on volunteering.

“Roswell Reads” this year will focus on three books about the Depression, including *Out of the Dust* by Karen Hess, which we read in 7th grade. A number of excellent activities are planned for both students and parents, and we hope you will participate.

Testing and Placement

As school starts, we will be looking at each students’ standards-based assessments and past grades, and we will be administering additional math and reading assessments in order to determine proper math and reading placements. Proper placement ensures that each student receives the instruction and support he or she needs to be successful in school. Mrs. Gazdik or Mrs. Bell can answer any questions you may have.

Middle School as College Prep

In a recent column in the Albuquerque Journal (7/28/09), Leanna Landsmann responded to a letter from a parent of an 8th grade girl. The mother was “shocked” when a relative asked how her daughter was preparing for college. The response to the worried mother was that middle school is not too soon to start preparing for college. Positive work habits, aptitudes and attitudes nurtured in middle school will be the source of success in college. Advice from Jeff Haig, a college professor, included teaching kids to take charge of their education, to use all available school resources, to think beyond grades and test scores to extracurricular activities, to find mentors, to use their summer vacations productively, and to take challenging course loads. We frequently talk to our students about high school and college, and parents should certainly do the same. It’s not too early to start thinking about college and beyond, and it’s good for students to be aware that the choices they make today can and will impact their future.



SGSM gets a much-needed facelift!



THINGS TO REMEMBER FOR A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

Attendance:

School begins at 8:00 am and ends at 3:00 pm.

Please do not drop your child off before 7:30.

Make sure your child is picked up by 3:45 pm. Any person who will be picking your child up must be on our list of approved persons.

Call the school in the morning if your child is going to be absent, and let us know if the child is ill, has a doctor's appointment, or the reason for the absence.

If you are bringing your child in late, or picking your child up before 3:00, you must come in the school and enter your information in the sign-in book on Mrs. Van Laningham's desk.

Breakfast/Lunch:

Free breakfast is available for all students. Please make sure your child is in school before 8:00 if he/she wants breakfast. It's not always possible to bring the breakfast into the classroom.

Forms will be available for free/reduced lunches.

If you pay for school lunches, you may pay cash or make a check (no more than \$20) out to RISD, but please give this check to Mrs. Van Laningham (not the district!).

Full prices lunches are \$2, reduced are \$1.

Students must write their choice of lunch when they come in each morning on the pad near Mrs. V's desk. If they bring their own lunch, they will need to indicate that they do not want a school lunch that day.

Students may purchase food and drink from the vending machine after they eat their lunch, and before and after school.

Classroom Rules:

Cell phones brought to school are to be turned off and left in the student's locker during the school day.

I-pods, MP3 players, etc. may be permitted during certain activities, at the teacher's discretion.

Hall passes will be used for students who leave the classroom during school hours.

A student who receives 3 "zeroes" in a week will be required to attend Saturday school. ISS and OSS follow for continued violations.

Please leave any medications your child needs with the office.

Students are not permitted to use the school phone during the day except in the case of emergencies.

We adhere to a strict "no-touch" policy, meaning students do not touch one another.

Check our website (www.sgms.us) and emails for notices, homework assignments, and other important information. Keep us current with your emails and cell phone numbers.

Check the SGMS Behavior Manual for all current rules and policies. Make sure you and your child have signed that you have received a copy of the Manual.