

A Note from the Principal, Mrs. Haney

Dear SMS Families,

We are heading into week six of the Hybrid model, and moreover than that, we are five successful weeks into the Hybrid model without needing to shut down any cohorts. We made safety our first priority and it's yielding success. Myself and our staff are thankful to all families for continuing to commit to COVID safety protocols which have kept students and staff safe and also enabled them to access their learning in the best possible way; at school.

As solicited in my most recent correspondence, parents were surveyed on how the return to school was going as we are ever seeking ways to improve what we are able to offer given the parameters from the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority. While we are thrilled that we have students back twice a week at the middle school level, we'd love to have students back four days a week and we would if we could. However, we are still held to the constraints of square footage by the state which limits the number of students that we are able to have in each classroom. For example, we have about 6-8 more students in our average classes than the elementary as well as having varied classroom sizes. Below I'll share a summary of the survey results along with learning more about changes that will be made in the third trimester.

While results were varied, the majority of parents and students felt that asynchronous days allowed for flexibility, self-pacing, greater (and much needed) time away from technology and Zooms, ability to re-watch or re-do work and families appreciated the quick responses from faculty. Conversely, some families are looking for more academic support on "at-home" days, find the work "too easy", would like paper options to complete work and would like to see more teacher interaction for days when students are at home.

As a result of the survey and discussions amongst staff, an email blast will go out later in the week sharing how we'll be providing more support for students on asynchronous days. We have several faculty and staff members that will be supporting our students both virtually and in-person Monday-Thursday for the first half of the day as well as the purchasing of additional technology that's affording more recorded and live-streaming capabilities. These additional offerings will begin next Monday, March 8th at the beginning of the 3rd Trimester.

Next week we begin our third and final trimester of the year. Your child's second trimester report card will be mailed out the week of March 8th. As we begin the final trimester encourage your child to set goals for finishing the last trimester academically strong, encourage your child to capitalize on the small cohort sizes for both accessing teacher support as well as building on and making new friendships, and lastly, find the enjoyment in each and every day at school!

My last bit of news is shared with a deeply bittersweet feeling. This will be my last year as the Principal of Sisters Middle School. While I love this community and our staff and students, I have resigned to take on what's sure to be the greatest "job" of my life, being a new mother. I look forward to cherishing each moment of the next few months before I depart. It has been my pleasure to serve the Sisters community, and it's my hope that this transitions is more of a "see you later" than a "goodbye."

Your partner in education and community enhancement,

Mrs. Haney, SMS Principal

A Note from our Assistant Principal, Mr. Roth

8th Grade Promotion Updates---more info to come for 8th Grade parents this week!

Save the Date: June 14th, Eighth Grade Promotion Ceremony & Parade at SMS 5:00 PM

For 8th Grade Parents interested in helping with an 8th Grade Celebration this Spring please attend the following Zoom meeting: Topic: SMS 8th Grade Celebration Committee

Time: Mar 8, 2021 05:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/95051774285> Meeting ID: 950 5177 4285 Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/aS6pT7M2>

State Testing

Updates on Oregon Department of Education State Testing

Under the Student Assessment Bill of Rights, the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and Oregon's school districts must provide families with a "Notice of Statewide Tests and Opt-out Form" 30 days before the start of statewide testing.

Please see below links for more information about ODE state testing and the parent opt out form. If you chose to opt out please return this form to your student's school by March 19, 2021 (Disregard the date of March 1st in the Letter).

English: https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/assessment/Documents/Opt-Out_Form.pdf

Spanish: https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/assessment/Documents/Spanish_Opt-Out_Form.pdf

A Note from Nurse Roy

Please remember to call the attendance line each day and leave a message about why your student is absent. If your student is absent for illness please list the symptoms that your student is experiencing. If you have any questions, feel free to call or email Nurse Roy at trish.roy@ssd6.org or 541 549-2099 Ext. 5505

Per the email that went out from the district, the attached letter and consent form offer in-school COVID testing for students who become ill at school: [COVID-19 Testing Letter and Consent Form.pdf](#)

A Note from Mrs. Halemeier, Health Curriculum Lead

We are using a curriculum from the State of Oregon called My Future- My Choice. This is typically the curriculum for 6th grade, however, this year we are using it for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. Last year's 6th grade students did not receive this information due to COVID, and the rapid changes. We do not have a dedicated health class for our students this year and as such we are using the basic curriculum from MFMC to provide students with a foundation. My Future-My Choice is a comprehensive, medically accurate, inclusive and trauma informed sexuality education curriculum. It meets the 6th grade requirements of Oregon's Health Education Standards, including Erin's Law and House Bill 2509 to provide age-appropriate sexuality education as an integral part of the health education curriculum.

Due to not having a dedicated class, we are paring down and focusing on the following specific topics and lessons for our students. Our hope is that this will also help facilitate positive, safe, healthy conversations between parents and students. As a parent it is essential to be involved in your student's life and we want to encourage positive healthy conversations.

Mr. Jackson and I are working together, along with other educators from Deschutes county to help come up with modules/lessons that students can work through in regards to these topics.

You as a parent, do have the right to opt your child out of any of these lessons. Please communicate with us and your child's homeroom teacher or myself if that is something you would like to do.

Thank you so much for your time and care for your student's education.

-Ms. Halemeier (elisa.halemeier@ssd6.org)

Here is the link to the State's website for MFMC as well as a parent brochure for you to look at as a resource.

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/children/mfmc/pages/index.aspx>

<https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/de0082.pdf>

<https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/ds0082.pdf>

Leadership Announcements from Mr. Schiedler

Last Call for Baby Ads! If you are interested in purchasing a space for a special message for your 8th grader, you have until spring break to do so. Email Mr. Schiedler with pictures and a sentence/paragraph for your student. This is a great way to leave a personalized message for your student as they move on to a new phase of their life! 1/4 page ads are \$30 and 1/2 page ads are \$60.

2020-21 Yearbooks are now on Sale! Price increase soon! Go to ybpay.lifetouch.com (Links to an external site.) to purchase this year's yearbook! The cost is \$25, but will increase to \$30 after spring break. School code: 14044521

For questions, please contact: jeff.schiedler@ssd6.org

A Note from our School Counselor, Mr. Jackson

Hello Outlaws!

As we begin to adjust to our new routine please keep up the wellness habits for you and your student. Optimum wellness supports optimum learning. Here are some general guidelines:

Sleep-8 hours a night for you and 9-11 hours a night for your student.

Hydration-half your body weight in ounces of water per day.

Exercise-Increased heart rate for 30 minutes, or a walk around the block, per day.

Eating Habits-Healthy meals, or at least healthy grazing, throughout the day.

Here are a couple of additional aspects to general wellness:

Technology-What are your family norms in relation to phone/tablet/internet usage? Managing and moderating technology usage in your family is part of any wellness plan. Here is a good place to start if you are looking for some answers. <https://www.screenagersmovie.com/screenagers-1>

Communication-"How was your day?" or "Do you have homework?" may not keep the conversation going. Try some of these to check in with your student or loved one:

"What was your high and low of the day/week? "On a scale of 1-10, how was your day?" "What did you learn in US History today?" "Highlight of the day?" "Let's take a look at Canvas together and prioritize your missing work so you can get caught up."

A solid wellness plan is good life maintenance. Keep up the good work Outlaws and reach out with any questions.

Brook Jackson, School Counselor

541-549-3195, brook.jackson@ssd6.org

A Note from the SMS Front Office

Absences

If your student is absent, please call the attendance line at 541-549-2099 opt 1 and leave the students name and a detailed message as to the reason for the absence. Our nurse will contact the parent/guardian if a student has not been excused or has been excused without sufficient information.

Tech Insurance

If you have not purchased the tech insurance but had planned on doing so, this is a reminder that your student's chromebook is not covered until the payment has been made. Please contact the office if you have any questions.

School Pictures

Lifetouch picture retakes will be on March 2nd & 3rd. If you did not have your picture taken at the beginning of this school year, please be sure to have it taken during retakes. Even if you do not plan on ordering any photos, we use your student's picture for this school years' yearbook. Orders can be done online or there are envelopes that payment can be made through. Just have your student give their homeroom teacher the Lifetouch envelope prior to having the picture taken. If you decide to order pictures through the online process, it can be done with the schools code: EVTKJ9WN9 at [Lifetouch](#).

Early Dismissal

If you plan on taking your student out of school early, please contact the office and let us know beforehand. We can have your student waiting in the office for you to come in and sign out for the remainder of the day.

Sisters Middle School Athletics

March is the time for Fall Sports.....I know it seems odd but hey, this is COVID. We feel lucky our schools are able to offer an athletics experience to our students this winter and spring. Below is the order of events.

Season 1 (Fall) - Feb. 22 to Apr. 10 (Football, XC, VB)

Season 2 (Spring) - Apr. 5 to May 22 (Track)

Season 3 (Winter) - May 10 to June 26 (Basketball, Wrestling)

Football, XC and Volleyball are all currently practicing, but it is never too late to sign up.

- Click [here](#) for the contact information for our coaches who can give you updated practice times.
- Click [here](#) for links to competition schedules and athletics policies.

Sisters Community Organization Announcements

Sisters Park & Rec: Looking for Support for your Student(s) On "At-Home" Days? Camp SPRD runs Monday through Thursday with a Monday/Wednesday and Tuesday/Thursday option to support the hybrid learning schedule. The morning hours are dedicated to school work while afternoon is all about play! Throughout camp, students have made a variety of crafts as well as created a few new games including the current favorite, giant four-square. Additionally, camp staff have stayed in close contact with Sisters Middle School staff. This open line of communication helps to ensure students are set up for success. For more information about Camp SPRD or to get more information on other district programs, visit www.sistersrecreation.com or call Sisters Park & Recreation District at 541.549.2091.

Sisters Park & Rec: Summer Camp: With summer only a few months away, it is time to start thinking about summer camp! SPRD has a variety of specialty camps for middle school youth. Visit the [website](#) for a full listing of summer camp options. Summer camp registration will open on April 5th at 9 am. For more details call 541-549-2091.

Important Dates

March 1st-11th: High School Counselors Visiting 8th Graders for HS forecasting

March 2nd & 3rd: Picture Days for Re-Takes or Those that didn't Make the First Round of Pictures

March 22nd-April 2nd: Spring Break