

VIKING NEWSLETTER

September, 2009

Dear Parent and/or Guardian:

Welcome Back-to-School! It was wonderful to see the smiling faces of our incoming 7th graders and returning 8th graders during our August Orientations. I would like to begin by thanking our many generous volunteers that helped us prepare, coordinate, and launch seven very successful Orientation sessions for our students and their parents. I am very pleased with the turn-out, as well as the efficient and calm atmosphere of each session. I hope that your student feels comforted by knowing the location of their locker, successfully opening their locker, knowing their class schedule, finding their classrooms, and being reassured that they will have a friend in their lunch. I hope that we have given you all the information in advance to adequately prepare your child for middle school and I am positive that they will enjoy their first day of school. Our staff is anxious to have their busy bodies back in the building making our work environment fun, energetic, and, at times, unexpected!

This year, we have a few new staff to welcome and introduce to our school community. We are excited to have each new staff member, because their fun personalities will bring new laughter to our Viking Family.

Karen Nelson – Attendance/ASB Secretary.

Karen comes to MMS from the Instructional Technology Department in the Edmonds School District.

Linda Bennett – Art Teacher

Linda comes to MMS from Mountlake Terrace High School.

Mark Walker – Art Teacher

Mark comes to MMS from Mountlake Terrace High School.

Obviously, our school is under construction this year. Thankfully, our Skanska Contractors have made student safety their priority and they have built a very clear delineation between the school zone and construction zone. To reinforce student safety we simply ask that students respect the construction zone by never entering the area. Our school campus is closed after school hours and there will not be any outside users able to rent our Gymnasium. We thank you in advance for not allowing your student to loiter on campus after school and to maintain an expectation that they come directly home from school; unless they are participating in a school club, receiving homework help, or they are an athlete participating in a school sport.

I look forward to a great school year with our amazing students, fantastic staff, and crazy construction. Let's be patient, flexible, and forgiving of one another as we all experience stress and fatigue at different times throughout the many seasons of a school year.

Sincerely,

Christine Avery, Principal

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

8	First Day of School First Day Fall Sports Turnout	24	3:45pm, Football at Brier Terrace Middle
9	7:000pm, Parent Club Meeting, Library	25	Non-Student Day -- No School
11	Picture Day	28	3:45pm, Girl's Softball vs. Einstein Middle
22	6:30pm, Curriculum Night	30	3:45pm, Girl's Softball at Alderwood Middle
23	3:45pm, Cross Country at Alderwood Middle 3:45pm, Girl's Softball at College Place Middle		3:45pm, Football at Voyager Middle

A MESSAGE FROM OUR NURSE

Remember to eat breakfast, which is the most important meal of the day.

Handwashing is your key to good health.

If you are ill, please stay home—no exceptions.

ALL medications need to be checked in with our Nurse.

Immunizations need to be up-to-date.

If you have any special needs or concerns, please let me know. I am here to assist you.

E-MAIL REQUEST

Our most efficient method of communicating news and information with our school community members is through e-mail. Our monthly newsletter is just one example of the use of e-mail to keep our families informed of important news.

Please let our registrar, Donna Davidson, know of any changes to your e-mail address. She can be reached at 425-431-4394.

5K EDMONDS STREET STRUT

WHERE: Edmonds Civic Track and Field at 6th Avenue N. and Bell Street in Edmonds.

WHEN: Saturday, October 10. Packet pick up: 7:45 am Start time: 9:00 am

FEES: Register by October 5. \$25.00 Adults, \$10.00 ages 8-18. T-shirt included!!
Register after October 5, \$35.00 Adults \$10.00 ages 8-18. No T-shirt included.
Under age 8 free. Pet and stroller friendly.

Register through Running In Motion at 401 Main Street, or by calling 425-774-0637, or online at 222.runninginmotion.com/events.htm or www.edmondspef.org.

VIKING RUN

The Viking Run is the primary ASB fund raiser each year at MMS. This year, the Viking Run will be held on Thursday, October 8. Students are asked to get pledges prior to the run, then collect the money and turn it in during the following week. Pledges can be a flat amount or a pledge per lap.

The money raised from the Viking Run goes directly in the MMS Associated Student Body budget. This money is spent on student programs such as clubs, sports, assemblies, dances, music, reward & recognition programs. The money raised by the students goes directly back to the students. This is our largest and most comprehensive fundraising event and participation by all students and families is critical. Parents can assist by volunteering to help on the day of the event and by seeking matching fund donations if they work for corporations that provide them (such as Boeing or Microsoft).

The Viking Run is a great community event that helps to make MMS a great school for kids – please plan to participate or support it this fall!

FALL SPORTS AT MMS

There are 3 sports offered during the fall sports season. They are football for 8th grade boys, fastpitch softball for 7th & 8th grade girls, and Cross Country for all students. To participate, students must have a current physical, a parent permission form, and a single sport clearance form. These forms can be picked up in the main office or downloaded from the MMS website.

Sports transportation will be significantly scaled back this year. After practice busses will only deliver students outside of the 1 mile bussing radius. In addition, if ridership on the after practice busses is low, students will be encouraged to arrange carpools with friends and family. Bus transportation to games will also be altered, with some teams getting round trip bus rides to and from contests, while others will get a “drop only” bus – meaning that parents will be responsible for getting the students home from an away game. Coaches will have information each season for each sport, please check with them first regarding transportation to away games.

Go Vikings!

ASB NEWS

This year, the MMS ASB government has been reorganized. Last year the students re-wrote the school constitution and changed ASB leadership from the traditional offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary to a structure of 3 committees with specific duties. The committees are School Spirit, Communications, and School & Community Events. Students selected co-chairs for each committee last spring. The committees will be comprised of 8 students representing 7th and 8th grade. Elections and appointments of 7th grade committee members will occur during September.

SUPERINTENDENT’S VISIT WITH PARENTS

Please plan to join our Superintendent, Dr. Nick Brossoit, and parents from our Northwest Quadrant neighboring schools at a Parent’s Meeting. It will be held in the Meadowdale Middle Commons on November 18 at 7:00 pm. We hope to see you there.

GOT TIME? VOLUNTEER!!



Contrary to popular belief, middle school has plenty of opportunities for parents to help. We are willing to work with you to match your interests, skills and time requirements. To be part of our valuable volunteers, you need to complete the paperwork and make sure we have your current email. Opportunities are sent out via email to our “Volunteer List”. Some opportunities are:

- Library.** Our librarian Ms. Mondo needs volunteers ready to help her weekly with checking out & sorting books as well as special events like Bingo Night & BookFair.
- Sports.** We need volunteers to help with weekly popcorn sales during lunch and on game days to help with concessions. All sports boosters are welcome to sell “Viking Coffee” to family and friends.
- Music.** We have an award winning music program that travels around the city and state. We need volunteers to drive our students to their events.
- Academics.** Our renaissance program rewards students for their achievement, periodically we need help handing out pizza and reward cards. In the fall and spring we need help listening to students read to determine student progress.
- Social.** Lunch monitors are welcome weekly or biweekly. Three or four times a year we need parent chaperones for dances. In addition, we plan to start Watchdog Dads—stay tuned for more information.

PAPERWORK: ALL VOLUNTEERS must have a completed and cleared Washington State Patrol Background Check on file in the office prior to volunteering. To be a FIELD TRIP DRIVER in addition to the background check you must include: a copy of your driver’s license; a copy of your insurance policy; and a copy of your driving record. (You can get a copy of your driving record from the Department of Licensing on Hwy 99 just complete their form, pay a \$10 fee and show your I.D.) Turn in all forms to our office manager, Sue Raymond for processing 2 days prior to volunteering. **All forms are online at our website under “Volunteering” or available from the school office.**

Have a question about volunteering at MMS? Email Lisa Conley at mmsvikings@gmail.com or leave a voice message at 425-431-1513

SPEED ENFORCEMENT CAMERAS IN SCHOOL ZONES

Children are eight times more likely to die if hit by a motor vehicle moving at 30 mph, compared to vehicles traveling 20 mph, or less. It takes a vehicle going 30 mph twice the distance to stop as a vehicle traveling 20 mph. Because of this, the city of Lynnwood is installing speed enforcement cameras in the Meadowdale area.

The school zone camera systems will be in operation when the crosswalk lights are flashing and only during school times, which are from 7:00 am to 4:30 pm on school days.

ADVISORY AT MMS

At MMS, we have a strong culture and belief that reading *is thinking* and it is a lifelong skill. We support our literacy program by providing 30 minutes every day for our students to silently read. We expect every student to come every day with a book to read and we encourage our parents to talk to their children about the books they are reading. Our Reading Specialist, Joan Pedersen, will support our building-wide focus on Analysis, an important reading strategy, by providing support to students and staff during Advisory.

EXTENSION AT MMS

This year we have incorporated Study Club into our school day. In the past, we have hosted an after-school bus for students to take home after they received Study Club help by one of their classroom teachers. We no longer have the same financial resources to sponsor a daily bus to provide this transportation home after school. Also, in the past, we struggled with getting the right students help, because those that needed it the most would typically not stay after school. Not to mention that parents were never sure if their child actually stayed after school to receive the additional help from their teacher. Now, we have **Extension**, which is 30 minutes matched with Advisory. So, a student is with their Advisory teacher for 60 minutes, but half of that time is devoted to Study Club-like activities. For instance, if a student needs to see a teacher other than their Extension teacher for extra help, then they pre-arrange with that teacher to receive a pass to their class the next day during Extension. Otherwise, students are expected to do homework, work on projects, read silently, update their dayplanner, study for a test, and/or review class notes. We hope to have Extension promote improved grades by eliminating those excuses that cause homework to be late or not be turned in, as well as missed opportunities

PRIVILEGE SYSTEM AT MMS

MMS is launching a very exciting Privilege System this year! We will continue to provide the same incentives and rewards to students through our Rewards Program, formerly known as Renaissance, that recognizes students for excellent Academics, Attendance, and Attitude, but now we are incorporating “privileges” into our system, as well. We have not finalized the selected privileges, because we are waiting for our ASB Students to provide input during the month of September. We do know the following about our new Privilege System:

Any student with a GPA of 3.0 or higher with no failing grades will qualify for a Privilege within our Privilege System. No students are eligible for a Privilege during 1st Quarter, but 8th graders will be allowed access to a Privilege during 2nd Quarter. A few ideas of a privilege are as follows: 1) iPods during passing period or lunch, 2) Pizza party on Fridays, 3) cell phones during passing period or lunch, 4) Hats at school. 7th Graders will have access to their first privilege after 1st semester grades, so at the beginning of 3rd Quarter. The BIGGEST privilege that we are considering is during 4th Quarter, only for 8th graders, they can be released from their Extension period to have an hour-long lunch every day.

At MMS, we believe that we should model good parenting by rewarding students that show they are responsible, learning, productive, and capable with a privilege. We also believe that a Privilege System will eliminate students that “*won’t do*” vs. “*can’t do*” from receiving poor grades. There are not GPAs counting for college admittance and high school credits for graduation in middle school to provide extrinsic motivation, so we are working hard to create extrinsic motivators in our own schoolhouse. As with any privilege in a home, we will explain to students that they can lose their privilege, too. For instance, if a student abuses a privilege, misuses a privilege, or has a minor discipline action where Loss of Privilege is an appropriate consequence, then a student will lose their privilege for a period of time or permanently. Please encourage your child to receive a 3.0 GPA with no failing grades their 1st Quarter (8th graders) or 1st Semester (7th graders) to receive their first privilege in our New Privilege System! We will be talking to our students about this New Privilege System the first week of school and throughout the school year.