

Santa Fe Trail Junior High School

January, 2022 Family Newsletter
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Better Together!

SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

January, 2022—Happy New Year! Returning to school after a holiday break is always a special time for staff and students. The chatter in the hallways and classrooms is infectious in such a good way. Of course, waking up to the alarm the first couple of days can be difficult, though the smiles on the faces of staff and students make it all worth it. In considering my resolutions for the new year I reflected on the progress and growth of our school. As a new member of the Charger family I have spent a great deal of time learning the values of our school community. Fortunately it didn't take long to learn that collectively we all want great things for our students. One of the first endeavors I was involved in upon arriving in USD 434 was the development of our vision statement: Inspiring and Empowering Every Charger, Every Day. To me, this is a perfect resolution for 2022; I will work daily to inspire and empower our Chargers of all ages.

The months of January and February are very important for our students. With everyone in a solid groove at school it is time to amp up instruction with a focus on increasing academic growth. As parents and guardians, you can support your children by checking in with them daily in regard to their assignments, their active participation in class, and their positive behavior choices. You can check their grades in PowerSchool and you can reach their teacher by calling our front office or by emailing the teacher. All staff email addresses are: first initial followed by last name @usd434.us. For example, my email address is JTesta@usd434.us

I hope you can join us for our next Site Council meeting. It will be held on Wednesday, January 19th at 6:30 pm. This is a new date due to other district activities booked on our previous date. Thank you for understanding.

Please do keep practicing COVID19 and health protocols so we can all stay healthy during this cold and flu season. Water bottles and coats should be a part of your child's morning routine before school. Thank you!

Jodi Testa

Positive Office Referrals

Staff members have been busy noticing and celebrating positive student choices by writing positive office referrals. We are celebrating whole-class and individual endeavors in the following areas:

- ♦ Cooperation
- ♦ Highly Active Learners
- ♦ Eagerness to Give Effort
- ♦ Academic Success
- ♦ Ready and Willing to Learn
- ♦ Respect
- ♦ Self-Motivation
- ♦ Goal Focused

Whole-class acknowledgements are celebrated with a special treat from Ms. Testa and a 'shout-out' during our morning assembly. Individual acknowledgements are mailed home to families for your personal celebrations.

To celebrate a staff member send an email to JTesta@usd434.us Celebrations of staff will be shared at our all-school morning assembly!



ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

December was a shorter month for us. The holiday season brings joy to our hallways and the opportunity to rest during break. SFTJH Activities and Athletics will rest for no one! We barreled through the end of the wrestling season, girls basketball season, and started boys basketball before students were back in school in January.

Before we sum up the sports, I do want to recognize that in our building we had some well-performed and attended performances by our fourth grade, 7th and 8th grade bands and choir, and our 6th grade band and choir. The band sent their low brass to Kansas City to celebrate Tuba Christmas again this year. We were all delighted to see Ms. Kara Mason make her directorial debut for us this year, bringing lots of joy and energy to our choral program.

In the building, classes were buzzing with the annual KAY door decorating contest. The winning door (Mrs. Riggs) was announced at our last day of the year “Christmas Sing”. Ms. Jarrett LOOOOOVES the Christmas Sing: a little song, a little dance, a little goofy, a little games. The school then had their holiday classroom parties in the afternoon, and the JH students enjoyed a dance party in the gym. We sent them home for winter break smiling and tired.

Back to the sports, wrestling ended their season on November 30 at a tournament at Shawnee Heights. They maintained their top dog position, and came home feeling accomplished. Thank you to Coaches [Regan Erickson](#), Chad Schmale, and first-year wrestling coach Christian Gulker for leading our Chargers to numerous pins and decided victories with dignity and honor.

Coaches [Cyndee Washington](#), [Lizzy Olorunfemi](#), and [Michele Herren](#) finished the girls basketball season in third place in the Pioneer League. Due to team sizes of other schools, they had to really collaborate with our B-team, as they played combined for most of the season. Still, our girls played tough and were really in it to win it, making all of us proud of them and their achievements.

Boys basketball did start practice mid-December in anticipation of an early start to their season. Rob Colvin and Chris Prost are coaching our seventh grade, but they are also collaborating with Sam Hendee and Christian Gulker’s eighth grade to build one powerful Charger team. There were some butterflies at our first game against Burlington, a formidable opponent. We brought home only one win with the 8th grade B-team, but the boys are hungry for more. The home opener is Thursday, January 25th versus Eudora (C teams). We are excited to see what they can accomplish when they are comfortable playing on their home turf.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL

LEARNING AT ITS FINEST

Focus Area: Personal Responsibility and Respect to Others

We met as a staff during the professional development day in November with a focus on continual growth and improvement. We drafted, revised, and adopted the following as our school rules. We hope you will join us in helping all students achieve these expectations.








Chargers will be ready, respectful, and responsible.

We then moved forward and described what it looks like and sounds like to be ready, respectful, and responsible in all locations within our school. We have taught the behavior expectations for classrooms, hallways, and the lunchroom. We will continue to teach the expectations for behaviors in the bathrooms, playground, and buses over the next three weeks of school.

On our next professional development day in January, 2022 we will design a list of staff options for responding to misbehaviors when they are shown by our students. When we have that drafted our Student Council and Site Council will be asked to review it and provide feedback to us before we implement it. We also plan to share that with all families via email for feedback, too. I envision that will be out to families in mid to late January. Please do watch for it as we do want your feedback.

Parents are invited to observe in classrooms to learn how to further support your child at home. To book time in your child’s classroom email the classroom teacher or Jodi with 24-hr notice at JTesta@usd434.us. We look forward to partnering with you for our Chargers!

NEWS FROM SCHOOL NURSE—MRS. CAROTHERS

I NEED TO STAY HOME IF...						
I HAVE A FEVER	I AM VOMITING	I HAVE DIARRHEA	I HAVE A RASH	I HAVE HEAD LICE	I HAVE AN EYE INFECTION	I HAVE BEEN IN THE HOSPITAL
						
Temperature of 100.4F or higher	Within the past 24 hours	Within the past 24 hours	Body rash with itching or fever	Itchy head, active head lice	Redness, itching, and/or "crusty" drainage from eye	Hospital stay and/or ER visit
I AM READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL WHEN...						
Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication such as Tylenol or Motrin	Free from vomiting for 24 hours	Free from diarrhea for at least 24 hours.	Free from rash, itching, or fever I have been evaluated by doctor if needed.	Treated with appropriate lice treatment at home and proof is provided to nurse	Evaluated by my doctor and a note has been provided when I am able to return	Released by my medical provider to return to school I have a note with the date I can return and any restrictions I may have
Any time a doctor is seen, it is best practice to return with a note as proof of doctor visit and any restrictions that may be a result of that visit.						

NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR

This month Ms. Fuller has spent her time seeing her 4th and 5th graders weekly and discussing leadership and how to resolve conflict. It is important that our students understand the difference between conflict and bullying. As our children grow, their relationships grow and change. We are seeing that the students are forming friend groups that are suited to their developing personalities and interests. Despite being from different walks of life, these students are incredibly collaborative and watchful over of their classmates.

In sixth through eighth grades, Ms. Fuller (a massive neuroscience nerd) finds any way to infuse brain science

into her guidance. We are talking about the function of stress, what causes it and how stress can actually be helpful and something to embrace. This can be a very stressful time of the year with the holidays and the end of the semester, so it is helpful to provide an alternative perspective to dealing with stress. Stress is ever-present, so while Ms. Fuller is always reminding students to take care of themselves and find peaceful moments, she would also like to encourage you as the family to engage in these moments yourself and with your student.

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