



Sisters Elementary School
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Principal's Message

As 2019 has come to a close, and we embark on 2020, I would like to thank each one of you for entrusting us with the awesome privilege and responsibility of educating your students. It is something we take seriously and we value your partnership in this work. All of us at SES would like to wish all of you a Happy New Year as we anticipate an exciting new year filled with opportunities for learning and growing.



This year we begin a five year process as a district of implementing our new Strategic Plan, the culmination of almost two years of hard Mission/Vision work by our community stakeholders.

You can find the document at:

<http://ssd6.org/files/2019/12/SISTERS-SCHOOL-DISTRICT-STRATEGIC-PLAN-for-2019-2024-FINAL-2.pdf>. In the coming months, I will be sharing in depth about each one of the three focus areas- Belong, Prepare and Inspire- and how we are working at the elementary school to apply these three tenets. This month I would like to highlight the first Tenet: Belong- ***Every student is known and connected to adults, peers and resources to develop emotional self-regulation and a foundation of resilience.*** Here at SES our focus is on increasing our regular attendance rates as research shows that there is a strong correlation between elementary school attendance and high school graduation. As a district we are sending attendance letters for students who may need supports to increase their attendance. It is our goal to collaborate with you to support your students being at school each day. We will also be honoring students who are at 95% attendance (4 or fewer absences) at the end of the first semester as a part of our **Strive for 95** campaign.

We are also focusing on increasing student resilience and on training our staff on effective strategies to support students who are struggling socio-emotionally. We are implementing GEM (Growing Early Mindsets) and working to create calming and regulating spaces within our classrooms and across the school. We meet regularly, through our MTSS process, to look at ways that we are supporting individual students who struggle with regulation and with getting along with their peers. Our counselor has begun instruction on the 7 Habits of Happy Kids from Leader in Me. We believe that as we work together on these focus areas we will see our students learn important skills and grow in their ability to self-regulate and to interact positively and effectively with their peers.

As we move into the second half of the school year, we will be working to support your students' ability to grow in their independence, while also guarding valuable instructional minutes. Research shows that the first five minutes of the morning when teachers are fully present to greet their students individually makes a huge impact on student learning for the remainder of the day and strengthens students' feelings of connection to their teacher and classroom community. To

that end, we are encouraging parents to say their goodbyes in the morning in the Commons and have your students walk independently into their classrooms to start the day. Beginning on January 27, this will become our norm, so please begin the process of building your child's independence in this important area. We value our collaboration with parents and want to keep our communication lines open. We know that there are times when you need to communicate with your child's teacher in the morning- you can call, email or you can give the front office a message to convey to the teacher. We also encourage you to make an appointment if there is something vital to discuss.

SES benefits from a variety of wonderful community partners. We could not do the work that we do without our community's generosity and support. I would encourage you to consider donating to Sisters Schools Foundation, an organization that supports all of our schools by providing specific grants to our teachers to enhance their instructional efforts. SES has benefited from projects that include: updated PE equipment, reading materials, intervention materials, musical instruments and field trip supports.

Our students are transitioning back into their academic routines, and, unbelievably, the end of the first semester marking period is quickly approaching. The end of the grading period is January 24th and report cards will go home on February 3rd. As always, please be sure to contact your child's teacher should you have any questions about their progress. When you have conversations with your students around report cards, I would encourage you to focus on the behavioral section, as this area gives the greatest indicators of your student's future success.

We are about to begin our mid-year benchmark testing of math and reading indicators. All elementary students will be assessed on common measures in both reading and math January 13-17. This is a standardized checkpoint for our staff to see how our students are progressing toward the grade level goals. We plan for instruction based on the outcomes from those tests along with other classroom measures. We do this to meet the learning needs of every child. We will be sending your child's benchmark scores home with report cards. You can read more details about both our report cards and benchmark assessments in other portions of this newsletter.

It is such an honor to serve the Sisters Community. My door is always open. Thank you for being a partner in your child's education.

Joan Warburg

SES January Calendar

Monday, Dec. 23-Friday, Jan. 3: Winter Break, No School
Monday, Jan. 6: Students Return from Winter break
Tuesday, Jan. 14: SPTC General Mtg. in SES Loft @ 6:30-8:30 pm
Wednesday, Jan. 15: Latino Family Night at SHS @ 4:30-6:30 pm
Thursday, Jan.16: Coffee with the Principal @ 8:30-9:30 am
Monday, Jan. 20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day, No School
Wednesday, Jan. 22: Chinese New Year Celebration @ 2:15 pm
Thursday, Jan. 23: Teacher Workday, No School



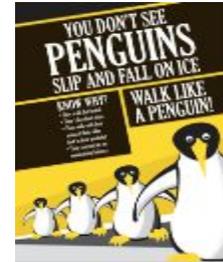
Friday, Jan. 24: End of semester, No School

Monday, Jan. 27: Implementation of new drop off routine for students; coffee in the commons courtesy of SPTC

Tuesday, Feb. 11: SPTC General Mtg. @ 6:30-8:30 pm

Safety Reminders

It is our primary concern that our students are safe at school. The parking lot can be a very dangerous place unless every one of us in our community is observing our protocols. It only takes a split second for a student in an unexpected place to be hit by a car. Please remember to only drop off your student in the drop off lane when you are next to the curb. **There are NO drop offs in the middle of the parking lot.** Parents can also park and walk your students through the parking lot using the crosswalk



Morning Routines

With the colder, wetter mornings of winter upon us, we will be having all of our students remain in the commons before School M,T,Th,F. Beginning on Monday, January 6, we will be having all of our students in designated spaces by class, in the Commons reading books. Our Kindergarteners will be on the stage, our first graders will be by the B wing and our second, third and fourth graders will be in the middle of the Commons. We reviewed routines and expectations with our students today, Monday, January 6. During those 15 minutes students will sit and read quietly. We would encourage interested parents to join and read to a small group from your child's class. When the bell rings, students will put their books away and wait quietly for the duty teachers to dismiss them by class to walk down the hallways. Wednesday mornings we will take our students outside if the weather allows for it.

January is Board Appreciation Month

Thank you to the four members of our school board: Jeff Smith, Jay Wilkins, Don Hedrick and David Thorsett. We appreciate your service and support of our community. Please express your appreciation to these folks who lead our district.



Winter Benchmark Assessment Results

Students at Sisters Elementary School are assessed in reading using NWEA MAP, and in math using iReady, three times a year. These are norm-based assessments that are predictive of a student's overall reading and math development. Our students will be benchmark tested the week of January 13-17. Your child's results will be sent home with their report card. If you have questions about your child's results, please contact his/her teacher.



Report Cards

Your child will be receiving a report card on Feb. 3. Our report cards align with our state standards and across our school, and provide important information to our parents. Each grade level has a unique report card based on unique focus standards, while still adhering to a common structure and format. All grade levels share the same reporting of attendance, specialist grades and behavioral expectations.



We evaluate our students on a 4 point proficiency scale that measures their progress towards meeting standards. In a proficiency model, the goal for all of our students is to attain a level 3, which indicates grade level proficiency. Only a small number of students may receive a 4. A 4 indicates that a child is exceeding grade level standards and is above level. It is important to remember that this proficiency scale cannot be compared directly to a report card that gives letter grades. As parents, please celebrate with your student who receives a 3 and encourage your student who receives a 1 or 2 to keep working. We are still instilling a growth mindset in our students. One recommended way to talk to your student would be, “you haven’t achieved proficiency yet, but I know you can. How can we work together to help you grow in this area?” An important area for parents to focus on with your children is the behavior grades section.

SPTC (Sisters Parent Teacher Committee)

Drumroll please....

We have brought in a total of **\$9,178.72** for the Un-Fundraiser!
Thank you to all who participated. EVERY donation counts!



Next meeting: Jan. 14th at 6:30PM in the Loft space above the gym. We hope to see you there!

Empowering ELL Parents and Families at Home

All parents can be helpful in their children's literacy development, regardless of their language, education, or literacy level. Parents who speak little or no English can contribute to their children's education in valuable ways. English language learners may benefit when they develop solid literacy skills in their first language before learning to read in a second one. Through Spanish, for example, they are developing key language and literacy skills that may enable them to become excellent readers in English.



<https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/homework-tips-parents-ells>

There are many and varied reading materials and resources in Spanish at your local Sisters Public Library. Contact Carly Garzón Vargas at the Deschutes Public Library (541) 312-1073.

<http://www.deschuteslibrary.org>

<https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/about/libraries/sisters>

Services for English language learners continue throughout the year. If you have any questions about services, please call Dawna Spencer at 541-549-8981 ext. 5540 or email dawna.spencer@ssd6.org. It is a pleasure to work with such amazing students!

Latino Family Connections

We would like to thank our families for coming to our second Latino family event of the year last month. It was wonderful to be able to spend time as a community. We so appreciate your thoughtful feedback for any areas of improvement in serving families and students. Thank you!

We would like to invite families to an exciting third Latino family event on Wednesday, January 15, 2020 from 4:30-6:30 pm. It is a special night, as the band Las Cafeteras will be performing at 7:00 at the high school. We hope our families will attend this Sisters Folk Festival concert! We appreciate the collaboration with Citizens 4 Community & Sisters Folk Festival. The schedule will be as follows:

- *4:30-5:30 Presentation by Las Cafeteras*
- *5:30-6:30 Pizza dinner with the band*
- *7:00 Concert in the SHS Theater*

The district welcomes Gabriel Cobos as our new Latino Family Connections liaison! If you should have any questions, or need any assistance, please feel free to contact him by phone at (541) 549-8981 ext. 5272. Or by email at gabriel.cobos@ssd6.org.

From the Nurse

Greetings from the school nurse!

I hope that you had a happy holiday. Please remember to send cold weather clothes with your child to school! We have a fair number of children coming in with shorts and sweatshirts without a coat or pants.



Also Please check your child's Immunization status. **If your child is not up to date by EXCLUSION DAY 02/19/20 they will not be able to stay in school.** The contact information for the School Based Health Center for immunizations is 541-526-6623.

Thank you!
Nurse Beth RN

Sock Drive

Thanks to your generous donations, we collected 400 pairs of socks. This allowed us to have a pajama day on Friday, December 20. The socks have been delivered to the Sisters FAN (Family Access Network) and will be distributed to members of our community this winter.



Physical Education

December has been another great month in Physical Education! Students have been introduced to Floor Hockey. My hopes are that students are being introduced to something new and that this will open their minds and allow them to accept new and different activities. This game is not only very active, but can be played in many modified ways to make it an ideal game for a wide variety of classes.



My objective for this unit is for students to learn to work together as a team and practice good sportsmanship, while at the same time learning how to hold a hockey stick and control the puck at various speeds and directions.

Please remember to send your child with TENNIS SHOES for Physical Education class each day.

Thank you,

Mrs. Thomas

Gym Floor and Gym Shoes

Over Thanksgiving break we completed stripping and rewaxing our new gym floor and it is already showing signs of wear and tear. In order to care for our floor, we need to be careful about the footwear that is being worn in the gym. Please remember to bring in a pair of PE shoes for PE. These shoes need to be tennis shoes with white, non-marking soles. Students may keep these shoes in their classroom cubbies or can carry them between school and home if they are responsible to bring them on PE days. We know that this can be an extra financial burden on families, so please contact our FAN team if you need help in obtaining a pair of shoes at 541-549-0155.



Counselor's News

Hello SES Families!

I hope you all had a wonderful break! I am looking forward to everyone returning to school and the months ahead.

In Kindergarten and 1st grade we are continuing to work on being proactive by knowing how to solve small problems. We will wrap this up in January and move into Habit #2. Habit #2 is Begin With the End in Mind. I have introduced this in some grade levels already! We will be spending time on setting goals and how to make a plan to reach them. We will also be taking some time to explore what student's interests and strengths are and how they can connect to future careers. Elementary age is a wonderful time for students to try new things, discover their passions and strengths, and to dream about how we can use those things in the future! It is important to learn how different careers make up our communities and really rely on each other.

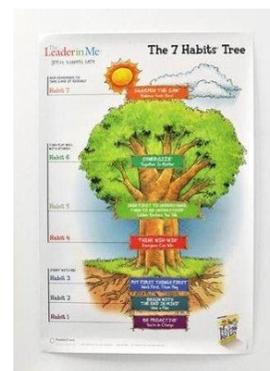
Take the time to share with your child about the path that led you to your career. What were your interests and strengths as a child? Are they the same or have they changed?

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Our 4th grade Leadership students did a great job introducing Habit #2-Begin with the End in Mind at our assembly in December. We will be learning more over the next couple months together.

Habit #2 focuses on having a plan.

- ★ I plan ahead and set goals for myself.
- ★ I am prepared.
- ★ I think about how the choices I make will affect my future.
- ★ I do things that have meaning and make a difference.



You can use this habit at home with your children in multiple ways...

- ★ Maybe there is something special your child would like to buy. They need to know how much they need to save. How will they earn this money? How long will it take?
- ★ Maybe your child wants to be involved in an activity or sport. What steps do they need to take? Is there certain equipment needed? How can I prepare for this? What kind of time commitment is involved?
- ★ Encourage them to dream about their future dreams and goals beyond elementary school. Is there anything they can be doing now to work towards accomplishing them?

**Fridays are school spirit day- Show Outlaw pride by wearing black and white on Fridays.

Musical Notes

Third Grade Families - Our 3rd Grade Musical "Compose Yourself" (premiering on February 13) is all about studying famous composers. We have a need for a few crafty construction folks to help design the sets for our show - if you'd be interested in helping, please email sara.miller@ssd6.org with your name and contact info and she'll send you some plan ideas!



We are pleased to announce that Sisters **Outlaw Singers** is returning this spring! Last year, our 4th and 5th graders had the option to join this fun performing group and we are expanding this year! If you are in 3rd, 4th or 5th grade, we invite you to join us this semester as we rehearse.

- At Sisters Elementary School, in the MUSIC room
- Each Wednesday morning (late-start Wednesdays)
- From 8:00-9:00am
- Beginning January 15 through May 27
- BLACK OUT DATES (NO REHEARSALS) on 1/29, 2/5, 4/15
- Fee: \$30 (covers the cost of a t-shirt and music)

If you are interested in joining, please email Sara Miller at sara.miller@ssd6.org for a permission slip to sign and return.

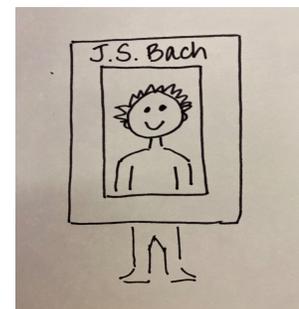
Dates to put on the Calendar for future musical events:

- Thursday, February 13, 5:00pm in SES Commons - 3rd grade musical COMPOSE YOURSELF
- Thursday, March 5, 2:00pm in SES Commons - Kindergarten musical PAJAMA PARTY!
- Tuesday, April 28, 5:00pm in SES Commons - 4th grade musical THE ADVENTURES OF LEWIS AND CLARK
- Tuesday, May 19, 5:00pm in SHS Auditorium - 1st and 2nd grade musicals SWAMPED! and GO FISH!
- Thursday, June 11, 2:00pm in SES Gym - Whole School WE'RE MAKING MUSIC assembly.

Parent Help Requested

Welcome back from what I hope was a very restful family time together over the Winter Break! Our third graders are in the middle of working super hard to get their own musical, COMPOSE YOURSELF ready to perform for you on Thursday, February 13 at 5:00 pm! We are so excited to share this with you!

I do need some help with costuming/art work. As this musical features famous composers from years past, rather than find white wigs for everyone, I'd like to do something a bit creative. The musical is set in a museum. Each "composer" will be identified by a pillar/pedestal (about waist high on our students, 2-3 feet tall), then I'm envisioning a poster-foam-board cutout (to look like a picture frame) with a label of each composer. With this setup, the student will then be able to insert their head/chest-up in the frame like a picture/headshot. However, to allow for movement, I'd like the poster-foam-board to be attached to their bodies (See picture). Would several parents be willing to take on this project?



Here is a list of composer "frames" we'd need, along with 16 pedestals.

Ludwig van Beethoven
Georges Frideric Handel
Johannes Brahms
Johann Sebastian Bach
Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky
Johann Strauss, Jr.
Felix Mendelssohn
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Richard Strauss
Franz Schubert
Franz Joseph Haydn
Modest Mussorgsky
Gustav Mahler
Igor Stravinsky
Philip Glass
Richard Wagner

Please email me if you're able to assist with this fun artistic endeavor! Thanks!

Sara Miller
SES Music Specialist
sara.miller@ssd6.org

Art

We have been learning about Folk Art this last month in art. Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd, learned about foreground, midground and background. We have been working on landscapes while using collage, drawing and painting centers. 3rd and 4th grades have been working in the wire center too.



In January we will begin to do print making! We will explore texture, color mixing and contrast. We will make collagraphs, momo prints and relief prints, while exploring in different media.