



Wolverine Wire

January 27, 2009

Dear Parents,

We have begun the second semester of the current school year. We are now officially closer to the end than to the beginning. For most parents, this time of the year represents one of our favorite times of the year-tax time. Ironically it also represents for Texas educators one of our favorite times of the year – TAKS time. In just a few weeks students will begin taking the mandatory state assessments in the areas of reading, math, science, social studies and writing. Certainly these assessments play an important role in determining what students have learned and also if they possess the skills and knowledge for the next grade level. For our eighth grade students, these assessments have special significance as passing the reading and mathematics TAKS is required for promotion to the ninth grade.

Parents can play an important part in the success of their children on the upcoming tests. They can do this by simply encouraging students on a daily basis to focus on instruction while in class and also the completion of practice in the form of homework. It should be no surprise that students who have regular attendance perform better than those students who have irregular attendance. The bottom line here is simple. We cannot teach them if they are not here.

Finally, when parents make school a daily part of their conversation with their children, they are telling their children that school is important to parents and therefore it should be important to them as well.

As we begin the semester, please make some time to speak to your child about the need to focus on their studies and to make every effort to have them in school regularly. With your support at home we believe our students will end the school year successfully and ready for next years challenges.

Sincerely,

Javier Martinez
Principal

Counselor's Corner!

Before you know it, students will be pre-registering for the 2009-2010 school year! Keep an eye out for the Zachry Electives letter that will be sent home with students through Advisory class on Wednesday, January 28th. Please make sure you and your child discuss the classes/electives before they make their selection.

On February 9th and 10th, all current 6th and 7th grade students will pre-register on-line at Zachry. At that time, a confirmation letter will be sent home for parents/guardians to review the assigned academic core courses and your child's elective choices for the 09-10 school year. If the information is correct, please sign and return the letter by the due date.

Any corrections need to be made on the letter, signed, and returned to the school counselor.

PLEASE REMEMBER: NO ELECTIVE CHANGES FOR THE 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR WILL BE MADE AFTER JUNE 4, 2009.

8th graders pre-registering for High School courses will be visited by the prospective high school counselors on February 12, 2009. The high school course cards will be taken home by 8th grade students on February 17th and should also be discussed and signed by parents/guardians before returning them to the 8th grade counselor.

For more information regarding pre-registration and other important topics, you can visit the counselor's webpage at www.nisd.net/zachry/classnotes.

TOP NOTCH!!

Stephanie Balderas and Rene Espinosa were selected by their colleagues as the Zachry Middle School Teachers of the Year!!

Ms. Balderas teaches 7th grade Science, and is the after school Tutoring Coordinator. Mr. Espinosa is a first-year teacher in 6th grade Social Studies. He completed his student teaching at Zachry. Both of these outstanding educators will be recognized at an awards ceremony hosted by Dr. John Folks. Congratulations!!

February 5th is Courts in School....

Courts in School is a program where a judge hears actual court cases on a stage at school. The defendants have given up their right to a trial by jury and will only have their case heard and decided upon by the judge. The cafeteria will become a legal courtroom and the 8th graders at Zachry are invited to sit and experience our legal system at work! A group from Boot Camp (a last resort facility for repeat offenders) will also be present, and students will be able to ask these individuals questions about their past experiences and present conditions in order to avoid such consequences themselves. This is a wonderful learning and enriching experience for our 8th grade students. Permission slips to attend will be sent home and must be returned signed for students to attend this event.

ALPHA NEWS...Mentathlon is a 7th grade Gifted and Talented district event and will be held at the Paul Taylor Field House on April 2nd. We are in need of parents to help run this event which hosts over 100 activities for ALPHA students. If you would like to volunteer for the day(8am-2pm), please contact either Pam Billingsley at pambillingsley@nisd.net 397-7487 or Suzanne Wehmeyer at suzannewehmeyer@nisd.net 397-7479. Volunteers will need to fill out the background check if they haven't already done so at www.nisd.net and click on **Quick Links** and find **Criminal History Authorization**. Now complete the **Temporary Service Form**...it takes only a minute! We'd love to have you join us as a volunteer at Mentathlon!

Members of the Zachry A1 Band participated in the Region Band tryouts November 1 at Luna Middle School. The following students placed in one of the two bands: Lauren M., Nico M., Justin R., Adriane G., Josh B., and Hope P. Jacob B. made alternate.

Mrs. Patmon and Mr. Friedman are extremely proud of the accomplishments of these students.

Boys Athletics

The boy's basketball teams are in the middle of their season. The 8th grade teams are as follows: A team is 2-2, B-team is 3-1. The 7th grade teams are as follows: A team 4-0, B team 3-1. Come out and watch a game! Games are held on Thursday nights, starting at 5pm. Admission is \$2.00 for adults, \$1.00 for students with an ID.

Ms. Dunn's 8th Grade English classes just finished podcasts with portions of their short stories and now are learning how to do research with the on-line library, Questia. In the coming months they will be creating Powerpoints over a literary aspect from the novel, *The Lottery Rose*, and will do proper documentation with the Citation Machine. We will begin poetry and persuasion for the new six weeks.

Reading

We had a great time reading novels this past six weeks. We are excited about finishing them and moving into short stories, plays, and vocabulary building. 8th grade will begin focusing on preparing for the first TAKS Reading administration on March 3. We know that we are going to do great! 7th grade will be doing Book Talks. Please make sure they are reading at home. Please plan to attend the Zachry Literacy Night on February 17. Come and see all the great things that we do here to encourage reading and writing and help your children become life long learners.

Tennis

Parents, thanks for your support through our tennis season. Zachry had a large turn out for 2008-09. At the Northside Team Tournament, Zachry beat Vale Middle School to advance to the winner's bracket. Zachry lost to Luna Middle School, which placed them to play against Connally Middle School for 3rd place. The matches against Connally were awesome and very competitive. Connally defeated Zachry by one match.

Tennis players, I appreciate your hard work and dedication. I look forward to next year. Also, keep an eye and ear open for the Tennis League this Spring.

ATTENDANCE NOTES

A few reminders to parents and students regarding absences and doctor appointments. When a student is absent the parent must provide a note stating why the student was absent, date of absence, signature and phone number. Please be as specific as possible on reason for absence. Reasons such as emergency, family matter or personal is not sufficient. If the reason for the absence is one that needs to be addressed by the administration, we request that you please call the school.

When a student is signed out at the front desk for early release, a note must be brought in the following day stating reason for absence. If the student is signed out for a medical appointment, eye appointment or dental appointment the note from the attending physician must be brought in to receive an excused absence. School begins at 8:30 am each day. Please help your student to be on time and ready to learn.

PLANNERS

At the beginning of the year, all students were issued a planner. Students are expected to pay for that planner. The cost is \$3.50 and needs to be paid in the front office. Please make sure it is taken care of **before the Spring break**. Students who have not paid will not be allowed to attend any school dances. The Planner is also a GREAT place to jot down your locker combination when you can't remember it!!

SWEETHEART DANCE CARNATION SALES

FRIDAY, February 6th dance for 6th grade 4pm to 5:30 pm, 7th and 8th grade dance from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm.
Carnation and ticket sales ONE DAY ONLY Fri Feb 6th
7:30 am to 8:30 am and during lunch

Tickets \$3.00 per student
Carnations \$1 for 1, \$5 for 6 and \$10 for 12

Sponsored by Zachry PTA
Students must be in good standing (planners paid, no discipline referrals)

STUDENT IDs

Each Zachry student has been given a picture ID which they are to keep with them at all times. For those who have lost their ID or who are new to Zachry Middle School, you may have an ID made during Advisory on Thursday, January 29th. A lost ID will cost \$5 for a replacement. New students to Zachry get the first ID at no cost.

CLASS COMPETITION!!!

Student Council is sponsoring a **Box-Top Brouhaha** this month! The game is on to see which grade level can collect the most box-tops! The grade that collects the most box-tops receives a free dress day on March 6th. Students can turn in box tops to their Science teachers. Products that participate in Box-Tops for Education are: Cheerios, Pizza Rolls, Betty Crocker, Hefty bags, and Hamburger Helper just to name a few! Please help your student and help our school!

Story Fest 2009

January 24, 2009

1:00-4:00 p.m.

John Marshall High School

8000 Lobo Lane

397-7133

- Author Rick Riordan (author of *The Lightning Thief & 39 Clues*)
- Door prizes
- Story telling
- Activities
- Book characters

For more information go to
<http://library.nisd.net/friends/>

BLUEBONNET BOOK VOTING

Students will get to vote on their favorite Bluebonnet Book for 2009.

Requirements are:

- Must have read at Least 5 books from the CURRENT Bluebonnet reading list.
- Must have completed the reading record.
- Must present a VALID Bluebonnet Voter Registration Card.

- Students can only vote ONCE!!

Ballots will be available on Wednesday, January 28th in the Library! Come be a part of this great reading program!!

CAFETERIA UPDATE

Zachry is a no charge school. Students that have to pay for their meals, must have money in their accounts at all times. There are no exceptions. Also, middle schools do not have alternative meals as in the elementary schools, if children do not have money they will not be allowed to charge meals.