

FRIENDLY HILLS

2014 - 2015 School Year



Dear Friendly Hills Families-

We have had an excellent first quarter at Friendly Hills Middle School. Our students and staff have done a wonderful job instructing and learning about many new topics, and developing skills that are important to 21st century learners.

As I was trying to think of a good topic to write about, a student asked me, "Hey, Principal dude (he couldn't remember my name) what do you do every day?" I had my topic.

I have been very busy working to get to know students, staff and the Friendly Hills Community. Along with that, I have been reviewing policies and procedures at the building level and making some changes that will hopefully provide students with a better learning environment, and a more productive school day.

Throughout my first 8 weeks at Friendly Hills, I have focused on spending time in the classroom getting to know teachers and students. I have completed over 150 classroom visits that have helped me understand teaching and learning styles in the building. Understanding how teachers teach, and how students learn is very important to me, and will help guide me to make proper decisions that will improve learning and instruction as we move forward.

I have also focused on being visible in the building. When students are moving, I am in the hallways and locker bays making sure they are on their way to their next class, and arriving on time. An orderly environment is a necessity in a middle school, and it exists at Friendly Hills. I have really enjoyed getting to know our students. They are a wonderful, energetic group of young people that are very well behaved and are fun to be around. I am impressed with the questions they are asking, and their quest for knowledge in each class they attend.

It has been great meeting parents and community members as well. I have appreciated the conversations I have been a part of with many of you, and I really look forward to working with you as the school year progresses. Each hour you have volunteered at different events during first quarter has been greatly appreciated. Thank you again for your dedication to our school community.

Finally, know that the things mentioned above will continue, and our building will continue to strive for excellence in academics, activities, and in the community.

Enjoy the last days of Fall!
Principal Chris Hiti

Upcoming

Tuesday, November 4th:
Election Day

Friday, November 7th:
End of Quarter 1
No School

Thursday, November 13th:
PTA Give to the Max day

Monday, November 17th:
6:30 p.m., FHMS Showcase

November 17th-21st:
Discover District 197 Schools

Monday, November 24th:
6:30 p.m., PTA Open Meeting

November 26th-28th:
No School

Tuesday, December 9th:
7:00 p.m., FHMS gym
7th grade band, choir and
orchestra concerts

Thursday, December 11th:
7:00 p.m., FHMS gym
8th grade band, choir and
orchestra concerts





Choir News

8th Grade Choir:

During the first week of November, we will be finishing our Keyboard Lab mini-unit; the goal for each student is to play 4 songs. We will also be finishing the first round of Voice Sectionals, and all students will be assigned a choral part (Soprano, Alto, Tenor or Bass). Finally, we will be preparing for our upcoming Winter Concert that will take place on Thursday, December 11th at 7:00 p.m. in the FHMS gym.

7th Grade Choir:

During the first week of November, we will be finishing our Keyboard Lab mini-unit; the goal for each student is to play 5 songs. The first hour choir will be finishing the first round of Voice Sectionals, where we learn about the parts of choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass) as well as changing voice. The third and fourth hour choirs will have their Voice Sectionals next. Finally, we will be preparing for our upcoming Winter Concert that will take place on Tuesday, December 9th at 7:00 p.m. in the FHMS gym.

6th Grade Choir:

During November, we will be continuing our Keyboard Lab mini-unit; the goal for each student is to play 5 songs. We are also working to sing our warm-ups a cappella (without the piano) in two and three parts, and to work on balance (all voices heard equally loud) and blend (no voices sticking out). Finally, we will be preparing for our upcoming Winter Concert that will take place on Tuesday, January 27th at 7:00 p.m. in the FHMS gym.

5th Grade Choir:

During November, we will be continuing our Keyboard Lab mini-unit; the goal for each student is to play 5 songs. We are also working to sing our warm-ups a cappella (without the piano) in two parts, and to work on balance (all voices heard equally loud). Finally, we will be preparing for our upcoming Winter Concert that will take place on Thursday, January 29th at 7:00 p.m. in the FHMS gym.

Orchestra News

The 7th and 8th grade orchestra students are working on getting ready for their December concert.

The 7th grade concert will be taking place on December 9th and the 8th grade concert will take place on December 11th. Both concerts will be in the gym at Friendly Hills and will start at 7:00pm.

The 6th grade orchestra students have started working on their concert songs as well. The 6th grade concert will take place on January 27th at 7:00pm at Friendly Hills.

The 5th grade orchestra students should all be able to bow a D major scale, and then they will begin to learn eighth notes, tempo, time signatures, 1st and 2nd Endings, half notes, half rests, repeat signs, and their first concert song, "Ode to Joy."

The 5th grade concert is on January 29th at 7:00pm at Friendly Hills.



Band News

Band students are showing great progress on their playing skills through full group rehearsals and small groups sectionals.

Our focus this year for all band students is rhythmic recognition and application.

5th graders are working on note reading, rhythm reading and the basics of how to play their instruments.

6th, 7th and 8th graders are playing exercises out of their method books as well as working on grade level concert songs.

Students are also preparing for upcoming concerts in December and January.

GIFTED & TALENTED SCIENCE

5th graders are learning about Force, Motion and Models. They are currently working on designing helmets that can protect an egg in a fall from the second story. They will continue their work with Force, Motion and Models during November and December.

6th graders have finished up their study of the Nature of Science and Technology and will be delving into the world of Chemistry next! One Future City team has been selected to represent Friendly Hills at the Minnesota Competition in January.



7th grade students are learning about microorganisms, viruses, bacteria, protists and fungi.

8th grade students have been working hard on designing their Future Cities. Two teams have been selected to represent Friendly Hills at the Minnesota Competition in January. During the month of November students will be exploring rocks and minerals and their importance in our lives.

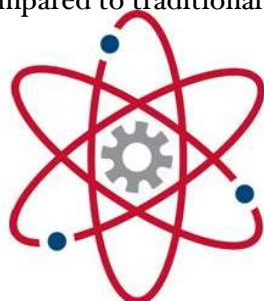
PROJECT LEAD THE WAY

With the start of 2nd quarter all three PLTW GTT courses will be up and running with one class of 6th and 7th graders and two classes of 8th graders. 6th graders take Design and Modeling, 7th graders take Automation and Robotics and 8th graders Energy and the Environment.

In November the 6th graders will be introduced to engineering where they will investigate and present on a technological artifact and engineering careers. 6th graders will then learn and apply the design process with either a furniture design or a hobby organizer.

During this month, the 7th graders will first investigate and present on a robot type that interests them. They will then learn about mechanical systems where they will build a series of standard mechanisms cumulating in a Pull Toy Construction Project.

Also during this month, the 8th graders will investigate what energy is and what forms it comes in. They will perform an Energy Audit on their own home and complete an Energy Expo project by investigating alternate forms of energy, their strengths and weaknesses compared to traditional forms of energy.



PROJECT LEAD THE WAY

PLTW

HEALTH, LIFESKILLS & COUNSELING OFFICES

For Parents and Students:

Please ensure that students have emergency medications and doctor orders in the Health Office.

Emergency medications do include inhalers, Epipens, and seizure medications. This is very important for student safety and to promote students' learning and academic success.

If there are any questions or concerns, please contact the Health Office at 651-403-7602 or jennifer.rockow@isd197.org.

Thank you,
Jennifer Rockow,
BS, RN, PHN
Nurse



This month LifeSkills will be covering:

- Tobacco advertising and how it impacts young people.
- Dealing with stress. What is stress in their lives and what are some management techniques?
- Communication – why it's important, along with some listening skills and practice.

Mary A Popelka, BS, LADC
Chemical Health and Drug Prevention

From the Counselor...

Happy Fall! Time flies when you're having fun and it's never a dull moment in the counselor's office. Lunch Bunch groups are underway and participation is phenomenal, with 205 kids involved school wide. Friendly Hills students continue to welcome new students who have moved into the area, with 5 new students in the past week.

Families of 8th grade students, Please take note:

8th Graders will be taking ACT's EXPLORE test on Thursday, November 13th during hours 1-3.

This test is designed to help 8th graders explore career options for their future, think about high school coursework and their post-high school choices. The EXPLORE test is made by ACT, and is meant to be an early predictor of how your child may perform on college entrance exams. Your child will also take the PLAN test in 10th grade, which is a similar test.

When the results become available, you will receive a report which contains information about your student's skills, interests, plans and goals. It will show your student's strengths and weaknesses in four subject areas: English, math, reading, and science. You will see how your student's scores compare to other students across the country who also took the EXPLORE.

Students will review their test results in social studies class with their teacher, Ms. Lufkin, and their school counselor, Ms. Lora Messer-Nilles, and will spend time exploring careers that matched their areas of interest on their EXPLORE results. We will use this college and career knowledge as we think about registering for high school in January, 2015.

For more information about the EXPLORE test, you can visit www.explorestudent.org. You can also access the brochure, "Using Your EXPLORE Results" from the District ISD #197 website: www.isd197.org >Curriculum Tab > Parent Resources > EXPLORE / PLAN.

Please call or email with any questions!

Lora.Messer-Nilles@isd197.org

651 403 7672



7/8 Grade

Mr. Friemann's classes started their health unit after MEA. Mr. Reddy and Mrs. Stremmer-Birr's classes started Ultimate Frisbee/Soccer. Please remember it is cool during the day so bring a sweatshirt/sweatpants for class.

5/6 Grade

All classes have now finished Ultimate Frisbee. They are now playing Soccer. We plan to be outside as much as possible so please dress for the weather!



ESL

Fifth graders are reading the novel *Any Small Goodness* and have been examining ways they can make small differences in the world.

Sixth graders are reading *Esperanza Rising* and learning how to identify and use subjects and predicates in sentences, and how to identify main idea and details in paragraphs.

Seventh graders have been studying folktales from Latin America and are currently writing their own original folktale.

In eighth grade ESL class, students are examining the coming-of-age story of *Esperanza in The House on Mango Street*. They are exploring gender roles and what it means to be a part of a community.



ART

In the art room throughout first quarter, seventh graders worked on amazing clay fish sculptures which were completed the last week of the quarter. Look for the sculptures hanging around Friendly Hills. We are really proud of their work!

All first quarter artwork should be coming home now through winter break. Ask your students about their oil pastel insect composition and zentangle fish designs and please encourage them to bring them home.

As we wrap up most seventh grade art, we are looking forward to welcoming the fifth grade students in to the art room.

If you are interested in volunteering to work on our art displays, please email Ms. Timmerman or Ms. Rodrique.

5TH GRADE

Our homeroom academic groups have been formed and have started this week. Our focus at Friendly Hills this year is Math. All staff are working across content areas to incorporate math in their classes. As a Fifth Grade Team we have designated our homeroom/flex time to math groups. Homeroom time is designed for intervention, enrichment, recess, and other activities the 5th grade team feels will benefit the students. Students were identified using test scores and teacher recommendations. Students meet twice per week and will work on various skills on IXL math in order to improve or solidify skills from the 5th grade math standards.

Our social studies class had a very successful trip to the Junior Achievement BizTown. JA BizTown is a 10,000 square foot kid-sized city within Junior Achievement headquarters in Maplewood, MN. Several weeks of classroom learning culminates in a day-long visit to this fully-interactive simulated free market facility where students become adults for a day. By working in one of 14 JA BizTown shops, students learn what it takes to run a successful business, manage a checking account, and work as a team. Thanks to all the wonderful parent volunteers who took time to help us out.

In science we are continuing to work on our Variables Unit. We have just finished up learning about density and buoyancy in our lifeboats investigation and we are going to begin learning about the forces of flight in our airplane investigation. We have also been implementing math extensions to integrate math and science instruction and support our building and district goals. Given that math is often the language of science this has been a seamless integration.

Just a reminder from the Reading teachers, "Batting a Thousand" BAT is due this week. All cards should be turned in to your reading teacher as soon as possible, no later than Thursday November 6th. Please remember that every quarter we do BAT. Any specific questions, please direct to your child's reading teacher.

6TH GRADE

November 6th, the sixth-graders will be attending Base Camp as an end of the quarter activity. Base Camp is the Northern Star Council's (Boy Scouts of America) newest program facility where students engage in rock climbing, archery, and numerous team building activities.

In these team building activities, students work cooperatively with other students to solve problems and hone their critical thinking and conflict/resolution skills.

It is fun to see the smiles on students' faces when they hit a bull's eye or reach the top of the climbing wall!

This is the ultimate hands-on learning field trip!

7TH GRADE

The 7th grade is excited to announce that we are participating in Math Day at the Minnesota Zoo. The students will be walking around the zoo answering math questions that relate to the exhibits and operations at the zoo.

In science, the students will be studying the wonderful world of microbes.

In social studies, the students are going to be studying the causes and outcomes of the Civil War.

Language arts classes will be answering the unit big question "What should we learn?" through the medium of nonfiction.

8TH GRADE

There will be an 8th grade dance on November 14th from 5:30-7:30 put on by Student Council. More information will follow.

8th graders will be taking part in Harvest Pack in the gym on Nov. 25th during the day.

The 8th graders will be taking the ACT EXPLORE test on Thursday, November 13th in the morning. Students should get a good nights rest the night before.

Coming up in Science:

11/10-11/15 - Project on Sulfide Mining

11/17 - Philosophical Chairs/Socratic Seminar

GIVE TO THE MAX!

No selling cookie dough, wrapping paper or pizzas! No door to door. This year the FHMS PTA has decided to utilize "Give to the Max" day as our fall fundraiser. Give to the Max Day 2014 is officially November 13, 2104 but donations are accepted on an ongoing basis. The best part is, unlike other fundraisers, 95% of your donation goes directly to FHMS. (Give MN charges a small fee to use their site-similar to a credit card transaction fee.)

To donate at any time use the following link:

<https://givemn.org/organization/Pta-Minnesota-Congress-220>

It's easy, you log into the site and make a donation. On November 13th GiveMN will be having daily and hourly contests where schools can compete for additional money from Give MN.

We are also looking for some volunteers to help run this fundraiser. It's an online process and does not involve a lot of meeting's or time. The commitment would be the next few weeks leading up to the event on November, 13th.

Please contact Melissa Zeleny at Quack1029@comcast.net if you can help.

Next PTA meeting will be Monday, November 24th at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome!

