

Bell Middle School

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February 2019

[School Website](#)

[Menu](#)

[Lunch & Bell
Schedule](#)

Message from the Principal...

Dear Bell Families-

This is the time of year that, believe it or not, we are entrenched in planning for the following school year. Furthermore, we still have 13 weeks left in the current school year, and a great deal of learning, activities, events, and projects happening. In other words, schools get super busy, and we only gain speed between now and the end of May. That said, I have a great deal to share in terms of celebrations and upcoming plans.

Celebrations

- **Bell Students took 1st Place in Local Math Competition!** – This was the first time our school has competed in a math competition in recent memory, and they did not disappoint, **taking 1st place on February 8th in the team competition!** Other schools that competed included: Colorado Academy (2nd place, Bear Creek K-8 (3rd place), Golden View Classical Academy, and the Manning School of Arts & Academics, Dunstan MS, Carmody MS, Denver Academy of Torah, Evergreen MS, Moore MS, Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen, and Shrine of St. Anne's. **A huge congratulations to:** Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Buruse, Isaac Ousterhout, Ian Fischer, Elise Henderson, Nate Reynolds, Jake Moore, Nieves Huarcaya-Osorio, Emma Wengrovius, Anton Blazejczyk, Will Powell, and Jesus Huarcaya-Osorio.
- **Golden Area Spelling Bee – Sophie Anderson (grade 8) and Maya Monreal (grade 6)** did an outstanding job representing Bell at the area Spelling Bee on Feb. 13. In the end, **Sophie earned the Grand Champion title** for the Golden area, and she will be representing Golden at the State Spelling Bee! Congratulations to both of the girls for making it to the Area Bee and good luck to Sophie at the State Bee!!

continued...

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Message from the Principal, continued...

Bell PTA and Accountability (BAT) Updates

- **PTA Fundraiser Follow-up:** This month we finalized most of the PTA grants given to our school from the Magazine Fundraiser you all participated in during the fall semester. We have already been able to support so many programs with the money our community so generously raised. We have purchased much-needed materials for our Spanish classes, which have expanded with the influx of 6th graders this year. We have also purchased a poster-maker that all the clubs and organizations in our school can use to enhance their marketing for their programs and events. When you walk into the building, you will also see an impressive mural by the main staircase that these funds helped pay for to enhance our school spirit and branding. We are also in the midst of purchasing more products for our Family & Consumer Studies classes and awarding scholarships to 10 students for Outdoor Lab. Finally, each teacher in the building has a \$100 stipend to spend on their classroom, and our teachers who are brand new to teaching (and who are always in need of more classroom materials) are receiving an extra \$200. Of course, these are just some of the highlights for how that money was distributed. It's incredible how far the money that is raised goes in our school, and *what a huge difference it makes for our students and their teachers*. So, thank you, again, for supporting our school!
- **Thanks for the Snacks!** - While we're on the topic of gratitude, I want to also thank the PTA members who contributed to our staff's snacks for their late-night of Office Hours on February 13. It helps so much to have a snack to boost the energy for teachers after they've had a 10+ hour day. On behalf of our entire staff, we just want to say thank you for your thoughtfulness; it does not go unnoticed!
- **Screenagers – March 18** - Back by popular demand, Bell PTA is sponsoring a screening of [*Screenagers: Growing-up in a Digital Age*](#). There will be a minimal cost for adults attending the event, and students are *free*. Click on the link above for more information about this eye-opening documentary. Additional details about the screening at Bell can be found further down in this newsletter.
- **BAT Update** – We spent some time going over the budget, staffing and plans for the 2019-2020 school year, and District plans for mill-levy funds at our BAT meeting on February 5. ALL BAT meeting notes, presentations, and agendas are posted on our [website](#) under the Family Resources tab. [Click here](#) to view my presentation from Feb. 5.

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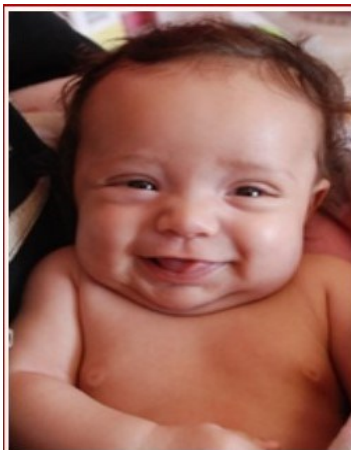
Message from the Principal, continued...

2019-2020 School Year Planning

- **Moving forward without Partnering with New Tech Network** – As you heard last week, we will not be partnering with New Tech Network next year due to budget constraints. While I am sad we will not be pioneering this partnership in Colorado, our plans for 2019-2020 were never contingent upon this partnership. If you did not read the letter from last week that explains in further depth this decision and how we're moving forward, please [click here to read it](#). We will be pursuing other partnerships within our District to fill some gaps that NTN would have filled (mostly with professional development for our staff), and we are already working on this.
- **Pathways in 2019-2020** – For the first time, Bell will be offering two distinct, clearly defined pathways for our students: iSTEM and Arts & Humanities. While our iSTEM pathway has been well-defined and constantly growing, our Arts & Humanities pathway is new and is being met with great excitement! We will begin with next year's 7th graders only. In 2020-2021, all 7th & 8th graders will be following one of these two pathways. Currently, our 6th graders are engaging in a guided process to help them determine which pathway is a best fit for their areas of passion and interest. To learn more about our pathways, please [click here for an easy-to-follow pamphlet](#).
- **Course Selections** – Most of our incoming 6th graders have already filled-out their course selections for next year. Our incoming 7th & 8th graders will be turning-in their course selections in the coming weeks. ***Please keep an eye out for course registration materials coming home with your student in the next two weeks.*** This is a great opportunity to dialogue with your student about the classes they are taking and engage in a conversation about their areas of interest, as they get closer to entering high school.

In reflecting on the past 18 months, it is remarkable how much our school has shifted – and continues to shift – to better prepare students and staff for the future. I feel fortunate to have a staff and community who are not only willing to try new things, but also engage in the development and critical thinking it takes to go from good to great. Thank you, again, for the honor of sharing your children with us. Take care!

Truly,
Michele DeAndrea-Austin, M.A.
Principal –
Bell Middle School



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FROM THE PTA

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Your donations to PTA during the magazine drive and other fundraisers made a difference in the lives of your kids and the staff that support them every day. Your contributions have provided over \$37,000 dollars that went to grants that provided a variety of resources to the school. Some of these include grants to all teachers for their classroom needs, additional funds to support new teachers. You have nurtured our kids learning experiences by funding a new poster printer for all kids to enhance their project-based learning, extracurricular activities during outdoor lab, social study wall atlases, and books for ELA and Spanish classes. You have also helped with increasing school spirit at Bell, a very important part of building community during middle school years, with funding a mural at the front of the school, providing snacks and supplies for events like school socials and ROAR assemblies, and funding the 8th grade picnic. And these are only a few of the grants you have helped to provide! The table shows you what categories your donations have contributed to:



Expense Categories	Amount	Percent of Total
Teacher Appreciation	\$ 10,731.99	29%
Capital Equipment	\$ 7,438.00	20%
Electives	\$ 7,380.00	20%
Student Activities	\$ 4,760.00	13%
School Spirit	\$ 4,200.00	11%
Core Curriculum	\$ 3,047.00	8%
Total	\$ 37,556.99	100%

Bell is grateful for all you do to bring these opportunities to your kids!

Thank you, Your PTA Presidents, Tami McMullin & Marissa Hummon



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FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

CMAS 2019

As you are probably aware, the state required CMAS testing window is approaching. Please **save these dates** to ensure as many students as possible are here for testing sessions. While we will hold make-up sessions, students tend to do better when they test with their peers. Participating in make-up sessions also pulls students out of the classroom during instructional times. It is also important that students arrive on time. Students who arrive after a session starts cannot go into their classroom until after the testing session is complete. Thank you for helping ensure every student can do his or her best!

Testing Schedule - 6th Grade

- April 2, 3, 4 (all day)

Testing Schedule - 7th & 8th Grade

- April 9, 10, 11 (all day)

Testing Schedule - 8th Grade Science

- April 16 (all day)

Tuesday, April 16th is a scheduled a flex day for our 8th grade students to complete the 2019 Science CMAS test. **Only 8th grade students will be attending school on this day.** Please make note of this important day on your calendars.

If you have any questions regarding state testing, please feel free to contact Bell's Assessment Coordinators.

Val Calvert
Assistant Principal
Assessment Coordinator

Allison Johnson
Instructional Coach
Assessment Coordinator

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FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Screenagers - The Movie is back by popular demand!

Bell Middle School Auditorium - 6:00pm - March 18, 2019

Registration is required - Cost is \$5 for Adults and free for Students

Last year we sold out, so register early!

Because screen time crosses into all aspects of kids' lives, SCREENAGERS is all about bringing people together to experience the movie and have discussions afterwards— discussions that promote lasting change.


Promo: <https://impactflow.com/event/presented-by-bell-middle-school-pta-10160>

Register at <https://bit.ly/2UZTURj>

Rubik's Cube Club



Students, you're invited to join us for the new Rubik's Cube Club! We will meet on Tuesday, February 26th from 2:15pm - 3pm in room G27 with Officer Hall and Mr. Haberkorn. We'll be teaching ways to solve the cube and discuss competition and games in the future. NO EXPERTISE NECESSARY!! Please bring your own cube!





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We Need Your Help!

Educators across Jeffco have expressed their appreciation and support of our Strategic Plan and the work to individualize education to better meet the needs of every one of our 85,000+ children. One common request (and urgent need) has been increased time for teacher collaboration and planning. Some schools have been able to schedule late starts while others have faced challenges with transportation scheduling. With this goal in mind, a task force comprised of principals, teachers, parents, and district staff including the transportation department, was formed to explore the viability of a late start schedule for schools across the district. As this task force explores the best way to go about these changes, they would appreciate your input! We need feedback from everyone, including families, educators, support staff, and others who support our students. **Please complete this survey by March 6th.**

SURVEYS:

<http://tinyurl.com/JeffcoEducatorPlanning>

<http://tinyurl.com/JeffcoEducatorPlanningEspanol>

Why does the survey matter?

We love our teachers! They work hard for students. Expectations and time demands continue to significantly increase for educators. This is the right work to help our students, but we need to think more strategically about how we schedule and use time. Why a need for more time?

- Teachers pull from multiple resources and collaborate with others to plan the best instruction. Additionally, transforming student experiences to provide more hands on, engaging instruction connected to “real” tasks takes more time. Research shows this creates better results for students.
- Teachers often share students across classes and subjects, which requires more time to share information on students and needs.
- To truly provide more personalized instruction, educators must deeply understand student needs. We have more data on our students than ever before, however this requires time to look at the assessment results, student work, perceptual data and more to address urgent needs.
- Teachers are addressing more significant social emotional needs in their students than ever before. Again, it’s the right work but it does take more time to work with other experts in the building to help students, talk with a student, call a family, access resources, and so on.
- Our teachers receive one 50-minute planning period each day to:
 - ⇒ Plan learning for next day, week, month including learning goals, differentiated instruction, unit outcomes, assess ments, authentic tasks, projects, and more
 - ⇒ Respond to email
 - ⇒ Make parent phone calls
 - ⇒ Meet with families
 - ⇒ Meet with teammates
 - ⇒ Gather resource & supplies for instruction, set up or clean up the classroom for various subjects
 - ⇒ Plan field trips, special activities, connect with parent volunteers and/or community groups
 - ⇒ Consult with the instructional coach
 - ⇒ Analyze data from both classroom work as well as standardized tests to inform the next day’s learning, organize groups, determine interventions
 - ⇒ Discuss strategies with colleagues for struggling students
 - ⇒ Consult with special education teacher
 - ⇒ Consult with mental health provider
 - ⇒ Meet with administration on various topics
 - ⇒ Work on individual professional development
 - ⇒ Review & grade student work

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Library Newsletter

The Materials for a Maker Space

Through a grant with the City of Golden, Bell is in the planning phase in the creation of a unique resource for our students. The Bell Maker Space is a huge classroom that has been set aside for checkout by any teacher for use project-based learning.



Want to help support a Project-Based Learning? You can donate project materials. We accept donations of craft sticks, poster boards, tri-fold project boards, hot glue sticks, pipe cleaners, glue sticks, duct tape, masking tape, yarn, string, or fabric.

Please email Julie Schlosser at julie.schlosser@jeffco.k12.co.us if you are able to help with a donation.

Stay tuned for details and for additional ways that you can help us make this space an amazing tool for all Bell classrooms.

Call for TA's and Tech Squad

Students who are interested in being a library TA (working on book shelving and library projects) and students who are interested in being on Bell's Tech Squad (library TA's who are taught to troubleshoot and fix school technology) must apply by Spring Break. Please see the Library website linked to the Bell Middle School Website for the online application.

Bring Your Own Device

Students may bring laptops or Chromebooks to school for classroom use. Please look on the Bell website under "Family Resources" or [follow this link](#) for Jeffco Tech Tips steps for BYOD (Bring Your Own Device).

Milk Caps for Moola



This year we will again be collecting bottle lids from products that come from the Longmont Dairy! Over the past five years we have been able to collect over 32,000 bottle lids (and save them from the landfills!) and in turn raise over \$1600 for Bell Middle School! Longmont Dairy recycles the lids (a win for them!) and pays us 5-cents for every lid we turn in to them (a win for us!). So, please save and bring in any Longmont Dairy lids (includes milk, lemonade, creamer, half-and-half, tea, and/or eggnog lids that you have throughout the year). The recycle box is located in the front office of the school.

For questions please contact Gwen Stroup at gwenstroup@yahoo.com. Thanks for your support!

Outdoor Lab

Do you have a 6th grader who is headed to Outdoor Lab? Have you been using the King Soopers card to earn money towards their tuition? If you have and keep using the card the funds you earn go towards the Outdoor Lab Foundation. You can keep doing this or you can get a new card that donates the profits to Bell for students needing scholarships and other Outdoor Lab needs.



Amazon Smile

While you are doing your online shopping using Amazon don't forget to shop through Amazon Smile. Same prices but when you buy part of your money goes towards the charity of your choice. By the way did you know that Bell PTA is one of the charities you can choose?



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