Message from the Principal...

Dear Bell Families -

December 8, 2017

Life at Bell MS is good! There’s a lot to celebrate, share, and prepare for. So, grab a cup of coffee or tea and take a minute to read all about it.

Celebrations -

• I am so proud to announce that Bell MS earned 2nd place (Runner-Up) in the Reunion Energy Conservation Competition! It was a tight competition, and we barely missed out on 1st place. This only could have happened through a huge team effort, led by Mrs. Bates and the honors seminar students. A huge thank you also goes to Mr. Castro, our facilities manager; our entire custodial staff; and all of our staff members who made changes to our facility to reduce significantly our energy consumption. We will be learning more about the awards we earned soon, which will include some funding to make energy improvements to our facility. This is a huge accomplishment, so congratulations to our whole community!

• Congratulations to Bell Middle School District Level Reflections winners! In Visual Arts, Adrian Blazejczyk won Excellence; in Literature, Eisley Daly won Excellence; and in Dance Choreography, Anna Weinberg won Excellence. The pieces created by these students will move on to the Colorado State level competition. We are very proud of each of you, and rooting for you at the State level of competition!

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Message from the Principal, continued...

- Congratulations to the 26 Bell MS students who qualified for the All County Band and Orchestra this year! What is more amazing is that three times as many Bell MS students qualified for All-County Orchestra than any other middle school in the county. Those students are (in no specific order): Morgen Anderson, Joanna Toy, Annika Waples, Natalie Phillips, Clancy Malone, Aidan Wiser, Kian Oaklief, Sam Ryan, Owen Wiser, Taylor Kent, Desiray Glasmann, Katelyn Kelble, Tanner Vodicka, Izzi Kimble, Penelope Jones, Teegan Meyers, Sophie Anderson, Anthony Rich, Delany Lingad, Sydney Drabek, Everlin Raork, Jack Haggard, Caroline Stoltenberg, Jady Sharp, Isabel Anderson, and Josiah Branham. Wow! We are so proud!

- Thank you to Corbin Hastings and Kyle Gathers in Mr. Van Vorhees’ Multi-Media class for creating a great video highlighting the great things happening at Bell MS! They did a professional job, and we have been using the video as we’ve been talking to different student and parent groups about Bell MS. Click here to take a look!

As you can see, we have so much to celebrate this holiday season! I am incredibly proud of our students and staff at Bell. I’m just in awe of it all, I guess.

What’s New for 2018-2019 at Bell? A lot!

Admittedly, with the 6th grade transition to middle school, there is a lot more to manage this year than I’ve had in my previous 11 years as an administrator; however, we’re making progress, and it is very exciting! All of these changes have been determined as a result of hours of different committee conversations with a variety of different stakeholders. I want to specifically thank the parents who have been part of these committees and conversations through BAT, PTA (including the area elementary school PTAs), and our Design Advisory Group (DAG).

- Facility Changes

As reported earlier in the year, Bell will be receiving an addition to its cafeteria. This is slated to include a nice outdoor sitting area off of the cafeteria, as well as over 1700 new square feet to the interior of the cafeteria. Additionally, we will be reconfiguring several spaces inside the building. We will be creating four new full-size classrooms by tearing down some walls and adding new ones. Additionally, we recently learned that Bell will be installing approximately 52,000 square feet of new carpet, and the front exterior of the building will be remodeled to better accommodate our increased pedestrian traffic in the mornings. Finally, while 6th grade will remain on the east side of the building, there will be a lot of other movement of grade-level classrooms by next August. Many decisions have yet to be made, and with that some decisions already made may change in the coming months as our enrollment numbers become clearer. So, stay tuned… there will be more to come.
Message from the Principal, continued...

- **2018-2019 Programming Changes for 6th Grade** *(for more information go to the 6th Grade Transition FAQs)*

  We are also making some changes to our 6th grade programming for 2018-2019. Sixth graders will have one English/Language Arts class starting next year, and they will be receiving more literacy instruction embedded into their core classes. This is a shift from previous practice where students had both a reading and a writing class. A couple factors led to this decision. First, instruction that embeds skill acquisition into content areas is a more effective and research-based practice at this stage in student learning, as it teaches students how to transfer their literacy skills into all areas of their learning. Second, this gives students more opportunity to explore their interests through electives, which can be more motivating for all students. For the first time since Bell has had 6th grade, most 6th graders will have two periods of electives, as opposed to one period. During one of those periods, they will be taking four pre-determined 9-week elective classes throughout the year. At least one of those classes will have a STEM focus, and therefore, ALL students will be receiving exposure to iSTEM programming. Because of this, we will not have an application for iSTEM in 6th grade. There will, however, still be a competitive application process for iSTEM for 7th grade, similar to past practice.

Information for the Good of the Whole

- **Changing Weather – Keep Your Students Warm and Safe** – Please ensure that your students are appropriately dressed for the weather conditions. As a parent of two teenagers, I know that this is easier said than done because, clearly, we adults don’t know what we’re talking about. Nevertheless, please know that students will be going outside for lunch recess as long as the temperature is 20 degrees or above and the conditions are otherwise safe. So, layers are recommended (including hats, gloves, and coats). That is also true for our morning routine before school starts. If you are in need of warm winter clothes, we can help! You can simply call the office and ask for Mr. Olsen for help.

- **Attendance Procedures** - As we enter this very busy time of year, that also includes flu season, I want to remind parents of our attendance policies. If your child is absent from school, please make sure to call the attendance line (303-982-4340). We ask that you keep your children home if they are sick, particularly if they have a fever, are vomiting, and/or have diarrhea, so as to prevent the spread of illness. Additionally, if you are planning in advance to take your child out of school for any reason, please fill out a “Pre-Arranged Absence Form” and turn it into Mrs. Hays at least three days prior to the absence. While we clearly understand that students sometimes miss school for a variety of reasons, please remember that it is very important to your student’s success that they have good attendance at school. Unfortunately, frequent absences can have a negative effect on students’ progress and can result in further actions taken by the District truancy office.

- **In Cases of an Emergency after School Hours** – If there is ever an emergency that requires you to contact school personnel after school hours, please contact District security at 303-982-2445. Again, this is only if it’s an emergency that cannot wait until the next business day (for example: a child is missing, a family tragedy that needs some immediate attention from school personnel, etc.). Security will then be able to contact school administration and the necessary District leadership.

  As always, remember to regularly check the Bell Website and Calendar to stay current, as that has the most updated information on it. Finally, I want to thank the entire community – parents, students, staff, and community partners – for welcoming me and supporting me in my first few months at Bell. I genuinely cannot think of another community I would rather be in.

Truly,

Michele DeAndrea Austin, M.A.
Principal
Bell Middle School
Enrollment for 2018-2019

- **1st Round Choice Enrollment – OPENS in January** – The first round of choice enrollment goes from January 8 – 31, 2018. This is a District controlled timeline and it is the same for all schools across the District. Choice enrollment forms can be found here. If you are already choice enrolled at Bell, you do not have to resubmit the choice enrollment paperwork to return to Bell next year. However, any time you are changing levels (going into high school, for example), you DO have to reapply for choice enrollment at the new school, even if you’re choiced into the school’s feeder school. Selection for enrollment through the choice process is done by a lottery, and notification will be sent out by mid-February. A student’s best chance for getting accepted into Bell as a choice enrolled student is through the first-round choice enrollment process. So, again, if you know of any families who want to join our Bell community, but who do not live in our articulation area, please pass the information along. Thanks!

- **Registration** – Students currently at Bell will begin registering for next year’s classes in late January/early February. Counselors will visit classrooms to work with students on this process.

Family & School Partnership

- This is a friendly reminder to take a few minutes to take the Family & School Partnership survey. This survey will provide us with important information to help us make better and more informed decisions about the future of Bell. The survey closes on December 20. **To access the survey:** Go to this link: www.tinyurl.com/JeffcoFamilySurvey2017, scroll down, and click on the applicable level (middle school) which will open up a link to all schools. Then, please click on Bell Middle School and the survey will appear. **If the link below does not work, highlight the link using your cursor. Then copy and paste the link into your browser address window and hit the “Enter” or “Return” key on your keyboard.** Thanks!

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**Student Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures**

- Our students’ and staff’s safety is of the utmost importance at Bell. For this reason, it is *imperative* that parents and other friends or family members who are dropping-off or picking-up students are following the parking lot expectations. Following the expectations also leads to a more efficient process, which helps get everyone through the line more efficiently and quickly. There are four simple, but vital expectations:
  1. Please do NOT stop in the painted crosswalks to drop your student off.
  2. Please form ONLY TWO LANES. The right lane (adjacent to the sidewalk) is used for stopping and dropping students off; the left lane is as a drive-through.
  3. Please **PULL all the way FORWARD** until you are directly behind another car along the drop-off sidewalk. This may mean you’re dropping your student off on the west side of the parking lot.
  4. Please DO NOT park on the left (outside) lane to drop-students off. This is *dangerous* and *inefficient*. This should be a non-stop lane in order to allow cars to drive-through the lot once their students’ have been dropped-off.

Thank you!

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**Vocal Music News**

Don't miss our upcoming performances in December:

* December 14, 7:00 p.m. Musical Theater Cabaret Performance
* December 19, 6:30 p.m. Band, Orchestra, and Choir Holiday Concert

Our spring musical will be The Lion King Jr! If your student is interested in participating, have them contact Ms. Rowlison for more information.

Three Bell Middle School students were selected to participate in this year's Middle School All County Honor Choir! Congratulations to Shea Arnold, Frannie Eaton, and Liberty Kuhns. Come hear the best middle school voices from all over JeffCo at the Honor Choir concert on January 12th at 7:00 p.m. at West Bowles Community Church.

Elizabeth-Ann Rowlison  
Vocal Music Teacher  
Bell Middle School  
303-982-4307
Counseling Newsletter 2017-18

Counselors are available to students for personal/social, career and academic support. Students can request to see their grade level Counselor by filling out a quick form in the main office. Counselors are also available for parent/guardian consultation. Appointments can be made by contacting your student’s Counselor.

Upcoming Events:

- Introducing a Food Services Experience for Spring semester: We are excited to introduce a new elective opportunity for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students in the Spring Semester. In this elective, youth will learn the safety and sanitation procedures incorporated with the kitchen and be introduced to the business side of the food service industry. They will learn their way around the kitchen, instilling healthy eating habits and build strong independent children. If your student is interested, please contact Counselor, Lindsey Leigh at Lindsey.Leigh@jeffco.k12.co.us.
- Winter Break is just around the corner! We hope everyone has a wonderful Winter Break and holiday season.

Helpful Tip of the Month:

Not only will the school reap the benefits of your involvement — you will, too. By interacting with teachers, administrators, and other parents on a regular basis, you'll gain a firsthand understanding of your child's daily activities. You'll also tap into trends and fads of school life that can help you communicate with your kids as they grow and change (all without intruding on their privacy or personal space).

Even if you haven't been involved in the past, it's never too late to start. In fact, it may be more important than ever to get involved when kids reach secondary school.

Erin Ballweg
6th Grade Counselor
Bell Middle School
303-982-1396

LanSchool

Bell has purchased a new tool for classroom management called LanSchool. This will allow teachers to monitor students at a glance, help with communication, and remove distractions. If you want to learn more information you can see the official website here.

The reason Bell is mentioning this is that because of the way we have to deploy this tool to the school’s Chromebooks. This will cause students to see a LanSchool icon with their School Google Login. We just want to be clear that while this icon will show up we can only monitor devices owned by the school and only when the student is at the school. This means we will not be able to monitor personal devices anywhere, school devices at home, or anything from a personal network.
PTA Meeting Dates Change

PTA Meeting Dates Change-
The January 9 PTA meeting has been
cancelled. The next PTA meeting will be on February 6, 2018.

BAT Meeting Dates Change

BAT Meeting Dates Change –
The January 9 BAT meeting has been moved to January 30, 2018.
Additionally, the February 6 BAT meeting has been cancelled.

You Will Be Missed Mr. Parelman

8th Grade English teacher, Ken Parelman, has resigned his position at Bell Middle School to pursue a new career path. Ken was at Bell for 11 years, both as a special education teacher and an English teacher. Kelci Spence has been filling-in for Mr. Parelman these past few months, and we are happy to announce that she has agreed to continue at Bell until the end of the school year. While we are happy for Ken who is pursuing his passions, he will be sorely missed. We all wish him the best of luck.
Girls in STEM

The Girls in STEM meet every Thursday in the iSTEM workshop from 2:20-3:10. Our next project is our “Make the World a Better Place” competition in partnership with the Golden Library and the School of Mines. In this project, the young ladies may work in groups of up to four students to select a problem in our world to solve. The contestants will present to library and School of Mines judges and the winners will attend the International Day of Women Luncheon. Additionally, our girls taught “Robotics” at the Golden Public Library on November 13th. Our next Golden Library topic will be on “Flight and Motion” on December 11th.
Computer Applications Projects

In computer applications, students completed their City of the World PowerPoint Presentations and orally presented their intricate PowerPoints to their classmates. Students next used the Pivot Stickfigure Animator. Students used their imaginations to invent a storyline to create an animation based on a story they wrote. Paint backgrounds were added to the animation. Students then imported the Pivot project into Movie Maker so they could add sounds, narration, and music. The class then previewed these exciting videos and peer graded them.

Students have “invested” in five of their favorite stocks to learn about the Stock Market. We check the stocks weekly and record the results in an Excel spreadsheet. Most student stocks showed a gain the last few weeks. I encourage each parent/guardian to have a discussion with their child about how finances work. Students have studied the stock market for the last three months and now have some actual history to go by. Students wrote excellent reflections in schoology describing their thoughts and emotions of owning stock.
Computer Science Projects

Computer Science students built their “dream home” using the Google SketchUp application. This 3-dimensional program allows students the creativity to design their home of the future and consider the many elements that go into architecture. This project encourages students to properly design a home’s interior and exterior design.

These students also built 3-D Frogger games using block coding. Piskel Sprite Maker was used to make characters for their video games.

Projects Completed by Both Classes

Students in both classes have started game coding using the Tynker, Hour of Code, Touch Development, and Scratch programs. Students are writing stories that they will use to create games in the future. There is much logic, reasoning, and innovation used in building these stories, animations and games.

The Schoology application has been used almost everyday by both classes. Schoology is used to present and discuss topics using videos and discussion threads. Students write paragraphs pertaining to the projects they are creating. These paragraphs meet the writing conventions of the Bell Middle School Writing Rubric.

Keyboarding Wall of Fame Pictures
Congratulations to Bell’s First Lego League. Kyle Gathers, Noah Slowey, Haidu Sharaid, & Kai Hampleman competed at Regis Jesuit against 50 other schools. Students completed “missions” on the First Lego League board and presented a PBL research project focusing on the topic “Water and our community” Congrats!!

Congratulations to Omar Sanchez and Elias Holunga for winning our second annual “Sumo Bot” War in period one. Other winners included Luca Crossett & Emily Enos period four - Mateo DelReal and Drew Davis period six. Students will wrap up the semester coding Python using “CodeCombat”

Multimedia-
Students are finishing their page in this year's yearbook and creating a stop motion using Paint 3D.
The Giving Tree

Join us in spreading a little cheer this holiday season. The Bell MS invites you to join us and pick a student request from our Giving Tree in the main office. The staff has selected students they deem as appropriate recipients. Items requested may include basic needs such as food and clothing, or community based activities. Student names will be confidential.

The Giving Tree is up and in the front office so if you’re interested in giving back this holiday season stop in the front office and take a tag or a few. Our students will be grateful to received something on Christmas. We ask that you have your items purchased, wrapped, tagged and delivered back to Bell by the close of business on Wednesday, December 13th.

Spanish 1

December is upon us and students are learning how to describe friends, family and themselves. We are also learning the map of Central and South America as we sing capital and country songs to commit the geography to memory. It is a fun month! December also brings learning of culture around the Hispanic World as we learn about traditions for Navidad. As we return from break, we will learn about el carnaval, create our mascaras, and learn how to communicate about school and our classes.

Spanish 2

December is an exciting month in Spanish 2 as we learn the cultural traditions of Navidad. We learn some of the traditional caroling songs, and write letters to the 3 kings when we return in January. We also learn about the Spanish tradition of 12 uvas for the New Year and create our mascaras for carnival. January we begin the study of clothing and how to communicate about clothes and shopping.
**News from the Visual Arts Department**

FIRST OF ALL.....CONGRATULATIONS to Meghan McDonough. Meghan entered the Lions International Peace Poster Contest and won first place in our district. THEN.....when her poster went to state she won FIRST PLACE! Meghan’s talent, persistence and hard work is taking her places!

**3D Printed Vases are being designed by all Visual Arts 2 and Intro to Visual Arts!**

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**Fused glass made by all Visual Arts Students**