

Greetings,

Summer. A time for rest, for rejuvenation, an opportunity to reconnect, and also a time for endless house guests, Hannah Montana re-run marathons, and daily football practice in the August heat. I would like to be the first to congratulate you on surviving the summer vacation. As you have negotiated the last couple weeks braving the back to school sales in search of the perfect backpack or embracing the packed isles of Target and Office Depot to track down new supplies, we at Mesa Verde have also been busy preparing for the arrival of the new school year.

As a principal I looked forward to the return of the energy glaringly absent from MVMS while students and faculty were away. But that energy on our campus rapidly began to build as the faculty and staff returned, preparing our campus for the new year. Three people who have been incredibly busy preparing for this fall are our two counselors Ms. Stephanie Martel (returning as our 7th and 8th grade counselor) and Ms. Barbara Tomeo (returning as our 6th grade counselor), as well as a new face on campus, our Assistant Principal, Mrs. Vickie Bakki. While she is new to Mesa Verde, Mrs. Bakki comes to us with experience in the classroom as an elementary teacher from Canyon View and as a middle school teacher from Bernardo Heights, where she joined the administrative team four years ago. We are very excited to have her join us at Mesa Verde this year. If you have not already done so, I hope you get a chance to meet her on campus in the near future.

Another group of people working diligently to make this a great year is the parent volunteers from our PTSA and Foundation who helped fearlessly with registration. I want to thank them for their hard work in helping make registration a smooth and successful process. I am continually amazed at the MVMS community. In addition to strong students, faculty and staff, Mesa Verde is lucky to have such overwhelming parent support. This definitely gives all of us an advantage, especially as we face the restraints of the California educational budget. And so, here's the shameless plug, if you have not had an opportunity to get involved with the PTSA or the Foundation, it's not too late! Keep a look out for more information on both of these parent groups.

With the faculty and staff back in full swing, we have been busy coordinating some events to make the transition into the 2009-2010 year a smooth one. I would like to share some of those events with you to help you prepare for the year:

Textbook checkout: August 20th, 21st, 24th and 25th. Please expect heavy backpacks on those days.

Wednesday Late Start: In efforts to align our schedules with Westview High School, we have changed our late start day from Tuesday to Wednesday. On these days, classes begin at 9:20 AM allowing our faculty one hour a week for professional time and development.

Principal's Chat: Last year I began this program to create an additional avenue to connect with our parents. During these monthly chats we discuss aspects of student life, and provide an opportunity to ask and answer questions. The program was very popular and we had many great discussions across the year. I will continue to host these on the last Friday of every month beginning at 8:30 AM. Our first Principal's Chat will be held August 28th.

Labor Day: Monday, September 7th is a PUSD holiday. No school. (Many of us may remember a time when we used to start school every year after Labor Day?)

Back to School Night: This annual event will be on September 9th. The evening will begin with a short PTSA Meeting at 6:00 PM. From 6:30-8:00 you will have an opportunity to visit your student's

classrooms and get a general overview of your student's day. Teachers will review the curriculum for the year and how best to handle the communication process for their class. Please watch for further information regarding Back to School Night.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: To give you an opportunity to discuss your student's individual progress, we have scheduled our conferences during the weeks of October 26th and November 2nd. You will be receiving more information about conferences from your student's teachers. On Tuesdays and Thursdays during those two weeks (Oct 27th, Oct 29th, Nov 3rd, and Nov 5th) we will have school "minimum days" meaning school will end early at 12:07 PM on those days. These minimum days will not be reflected on the PUSD school year calendar.

Additional Minimum Days: We have scheduled two additional minimum days throughout the year that are also not posted on the PUSD calendar. Those dates are December 18th and June 8th.

And finally, a few bits of housekeeping for a safe year ahead. First, a reminder that under the California Penal Code all students riding skateboards or bicycles must be wearing helmets. We speak with many students arriving on campus with their helmets stuffed in backpacks or hanging on their bicycle handlebars. Please remind your students that this is a point of safety, and not one of vanity.

Second, as many of you may have experienced, our streets tend to get congested around 3:15 PM every school day. This past year I have discovered the secret to avoiding the traffic snarls associated with the mad rush. It's actually very simple. When picking up your student, please consider doing so at 3:30 instead of 3:15. We have 9 school buses that depart at 3:25 everyday. Once those busses leave, our streets are virtually deserted. Reducing the 3:15 congestion, whenever possible will make the pick up process safer and less stressful for all. Meanwhile, your students can wait safely in the library, in the Student Center, touch base with a teacher on an assignment, or enjoy the sun on the front lawn.

My hope is that all this information is useful to you as you begin the new year. However, if you have further questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to spending time with all of you and your students. If we have not already had a chance to meet, please feel free to stop in any time.

Sincerely,

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