



September Newsletter

A Note from the Principal

Dear SMS Families,

Welcome back for another wonderful year at Sisters Middle School! We are excited about this new school year! We hope that you've had an amazing summer and are ready to embrace new learning, new friendships and new experiences.

As you plan for the upcoming year, please note the new school hours for middle school are 8:30 AM – 3:15 PM. The earliest any child can be dropped off at the school is 7:40 AM and those coming at 7:40 AM must first complete an early-drop off contract. It is very important that your child arrives to school on time every day. Attendance is key to taking advantage of all the resources and tools our teachers have to offer, and to help your child be successful. There are several holidays built into our calendar, so please try to plan your vacations in conjunction with the school's holidays so that your child does not miss any important instruction.

Your child is important to us. Our faculty and staff have some wonderful activities and units planned for your children. There will be times when the teachers and teams may need some support from our parents and community. We thank you in advance for your help to ensure a happy and holistic education for your child(ren). We welcome all parent volunteers as well as ideas and input. Please plan on collaborating with our awesome organization at our monthly principal coffee or join the Parent Collaboration Team!

We are looking forward to a successful year at Sisters Middle School, and I hope you are too! Thank you for your support as we embark on the 2019-2020 at SMS.

Your partners in education and community enhancement,

Ms. Baglien, SMS Principal Mr. Roth, SMS Assistant Principal

New Compliments and Offerings to SMS Education

- AVID Expansion (Advancement Via Individual Determination): “AVID’s mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college readiness and success in a global society.” We are now offering the AVID elective in grades 6-8 and the programs practices and strategies will be utilized in all classrooms. More information can be found at avid.org

SISTERS MIDDLE SCHOOL

A Typical AVID Week

Monday	AVID Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Binder Checks/Organization ● Focused Note-Taking ● AVID Strategies ● Skills Work ● Group Projects
Tuesday	Tutorial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tutorial Request Forms (TRF) ● Small Group Collab ● Tutor Groups
Wednesday	AVID Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focused Note-Taking ● AVID Strategies ● Skills Work ● Group Projects
Thursday	Tutorials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Binder Checks/Organization ● TRF ● Small Group Collab ● Tutor Groups
Friday	Team Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Note Checks ● Guest Speaker ● Field Trips

- Homeroom: This year we have created a homeroom period to teach our students the skills they need to plan and prepare for their week while learning the soft-skills needed for school and beyond and celebrating successes. Our weekly structure is as follows: Monday-Outlaw News & Community Building Tuesday-Planning & Preparation (Planner Checks) Thursday-Study Hall/Teacher Pass Friday-SEL & Celebrations.

- STE²AM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Art & Math): We have hired a STE²AM teacher to build upon our previous tech course. This STE²AM expansion will start small and build over the coming years offering our students real-life connections and cross-curricular integration.
- Problem Solving University (PSU): Mr. Roth and myself have had the assistance of several teachers in the building, especially Mrs. Aylor and Mrs. Patton, in creating a ‘buffer’ to unresolved student challenges. Middle school can be a time where students are on an emotional roller coaster, the PSU space is there to allow students time to calm down, think, and problem solve with adult support and hopefully spend more time in class learning. Teachers may request support for a student or students can advocate for themselves and ask to utilize this resource room. The goal of PSU is to help students develop self management, self awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Problem Solving University was created in an effort to help identify the lagging or lacking skills and pinpoint the situations in which the student is most likely to have these difficulties, because **students do well if they can**. Majority of unexpected or undesired behaviors result from a task not aligning with a students learned skill set.

Welcome New Outlaw Faculty & Staff!

Our faculty and staff were sad to see a few staff retire and a couple of staff members take new positions, but we celebrate and honor those that were here while welcoming with great excitement new members to our team!

Tim Roth, Assistant Principal of Student Success MS/HS

My name is Tim Roth and I have worked for the past 2.5 years for the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) as a Lead Science/Math Teacher, Middle School XC coach, and Chemical Hygiene Officer in Bavaria, Germany. I grew up in Central Oregon and attended Bend Senior High School. I went on to Willamette University in Salem, Oregon earning a B.S. in Biology. I met my current wife Laura while on the swim team at Willamette. Immediately following my undergraduate degree I moved to Portland, Oregon where I coached swimming at La Salle High School and Oregon City Swim Club for 4 years. I had such a good time working with kids I went back to graduate school at the University of Portland where I earned my Master’s Degree in Teaching in 1999. I was hired where I student taught at Milwaukie High School in the Chemistry and Biology department. I have served as teacher in Oregon for 13 years, Athletic Director for 5 years (at Sisters High School), and Vice Principal for 1 year. I earned my Administrators Certificate through Concordia University in 2016.

I am married to my wife, Laura (Juckeland) Roth, whom I met while attending Willamette University as an undergraduate. We have two children Hayden (14), and

Mae (12). My family loves the outdoors and for the past two years we have been heading into Austrian Alps and the beaches of Europe every chance we had. We love to travel but every time I leave my home state of Oregon I realize how special it is. I think Oregon is the most beautiful and special place in the world.

My primary objectives as the new Student Success Coordinator include working to foster a sense of encouragement and belonging for every student in Sisters, developing proactive and positive approaches to student behavior, working to decrease district absenteeism rates, and helping to provide positive transition pathways from middle to high school. I am truly excited to come home to Sisters and be part of this educational team.

Erika Velikonja, Instructional Coach ES/MS

Hello! My name is Erika Velikonja and I am blessed to begin this journey as Sister Middle and Elementary Schools' instructional coach.

I was born, raised and then taught in a small rural town called Paradise, CA. My amazing husband (also a teacher), three beautiful girls and I recently moved to Redmond. We are so blessed to call Central Oregon our home. Sisters had always been a favorite of ours and we always made a point to visit when we were here. I would hear from people about how amazing the Sisters School District is, and I am so excited to be a part of the Sisters District team. Previously, I have experience teaching K, 1, 5 and 6 grades. There are so many things about teaching each of these grades that I enjoy, but the most important to me is helping the kids to LOVE school through exciting and meaningful instruction. Throughout the years, I have worked on various instructional leadership teams creating Next Generation Science Standards aligned units and literacy woven content. I believe that relationships should be at the heart of all teaching and this led me on a journey to equip myself with culturally responsive strategies and trauma informed practices. More recently, I received a microcredential in mentoring from Orange County Office of Education and participated in California Office of Education's Rural District Leadership grant program. I have a passion for coming alongside teachers and staff to encourage and inspire them through best practices. I love digging into curriculum, using all things Google, creating exciting and engaging learning units and getting kids fired up about reading. When I'm not doing something teaching related you can find me hiking, on a paddleboard or reading a good book.

So what is an instructional coach? Well, the best athletes in the world have coaches. A person that challenges, models, encourages, listens, and empowers another to be the best they can be. Instructional Coaches work one-on-one and in small groups to provide guidance, training and resources to teachers and staff. Together we reflect upon and implement proven, effective practices so that students are receiving the best instruction possible. My hope is also to support and encourage teachers as they navigate curriculum, support systems and planning. I am by no means an expert, but I am a lifelong learner. Sisters School District has a strong reputation for academic excellence and I am looking forward to serving your youth and your teachers. I want to thank you

for the warm welcoming your community has shown. Here's to a rewarding 2019-2020 school year!

Angela Fricilone, District School Psychologist

Angela was raised in the woods of interior Alaska and grew up hiking, backpacking, and exploring her beautiful state with her four younger siblings. In addition to traipsing around in the woods, Angela played violin and toured around the world, to places as far as Germany and Greece with her Fairbanks-based orchestra. She has always loved working with children and families and her contagious passion for learning and education has led to many adventures. Angela has been working in the field of education for nearly a decade in diverse arenas that include: teaching English in South Korea, tutoring in after-school programs in Washington D.C., teaching at a trauma-informed school for children in residential psychiatric treatment, and interning as a school psychologist in the Portland Public Schools. After completing her Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) degree in School Psychology from the Lewis and Clark Graduate School for Education and Counseling this past June, Angela was overjoyed to be welcomed into the Outlaw Family of Sisters School District. Angela will be working with students, teachers, and families at all three schools in the district and looks forward to using her repertoire of skills to meet the diverse needs of students in special education as well as supporting students with mental health and behavioral challenges. Angela cannot wait to join this community of learners, educators, and families and is excited to meet everyone this fall!

Dawna Spencer, District English Language Development (ELD) & 6th Spanish

Greetings! My name is Dawna Spencer, and I am very excited to join Sisters School District. I look forward to supporting K-12 English language learners and teaching 6th grade Spanish. I have a passion for learning, a whole child approach to education, and a belief that fostering relationships with students, families, and school teams is foundational to success. I have extensive K-12 teaching experience spanning fourteen years. This experience includes supporting English language learners, teaching Spanish at secondary levels, and facilitating the development and progress of ELL programs.

I am a native of our beautiful state of Oregon and have lived in Redmond for the last several years to be close to my amazing family and friends. I enjoy the arts in any medium, am quite active, and love doing anything outdoors from kayaking to snowshoeing. My dog Bella, a retired classroom therapy dog, often comes with me on many adventures!

Thank you so much for the opportunity to work in your wonderful community! I eagerly await meeting students, families, and staff in the coming weeks.

Jeff Husmann, 6th/7th Language Arts

Jeff Husmann comes to Sisters Middle School with a long history of working with middle school students. After earning degrees from his home state of Iowa, he began his teaching career in Northwest Wisconsin before moving to New Hampshire where he taught for 16 years. Most recently, he spent the last year teaching at a therapeutic boarding school in Yaak, Montana before finding his “dream job” at Sisters Middle School. In addition to teaching English, Mr. Husmann has also coached a variety of sports including soccer and Nordic skiing. Mr. Husmann has always found excitement in exploring the woods, mountains, and lakes and this need to explore is certainly a big reason why he has moved to Central Oregon. When he is not working with kids, he enjoys cycling, camping, canoeing, and writing poetry.

Laura Roth, Special Education Paraprofessional

My name is Laura Roth and I will be working as a Para this year at SMS. I grew up in Portland, Oregon and went to college at Willamette University. I was a competitive swimmer for about 25 year and I met my husband Tim Roth on the swim team at Willamette. We have two children, Hayden (14) and Mae (12).

After graduation, I went to University of Portland and earned a Masters in Teaching. I have worked in the North Clackamas School District as a 5th grade teacher, in the Astoria School District as a Parenting teacher and in Sisters School District as a 3rd grade and 7th grade Reading/Language Arts teacher. All together I have spent about 13 years in education.

I've always had a love for travel and have lived in England and Costa Rica in the past. In 2017 Tim was hired by the Department of Defense to teach Chemistry and AP Chemistry on a NATO training base in Hohenfels, Germany in Bavaria. My family lived in Germany for the last 2 ½ years and we traveled to about 14 countries during our time in Europe. It was an amazing experience that we will always cherish and remember. We are excited to be back in Sisters and look forward to an awesome school year!

Jeff Schiedler, STE²AM & Math

Jeff Schiedler is extremely excited to join the SMS Team! He comes here with his wife and three kids from Redmond, and their oldest son will be starting Kindergarten this fall. Jeff has been teaching many levels of math at Redmond High School the last 5 years, and he is thrilled to bring his passion to the STE²AM classes at SMS. During his off time, Jeff and his family love to go on hikes, bike rides, and almost anything outdoors. They feel so blessed to be joining such an amazing community.

Lauren DelMar, District Speech Pathologist

My name is Lauren Del Mar and I am the new speech language pathologist (SLP) for Sisters School District. SLPs in schools help students with speech and language difficulties communicate. One of our jobs is to help teachers and parents support kids too! I have worked with children and adults of all ages, most recently in Redmond with

kids aged birth-5. I was drawn to work in Sisters Schools because of the small town feel, close community and the chance to work with students from kindergarten to high school. For Sisters Middle School specifically I plan to continue one on one and small group therapy, and I hope to implement a peer model lunchtime group. Keep your eyes open for more info coming soon! Middle school is full of transitions and I am excited to help students navigate successfully into high school and beyond. SLPs love to talk, so please pop in or send an email anytime to say hi!

Jeff Larson, 6th/7th Social Studies

Jeff Larson is a resident of Sisters. He's been married for 26 years to Louise and they have three children: Seth (21), Skyler (18) and Shelby (16). The boys are in college while Shelby is a junior at Sisters High School.

Jeff began his teaching career in 1993 and stepped away from full-time teaching in 2007 when he was offered the opportunity to coach track and field at the collegiate level. After five years of late night recruiting and missed family moments, Jeff decided to stop coaching college athletes to spend more time with his kids. The family moved to Sisters where Jeff began a six and one-half year stint as a substitute teacher waiting for an opportunity to become a full-time teacher again.

Jeff is now beginning his 'second career' as a full-time teacher and is looking forward to the challenge. In the spring he serves as the head high school track and field coach but greatly enjoys working with middle school track athletes when the opportunity arises.

Elisabeth Halemeier, 6th Science & 7th/8th Health

I am so excited to be joining the Sisters Middle School team. I feel it is a deep honor to get to work with both students and families. I am grateful for the opportunity to get to know your child this upcoming year. I feel deeply that teachers, parents, and schools should work together to further a student's education.

This will be my 9th year teaching, I have taught at both the middle and high school levels. I am coming to Sisters from Eugene. I graduated with undergraduate degrees from the University of Oregon: Biology / Family & Human Services. I then taught for 2 years at a private school before pursuing my Masters of Arts in Teaching from Pacific University. Most recently, I taught within Eugene 4J School District, over the past 6 years.

I am a passionate individual who believes deeply that we all are learners and have the ability to learn and grow. I love science and the outdoors and love getting to share the excitement of studying our natural world with students. I want students to learn how to ask good questions, research and access, and identify valid information, and see themselves as lifelong learners.

Olivia Stewart, Lisa Dieringer & Sarah Griffin, Part-Time Paraprofessionals

We are pleased to welcome Olivia, Lisa and Sarah as part-time para-professionals. They will be bringing great experience for morning and lunch supervision and classroom support. Olivia just graduated from U of O and will be pursuing a further degree in education. Lisa spent many years making a difference in students' lives as a teacher prior to retiring in Sisters. And Sarah comes to us post-retirement as well after a successful career in criminal justice.

School Goals

- We are currently in the process of aligning our school goals to the mission-vision goals the district has written for the five year strategic plan.

Important Info

- Please ensure that you have reviewed our **updated** SMS Handbook with your student and that you return all forms going home today in a timely fashion.
- Newsletters: Newsletters will come out the first Monday of the month (other than September) via School Messenger in your email. September is the only newsletter that goes out hard copy.
- Please see the Sisters Middle School Calendar of Events (attached). Any changes will be communicated ASAP.
- Pictures: September 13th Open House: September 19th 5:30-7pm

Year Long Movie Series Hosted by Sisters Middle School

October 14th at 6pm: **LIKE** is an IndieFlix Original documentary and series that explores the impact of social media on our lives. The goal of the film is to show that social media is a tool and social platforms are a place to connect, share and care but is that what's really happening?

December 9th at 6pm: **Angst** is an IndieFlix Original, documentary designed to raise awareness around anxiety. The film includes interviews with kids, teens, educators, experts, parents and a very special interview with Michael Phelps.

February 3rd at 6pm: **Finding Kind** explores the ways girls treat each other, and how this treatment affects us all. Through a cross-country journey of discovery and education on the topic of girl bullying, filmmakers Lauren Paul and Molly Thompson begin conversations that bring this important issue out of the dark, and uncover the experiences shared by girls in schools and communities across the country.

April 13th at 6pm: **The Upstanders** explores cyber-bullying, bullying amongst friends, families, co-workers and the brain science behind it all. The film highlights new laws and programs already reducing bullying in schools and shows us how we can learn to make a difference together.