

February 2017

Spring Volume



## SPRINGING TOWARDS SUCCESS

Hello Thunderbird family,

Can you believe that we have already passed the halfway mark? As we move towards the end of the 2016-2017 school year, there is still a lot of work that has to be done. Pinellas Park Middle School still has many things going on. We want your student to be as successful as possible. Hopefully, this edition of the 'Counselors' Corner' will help you stay in the loop of what is going on at 'The Park'.

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### Preparing for the FSA

One of the most significant assessments that Pinellas County Students take is the Florida Standards Assessments (FSA), which has taken the place of the FCAT, Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test. This test is crucial to your student's educational career in that scores can help determine placement in core courses, are often seen as a reliable data predictor of success for District Application programs (i.e. Cambridge/Pre-AICE program), and give a snapshot of your student's achievement compared to students across Florida. FSA is often looked at as a reflection of a student's knowledge of statewide benchmarks for their grade level. Attending school, and doing homework can help students earn high grades. While these can also help students with their FSA scores, all students can improve test scores and grades just by using some test-preparation strategies. Remember, "Before anything else, preparation is the key to success" (Alexander Graham Bell). Here are some test prep strategies your student can use to prepare for the FSA.

- ◆ Create a study Plan— Create a study plan that spreads out your studying. Start early. A sample study plan could be to spend a certain amount of time everyday on FSA prep. A great resource is for students to sign up for a Khan Academy account on [khanacademy.org](http://khanacademy.org) and spend 10 minutes 2-3 times a week on this personalized learning resource to build skills that FSA targets
- ◆ Make Flash Cards and/or Review Sheets— Work with your teachers to obtain review information for the FSA. Turn the information on the review into simple flash cards. Practice +Repetition makes strength!
- ◆ The night before the tests, get eight hours of sleep.
- ◆ Get up early enough to eat a good breakfast and not be rushed. In Pinellas County, many restaurants, such as McDonalds offer students free breakfast the morning of the FSA! PPMS also always serves free, hot breakfast to all students everyday!
- ◆ Practice visualization— Close your eyes and imagine yourself taking the test, answering the questions correctly, and getting the grade you want.
- ◆ Relax, think positive thoughts, and do your best! Many students often feel anxious. Don't worry, take several slow, deep breaths and do some stretching. If you need more help prepping for the FSA or any test, please see your grade level counselor.
- ◆ (Strategies adopted from Woodburn Press, 2017)

### Special points of interest:

- Khan Academy: A personalized study and test prep website/resource for all grade levels (K-12). [KHANACADEMY.ORG](http://KHANACADEMY.ORG)
- Start early!
- Good Sleep + Good Breakfast!
- Relaxation strategies

## Course Recovery Options and Remediation Options

If your student is not making satisfactory progress in middle school, your grade level counselor can help! Unsatisfactory progress means earning 'below a C' (D or F) in a core subject such as Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and/or Science. If you are unsure of your student's progress, please schedule a conference with your student's teachers.

You may do this

through your School Counselor.

Many students are recovering failed courses through an online platform called Plato Course Recovery. If your student is enrolled in Plato, or you would like your student to be enrolled in Plato, see your School Counselor for their unique log in credentials. The program can be accessed from home for lesson completion. End of the lesson tests do

need to be completed on campus. Students can have time to do this through our ELP (Extended Learning Program) either before school or after school. ELP begins before school as early as 7:40 am and after school hours are from 4:15-5:45. If your student signs up for ELP, they will get free dinner immediately after the program as well as the support they need to earn the best grades possible. There is also an ELP bus with limited stops that can help your child get home.

Lastly, Pinellas Park Middle also offers summer programs, including remediation courses designed to supplement students in areas of advanced math, advanced science, regular science and reading. More information will come when available.



### *Some Important Dates at 'The Park'*

**Month of February:** Black History Month

**February 13-24th:** Counselors come in Social Studies Classes to help Students Pick their Electives for Next Year!

**February 28th:** FSA writing (all grades)

**March 24th @ 8:15AM:** Coffee With The Counselors Parent Workshop

**April 10-11:** 8th grade Reading FSA; **April 12-13:** 7th grade Reading FSA; **April 17-18:** 6th grade Reading FSA

**April 20-21:** 8th grade Math FSA; **April 24-25:** 7th grade Math FSA; **April 26-27:** 6th grade Math FSA

**May 2nd:** 8th grade science FCAT

**May 4-5:** Algebra and Geometry EOCs

**March 24th:**  
Coffee with  
the  
Counselors  
Parent  
Workshop by  
Invite Only.



## High School Registration Information

The time has come for your 8th grade student's to register for their high school courses. Ms. Sobo will be going into 8th grade History classes to help students map out their high school pathways. We will be working in a program called

Career Cruising. This program can help student design their high school course selections. The District Application Program window to accept a magnet program is now open. The window to accept closes February 15th. The late application

period begins March 22nd. Dixie Hollins High School will be here March 7th and 8th to register students. Pinellas Park High School will be coming on March 21st and Boca Ciega High School will be here on March 24th. If you have any questions about your 8th grade student's trip to high school, see Ms. Sobo.



#### Costs include:

- ◆ Complimentary Class of 2017 T-Shirt
- ◆ Transportation to and from Universal Studios
- ◆ Enjoy both Universal Studios and Islands of Adventure

**WHEN:** Friday, May 19, 2017

**WHO:** GRADUATING 8TH GRADERS!

**WHAT:** Grad Venture

Your middle school grads can celebrate with all their friends and experience the thrills of BOTH Universal Orlando™ theme parks. When your students attend Orlando's only two-park middle school graduation

celebration they'll enjoy multiple DJ's, plenty of street entertainment, and the most exciting rides and attractions around. It's an unbeatable night of thrills in a safe, supervised environment. Best of all, a voucher for dinner in the parks is included making for the utmost in fun and convenience!

Spaces are reserved for the first 200 students meeting the minimum requirements of good behavior

(no excessive referrals, in-school or out of school suspensions), good grades (no F's on report card), and good attendance (no excessive unexcused absences or excessive tardies to class).

*The cost of this field trip is \$100, which will cover the admission price, transportation costs, meal voucher, and a commemorative T-shirt.*



Cash, Checks, and Money Orders are accepted.

Minimum deposit of \$25 due by Friday, February 17

Second payment of \$25 due by Friday, March 17

Third payment of \$25 is due by March 31<sup>st</sup> Final payment of \$25 due by Friday, April 17

## Teacher Spotlight: Mrs. Stang-6th Grade Math!

For this edition, The PPMS Counseling Department would like to spotlight Mrs. Stang, 6th grade Math Teacher. Besides being a wonderful resource and support for our students, Mrs. Stang was recently recognized by the Florida Department of Education as a "high impact teacher". Here's a little bit more about Mrs. Stang. Thank you for all that you do Mrs. Stang!

#### **Favorite Hobby:**

Reading, knitting, crocheting, walking, writing cards

#### **Favorite Songs:**

"Wonderful World" by Lou Armstrong

"I just called to say, I love you" by Steve Wonder

Somewhere Over the Rainbow" by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole

"How Great Thou Art"

#### **Favorite Math Concept to teach:**

Statistics and Number Sense

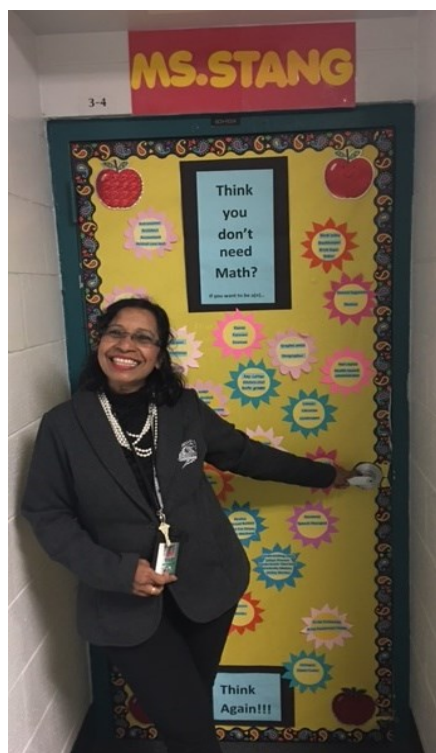
#### **A tip for all students' parents:**

Support your child by being actively involved in their education and advocate for them when necessary. Support the teachers and acknowledge their effort positively.

#### **A fun fact about me:**

Love to sing, have participated in half marathon, love children, love to laugh, passionate about my job, have done mission trips for over 20 years, speak few dialects, taking care of 37 children from afar, and faithful and a loyal friend...

**"Support your child by being actively involved in their education and advocate for them"**



## Pinellas Park Middle School Counselors' Newsletter

Pinellas Park Middle School  
6940 70th Avenue North  
Pinellas Park, FL, 33781

Phone: 727-545-6400  
Fax: 727-547-7894



*The mission of the Pinellas Park Middle School Counseling Department is to assist the administrative team and instructional staff with the goal of helping students at our school achieve maximum potential within the academic disciplines, while providing a world-class education to students and ensuring that they have social interactions and college and career ready mindsets that have relevance to the real world.*



We're on the Web!

<http://www.pcsb.org//site/Default.aspx?PageID=14528>

### Mr. Fletcher

6th Grade School Counselor

[fletcherjo@pcsb.org](mailto:fletcherjo@pcsb.org)

727-545-6400 ext 2013



### Mrs. Norton

7th Grade School Counselor

College Reach-Out Program Specialist-  
[nortons@pcsb.org](mailto:nortons@pcsb.org)

727-545-6400 ext 2017



### Ms. Sobo

8th Grade School Counselor

Take Stock In Children School  
Ambassador

[soboa@pcsb.org](mailto:soboa@pcsb.org)


727-545-6400 ext 2023



## *Pinellas Park Thunderbirds are Committed to Character!!!!*



Commitment to Character, the Pinellas County Schools district model for character development, utilizes a common language, teachable moments, literature, service learning, and modeling to teach character in all curriculum areas. Each month, our school will recognize one character trait.




February

## Tolerance

Respecting the individual differences, views, and beliefs of other people.

Safe & Drug Free Schools  
Pinellas County Schools, Florida  
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March

## Honesty

Using truthful speech and behavior.

Safe & Drug Free Schools  
Pinellas County Schools, Florida  
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April

## Self-Control

Managing your emotions and choosing acceptable behavior.

Safe & Drug Free Schools  
Pinellas County Schools, Florida  
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