



Macaw Messages

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Mrs. Kyley Ybarra, Principal
Mrs. Kathryn Grimble, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Sheila Valcarcel, Counselor
Mrs. Keri O'Neil, Counselor

A Message from the Principal

The entire FAMMS staff joins me in extending you a Happy 2012! Our hope is that 2012 will be filled with a deep appreciation for just how wonderful life is. Our hope is that you and your family had time to remember and share goodwill, joy and happiness with others. We hope that during 2012 you are able to:

Celebrate Life... Think freely... Practice patience... Smile often... Make new friends... Rediscover old ones... Tell those we love that we do... Feel deeply... Forget troubles... Forgive an enemy... Grow... Count our blessings... Observe

miracles... Take time for people... Reach out... Let someone in... Trust life... Comfort a friend... Laugh heartily... Cry when we need to... Make time for ourselves... Enjoy wonder... Have good ideas... Make some mistakes... Learn from them... **CELEBRATE EACH SPECIAL MOMENT!**

We would like to congratulate Mrs. Tafoya, principal's secretary. She was selected as FAMMS Classified Employee of the Year. We appreciate all of Mrs. Tafoya's hard work and dedication to our school.

As January swiftly passes by, we have several upcoming events highlighted throughout the newsletter. We look forward to seeing you at our various activities this month.

Mrs. Ybarra

Mrs. Kyley Ybarra,
Principal



Patricia Tafoya
Principal's Secretary
Classified Employee of the Year



Saturday for Success

This year, Frank Augustus Miller Middle School will be offering an innovative program called “*Saturdays for Success*.” This program is designed to give students the opportunity to make up critical time at school that was missed

because of an unexcused absence, truancy or illness. “*Saturdays for Success*” is not punitive in nature but rewards students and parents for taking the initiative to participate. When students attend the program, an unexcused

absence, truancy, or illness is removed from the student’s attendance record. Eligible students will bring home an invitation that will need to be returned in advance of the “*Saturday for Success*” that they plan to attend.

King High School Counselors will be registering 8th graders through history classes on March 12th. Registration for Arlington High School will be done on April 12th.



Counselors’ Comments

Career Cruising

Over the past few weeks, students have been introduced to a new system called Career Cruising. Students met with the counselors through their history class and learned how to navigate the program, complete interest inventories, and learn more about careers that might suit them later in life. This program will be used throughout middle school and high school to help students track which classes they have taken and need to take to reach their college and career goals.

Upcoming Registration

Parents of 8th grade students, this is an important time for your 8th grader. There are

many events upcoming that will prepare them for High School. Counselors from King High School will be present on March 12th in our History Classes to discuss and review course registration for high school and parent night at King is on March 13th. Counselors from Arlington High School will be here to go through the same process on April 12th and parent night at AHS is on March 20th.

Our current 7th graders will be registered following this year’s Spring break. Incoming 7th graders currently attending our elementary feeder schools, Mark Twain, Woodcrest, Lake Matthews and Harrison Elementary will be registered this Spring as

well. Student Progress

As we enter our midyear months, we want to be certain to encourage students to perform at their very best. If your student is struggling and you have already been in contact with his or her teacher, please feel free to contact either Mrs. Valcarcel, or Mrs. O’Neil to schedule a parent /teacher conference with all of your students teachers. Don’t forget that you can monitor student progress via Aeries Parent Portal and Haiku as well. They may be accessed thru our [school website](#).



A Message from the Assistant Principal

We all want our children to have good values and strong character. However, good character doesn't just happen. Each of us has a part in laying a solid foundation for character development by teaching children right from wrong and acting as positive role models.

What is character, anyway? At Miller we want our students to exemplify the characteristics of a global-minded learner and we encourage our students to become risk-takers, caring, principled, inquirers, open-minded, thinkers, reflective, and balanced. We believe that character is not hereditary, but rather is learned from examples set by parents, teachers, youth leaders, and others in the community.

Each month is dedicated to a different characteristic, or "Pillar" as we call them. In each class,

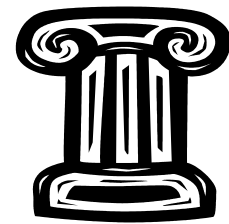
teachers review the characteristics for the month and create activities that engage students in reflective thinking about that characteristic. In doing so, teachers are able to show students ways in which others embody the pillar of the month as well as ways that students can strive to embody that characteristic in themselves.

This month's Miller Pillar is Inquirers. Inquirers develop natural curiosity and acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research to further their own learning. They actively enjoy learning and this joy will be sustained throughout their lives.

So this month, encourage your student to research or seek out a solution for a problem that he or she is facing. Whether it be a more

efficient way to complete homework, a faster route to class to avoid being tardy, or even how to improve their grade in a class that they struggle with, they will be practicing their skills as an inquirer and finding out firsthand how satisfying learning can be.

Miller is a great school that is developing great traditions and great students! I am certain that at the end of 8th grade, each student will leave here with a deeper understanding of and affection for learning as a direct result of the amazing teachers and staff members on campus.



Inquirers

"It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities."

— J. K. Rowling

School Spirit Days

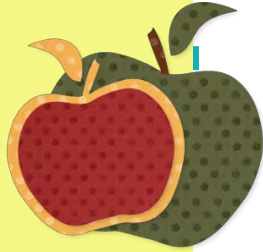


MACAWS

Don't forget that every Tuesday is a Spirit Day at Frank Augustus Miller Middle School. With our focus on exposing ALL students to College and their academic life/plans

after High School. We have made Tuesday a day where the students can either wear their favorite College Team/University Wear OR our school colors of turquoise and

yellow. We will soon start having classroom contests to support the Spirit at Frank Augustus Miller!



Parent Involvement

PTSA Meetings:

Executive Board
Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 2:00 p.m. in the Library.

February 14th
March 13th
April 10th
May 8th

School Site Council Meetings:

SSC Meetings are held at 2:10 p.m. in the Library.

March 12th
April 16th
May 14th

ELAC (English Learner Advisory Council) Meetings:

ELAC meetings are held at 1:00 p.m. in the Library.

March 8th
April 18th



Progress Reports



Progress Reports will be sent home with students on the following dates:

2nd Trimester:

January 19
February 9
March 1

RUSD Progress Reports will be mailed home the week of January 30.

Trimester 2 Report Cards will be mailed home the week of March 19.

3rd Trimester:

March 29
April 26
May 17
June 7

RUSD Progress Reports will be mailed home on April 30.

Trimester 3 Report Cards will be mailed home the week of June 18th.

Check out the [Teacher Webpage](#) link on the [FAMMS website](#).

Public Library Resources

Visit a Riverside Public Library for the resources your student needs to succeed. Whether help is needed with homework or for an assignment, the library can help. Many free tools are available for your use from home with your Riverside Public Library card:

Brainfuse—live homework help; connect with a tutor for grade specific, subject specific help daily from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

For encyclopedia sources, see *World Book* or *Grolier Online*

Sources for news and periodical articles on a

wide range of topics, see *Infotrac*, *Onefile* and *Infotrac Newstand*.

Tutoring—one on one K-12 homework help provided by local college student. Contact your local branch.



Haiku Parent Accounts

RUSD has recently implemented the Haiku Learning Management System for all grades. Haiku can be used by teachers and students to share information about class assignments and assessments, post to discussion boards, and more. One of the outstanding features of Haiku is the availability of a parent account. This will allow parents to log into the system and see

information that their student's teacher is providing about class events, homework, and other student resources. The parent accounts are created from the information in Aeries and require that we have an email address on file. The parent log in is the email we have on file with the @ symbol replaced by a period. All initial passwords are set to Welcome!

To log on, go to

<http://www.rusdlearns.net>

1. Enter the username and password
2. Create a new password and save
3. Click home to see a list of your students classes.

If you are having trouble accessing your account, check out the guide on our website.

New High School Graduation Requirements

On November 1, 2011, the Riverside Unified School District school board voted to require students to take three years of high school level math in order to graduate. This change will affect students now in eighth grade and will also increase the graduation requirements from 215 credits to 220 credits. Middle school students can receive high school graduation credit for passing algebra, geometry, or both.

Most eighth grade students take Algebra I. However, some advanced students take algebra in seventh grade and geometry in eighth grade. These students typically continue with Algebra 2, pre-calculus, calculus, and Advanced Placement probability and statistics before they finish high school. An article in the Press Enterprise reported that Tammy Kerr, chairwoman of the district's high school task force supported this decision by citing a study that showed the

preparation needed for students to succeed in community colleges and vocations is exactly the same as the preparation they need for university success, including content knowledge in algebra. Additional changes in the graduation requirements will be considered in order to bring RUSD requirements in line with admissions requirements at colleges and universities.

Intervention Saturdays for English Learners

We are excited to share the news that our new Intervention Saturdays for English Learners class is starting up at the end of this month. All English Learners are invited to sign up and attend

this fun and innovative class. Unlike a traditional Saturday school, this program will offer opportunities to play games, computer time, snacks, social time, and more. Invitations

were mailed home to eligible students after winter break. We look forward to sharing the positive outcomes of the program.

Attendance Office Message

Perfect Attendance
FAMMS is excited to be one of the many schools participating in the Singh Chevrolet Perfect Attendance Program. Eighth grade students who have a minimum GPA of 2.0 and perfect attendance

from August 2011 through May 2012 will be eligible to participate in a drawing for a computer with color printer, \$100 Target gift card, Set of 4 tickets to Disneyland, 4 certificates for El Torito, 2 passes to Aquarium of the Pacific, 2 Best Buy Gift Cards,

Ultrastar movie tickets, and Famous Joe's dinner tickets. See the [FAMMS website](#) or contact the attendance office for further information on how students can make up absences in order to qualify for this fantastic drawing.



1st Period Attendance Contest

In an effort to improve attendance and punctuality in our students, we are holding contests each month between 1st period classes. Each week we calculate the percentage of students present in each class

each day to come up with a spreadsheet that compares the attendance percentage of each 1st period class. At the end of the month, the class with the best percentage wins a ticket for a free cookie or slushy from the

snack bar at lunch. Encourage your student to get to school on time every day to help his/her class win this month.



REEF Grant Award Winners

FAMMS had nine groups of teachers receive REEF (Riverside Educational Enrichment Foundation) Grants this year. We are extremely proud of their hard work and extra efforts to support the FAMMS students in supplemental ways. The following are the recipients and the title of their grants:

Lara Jones: *Math Counts at FAMMS*

MacLaughlin, Luchsinger, Tiberi (8th Grade Science): *Carbon- It's Organic!*

Luchsinger (Drama, Alice in Wonderland): *Through the Looking Glass of Theater*

Prewitt, Queyrel, Parker (7th Grade Science): *And the Beat Goes On and On*

Prewitt, Queyrel, Parker (7th Grade Science): *Take a Look and See What I Found*

Salyers: *Badly Needed Instruments*

Congratulations to all of our grant recipients. We look forward to seeing the results.



Box Tops for Education

Frank Augustus Miller Middle School PTSA is collecting **Box Tops for Education**. This is a great way to earn money for FAMMS, just by collecting General Mills Box Tops. Each 7th period class has a wrapped box to put box tops in. At the

end of 2nd and 3rd trimesters, the box tops will be collected and the 7th period class with the most box top points will receive a special treat courtesy of PTSA. Thank you for your participation and bring in those box tops!



A Message from your Librarian



Our library is bustling with activity all day long. It is nice to see that we are just as full on days with good weather as bad weather, although there is more of a demand for space on those rainy days!

At this age, students have many competing demands for their time. Sports, dance, homework, and family time are just some of them. Make sure that your student is spending time each day reading. Reading is the one activity that studies show is good for your brain. According to *The Power of Reading* by Stephen Krashen, studies show that:

- Good thinkers read more;
- Studies of “good thinkers” give us reason to believe that reading makes you smarter. ...Creative

students read more than non-creative students-most report that they read more than 5 books per year;

- Reading improves spelling;
- Those who read more know more;
- Those who read more have less apprehension about writing; and
- Children who are read to at school or at home read more and show better literacy development. Even college students read more and better when they are read to.

Furthermore, “studies showing that reading enhances literacy development lead to what should be an uncontroversial conclusion: Reading is good for you. The research, however, supports stronger conclusions: **Reading is**

the only way we become good readers, develop a good writing style, an adequate vocabulary, advanced grammatical competence, and the only way we become good spellers.”

Make sure you encourage your Macaw to read by setting aside time each day to read, that you model reading by reading, and that you help provide reading materials for students by encouraging them to check out books from our library. (We have over 11,000 books just waiting for students to check out and read). Find out what book your student has checked out from the library, ask your student to share with you a little about the current book they are reading.

Yearbooks

The yearbook is currently under construction. We have completed our cover and chosen a theme, “Our Journey”. There is still time to purchase a yearbook. They are \$35 each until **March 31st**.

Also, this year we are offering the opportunity to place personal messages in the yearbook. Ads are available starting at \$10 for one line. A flyer will go home with students in the next few weeks. If

you would like additional information, please contact Mrs. Blasjo, Room 708
rblasjo@rusd.k12.ca.us or call 789-8181 ext. 57005.

