



COUGAR NEWS

Combs Middle School

School Newsletter – February 2017

Parent-Teacher Conferences



The staff at CMS understands the importance of building relationships with parents. One way this occurs is through the JupiterGrades system. Another important opportunity will take place when the middle school hosts parent-teacher conferences on February 23rd and 24th. At the middle school, conferences take place in individual teacher classrooms. Because students have six different teachers throughout the day, no specific appointments are made. Instead, parents have the opportunity to move around campus during the established parent-teacher conference time frame and interact with teachers. This setting provides the best opportunity for private conversations to take place between teachers and parents.

Conferences will take place on February 23rd (2:30-7:00 pm) and February 24th (2:00-4:00 pm). Students will be dismissed at 1:00 pm on each of the parent-teacher conference days. The middle school will follow the 1:00 pm early release schedule; breakfast/lunch will be served on these two days.

As the second semester continues to move forward, teachers are looking forward to meeting with parents during parent-teacher conferences to share the many successes our students have experienced so far this school year.

2017-2018 Course Selection Process



The course selection process for the 2017-2018 school year is under way. This important process allows students and parents to partner with teachers and counselors to pick courses for the upcoming school year.

Our 8th grade students had an opportunity to attend a CHS Open House with their parents at the high school on January 25th and participated in CHS Visitation Day on January 18th. Both of these important events provided an important foundation for the transition that will soon take place from middle school to high school. Course selection materials for the 8th graders were due on Friday, January 27th. If any 8th grade parents have any questions about the course selection process, please feel free to contact Ms. Sherri Hammer, High School Counselor, at (480) 882-3553.

Our 7th graders participated in their course selection process in Language Arts classes January 30th/31st. Students received their course selection materials for the upcoming school year to complete with their parents. Course selection materials are to be returned by Friday, February 17th. If any 7th grade parents have any questions about the course selection process, please feel free to contact Dr. Leslie Wiberg, Middle School Counselor, at (480) 882-3518.

The course selection process is an exciting time to plan for future educational opportunities for our students. Please know that it will be the goal of the staff to make this process as successful as possible!

CMS Web Store

CMS now has a web store on our website. It is located as one of our quick links on the left side of the front page of our website. Visit it to pay a variety of class fees on line and to purchase items such as the yearbook.

Library Book Drive

Throughout the month of January, Combs Middle School participated in a book drive. “Thank You” to everyone who donated a new or gently used book for the drive. If you would still like to make a donation, please feel free to contact Mrs. De Leon, Library Assistant, at 480-882-3510 (extension 1419).

Students of the Month

The following Cougars and Lady Cougars earned the distinction as Student of the Month for January:



District “Character Counts” Program

Freddi Anderson (8th grader – pictured left) received this recognition in January for the pillar of Respect.

Middle School “Outstanding Cougars” Program

The Cougars and Lady Cougars recognized for the month of January were:
7th Grade – Lillian Threlkeld and Michael Davenport
8th Grade – Janae Benson and Tydon Bullard

Sixth Grade Transition Events

The CMS staff is very excited about the opportunities that lie ahead to assist our future Cougars with their growth academically, socially, and personally. To assist with this, CMS is hosting Open House at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, February 1st. This event will allow 6th grade parents and students the opportunity to visit the CMS campus and interact with various members of the middle school community. The staff at Combs Middle School is looking forward to building new relationships with our future Cougars.

Athletic Director’s Update



The middle school has begun its third sports season which is comprised of girls’ basketball, flag-football, and cheerleading. As students participate in the current season, it is time to start planning for the final season of the year. The fourth quarter sports programs of girls’ soccer and boys’ basketball will take place after spring break. All students interested in participating in these programs are required to have a physical, copy of their insurance card, permission slip, and emergency contact form completed and returned in order to receive a clearance card and participate in tryouts. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Ridge at 480-882-3519.

Spelling Bee

The CMS School Spelling Bee took place on January 10th in the middle school cafeteria. Listed below are the middle school students who received recognition at the school spelling bee:

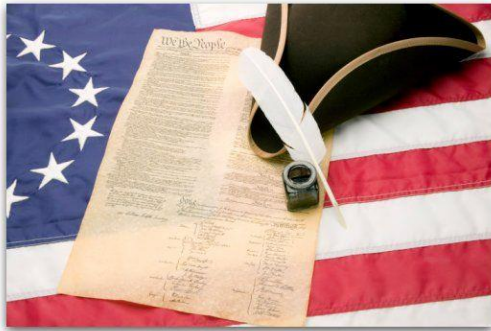
- Faith Powell (1st Place)
- Javier Suarez (2nd Place)
- Ashlynn Blamires (3rd Place)
- Connor Elder/Tina Vo (Alternates)

1st, 2nd, and 3rd place recipients participated in the district spelling bee which took place on January 23rd. CMS is proud to share that Faith Powell took 1st Place at this event and moves on to the Pinal County Spelling Bee in February.



Yearbooks

Ms. Foster and the students in the Yearbook class have been diligently working to produce this year's edition of the middle school yearbook. This year's yearbook is going to be a great edition. Students always enjoy looking at past yearbooks as a way to remember the experiences that took place during their middle school years. The cost of the yearbook is \$40. Please turn in money (cash/check) to the front office or pay online. Feel free to contact Ms. Foster at 480-882-3510 (extension 1421) if you have any questions about this year's yearbook.



Arizona Department of Education Civics Test

In 2015, the Arizona legislature passed the American Civics Act (House Bill 2064). This bill will require students, beginning with the graduating class of 2017, to pass a civics test based on the United States Immigration and Naturalization civics questions. Students will be required to score 60% or higher in order to graduate from high school or obtain a high school equivalency certificate. As a courtesy, the Arizona Department of Education, with help from the Maricopa County Education Service Agency and Arizona educators, has developed a mostly multiple choice version of the required test.

The Civics Test provided by ADE includes the 100 civics questions from the naturalization test with most questions rewritten as multiple choice questions. The few questions that require students to name specific elected officials are worded as short answer questions and placed at the end of the test. The multiple choice questions are ordered by the grade based on test content alignment, beginning with Kindergarten and ending with high school.

The official list of 100 civics questions included on the naturalization test and free study materials are posted on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services web site:
<http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learners/study-test/study-materials-civics-test>.

The 8th graders will take this test on February 16-17. If you have any questions about this, please contact Ms. Emily Hubbard, Social Studies Department Chair at (480) 882-3510 (ext. 1435).

District News



February 7th - Kindergarten Round-up at Ellsworth, Harmon, Ranch, Simonton Elementary Schools at 6:00-7:00 pm. Parents will tour the school and talk to teachers while students enjoy activities in the classroom.

February 9th - Kindergarten Round-up at Combs Traditional Academy at 6:00-7:00 pm. Parents will tour the school and talk to teachers while students enjoy activities in the classroom.

February 16th - District SciTech Festival will be hosted at Combs High School at 6:00-7:00 pm. Students from around the district, as well as community organizations, will demonstrate Science and Technology in Society. Join us for a fun evening highlighting Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) projects and professions. All seven district schools will have representation at the event. Additionally, the district is partnering with ten STEM related businesses to bring hands-on, fun activities to students and families. Informational material will be going home with students in the coming weeks. In addition to our own flyers, the event is listed in the AZ SciTech 2017 Events Highlights brochure. Encourage your students to bring these to the event because AZ SciTech team members will be on campus stamping the brochures. Students who attend four different events receive a prize from AZ SciTech!

Please help us promote all three of these upcoming district events by inviting students, parents, and community members to attend.

Calendar

February

- 1 6th Grade Open House (6 pm @ CMS))
- 3 Bus Evacuation Drill (9:00 am)
- 6-10 Distribution of Course Selection Materials to Sixth Graders (at elementary sites)
- 10 Valentine's Dance (6-8 pm)
- 16-17 Social Studies Civics Test – Eighth Graders
- 17 Course Selection Materials Dues for Sixth/Seventh Graders
- 20 President's Day (no school)
- 23-24 Parent-Teacher Conferences (1:00 pm dismissal)
- 27-28 Spring Music Concerts

March

- 13-17 Spring Break (no school)
- 20 Professional Development (no school)

Important Numbers and Information

Main Line: 480-882-3510

Fax: 480-888-8049

Attendance Line: 480-882-3510 ext.1402

Food Service: 480-882-3514

Transportation: 480-987-5309

Health Office: 480-882-3513

Web Address: www.combsms.jocombs.org or www.jocombs.org