



COUGAR NEWS

Combs Middle School

School Newsletter – January 2017

Second Semester Message



As the second semester gets underway, our school community will reinforce the key principles that have been emphasized throughout the first semester which are for students to be open-minded to learn as much as possible while striving to be respectful to themselves, others, and their school at all times.

Students are centering their focus on learning using three important words: record, retain, and recall.

- Record information in their notes accurately and completely so that it may be understood
- Retain information in their long-term memory by incorporating the strategies of being prepared for class, completing/producing high quality work, participating in class, asking questions, studying daily, and seeking help when needed
- Recall information from their brain to be used in various settings in order to demonstrate the ability to apply, comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what has been learned

Students have taken many positive steps forward in the respect that they extend towards others. The school community has worked to grow in this area through the living of the six Character Counts traits of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. As students and teachers continue to work toward becoming a place in which our school community is proud, the words of our school pledge remain a point of focus. “Today I will do more than I have to do; I will treat others as I want to be treated, and I will become a better person.” Your children have taken advantage of many opportunities throughout the first semester to grow academically, socially, and personally. Their accomplishments are a direct reflection of the amazing parents, relatives, and friends that they have who support them and encourage them every day.

2017-2018 Course Selection Process

The course selection process for the 2017-2018 school will begin soon. This process will allow students and parents the opportunity to pick courses for the upcoming school year. If any questions arise regarding this process, please feel free to contact Dr. Leslie Wiberg, Middle School Counselor, at (480) 882-3518.



For seventh graders (2017-2018 eighth graders), the course selection process will take place in their Language Arts classes February 6-10. Course selection materials for 7th graders will need to be returned by February 17th. For eighth graders (2017-2018 high school freshman), the course selection process will take place January 17th in their Language Arts classes. On January 18th, eighth graders will visit the high school. On January 25th, the high school will host Open House at 6:00 pm to visit CHS.

When you receive your child’s course selection materials, please read course descriptions and talk with teachers to get as much information about options as possible. Some courses require teacher recommendation to ensure correct placement. Those courses are noted as such in the prerequisite section of the course selection guide. The course selection process is an exciting time for parents and students in planning for the educational opportunities of the upcoming school year. Please know that it will be the goal of the entire staff to make the course selection process as successful as possible for each family.

First Semester Report Cards



Students will receive their first semester report cards in CSS on Wednesday, January 11th. For each class a student takes, he/she will receive a letter grade for the second quarter, the semester exam, and the first semester. Students receive a pass/fail mark for Cougar Skills for Success (CSS). In addition to letter grades, students will also receive one or two comments.

If you have any questions about the grade or comments your child received for a given class, please contact the teacher for that class. You may locate teacher phone extension and/or e-mail information by going to the “Contact Us” area of the middle school website at www.combsms.jocombs.org.

Spelling Bee



Before winter break, our Cougars dusted off their dictionaries and prepared to compete for a spot in the school spelling bee by participating in the first round of competition in their Cougar Skills for Success (CSS) class. From this first round opportunity, the top students were chosen to compete in the school spelling bee which will take place at on January 10th. Honorees from this competition will move on to the district spelling bee which will be hosted at the middle school on January 23rd.

Mr. Rick Findlay and Ms. Lori Rajnisz have done an outstanding job overseeing this opportunity for our students. “Good Luck” to our Cougar spelling bee competitors!

Library Book Drive



Throughout the month of January, Combs Middle School is going to host a book drive. Many people may have received new books as presents and may be willing to sort through the books that are no longer wanted. By donating them to CMS, you will be helping to increase the middle school inventory and fill in some series that are missing one or two issues.

If you wish to make a donation, please have your child bring the books to the school library. Please make sure all donated books are new or gently used. If you have any questions about the book drive, please contact Mrs. Michelle De Leon, Library Assistant, at 480-882-3510 (extension 1419).

Athletic Director's Update

“Congratulations” to Coach Reaves, Coach Spray, Coach Findlay, and all their athletes for their girls’ volleyball and boys’ soccer seasons. The third quarter programs will be flag football, girls’ basketball, and cheerleading. If you have any questions about the upcoming season, please feel free to contact Mrs. Ridge at 480-882-3519.

Successful Winter Concerts



The middle school music programs celebrated their talented students during their winter concerts. The Music Winter Concerts took place in December with students in orchestra, band, guitar, and choir performing a number of pieces to showcase their many months of hard work. The concerts were very well attended by the school community exemplifying the support that exists for these talented students.

“Congratulations to Mr. Thornton (orchestra) and Mr. Lloyd (band/choir/guitar) for the hard work they put forth with their students which was celebrated in these outstanding concerts.

Yearbooks

Ms. Foster and her 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 your money (cash or check) to the front office. Feel free to contact Ms. Foster at (480) 882-3510 (extension 1421) if you have any questions about this year’s yearbook.



Local Kiwanis Recognizes Students

The principle core of the Kiwanis Mission is the belief that the most effective way to enhance the community is to enhance its children. Great things happen when you give a child a chance to learn, experience, dream, and succeed.

Within the school setting, the Kiwanis Club of Queen Creek recognizes students at Combs Middle School (CMS) monthly for their outstanding accomplishments. CMS teachers nominate students in seventh and eighth grades with their criteria focusing on academic success, regular attendance at school, treating others with dignity/respect, and citizenship. The Kiwanis of Queen Creek then celebrates those selected honorees by presenting them with a plaque, various gift certificates (San Tan Café, Baci Italian Bistro, Harkins Theatres), a Kiwanis SOM bumper sticker, and a student dictionary.

Partnerships between the community and local schools are important to the success of our students. “Thank You” to the Kiwanis Club of Queen Creek for this special partnership and “Congratulations” to the CMS students who earn this wonderful recognition each month.

Combs Middle School Welcomes Representative Kelly Townsend



Combs Middle School welcomed Representative Kelly Townsend on Monday, December 12th as she interacted with 7th Grade Honors Social Studies students. Representative Townsend talked about her wealth of experience in the military working on air crafts where she was an aircraft mechanic. She spoke with the students about her love for the United States which was developed through her time serving as a veteran for our country.

She talked about the importance of civics education in school and gave the students the civics quiz that is online. Students were able to earn Arizona state coins for correct answers, and she offered them the opportunity to earn additional coins by writing her a paragraph on the difference between a republic and a democratic society. Tyler Savage, 7th grade student shared, “She taught me about the war and what it does to your life.”

The middle school community is very appreciative of the willingness of the representative to visit the campus and interact with students where she helped them to understand what it means to be patriotic and explore the people, documents, and ideals of our state and country.

Pictured: Tyler Savage and Naomi Oakes, 7th Grade Honors Social Studies Students, interacting with Representative Kelly Townsend

District News



January brings good news and great community events you won't want to miss.

Check out the Ledger about Combs. Keep a look out for the publication in February.
http://www.copperarea.com/pages/wp-content/uploads/12_7_16-Combs-Ledger.pdf

Combs Middle School students will have several exciting new elective course options to choose during the upcoming course selection process: Photography, Graphic Design, TV/Film Production, Coding, Weight Training, Teens 'n Teaching, Introduction to Medical Professions, and Leadership Development. These and other elective classes provide students an opportunity to explore future careers and interests.

January 25th - Combs High School Open House (6 pm)
Parents, incoming 9th graders and new students are invited to tour the school and learn about CHS.

February 1st - Combs Middle School Open House at (6 pm)

Parents, incoming 7th graders and new students are invited to tour the school and learn about CMS.

February 7th - Kindergarten Round-up at Ellsworth, Harmon, Ranch, Simonton (6-7 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 (6-7 pm)

Parents will tour the school and talk to teachers while students enjoy activities in the classroom.

February 16th - District SciTech Festival at Combs High School

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.

Calendar

January

10 CMS Spelling Bee (9 am)

16 Martin Luther King Day (no school)

17 Distribution of Course Selection Materials to Eighth Graders (through ELA classes)

18 8th Grade Visitation Day (9-11:30 am @ CHS)

23 District Spelling Bee (6 pm)

23,24 6th Grade Visitation Days (9-11 am @ CMS)

25 8th Grade Open House (6 pm @ CHS)

30-31 Distribution of Course Selection Materials to Seventh Graders (through ELA classes)

February

1 6th Grade Open House (6 pm @ CMS))

6-10 Distribution of Course Selection Materials to Sixth Graders (at elementary sites)

10 Valentine's Dance (6-8 pm)

17 Course Selection Materials Dues for Sixth/Seventh Graders

20 President's Day (no school)

23-24 Parent-Teacher Conferences (1 pm dismissal)

27-28 Spring Music Concerts

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