

Olympus Junior High School

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July 21, 2021

Dear Olympus Jr. Families,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 School Year! We are excited to get the school year up and started, and we are anxious to get to meet all our new students. We have started getting a lot of calls in the office, so I want to get this information out to everyone so students can feel calm and ready for school to start on August 16. Many of the questions pertain to what school will look like this year compared to last. As you all know, we put many safety measures in place last year to help minimize risks associated with COVID. This year, we will be able to move away from some of those measures.

I will cover the changes to protocols later in this letter, but we are aiming for and excited to allow school to have a more familiar feel to it this year. We are also excited to be welcoming back our distance learners to school this year and will be happy to have all of our students on campus.

I would also like to take a quick moment to welcome a few new people to our school. Ms. Shelti Thompson will be our new Dance teacher. She has a great background in dance and is excited to work with our students. Ms. Nicole Bearss is returning to Olympus Jr. She will be our new math teacher, and we are excited to have her. She student taught and then taught at Evergreen last year. Ms. McKinnah Judd will be our new intern counselor, and she will be a great addition to our counseling team. Mr. Derek Robinson is a new to our district Social Worker and has been assigned to our school. He will be here for three days a week this year. Ms. Nicole Feigt will be our assigned Psychologist. Finally, Ms. Heather Birrell will be our new Registrar. You will see her in the Counseling Center, so all students will get to know her as they are in and out of the office.

Lastly, I encourage everyone to follow our Facebook Page. It is the best source for up to the minute information. I often post information there before sending it out in an email. Keeping up with the details we're working on prior to the school year and then seeing what's happening once school starts is best done via Facebook. To get to the correct Facebook page, go to our school website, <https://schools.graniteschools.org/olympusjr/>, and click the Facebook icon in the upper right. Once at the page, you can follow it.

Registration Information:

We are doing on-line registration this year, and the registration materials can be found on the school website under the "Registration" tab at the top of the page. The registration process will be completed on the district website, but our page has a direct link you can click to get you to the correct place at the district site. Our page also has information you and your student should read prior to the school year. On-line registration will begin on **August 2**. To complete the on-line registration, you **MUST** create a Parent Portal. Instructions for creating a portal are available on the district site you will be sent to when you click the registration link. In addition to being necessary for registration, the portal allows you to log in and see your student's PBL proficiency levels for their classes and attendance. The portal is also where the district downloads your student's RISE results each year.

You should receive a postcard reminder about registration in the mail next week.

Everyone needs to use the website for registration; however, if you have questions, we are here to help. The office will be open daily.

Important information regarding policies and student expectations, including information for Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) will be in the student planners. Students will be given their planner the first week of school in their Advisory class. These expectations will be reviewed and reinforced throughout the school year. Olympus Jr.'s PBIS motto is RISE, which stands for Respect, Integrity, Safe, Engaged, and the school is working with the faculty and students to develop and implement school-wide expectations based on these principles. We will continue to send information home about our progress and developing expectations for PBIS as the school implements them.

Important Items:

Orientation

I understand the importance of orientation for our new students. Last year we were unable to do orientation due to the pandemic, so, really, all three of our grades will benefit from a formal orientation. The 6th graders need to know how the school functions, and the 7th and 8th graders will have procedures and policies reinforced. We will do orientation on the first day of school. Students will have orientation in the auditorium, and it should last the first two periods of that first day of school. This will allow us to ensure that all students have the same information and will know the expectations and procedures they need to follow at school.

There are usually two concerns for new students. First, they want to know where their classes are so they don't get lost on the first day of school. Second, they want to practice opening their locker. Without having an official orientation day prior to the beginning of school, this can make some students nervous. So, to alleviate that concern, please know that the building will be open beginning August 2 for students to come find their classes and practice lockers. Once a parent finishes the registration process, they will be able to print out their student's schedule complete with teacher names and room numbers. Once your student has that in hand, they are welcome to come to the school between 8-2 to walk and find their classes and practice opening a locker.

None of our students will have had lockers before, so I assume all will want to come and practice them. We will have a bank of lockers next to the Counseling Center with the combinations written on masking tape on the locker so students can practice opening them. Students will receive their locker assignment and combination when school begins.

We do ask that during this time students not congregate in large groups or loiter at the school. Teachers will be here getting ready for the school year, and the week of August 9-13 they will be having meetings throughout the days that shouldn't be disturbed with a lot of craziness in the halls. Students loitering or causing unnecessary commotion will be asked to leave.

Lockers/Bookbags:

We will be assigning lockers to all students this year. You will not be able to come in and request certain lockers; we are assigning them by grade level in designated areas. Students will still be allowed to have their bookbags with them in classes. While we are assigning lockers, we are strongly encouraging students to not use them very often during the school day. Passing time between classes is only four minutes, so students don't have time to go to their lockers between each class. This issue is minimized by

the fact they can take their bookbag to class with them. Our suggestion is to use the locker to store lunches, jackets/coats and then carry needed class supplies in their bags.

Additional information about lockers is available in the school policies, but quickly: students are responsible for their locker. They shouldn't share their combination with friends. Last year we had very minimal theft issues and the main reason was students didn't have lockers, so don't store valuables in the lockers. No stickers or writing on the lockers with markers is allowed. No decorating the outside of lockers (birthday decorations get out of hand and will be removed).

Distance Learning:

We are anticipating all students being back to school in a face to face setting for this year. The district is not asking teachers to teach in dual modality this year. This means our teachers will only be focusing on teaching their classes here at school. They will still be utilizing Canvas and putting things on line, but it will not be to the extent that students will be able to complete the class from home.

The district is still offering a Distance Learning opportunity for students who need it. There is limited capacity as this will be a district-wide program. To participate in the district distance learning, you will need to contact Mr. Matich and set-up an appointment to meet with him and your student's counselor during the week of August 2-6. They will only be doing appointments that week as the following week everyone will be tied up in meetings each day. Please call 385-646-5224 to schedule an appointment.

A few things to be aware of for the district distance learning program. First, it is not a dual enrollment program. If you are in the distance learning program, then you are not an Olympus Jr. student. So, you must take your classes through that program. You will not be able to split the days between here and there. Second, the classes will be offered asynchronously. This means school will start at 7:45am and students will have to log in at 7:45 for roll to be taken. They will then have to log in to each class throughout the day to be counted on roll. Students will not be able to do their classes whenever they want; it will be structured. The program will follow a 4x4 block schedule like the high schools are on. Sixth graders who want to do distance learning will have to be enrolled in the elementary distance learning program, not the junior high program. Class options will be limited to core classes and state required elective classes, so students will not be able to participate in music, theater, or other optional elective programs we offer at the school.

Summer Program:

Next week is the last week of our summer program. The schedule can be found on our Facebook page, but here's a quick reminder of what is being offered. Ms. Varoz is doing a 6th grade math review. Mr. Rossi is doing a 7th grade math review. Ms. Sorenson and Ms. Criswell are doing English reviews. And, finally, Ms. Brown is doing a STEM Camp.

Please remember that the summer program is only for students who were Olympus Jr. students last year. This means that *incoming 6th graders cannot attend our program this year*. This is due to the summer program being a review of what was taught last year. Hopefully our incoming 6th graders took advantage of the summer programs offered at their elementary schools.

Passing Time:

Students have four minutes to get from class to class. This is enough time for students to get where they need to go; however, it is not enough time for students to get where they need to go if they stop to congregate and talk in the halls, go to their lockers every period, or roam the halls with friends. There will

not be a bell to begin class, so there will be no bell letting students know they are tardy, so students need to get to their next class quickly. Teachers will be in the halls monitoring students and then going into their classes when class starts. Students should aim to be in class before the teacher comes back into class. This year, we will be encouraging all teachers to utilize starter activities for students to begin working on as they enter class. This will get students to class and beginning to work on focusing on the day's lesson while giving the teachers time to take roll and otherwise get class up and running.

Citizenship Pilot:

The district has been working on revising how the Citizenship Grade is determined in secondary schools for the past two years. They are ready to pilot what they have created, and the Olympus Network is participating in the pilot. Citizenship Grades will be determined by a specific rubric that looks at five different categories. Teachers will mark a score in each category and then the average of those scores over the five categories will be the Citizenship Grade for that class. More detailed information will be shared later, but I wanted everyone to be aware that we will be piloting this new program.

Cell Phone Policy:

I want to make sure all students are aware of the cell phone policy prior to school beginning. Students will not be allowed to have their cell phones out during school hours from 7:45am-2:45pm. Students need to make sure their phones are on silent mode and put away in their bags. Students are not allowed to access their phones between classes or at lunch. If a student needs to call home, they can use the phone in the Counseling Center to do so.

Bell Schedule Change:

We are adding Advisory back into the schedule on Monday-Thursday. The advisory period will be 26 minutes long to accommodate announcements as well as the other activities of Advisory. It will follow 2nd period.

First Period will begin right at 7:45am each day, so please make sure your student is at school early enough to get to class on time.

Fridays will have a twist in the schedule due to lunch. Because Friday is an early out day, having lunch around 4th period would have first lunch start at 9:36am; that is really early. To alleviate this, students will go to 5th period first, then 4th period with lunches. This will allow lunch to be at 10:09; still early, but not as early. So, all students will go to class in this order on Fridays: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 4th, 6th, 7th.

General Reminder Items:

Fee Waivers and Free/Reduced Lunch Applications:

Fee waiver applications will be available in the on-line registration materials. Please remember that each child needs a fee waiver application, so if you have students in elementary, junior high, and high school, you will need to fill one out at each school. Also, Fee Waivers need to be applied for and approved every year. If you are interested in applying for Fee Waiver, please follow these steps:

- a. Fill out application (can be printed from on-line registration material or picked up in the main office)
- b. Bring appropriate documentation (Federal Tax Filing preferred)
- c. Meet with an administrator for review of application (either administrator can help)

Free and Reduced Lunch applications can be filled out as part of the on-line registration process. Free and Reduced Lunch applications can be filled out for a whole family, so you will only need to fill out the application once for any of your students in Granite School District. These forms can be completed on-line or physically turned in to the lunchroom manager.

In a continuation of a program from last year, all students will receive free lunch again this year. However, the district still encourages families to fill out the Free and Reduced Lunch application if you qualify because there are other programs and grants schools become eligible for based on the percent of students who qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch. So, please fill out the form if it's a program you would normally qualify for.

Lunch Pin Numbers:

If you are a returning Granite District student, your lunch pin number will be the same as it has always been. If you are new to Granite District, your lunch pin number will be provided to you by the lunch secretary on the first day of school.

Students must enter their lunch pin number to receive lunch.

School Policies:

School policies are included on the web site with the other registration materials. Please make sure you read them prior to the school year starting. We will also be providing student planners to all students, and the front section of the planner will include all school policies families will need to know. As you review policies, please note the cell phone and dress code policies.

Immunizations:

Salt Lake County requires all students to be in compliance with the State Immunization Requirements. Students must be vaccinated in order to register for and attend school. If you have questions about vaccinations, please contact the Counseling Center at 385-646-5225.

There are shots needed for all students going into 7th grade. Please work with your pediatrician to get these shots. We are also working with Salt Lake County to have an immunization clinic on August 2. Specific information for this was sent out with the registration reminder postcard you should receive next week. Once your student receives the needed shots, those updated records will need to be turned in to the Counseling Center.

School Pictures:

Every student needs to have a school picture taken so they can receive an Olympus Jr. Activity Card and be in the Yearbook. Picture Day will be August 31, with a make-up day being held on October 15.

Student Schedules:

Student schedules will become available once the on-line registration process is completed. We work diligently to balance classes as much as possible during the creation of the school schedule. Due to this, class changes will be minimal. If you would like to make an appointment with your counselor about your schedule, please call 385-646-5225 starting August 9.

Yearbooks:

Yearbooks will not automatically charge to your student's account as they are not a fee; they are an optional item that can be purchased. Yearbooks must be pre-ordered and will need to be ordered and paid for prior to Winter Break.

We are excited for the school year, and we are looking forward to seeing all the kids!

Sincerely,

Josh LeRoy, Principal

Jonny Matich, Assistant Principal