

# Santa Fe Trail Junior High School

September Family Newsletter  
Jodi Testa, Lari Jarrett  
1.800.836.9525



## Better Together!

### AWESOME START TO THE SCHOOL YEAR

With ten school days tallied in the school year we continue to grow together as a school family. Our day starts together with an assembly which includes morning announcements and informational tidbits followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The time spent together is an integral part of our day as it provides a relaxing time and space to get to know one another. This year we are hosting Wacky Wednesday's during our morning assembly. This is a perfect time to laugh and have fun together. Research shows six surprising benefits of laughter which include:

- ◆ pain relief
- ◆ increased heart health
- ◆ boosted immune system
- ◆ reduction of stress
- ◆ relaxation of the body
- ◆ generally increase in overall happiness

The rest of our morning is spent with students and staff focused on academics in the classrooms. This year we are offering math, English language arts, science, and social studies in both the Summit and non-Summit platforms for our sixth through eighth graders. We also offer our sixth through eighth grade students elective classes ranging from physical education to financial literature to 3D art and several other options. Our fourth and fifth graders learn and grow with their individual teacher in a structure that is similar to elementary classrooms. All students enjoy a 25-minute lunch period where they have choice in where they sit. We encourage students to include others and expand their friendship circle. We do take students outside for a quick stretch break after they eat. Students and staff have settled into a nice dismissal routine that meets the specific needs of our families. This year our staff has informally adopted the theme 'Better Together.' The first days of the school year have certainly proven it true that together is indeed better. SFTJH is a good place for kids! We are honored to be here working with your children.

### Positive Office Referrals

Staff members have been busy noticing and celebrating positive student choices by writing positive office referrals. We are celebrating whole-class and individual endeavors in the following areas:

- ◆ Cooperation
- ◆ Highly Active Learners
- ◆ Eagerness to Give Effort
- ◆ Academic Success
- ◆ Ready and Willing to Learn
- ◆ Respect
- ◆ Self-Motivation
- ◆ Goal Focused

Whole-class acknowledgements are celebrated with a special treat from Ms. Testa and a 'shout-out' during our morning assembly. Individual acknowledgements are mailed home to families for your personal celebrations.



*SRO Hamm delivered brownies to students on the first day of school.*

## ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

Volleyball, cross country, and football are well underway in the Pioneer League. At SFTJH we have about 85 student-athletes. These students put in a full day of classes and then stay after school to practice their chosen sport. Each team competed for the first time this week. We hope you will have the opportunity to help us cheer them on. Please watch the district website for competition dates and times. ([www.usd434.org](http://www.usd434.org)) For game highlights please follow our Facebook page at Carbondale Attendance Center/SFTJH.

Our KAY sponsor, Alicia Amborski, is getting prepared to get the school year underway along with the KAY student officers. If your child is interested in participating in this KSHSAA-sponsored program, please do reach out to [AAmborski@usd434.org](mailto:AAmborski@usd434.org) for more information. Key focuses for the KAY program include but are not limited to:

1. connecting students across the school
2. developing lifetime leadership skills
3. establishing an "I get to" attitude for service
4. discovering self-potential and self-confidence
5. developing team skills
6. increasing service learning through friendship

To participate in KSHSAA activities, including sports and KAY, students must maintain academic eligibility standards. Any student who has less than a 60% average, cumulative for the quarter, in more than two subjects will be ineligible for the next week. Weeks will run Sunday 6:00 a.m. through Sunday 5:59 a.m. Eligibility at SFTJH was explained to our seventh and eighth graders on September 1st. We will begin eligibility checks on Wednesday, September 8th. Information about your child's academic grades can be found in PowerSchool. If you need support in accessing PowerSchool please do call our school office at 1.800.836.9525 between 8:00 a.m. and 3:45 p.m.

## ENROLLMENT NUMBERS

Fourth Grade	69
Fifth Grade	86
Sixth Grade	76
Seventh Grade	75
Eighth Grade	84
Total	393

Percent Females	47%
Percent Males	53%

Certified Staff	34
TLEC Certified Staff	8
Classified Staff	14
TLEC Classified Staff	10



## STUDENT VOICE

We want our SFTJH Chargers to have a voice regarding our school. Recently our students had the opportunity to vote on our school district's vision statement. The winning vision statement is 'Empowering and Inspiring Every Charger Every Day.' Thank you to all students, staff, and parents who expressed their hope for our school district by voting.

In the coming months we will add three more opportunities for students at our school to express their voice. We will organize a student council in which students will elect their representatives. We will organize our Site Council which will include staff, parents, community members, and students. And, finally we will establish a system that allows students to submit ideas, concerns, celebrations, and reflections by writing them and dropping them in a box for admin and Student Council review and consideration. Our hopes are lofty and will take some time to get them off the ground. We ask for your patience in getting it all organized.



*"I think it's definitely odd to be seeing everyone's face again. We're all glad to be back! The teachers are doing the best they can and students are rockin' with their roll!" When asked to rate the start of our school year, Jordan, grade 8, shared "we are definitely doing a solid 12 out of 10!"*

## MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH STAFF

We have many staff, beyond content area and classroom teachers, available to students. Please feel to reach out with any questions you might have. We can all be reached at 1.800.836.9525. We are here for you!

Jodi Testa	Principal	Kristy Markham	Nurse
Lari Jarrett	AP/AD	Keturaugh McKitterick	Library Para
Megan Fuller	Counselor	Chelsie Masters	Secretary
Maggie Mead	Social Worker	Richard Hamm	Resource Officer
Kara Mason	Music	Sally Riggs	Visual Arts
Alexis Soby	Gr 4 Music	Kim Dayhoff	Tech Instruction
Lance Quilling	Band	Zach Johnson	Gr. 4 PE
MacKenzie Rice	Band	Alexis Soby	Gr. 4 Music
Kayla Chiddix	PE		

*"So far it's a pretty strong educational and all-around good performance from the school. It's been a big change for me from 501 to 434 school district but I think I like the change. I do really like the kids here and the teachers are very, very nice!" Jacob, grade 6*

