

April 2016

# Freeport Middle School

701 West Empire Street, Freeport, IL

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<https://www.facebook.com/Freeport-Middle-School-341448462610763/>

## Shared Vision:

In our school: staff, students and parents will be held accountable as we prepare our students to be life-long learners who are college and career ready. We will show respect for all individuals and have a collaborative parent-school-community partnership.

## Helping Your Child Succeed

Middle schoolers are trying to navigate many different roads. From friendships to math word problems to what is the newest fashion trend. As educators, parents frequently ask us how they can help their child be successful. Here are a few tips:

- Develop a plan for how to stay **organized**. He/she should use a planner to keep track assignments and a binder/folders to categorize papers. Middle school is most likely the first time that students have more than one teacher which greatly increases the need for organization.
- Promote the use of **problem solving skills**. As parents, we often want to rescue our children and show them the right way to do something. However, children need to learn how to problem solve, and it is best for him/her to learn how to problem solve when he/she still has parents who can help him/her.
- **Communication** is vital. Communicate with your child and with you village to raise a child, and we all need to work together for the be
- Be **involved**. Ask them questions about school, attend their events, come spend the day with them at school. Even though they act like still play the most influential role in middle schoolers' lives.

For more ideas on how to help your child be successful, you can look

- **Parents' Guide to Student Success**, National PTA website  
<http://www.pta.org/parents/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2583&>
- **Helping Your Child Succeed in Middle School**, Dr. Kenneth Shore  
<http://drkennethshore.nprinc.com/for-parents/helping-your-ch>



**Nick Swords**, Principal

**Jennifer De Jong**, Interim  
Assistant Principal

## Upcoming Events

### PARCC Testing

- **April 20,21\*,22-** 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
(\*only one test on April 21)
- **April 25,26,27-**6<sup>th</sup> grade

**April 21-** Early Release Day

**April 27-** NED Show Assembly  
for 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders

**May 26-** 8<sup>th</sup> grade Promotion,  
Students' Last Day

## NED SHOW...coming to FMS 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

On **Wednesday, April 27**, the NED SHOW will be at the Jeannette Lloyd Theatre to present character education to our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. NED centers around three important messages: **N**ever give up, **E**ncourage others, **D**o your best®. During the assembly students will learn about NED's message while enjoying storytelling, magic, humor and yo-yo tricks. More information will be sent home with students.

## Eighth Grade Promotion Ceremony

The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion Ceremony will take place on Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup> in the Jeannette Lloyd Theatre. Doors will open at 6:00 PM with the ceremony beginning *promptly* at 6:30 PM. The Student Council is hosting a 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade dance directly following the ceremony. The dance is free for 8<sup>th</sup> graders and concludes at 9:00 PM. Please make arrangements to pick your child up on time.

### Promotion Ceremony Dress Code:

- ✓ All dresses must cover the child's back up to the bottom of the shoulder blades.
- ✓ Strapless or one strap dresses are not allowed. All dresses must have two straps that are at least ONE INCH wide.
- ✓ Dress length must be at least mid-thigh.
- ✓ If a dress is deemed inappropriate, the student will not participate in the evening's school activities (ceremony and dance).
- ✓ Blue jeans are not to be worn.
- ✓ A collared shirt must be worn.
- ✓ Shorts are not allowed.
- ✓ No hats.
- ✓ If you have any questions about student dress, please contact FMS administration.

### IDEAS FOR CREATING A GROWTH MINDSET ENVIRONMENT AT HOME PART 3:

## Redirecting Fixed Mindset Thinking

- Redirect your child's fixed mindset statements. If you hear your child say, "I am not good in math" or "I just can't understand Shakespeare," point out the fixed mindset thinking and direct his/her to a growth mindset place. Remind your child that he/she may not understand yet, but will be asking questions, finding new strategies, setting small goals, and working hard. Two examples of how to redirect such statements are below.

If your child says	Then You Might Say
"I am no good in math."	"You may not understand this yet, so let's practice some more."
"I don't need to study; I always do well on math assessments."	"Studying can help prime the brain for further growth. Maybe you should let your teacher know that these assessments don't require much practice for you and that you are willing to take on more challenge."

Material from: *Ready to Use Resources for Mindsets in the Classroom: Everything Educators Need for School Success* by Mary Cay Ricci

## Getting to Know Our FMS Staff

We want to know our students and their families, and we also want you to know us! It's our desire to have a *collaborative parent-school partnership*. You will have the opportunity to meet our staff through this spotlight in our monthly newsletter.



**Name:** Nicky Arn

**Family:** Husband, Cutest dogs ever Copper & Apollo

**Job Title:** Middle School Band Director

**What do you like best about what you do?** Making music with kids and building a good rapport with my students over 4 years. **Who inspires you?** My music department colleagues inspire me to be a better teacher.

**What has been a highlight of your career/job?** Seeing students continue to play their instruments after high school or college just because they enjoy playing.

**If you could go anywhere, where would it be?** I would go to Italy to work at a vineyard and study wine-making. **What is your favorite subject?** Besides music, algebra and Spanish.



**Name:** Ryan Balsiger

**Family:** Wife, Son

**Job Title:** PE/Health Teacher

**What do you like best about what you do?** I like teaching students to be active and to encourage them to participate in activities they may not normally do. I also like to teach students about relationships, nutrition and human growth in the classroom.

**Who inspires you?** My family

**What has been a highlight of your career/job?** Seeing previous students graduate college and enjoy their career.

**If you could go anywhere, where would it be?** I would go to Japan or the Dominican Republic and study baseball. **What is your favorite subject?** PE, of course!



**Name:** Shaun Dascher

**Family:** Fiancé

**Job Title:** PE/Health Teacher

**What do you like best about what you do?** Observing students reach goals. Most importantly when they take risks and work outside their comfort zones.

**Who inspires you?** Any person willing to make a change for the better.

**What has been a highlight...?** Coaching Rockford University Baseball team to a conference title. **If you could travel anywhere and study anything?** Northwestern University to study Kinesiology. **What is your favorite subject?** Physical Education



**Name:** Anthony Dedmond

**Family:** Wife, 2 daughters, 1 son, 2 grandsons

**Job Title:** Family Resource Coordinator

**What do you like best about what you do?** I love working with kids. Each day is different and the connections made with the children help make it enjoyable.

**Who inspires you?** My grandmother Helen Thomas. She has always been very positive and encouraging throughout my life. She is truly a big part of who I am and what I am.

**What has been a highlight...?** Receiving the Award of Excellence from the Illinois School Board. It was just fulfilling to be recognized.

**If you could travel anywhere and study anything?** I would go to Harvard and study law. I think I watch too many crime dramas.

**What is your favorite subject?** I enjoyed school as a whole, no one subject stood out.



**Name:** Jessica Dobson

**Job Title:** Educator of Scientists (8<sup>th</sup> grade)

**What do you like best about what you do?** The humans I work with, and the science I get to do.

**Who inspires you?** Bill Nye **What has been a highlight...?** Doing labs with kids who earn it.

**If you could go anywhere, where would it be?** Space to study space

**What is your favorite subject?** Science!



**Name:** Bryant Moore

**Family:** Wife, daughters

**Job Title:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies

**What do you like best about what you do?** I enjoy the ah-ha moments when teaching. Helping students not only learn but question the world around them.

**Who inspires you?** My Mother inspires me. She was the only one of her siblings to finish high school, and she really pushed education in our house.

**What has been a highlight of your career/job?** Being treated to Applebee's on Teacher Appreciation Day last year.

**If you could go anywhere, where would it be?** I would go to Egypt and study the pyramids.

**What is your favorite subject?** History



**Name:** Kerry Pruitt

**Job Title:** Utility Person

**What do you like best about what you do?** I like moving around daily.

**Who inspires you?** My family members

**What has been a highlight of your career/job?** Maintaining employment

**If you could go anywhere, where would it be?** ICC Tech to study Computer Programming

**What is your favorite subject?** Mathematics



**Name:** Vicky Rohe

**Family:** Husband, 2 daughters

**Job Title:** 7<sup>th</sup> grade Math, 7<sup>th</sup> grade AVID

**What do you like best about what you do?** Seeing students persevere when they struggle with a new concept and the moment they finally get it.

**Who inspires you?** My mom

**What has been a highlight of your career/job?** When I completed my Master's Degree.

**If you could go anywhere, where would it be?** Hawaii

**What is your favorite subject?** Math



**Name:** Laura Wilson

**Family:** 2 children

**Job Title:** 6<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA, Social Studies teacher

**What do you like best about what you do?** My lovely coworkers and sixth graders. There is a great personality in this school!

**Who inspires you?** My parents. They are hard-working and genuinely good people.

**What has been a highlight of your career/job?** The relationships I've built and maintained with my students. One in particular that comes to me when he's having a rough time.