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**Mission Statement**

To promote a safe, successful, and rigorous academic community for diverse learners.

**Vision Statement**

- To implement research-based learning strategies that are continually adjusted to improve student performance and the instructional program.
- To create an environment that has clear, articulated focus for student achievement.
- To provide a structured and developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- To facilitate the teaching and learning strategies of acquiring, questioning and evaluating.
- To promote opportunities for social, emotional and physical growth of every individual.
- To provide avenues for students, staff, and parents to explore learning and foster the desire to learn more.
- To inspire community involvement through collaboration and responsibility.
- To provide professional development for staff that is aligned with Mason's focus and expectations.
Spring 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians of Fifth Grade Students:

Welcome to Mason Middle School. We are looking forward to a successful 6th grade school year. Our counselors have visited your student’s 5th grade classroom and shared information with them about being a 6th grader at Mason Middle School. In order to help prepare for next year, we have included the attached pages for you to review, complete and return:

- Information on Mason’s Band, Orchestra, Mason’s Dress Code, School Supply List, Bell Schedule, After School Activity Permission Form, and Frequently Asked Questions
- Mason Middle School Selection Sheet. This form is to be completed and returned immediately to your student’s elementary school. Please return the Mason Middle School Selection Sheet to your student’s teacher within two days.
- Mason Middle School Activities Contract and Eligibility Form. This form can be found online and must be submitted for students to participate in after-school activities. [https://masonmustangs.org](https://masonmustangs.org) (click on the resources tab)
- Middle School Athletics. Parents and students must register online through Final Forms. [https://www.tacomascchools.org/student-life/Pages/MS-Athletics.aspx](https://www.tacomascchools.org/student-life/Pages/MS-Athletics.aspx)

If your home address changes during the summer, please notify Mason to update your student’s records.

The 5th Grade Summer Transition Program will take place August 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th. More information will be mailed home. There will also be a welcome assembly on Thursday, August 27th at 10:00 am for our new students. This will give students the opportunity to meet other 6th graders, tour the building and meet the 6th grade teachers.

If you have any questions, please contact Mason at (253)571-7000.

Sincerely,

Kevin Kannier
Principal

Mark Phillips
Assistant Principal
Mason Dress Code is under review for the 2020-2021 school year. There will be an announcement on our Facebook Page @masonmustangstps and our Mason website https://masonmustangs.org

Mason School Supply List

- Backpack (no wheels, multiple pockets; make sure 3-inch binder fits)
- 3 inch binder (given in AVID Homeroom)
- 8-10 - spiral notebooks, 70 pages
- 8-10 composition books, college ruled
- Pencil pouch, sturdy cloth
- Dividers, strong plastic with pockets
- Pencils, 4-6 #2 with erasers
- Highlighters, variety of colors
- Pencil sharpener, hand held
- Pens, blue/black/red
- Colored pencils/markers/colored pens
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Metric scale ruler, 12” and 6”
- Calculator
- Tissues (for AVID Homeroom)
- Ear buds or head phones for testing

Additional Items Paid to Mason Middle School Cashier

- $3 Student Planner
- $6 Time for Kids magazine. Grade 6 Social Studies*
- $10 Junior Scholastic magazine. Grade 6 Social Studies*
- $10 Art fee
- $5 Technology fee
- $12 Science Lab fee Grade 8
- $10 Science World magazine or lab fee. Grade 6 and 7
- Foreign Language: teachers do not have a set class fee however they would appreciate any donation
*Fee is dependent on which teacher is assigned

- $2 Mason Logo earbud case with earbuds (optional)
- Dress code t-shirts and sweatshirts are sold by Mason Booster Club.
- Supplies will need to be replenished throughout the school year.
- Extra supplies should be kept at home and sent to school when needed.
Mason students begin their day with an AVID Homeroom class. Following homeroom students have 6 class periods throughout the day, which consists of math, English language arts, social studies, science and AVID reading (for 6th grade).

Sixth grade mathematics is about connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems; completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers; writing, interpreting, and using expressions and equations; and developing understanding of statistical thinking.

Science uses a hands-on inquiry based approach where students explore topics in Structure and Function, Genetics, and Weather and Climate. Throughout the year we learn and use reading strategies to aid in comprehension of non-fiction text.

In Social Studies students will cite evidence, identify main ideas, use primary sources, integrate subject vocabulary in their writing, recognize relationships between humans and their physical environments, use text features effectively and write organized responses to showcase their learning. Students will examine the world using the five themes of geography. The themes are: location, region, movement, place, and interaction.

In English Language Arts, students will be building their knowledge and skills of the writing and reading processes, which ties nicely with the adopted District curriculum, \textit{SpringBoard}, The College Board’s official Pre-AP program. With the curriculum comprised of literary and informational texts, students will master the skills necessary to succeed in high school and be college and career ready. Students will hone their writing and language skills, such as vocabulary, grammar, and language conventions through actively participating in activities, independent writing, and weekly reading assignments. Students will also develop their communication skills through presentations, participation, and collaboration.
Mason Music: Band and Orchestra

Mason Middle School offers two exceptional music programs with Band and Orchestra. Many students begin learning to play an instrument through 5th grade music programs. Others begin learning how to play an instrument in the 6th or 7th grade at Mason.

**Band**

Mr. Ronning is the Band Director at Mason. He offers 4 levels of band – beginning, intermediate, advanced and concert band. Beginning band is for students who have never played an instrument, or have played one for less than one year. Intermediate band is for students who have successfully completed a 5th grade band program, or have established skills from private lessons, and will be continuing with the same instrument. Unless a student already plays an instrument, it is recommended by Mr. Ronning that students wait until class begins before actually selecting the instrument that they would like to play. The information that he provides to students and parents is invaluable in making an instrument selection that fits the student, and that also compliments the band class. The majority of students provide their own instruments by either purchasing or renting them from a local music store. A band book will also need to be provided by the student. Parents who are unable to provide an instrument for their student may contact Mr. Ronning to see if a district-owned instrument is available for rental for a nominal, annual maintenance fee. Concert band is an audition-only ensemble comprised mainly of 8th grade students.

**Orchestra**

Mr. Banet is Mason’s Orchestra Director. He teaches 4 levels of orchestra – beginning, intermediate, string, and concert orchestra. Beginning classes are for students who have never played an instrument, or who have played an instrument for less than one year. Intermediate students will have successfully completed at least one year of instruction, or have had private instruction and can demonstrate the skills required for this class. Concert orchestra is an audition-only ensemble comprised mainly of 8th grade students. Beginning orchestra students should wait until the beginning of class to select an instrument. A method book needs to be provided by the student. Parents who are unable to provide an instrument for their student may contact Mr. Banet to see if a district-owned instrument is available for rental for a nominal, annual maintenance fee.

**AVID - Advancement Via Individual Determination**

The Mission of AVID is to close the opportunity gap, and prepare all students for college, careers, and life. Mason’s AVID program is six years strong and we have been recognized as an AVID School of Distinction for three years now. The power of AVID at the secondary level is the ability to impact students in the AVID Elective class and all students throughout the campus. AVID students reflect and question while mastering content rather than just repeating and memorizing. Our students work together to problem solve and to change the level of discourse in the classroom as they prepare for success. Students are taught to articulate what they don’t understand and learn how to seek out the resources they need. By teaching critical thinking, inquiry, and self-advocacy, AVID educators empower students to own their learning.
Mason is 1 of 26 schools in our district implementing the Tacoma Whole Child Initiative (TWCI). This initiative focuses on developing, defining, teaching, and learning clear expectations to help develop positive behaviors during the school day. TWCI is a collaborative partnership between Tacoma Public Schools and the University of Washington - Tacoma.

Mason Students can earn Mustang Merits from all staff members for being respectful, responsible, and ready to learn. Each student collects Mustang Merits in their planners and are responsible for having it in class every day.

Each week students can “cash-in” their Mustang Merits for a reward. This can include: free shirt day, free dress day, front of the line for lunch, Lunchroom DJ, or a homework pass.

Our motto for expectations of all students and staff at Mason is:

Be Respectful
Be Responsible
Be Ready to Learn
Mason Clubs, Sports, and After School Activities

Mason Middle School offers a wide range of extracurricular activities to encourage maximum participation for each middle school student. The programs emphasize skill development of all students wishing to participate. They also strive to create in each student a sense of self-worth. These activities help students explore special non-academic interests and increase cooperation with others. Mason’s athletic activities, clubs, and other high-interest activities are offered after school.

Students who participate in school sports and club activities will be required to purchase an ASB membership from the Main Office. The current cost of ASB is $15.00.

Transportation is provided from Mason to the nearest elementary school to your residence. The after school activity bus leaves Mason at 4:00 PM. The sports activity bus leaves Mason at 5:00 PM.

**Sports**

Sports participation throughout the year provides students an opportunity to compete with other schools. Sport physicals, FinalForms Registration, along with an ASB Membership, are required to participate in any and all sports. The ASB Membership helps to pay for sport uniforms and bus transportation. Coaches will hold informational meetings before the beginning of each sport. Parents will need to register their student on FinalForms. (See the Mason Webpage under quick links for more information.)

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<td>Track &amp; Field</td>
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**Clubs**

Club activities make up a large part of Mason Middle School’s after-school program. An After School Activity Permission slip needs to be completed in order to stay after school. Clubs meet on various days of the week, from 2:45-4:00pm. Here are examples of offered activities (clubs vary by year according to student demand):

- Homework Club
- Robotics
- Computer Club
- GSA Club
- Creative Writing
- Yearbook
- Multicultural Club
- Book Club
- ASB
- Chess Club
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Where do I go when I arrive to school every morning? Where do I go after school?
A: When students arrive to school each morning they are to wait in the designated drop off areas at the end of each grade level hallway (on 29th St.) OR inside the cafeteria if they are eating breakfast. Breakfast is served between 7:45 AM and 8:07 AM. **Students are NOT permitted in the hallways until the first bell rings at 8:07 AM.**
When the bell rings at 2:45 PM to dismiss students for the day, students who are picked up by their parents/guardians must wait on 29th St. Bus riders will load on to the bus on 28th St.
As a reminder, if you have optionally enrolled into Mason, no District Transportation will be provided.

Q: Can we ride bikes to and from school? Am I allowed to bring my skateboard, scooter?
A: Yes, students are allowed to ride their bike to and from school. Students must wear their helmets, which is required by law! Once on school property students must lock their bikes to the bike racks with a chain and lock. No scooters or skateboards are allowed on school property, they do not fit in lockers and are not able to be locked to the bike racks.

Q: How much time is there between classes?
A: Students have four minutes in between each class. This is plenty of time to go to lockers, restrooms, and get a drink before arriving to the next class.

Q: How long is lunch break? And is there recess?
A: Students will have 30 minutes for lunch, which includes free time outside or in the gym depending on the weather.

Q: When can I go to my locker?
A: Students may go to their lockers when the first bell of the day rings to put away their backpacks and gather materials for periods 1, 2, and 3. Before lunch students may visit their lockers to put away their materials. It is advised students DO NOT bring their binders or other materials to lunch with them. After lunch, students may visit their lockers to gather materials for periods 4, 5, and 6.
REMEMBER—Before, Before, After, After

*How to Open Your Locker with a Combination*
1. Turn your dial to the right, two or more revolutions (complete turns past zero). Then stop at the first number.
2. Turn the dial to the left, one full turn passing the second number, and stop at the second number.
3. Turn the dial to the right and stop at the last number.
4. Push up on the locker handle and pull to open the door.
5. When done with your locker, make sure the door is locked and all backpack straps, coats, etc. are not hanging out of the locker!
Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What happens if I forget my locker combination?
A: Students need to write their locker combinations on a piece of paper and tuck it into a compartment in their binders. If a student still cannot remember his/her combination, he/she can request their combination with Mrs. Duesterbeck, Security.

Q: Am I allowed to bring my backpack or bag to class?
A: All bags must be stored in your locker. Students are not allowed to bring any backpacks or small bags to class.

Q: How do I earn a free shirt or free dress day?
A: Students may earn a free shirt or free dress day by exchanging their Mustang Merits. Students may also earn free shirt or free dress throughout the school year based on various grade level activities.

Q: Am I allowed to bring my cellphone or electronic device to class?
A: Please understand that Mason is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones. If students choose to carry a cell phone, they must remain silent and out of sight at all times, unless a teacher has given specific permission for cell phones to be used for an academic purpose in a classroom.

Q: Do I get a choice for lunch? When and where do I turn in lunch money?
A: Students may choose from the sandwich line, nacho/taco line, pizza, or the regular entrée line, as determined by the food service department. All lunches include regular milk, chocolate milk, and choice of fruits and vegetables. The cost of a student breakfast is $1.90 and lunch is $3.25. Lunch money can be deposited in the cafeteria or online at www.tacoma.k12.wa.us select Parents > School Meals > Lunch Money Now

Q: Where do I sit at lunch?
A: You may sit anywhere in the lunchroom. Seats are available on a first come, first serve basis. Students may not save seats for their peers.

Q: How do I check my grades online?
A: Students and parents may monitor student progress by checking the Home Access Center. Parents are encouraged to sign-up for notifications when their students grade has dropped below a certain percentage. Each student is assigned their own user name and password. And each parent/guardian is assigned a separate user name and password. If you have multiple students in the district you will be able to see them using one login.
You can obtain your login information from the School Counseling Registrar. The Home Access Center can be found on the district website at www.tacoma.k12.wa.us and selecting Parents > Home Access Center.
Jump Start

**Dates:** August 24 – 27, 2020

**Time:** To Be Determined

**Breakfast:** A breakfast is free for all students from 8:30-9:00am

**Lunch:** A lunch will be provided by TPS Nutrition Services at no cost to students. If preferred, students may bring a lunch from home.

**Supplies:** All students will be provided materials for the week.

**Dress Code:** Mason Dress Code is not required for Jump Start. Students will be in a PE class each day. Please make sure they are dressed for light physical activity with tennis shoes.

**Drop-off/Pickup:** Please make sure your student knows the drop off/pick up plan for each day. Teachers will walk students outside at the end of each day.

**DRIVING:** Drop off/pick up on N 29th Street

**BUS:** Students will be picked up/dropped off at your neighborhood elementary in Mason’s catchment. When at Mason, students will be dropped off/picked up in the bus zone on N 28th Street.

**WALKING:** Students may enter at the West End Parking lot entrance or the cafeteria entrance on N 29th Street.

**Registration:** Please check our Mason [website](#) in the summer for more details

**First day:** On the first day of Jump Start, students will report to the cafeteria. Sixth grade teachers will greet the students and will call the names of their first group of students and led them to their classroom.

**Student Expectations:** During Jump Start students will practice opening lockers, move from class to class like a typical middle school bell schedule, go on a school tour, meet other students and staff, participate in AVID strategies and gain confidence as in incoming middle school student.

Any questions, please contact Ms. Bailey at: [sbailey1@tacoma.k12.wa.us](mailto:sbailey1@tacoma.k12.wa.us)