

Blevins Bear Tracks



Newsletter for Incoming 6th Graders

Dear Incoming 6th grade students and parents/guardians:

Welcome to Blevins Middle School! I am very excited about the 2011-12 school year and our new class of 6th graders...that is you! The purpose of this communication is to get 6th grade parents and 6th grade students as much information as possible at the beginning of summer break in order for you to plan for the upcoming fall semester. The enclosed information will help you and your student with a smooth transition to middle school. We have included many dates and times for the beginning of the 2011-12 school year. Please note that these times and dates are planned to the best of our ability and understand that over a three month break, may need to be adjusted. There will also be an August newsletter, that you should receive in the mail a few weeks before the beginning of school. If, for whatever reason, it does not find you, stop by the Blevins office and pick one up a couple weeks before school is scheduled to begin in August.

To our new incoming students we extend a warm welcome and share with you an excitement as you enter this new stage of development and new school. As Blevins wraps-up the 2010-2011 school year, we are working hard to prepare for the upcoming 2011-2012 school year. At this time, we are developing our master schedule, planning the school calendar, selecting a few new staff hires, and planning for the "kick-off" of a new school year. The sixth grade team of teachers are absolutely awesome and are excited to get to know you and help prepare you for your future.

To our parents, whether as a first time Blevins parent or as a previous parent, Blevins extends our hand as a partner in your child's education. We encourage parents to remain an active partner in their child's education. I hope you will be an active parent participant in our school community.

The fall newsletter will contain more detailed information regarding registration of new students, schedules, locker assignments, fall calendar and upcoming events. I am pleased to report that we will have a 6th grade transition day, where only 6th grade students will attend school on the first day of the fall semester (August 19th).

Blevins is also actively recruiting parents to fill some vacated positions in the building. If you are interested in any of the following, please contact Michele Trujillo or David Linehan @ 488-4000:

- PTO Member
- School Accountability Team Member
- School Volunteer

I hope you find this initial information helpful. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at Blevins at 488-4000. The staff and I look forward to meeting you in the fall!

Sincerely,

David W. Linehan, Principal

May 2011

Inside this issue:

Health Info

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Blevins Mission Statement

Blevins Middle School will create a safe, relevant and challenging learning environment where students, staff and community collaborate to help all students achieve their highest potential.

Health Information for 2011-2012

Please sign up for the Blevins email list by going to the District's website and clicking on "Email Alert Sign-up", and then clicking the box by Blevins.

The email list is an incredibly important communication tool for Blevins, and it is important that we have as many families signed up as possible!



SUMMER MUSIC PROGRAM

July 25th - August 12, 2011 \$50.00



The summer beginning band and orchestra program is a 3 week entry into the wonderful world of band and orchestra in middle school. Classes are separated into like-instruments so we can really focus on getting every student started just right. It is our desire that all students joining their school's beginning band and orchestra will attend this program and participate at the site closest to their middle school. In a lot of cases, students will be studying with their future teacher, and meeting the students they will be spending the next years with. If you are currently on the district free and reduced program, your registration fee can be waived. Registration forms are available in Student Services. Contact Mr. Bretting (488-4021) with band questions, or Mr. Floyd (488-4029) with orchestra questions.

Please watch the Blevins website throughout the summer for important registration information.

<http://eweb.psdschools.org/schools/blevins/>

Immunizations:

AS PER STATE LAW: STUDENTS MUST BE COMPLIANT TO BE IN SCHOOL, YOUR CHILD REQUIRES THESE IMMUNIZATIONS PRIOR TO ATTENDING

BLEVINS:

DTaP/DTP/DT/Td	5 doses
Tdap booster	1 dose (6th - 12th grade)
Polio	4 doses
Hepatitis B	3 doses*
*A 2 dose series is now available for children ages 11-15.	
MMRs	2 doses
Varicella	1 dose grades 5-11 (or disease history from health care provider, parent or guardian.)

A Tdap booster is required for all 6th-12th graders

This is different than the DTaP vaccinations they received as infants and pre-K. The "p" (pertussis) has been added to the standard Td booster in order to protect teens against whooping cough. Your student will be considered "in Process" if they have received a Td booster in the past 2 years. When the 2 years has passed, the requirement will be enforced.

Prior to the 1st day of school, a copy of the immunization record from the doctor's office must be provided to the school.

Please submit proof of these immunizations as soon as possible to your current school. If this is not done, your child will be excluded from school. You may fax immunization records or request your doctor's office to fax this information to Blevins at (970) 488-4011 Attn: Janet Diack. We appreciate your prompt attention and help.

Health Care Action Plans:

Your child is unique. Please give us details about any health concerns that your child may have so we may be of assistance to your child at school. The school nurse will review any information you provide and a Health Care Plan may be developed. Health Care Action Plan forms are available in the Health Office (**and must be renewed yearly**). This form must be signed by a parent/guardian and a physician. Parents/guardians may fax Health Care Action Plans to the physician to sign. Return the signed forms to Blevins for the 2011-12 school year.

- Migraines or frequent headaches
- Astmas, especially Inhaler users
- Diabetes
- Seizures
- Severe allergies, especially Epipen users
- Any other conditions needing special attention and/or care.

Medication at School:

All medications (doctor prescribed or over-the-counter) given at school must be accompanied by a PSD Medication Release form for the 2011-2012 school year. This form must be signed by a parent/guardian and a physician. The medication must be provided to Blevins in the original prescription bottle accompanied by the completed PSD Medication Release form. Medication must be brought to school by parent/guardian. Students may carry their inhaler or Epipen/antihistamine for a severe allergic reaction, but a medication permission form must be completed and kept on file in the health office for the current school year. Health Care Action Plans and medication forms are available online at psdschools.org, or on the Blevins website.

The School Nurse and Blevins Health Tech want to meet the needs of your child to insure a safe and healthy school year. For any questions please call the Blevins Health Clinic at 488-4007. Thank you for your assistance.

Amy Asher, RN, MSN, NP, School Nurse
Janet Diack, Health Technician

Free and Reduced Lunch Program Application

If you qualified for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program during the 2010-2011 school year, *you will automatically be mailed a 2011-2012 application.*

If you think you might qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program for the 2011-2012 school year, please request an application from Deb Caskey beginning Monday, Aug. 8, 2011.

Non-Permission Forms / Photos, Videos, Internet and Email

Classroom activities and events sponsored by school occasionally are photographed or video taped.

Use of the Internet and electronic mail are used as a tool to complete some assignments and projects.

If you **do not** want your child to be photographed, video taped, have access to the internet and/or have an email account you must sign and return a Non-Permission Form to Student Services. *Forms may be obtained online at <http://www.psdschools.org/schools/blevins/> under Parent Info, in the Student Services office, or during orientation.

A new form must be submitted at the beginning of every school year.

IMPORTANT DATES

DATES FOR AUGUST 2011


August 16, Tues. 8:00-9:30 am
7th/8th grade schedules and lockers issued.

August 16, Tues. 10:00-11:30 am
6th grade schedules and lockers issued.

August 19, Fri. 6th Grade ONLY First day of school

August 22, Mon. All Students in school.

August 22, Mon. 6:00-7:00 pm
6th grade Open House for parents and students



Watch for the August newsletter for important dates on schedule and locker distribution. Yearbooks will be on sale during locker and schedule distributions. Get yours early for a lower price!

BLEVINS SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST

(All students must have a Blevins planner on the first day of school)

6TH GRADE LIST

- Blevins planner (purchase at school)
- 3 pocket folders
- 1 spiral notebook
- 3 composition notebooks
- 1 Spiral graph paper notebook (NOT a pad). These can be found at Target and WalMart.
- 1 - 3 ring zippered binder
- 3 - 1 1/2 " 3 ring binders (these binders will be kept in class to organize class materials for Science, Math, and Language Arts)
- 3 packages of dividers (8-12 tab)
- 1 pencil pouch
- 1 pair of adult scissors
- Big eraser

***Note:** We do not require book covers for text books.

The following items will be collected in homeroom and put in a community tub to be shared amongst class members.

- 1 - 3x5 index cards
- 1 - colored pencils (Crayola/RoseArt 8-10 pack)
- 1 package highlighters (4 colors)
- 1 markers (Crayola/RoseArt 8-10 pack) No Sharpies
- 2 glue sticks (no bottles or rubber cement)
- 1 - Ream of white copy paper
- 2 large pkgs loose leaf, wide ruled white paper (1 shared, 1 kept in locker)
- 2 pkgs/24 ct #2 pencils (1 shared, 1 kept in locker)
- 3 large boxes of Kleenex
- 2 dry erase markers

Optional:

- 1 gallon storage bags (boys)
- 1 quart plastic bags (girls)
- Bright color copy paper
- Hand sanitizer

Dress Code Reminder!

Before buying new school clothes for your student, please review the Blevins Dress Code (taken directly from the Blevins Handbook).

In an effort to create an environment that focuses on student achievement, students are expected to dress in a manner that is not disruptive to the educational process or constitute a health or safety hazard. **Rule of Thumb...If you have to ask yourself, "Is this clothing school acceptable"; then it probably is NOT.**

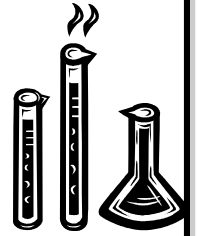
School is the business and professional work environment for students. Clothing should be appropriate for school and school activities. Clothing and other forms of personal appearance should not distract from the learning environment and should not be intimidating. The following Dress Code guidelines have been developed:

- Short skirts and short shorts are not allowed.
- Clothing must cover underwear, midriff, chest, back and buttocks.
- Half shirts, see-through shirts, mesh shirts, halter-tops, tube tops, or any tops without a back will not be allowed.
- Tank tops are not permitted—does not matter the width of the strap.
- Caps, hats, bandanas, handkerchiefs, masks, chains, and sunglasses are not permitted to be worn during school hours, unless specific notification has been given by the administration
- Heavy coats/trench coats are not to be worn in school. These items should be stored in a student locker only; it is your responsibility to dress appropriately for the weather. Always have a sweater, sweatshirt or lightweight zip-up in your locker for cooler conditions.
- Clothing or jewelry which promotes alcohol, drugs, tobacco, sexuality, profanity or anything that could be used as a weapon will not be allowed.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- Drawings and/or writings on skin or clothing that are inappropriate for school or a distraction to the school environment are not allowed.
- Tattoos must be covered at all times.
- Any manner of grooming or apparel, including clothing, jewelry, hats, emblems, bandanas and badges, which by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, or other attribute is associated with or denotes membership in or affiliation with any gang, will not be allowed. (This includes color of clothing & brand names.)
- Torn clothing

Meet the 6th Grade Team

Mary-Pat Hulse

I can't believe it is time to welcome another group of incoming 6th graders to Blevins! I teach Math and Science. In addition to teaching, I coach Science Olympiad and want to see YOU join the team. In the Fall I also run the 6th grade Science Fair. If you love math and science, come and check out my room, Rm. 140. Outside of school, my two children, two dogs, cat, and two reptiles keep me busy with baseball, volleyball, and skiing. When I have a few minutes to myself, I love to scrapbook and read. I plan on having a stellar year with you next year!



Den Kraus



I am excited to be starting my 14th year teaching. I am originally from Ohio and moved to Fort Collins in 2001 with my husband, Dirk. We have a 4-year-old son, Jayden, and 1 1/2 year old twins Allia and Riley. The kids keep us very busy. We also have 2 boxers, as well as a wonderful cat. I love the outdoors. We enjoy hiking, camping, skiing, and snowshoeing. I am also an avid reader. I teach language arts and social studies and am looking forward to an incredible year!

Mike Foster

My name is Mike Foster, but I am often called Mr. Foz. I live in Loveland with my wife, son, and daughter, who is also a middle schooler. I grew up in Fort Collins and returned here with my family a few years ago. I love teaching Sixth Grade - I left the elementary schools so that I could be your teacher! I really have fun teaching science, geography and math, and have been involved behind-the-scenes with these subjects in addition to teaching. I hope that you'll end up having as much fun as I do, and will come to love these subjects through your Blevins experience!



Becky Duran



I am excited to start my 12th year teaching at Blevins. I love math and science, and I hope you will too. I have two kids who are 7 and 5, a husband, a great dane, and a llama. I've lived in Fort Collins since I was two years old. I went to Beattie Elementary, Boltz and Webber for junior high, and graduated from Rocky Mountain High School. I have a Physical Science degree with minors in Mathematics and Geology, along with a masters degree in Gifted and Talented Education. I enjoy anything outdoors, swimming, and being with my kids.

Janett Steeples

I have enjoyed 24 years in the Poudre School District, teaching grades 4 through 8. 6th grade is my favorite grade to teach because I like the curriculum and love the kids. I have lived in Fort Collins for over 30 years and am blessed with one son and one grandson. I have raised all sorts of farm animals on my small farms. My hobbies are reading travel, and working outside on my land. Next year I will take kids on a Spring Break trip to France, so watch for upcoming news about the trip in 2012.



Gabby Wymore



I will be teaching 6th grade social studies next year. I am really excited to be part of the 6th grade team and to make this first year of middle school a wonderful experience. This is my 6th year teaching social studies. I grew up right here in Ft. Collins, and even went to Blevins and Rocky! I have a 9 year old son named Austin who will be a 4th grader next year at Kruse. I have a 9 year old cat (Ember) and a 1 year old puppy (Buddy). In my free time I enjoy watching my son's sports, and I am training for various running races and just completed my first half-marathon. I look forward to next year - getting to know you and teaching you about the Western Hemisphere!

Frequently Asked Questions

We know you have many questions about what to expect next year for your 6th grade student. Transitions can be difficult for any child no matter what the grade level change is. Please feel free to contact the Blevins 6th grade team with your questions.

What interaction will 6th grade students have with 7th and 8th graders?

The 6th grade classrooms and lockers are all grouped in the SE corner of the building. Restrooms are located near this area, but are communal. During passing periods and lunch, hallways and the cafeteria are heavily supervised. Your student will move throughout the building to travel to their 6th grade electives. Interaction with other grades may occur during these times. 6th grade students will not have classes with the other grades unless they are in an advanced math class.

Will my child have a homeroom teacher?

Middle school homerooms have a different structure than elementary homerooms. Your student will have a teacher advocate assigned to them at the beginning of the year who will connect with, and advocate for your child.

What kind of homework should I expect my child to have?

District policy is approximately 10 minutes of homework for each grade level. Your student should expect to have up to an hour of homework per night. The 6th grade team meets regularly to discuss class calendars to avoid overlapping test and project due dates.

Will my child have an assignment notebook?

All students are required to purchase a Blevins planner. You may purchase the planner at the beginning of the year from the front office. The planner is used to record daily assignments and, it is your student's hall-pass. We expect you to check the planner daily for homework, test due dates and project due dates.

How will I monitor my student's grades and missing assignments?

Grades are updated at a minimum every two weeks in our electronic grade book. These grades are available for you to view through Pinnacle Grade Viewer (PIV). At the beginning of the school year your student will receive their password; their PIV username is their student ID number. At the beginning of the year you will receive information regarding specific teacher policies and procedures.

How many teachers will my student have?

Your student will have 2-3 teachers who will teach the core subjects of Math, Science, English and Social Studies. The number of elective teachers your child has depends upon the electives your student is taking.

Lockers???

As a grade level team, one of our priorities is developing good organizational skills. We will have consistent expectations and policies among the 6th grade team regarding being prepared for learning and class.

What kind of discipline philosophy is used at Blevins Middle School?

Blevins uses a powerful school wide model called Discovery for teaching positive choices in behavior, social skills, and problem solving. Students are directly taught the expectations of the classroom and school environment allowing more opportunities for success both academically and socially. You will see the 6 P's posted throughout the school and in every classroom giving students real clarity of what is expected of them. Through the use of Discovery, a sense of community is established with positive support system in place for every student.

Other Questions?

Contact the 6th Grade Team and we will be happy to answer your questions.

Blevins Middle School Standards Based Grading Guidelines

The purpose of this communication is to explain details related to Standards-Based Grading and how it impacts your student and the reporting of grades at Blevins. The 2011-12 school-year will mark the third year that Blevins has utilized the Standards-Based Grading System. All students will receive two separate grades in each class. (Content Knowledge/Standards and Work Habits) This system aligns with Blevins's commitment to provide rigorous curriculum for all students that meet state standards-based requirements. While Blevins is one of the first four middle schools in Poudre School District to implement SBG, it is neither new nor experimental. Many districts around Colorado have utilized this system for several years, and schools throughout the country have been using similar systems for over a decade. This document explains how Content Knowledge/Standards Grades and Work Habits Grades will be determined and reported. This system of grading and reporting will communicate more effectively student's mastery of district/state standards, and the development of student work habits.

The advantage of this system over the previous traditional grading system can be demonstrated through the following example:

Charlene is a kindergarten student. The essential learning standard to be achieved is the ability to count to 10. On the first assessment Charlene was only able to count to 2 or 20%. On the next assessment, she was able to count to 3 or (30%). On the following assessment, she was able to count to 5 or (50%). On the final assessment, Charlene met the standard by counting to 10 fluently with no mistakes. On this final assessment she received 10 out of 10 or 100%.

In the traditional grading system her assessments would be averaged and her grade therefore would be a 50% or F. With standards-based grading, Charlene would receive a "4" which would communicate her proficiency of the standard at an advanced level. Using the new grading system will more clearly reflect what a student has accomplished regarding his/her learning and what he/she is able to achieve. It will help students, teachers and parents understand who needs additional help to learn the material and what standard needs to be addressed.

How are Content Grades determined?

Content Grades are based on student demonstration of academic achievement on assessments measuring proficiency on district/state standards. Assessments will be weighted as 90% and practice/homework will be weighted 10% of the final grade. Grades will be determined through the use of multiple assessments over time as well as the opportunity for retakes, when necessary. Retake opportunities/multiple opportunities for demonstration of learning are an integral part of standards-based grading system and one of the attributes that separate it from a traditional grading system.

How are Work Habits grades determined?

Work Habits Grades are based on student demonstration of behaviors related to work completion, preparedness for learning, participation, and following classroom expectations. These behaviors contribute to academic success, as well as the ability to be life-long learners and positive contributors to society. Specifically, work habits grades are based on tasks that are assigned for practice or preparation, including homework completion and homework quality and by other factors such as class participation, work ethic, neatness, effort, attendance, punctuality of assignments, class behavior and attitude, student notebooks and journals.

What does 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0 mean?

This system translates easily to traditional grades as follows:

Numeral "4" = A = 90 – 100% = "Advanced" = Exceeds standards/checkpoints for this grading period.

Numeral "3" = B = 80– 89% = "Proficient" = Meets standards/checkpoints for this grading period.

Numeral "2" = C = 70 – 79% = "Partially Proficient/Developing" = is progressing toward standards/checkpoints for the grading period.

Numeral "1" = D = 60 – 69% = "In-Progress" or "Emerging" = Does not meet standards/checkpoints for this grading period. Interventions are necessary for standards/checkpoints in this grading period.

Numeral "0" = F = 59 = "I" or "Insufficient Evidence." Interventions are necessary for standards/checkpoints in this grading period.

Assessments (commonly known as tests) are 90% of a student’s grade. The reason for this is assessments best reflect what the student can really do independently. Homework/practice is also given a grade, but it ultimately counts for only 10% of the grade. Homework is important work but may involve help from peers and adults (parents, teachers). It is the work that leads to the point where a student can demonstrate on an assessment that they have achieved proficiency on the learning target.

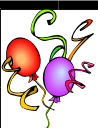
Report Cards


Report Cards will reflect both an academic grade and work habits grade (in the comment section.)

Academic Grades -For the 2011-12 school-year, Report Cards will reflect an A, B, C, D, and F “letter grade” reported to parents and students. However, in reality, these letter grades correlate to a 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 scale of proficiency. Assessment and assignment grades in Gradebook will be represented by the 0-4 scale and then be converted to a letter grade. Gradebook will also “weight” the two grading categories: 10% for practice/homework and 90% for assessments. So when a letter grade is reported, translate it to a number based on the following scale. In addition to report cards with letter grades, parents and students will be able to view student progress, related to standards, on the district computer grade reporting system (Pinnacle Grade Viewer).

Report Card Scale Points

<i>Mastery Score</i>	<i>Scale</i>	<i>Mastery Levels</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>
4	3.5 and above	Advanced	A
3	2.6 – 3.4	Proficient	B
2	1.7 – 2.5	Partially Proficient	C
1	1.1 – 1.6	In Progress	D
0	0 -1.0	Insufficient Evidence	F



You are invited! 

Mark your calendars: August 30 at 6:30 pm

The Blevins Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is hosting an open house where parents/guardians can find out more about getting involved at Blevins.

Attending PTO is a great way to learn more about the school and staff and meet the parents of your children’s friends! PTO sponsors a couple of activities each year and supports one fundraiser that enhances classrooms and programs at the school. Your input is welcomed and appreciated and we hope that you will stop by on August 30 to find out more about this fun group!

Get On Board for a tour
of **FABULOUS**
FRANCE with the
Blevins Globetrotters,
Spring Break 2012.
Watch for more information in upcoming
newsletters.

