Welcome to the 2013 School year. I am Mrs. Witherell, the Navigators math teacher. I am excited to get started with the concepts and applications in mathematics. The district is in our first full year of our new math textbook that we are implementing this school year. Students will be receiving pass codes to be able to log in to the textbook website after Labor Day. We will be focusing on problem solving strategies and applications this year in all math classes. Students will be taking two math acuity tests during the year, two diagnostic math tests, one during each semester, as well as, the Nebraska State Mathematics Test in April. I am available a few days after school for additional help. Please contact me at keri.witherell@ops.org or call 402-557-4300 to set up afterschool help for your child.

Mrs. Witherell will be covering integers, decimals, fractions and basic math operations of real numbers in 7th grade Pre-Algebra during first quarter. In Pre-algebra, students will focus on the real number system. Students will acquire skills and understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of integers, decimals, fractions, and whole numbers during the first quarter. Students will also be exposed to divisibility rules, the properties of zero, square roots, and scientific notation during this time. Students will move into proportional reasoning and data analysis during the second quarter.

Mrs. Witherell’s seventh grade math classes will be investigating proportional reasoning and percents during the first quarter. The concepts of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of integers, decimals, fractions, and whole numbers will be studied during the second quarter, as well as, coordinate geometry. Students will focus on rational numbers during the first semester. Students will be exposed to number sense, ratios, and proportions, coordinate plane, and transformations during the first semester. Real world applications and estimation skills will be incorporated into most lessons.

Navigator students will be earning Gator stamps in all of their core classes for their safe, responsible, and respectful behaviors. At the end of each quarter, students will cash in their Gator stamps for a reward of some kind. If anyone has any connections to discounts or donations involving businesses in the Omaha area, we are always looking for additional support for our students. Please contact Mrs. Witherell either by email at keri.witherell@ops.org or call 557-4300. Thanks for your support.

My name is Matthew Twit, and I am the Resource teacher for the Navigator team. The Navigator Study Skills class is off to a wonderful start. This year I have the good fortune of having a student teacher. Ms. Mary Johnson will be joining me as we pre-teach, re-teach, and enrich content from all core subjects. We also address social skills, and organization. Ms. Johnson and I look forward to a great 2013-14 school year!

Welcome back to school and the start of wild adventures as we explore the world in 7th grade Humanities with Mr. Schmidt. Our young geographers have been busy dusting off their map skills before setting sail for North Africa and Southwest Asia. Our students mastered the arts of reading and interpreting maps using a map key, using a map scale to figure out distances between locations, and finding places using coordinates, latitude and longitude, as we worked with various types of maps. Who needs a G.P.S. device when you have latitude and longitude skills? Certainly not our Navigator students! Our map skills will be extremely valuable as we travel along the beautiful waterways and sparse deserts of North Africa and Southwest Asia.

Our students will start their exploration of Southwest Asia or the Middle East by surveying its geography. Did you know the region of the Middle East is only slightly larger than our 48 continental states? In addition, most people before the 1900’s traveled by camel caravans because of the vast deserts and little water sources in this region. We will also be examining the Fertile Crescent region, between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, in modern-day Iraq. The Middle East is not only the “birthplace of modern civilization,” but is also the birthplace of three major religions; Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. Our young explorers will compare and contrast these three religions and discuss the culture(s) associated with these belief systems. Our major goal is to clarify and erase any incorrect stereotypes that may exist about these three religions and their followers. Next, we will set out to determine the role oil plays in the economic development of Southwest Asia and examine the United States relationship with this region due to the resource. Did you know that Saudi Arabia is home to more than 260 billion barrels of oil? No wonder 90% of Saudi Arabia’s income comes from “black gold”! Finally, the last stop on our tour of this region will be the United Arab Emirates. Who wouldn’t want to stay in the world’s only seven star hotel for only $2,000 per night, while having an island built for yourself in the Persian Gulf! Eventually
we’ll have to leave our seven star hotel and man-made islands and travel to the world’s second largest continent….Africa. Buckle up; it’s going to be an amazing voyage!

Welcome to Language A with Mrs. Fischer. I’m very glad to have your child in my class and I’m eager to get to know them as the year progresses. During the year, we will read several novels and complete projects, papers, and assignments that are in real world contexts. Along with in-class activities and novels, every student is required to carry an independent reading novel at all times. I ask that they take these books home and read them there as well. Independent reading is proven to increase test scores, therefore it’s important that parents and guardians reinforce our efforts of improving test scores and ask their child questions and engage them in discussions about their books. Together, we can make our students better readers, writers, and international citizens. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns throughout the year!

It certainly has been enjoyable meeting the new 7th grade Navigator students here at Lewis and Clark. As new students, the Navigators struggled a bit with getting lockers to open correctly using a combination of numbers. We also struggled with getting lunch ordered and finding correct classrooms. But after settling into a daily routine, our Navigators have survived the first few weeks of school.

In Mr. DeWald’s science classes, students have learned safety procedures within science laboratories, the five parts of the scientific method, and the five levels of environmental organization. Students are also learning that science is very organized and we are maintaining a 3-ring binder with all completed assignments in it. The binder will be turned in at the end of the quarter graded for work completion and organization.

In the first quarter, students will also design a hot air balloon using the five parts to the scientific method. The balloon will be launched on a predetermined course. Students will have one week to research the project and demonstrate their proficiency of using the scientific method. Also in the first quarter, students will be able to describe the functions of producers, consumers, and decomposers in an ecosystem. We will study and be able to distinguish between a food chain and a food web. In the unit of environmental science, students will also be made aware of global warming, seasonal change and the carbon footprint that man leaves on earth each day.

As always, it is a pleasure having your child in my science class and I hope this new year at school is an enjoyable one.

Pathfinders

Currently in the Pre-Algebra math classes with Mrs. LaFleur, we are working on integers and square roots. Students will be taking their first unit test in the next couple of weeks and then will move on to fractions. The students finished their first project for math on September 6 and can expect to get another one shortly after. In the Math 7 classes, we have started in with the new textbooks and are working on rates and proportions. All of the classes have jumped right into math with a positive attitude and a hard work ethic. I am very impressed with the manners and behaviors of all the students and can not wait for the rest of the school year. Please feel free to contact me at Kelly.lafluer@ops.org anytime in regard to your child’s academics.

In Language Arts with Mrs. Franson, we began making "All About Me” posters and will spend some time writing about our posters on block day. Students will also be doing some comparison work with other students and their posters. From that, we will be looking at the many parts of speech and review how to use them appropriately.

This quarter we will also be reading a book titled Freak the Mighty. It’s is a great book to start the year and get our reading and writing skills dusted off.

I am excited for this year and am really impressed with our Pathfinder group of students. If you have any questions, please contact me at jane.franson@ops.org.

In science with Mrs. Rinn, we are off to a great start for the school year. Pathfinders are settling in nicely and everyone can open their own lockers! We have reviewed the steps of the scientific method and science safety. Your child should have brought home a science safety contract for you to sign. This year we will be using consumable textbooks. Those will be passed out to the students in September. First quarter we will focus on our ecology unit. Students will learn how the environment is organized, photosynthesis, how organisms are divided into groups based on their energy source, and how biotic and abiotic factors impact organisms.

In Mr. Behne’s Humanities 7 classes, Pathfinders have been exploring the ins and outs of culture. Students have taken a deeper look at what makes up culture, what can effect culture, and how culture can adapt over time. Students have been working on the “Who am I?” project over the first couple of weeks, by bringing a cultural artifact about themselves to show to the class, creating a letter addressed to Mr. Behne about their own personal culture, and constructing a culture mural to visualize what their culture is all about.

Students are posed a weekly reflection question the first day of each week, and have all week to use what they learn in class to answer it. On the last day of the week, students turn in their reflections on a piece of regular loose-leaf paper. This standing assignment will take place every week of the school year, so keep an eye out for these questions, and ask your children what they are trying to answer each week.

Our next area of study is Southwest Asia, or the Middle East. We will tackle a variety of subjects for the remainder of the quarter while studying Southwest Asia including geography, history, and governments of the region. Students will be working on a unit project at the end of the quarter where they will be
applying what they learn to create their own “island” of Southwestern Asia.

Keep checking those agendas and online for all your child’s progress. I update frequently, and am happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Pride

Ms. Kloppenborg’s 7th and 8th grade Study Skills classes have gotten off to a fantastic start this year! We have been focusing on getting organized so that we can be as successful as possible in middle school and in life. We have been working on deepening our understanding of concepts presented in our core classes, such as integers, rates, and proportions in math class and identifying parts of speech in Language Arts. This week, we completed our first Study Skills tutorial session of the year. Tutorials take place every Thursday and are a chance for students to bring in questions from their core classes and get help from their classmates. It’s a great way for students to teach one another and have a consistent place to get help with whatever they need. Ms. Kloppenborg is looking forward to the rest of the school year and is positive that this will be the best one yet!

Happy New School Year! We are off to a tremendous start in Ms. Croisant’s Humanities. In my 7th grade classrooms we are beginning with some basic geography and mapping skills. Students will be locating cities using latitude and longitude coordinates, determining the distance between cities using a map scale, and exploring all the different types of information that can be displayed on a map. From there we will move into a unit on comparative religions, learning about the history and traditions of the world’s major religions.

Eighth grade Humanities students also started with some basic geography skills and a review of the American Revolution. We will be spending much of this quarter on the Constitution, first looking at the Articles of Confederation and the problems that document created. We will compare and contrast the views of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists and hold a debate to understand the conflicts and compromises involved in writing and ratifying our Constitution.

All students are expected to complete a current event summary each week. Seventh graders should focus on world news, and 8th graders on US news. I will have a supply of newspapers in the classroom, but they may also use the Internet, television or radio news, or magazines as sources. This is a great opportunity for discussions at home; schedule a weekly “current event session” with the whole family!

Ms. Kloppenborg is the Pride math teacher. We are excited to get started with the concepts and applications in mathematics! This is the first year with our new books in Math 7, Pre-Algebra, and Algebra. We will be focusing on problem solving strategies and applications this year in all math classes. Students will be taking two math Acuity tests during the year, as well as, the Nebraska State Mathematics Test. I am available for afterschool for help from 2:40 to 3:30 Tuesday through Thursday. In addition to this, I hold a study session every Wednesday from 3:00 to 3:30. Please contact me at mariel.kloppenborg@ops.org or call 402-557-5633 if you have any questions or concerns.

Students in Math 7 have been exploring the differences and similarities between ratios, rates, and unit rates. They have also been investigating the concept of proportions. They will be able to solve the missing piece of a proportion and decide if two ratios are proportional or non-proportional.

Students in Pre-Algebra have been covering basic integer operations using positive and negative numbers. They have used various models for adding and subtracting integers. They will also be exploring multiplying and dividing integers in the next week. Throughout the year we will be discussing the value of having good estimation skills.

Ms. Kloppenborg’s Algebra class have been reviewing this first week but will jump into investigating Expressions. They will look at how to combine like terms, substitute a quantity for a variable. They will be explore the distributive, associative, and commutative property. It shaping up to be a great year!

Welcome Pride Parents! My name is Jessica Leisure and I am thrilled to have your child this year in Language A. This is my second year at Lewis and Clark and I love being a Trailblazer.

This year in Ms. Leisure’s Language A class, all students are required to have a composition notebook that they bring to class every day. Please remind your child to bring his/her notebook to class. Another way you can help your child be successful is by checking his/her agenda every night. We will take time in class to fill out agendas every day with any assignments or upcoming tests. Checking agendas each night will help your child stay on top of school work and not fall behind. If you have any questions for me, please feel free to email me at any time at Jessica.leisure@ops.org or call the Lewis and Clark main and ask for Ms. Leisure. I look forward to getting to know you and your student this year! Go TEAM PRIDE!

Welcome to Mrs. Tingelhoff’s Team Pride Science. This year I have the pleasure to teach Science 7, Science 8 and Physical Science and thus will have all Team Pride Students in my class. This is my 11th year teaching science at Lewis and Clark and I can only hope that this year will match or exceed my experiences from previous years. I look forward to working with all Team Pride students and families this year as we work to make this year the best it can be.

All three levels of science are interdisciplinary in that the topics that are covered range over the course of the year. Science 7 curriculum will cover units in Ecology, Human Body, Heredity, Weather and Earth’s Systems, and Space Science. Science 8 will cover units in Chemistry, Physics and Energy. Our Physical Science students will begin the year with a unit in Chemistry and then move on to Physics, Energy and Space Science.
As students begin this year, they have constructed an ISN or Interactive Science Notebook. This notebook will be used daily in class and outside of class. The notebook will serve as a place to record both input (teacher given) and output (student given) activities. As students work with the material presented in class they will have a chance to demonstrate their understanding through work in the ISN. Ask your child to see his/her ISN for a chance to see what has been going on in Science Class.

**Pioneers**

Students in Ms. Selks’s Pioneer Study Skills will be working on a variety of skills that are important to classroom success. We have had a great start, and we are looking forward to a wonderful year together. Other than Study Skills, I can also be found co-teaching in Pioneer core classes with our amazing team of teachers. If you have any questions or concerns please don’t hesitate to contact me: Theresa Selk at 402-557-4300 ext. 7341 or Theresa.selk@ops.org

Welcome to Mrs. Larson’s Pioneer Science. We begin the year with a chemistry unit after we learn proper lab procedures, the scientific method, and the routine of classroom procedures. Grades are based on unit tests, quizzes, activities, and labs. How do your children prepare for those? By participating daily in class, doing bell work regularly, and keeping on task in class. Be sure to ask your child what is going on in science class.

Hello Pioneer Humanities Students and Parents! What an exciting first few weeks we have had in Mr. Geert’s Humanities classes studying about the early history of the United States in the 18th century. Students have learned why the U.S. Colonies and England grew apart, how the Constitutional Convention worked, and even danced like people in the 1700s! Next up, students will be analyzing what the U.S. Constitution was all about and, more importantly, how it shaped our country. Each week, the Pioneer team does send home an email detailing what your child is doing for the week in their classes. We also attach any and all homework to the email. If you are not receiving those emails and would like to, be sure to email me at matt.geerts@ops.org and I will get you on the list! Do not hesitate to call me or email me (always the best way!) if you have any questions about the class. It’s been a great few weeks so far and I cannot wait to dive into this U.S. Constitution! Go Blazer Pioneers!

Welcome to the 2013-14 school year Pioneers! Eighth grade is a fantastic year for our Language Arts students in Mrs. Mitchell’s classes. We will be working on our writing and reading skills all year as we strive to prepare ourselves for the next leg in our educational journey.

This quarter, Pioneer students will be working with verbs, adjectives, and articles in their grammar for writing workbooks. We will be practicing these parts of speech along with learning various ways to utilize 6-Trait Writing and Step Up to Writing to improve our writing skills.

For our class novel, we will be reading Touching Spirit Bear by Ben Mikaelsen. I am so excited to read this novel with our students this year, not only because it is a terrific read, but also for another exciting reason. Ms. Leibrandt, our librarian, has arranged for the author to come visit and talk with our students!

Please be sure to check your e-mail for weekly reports from the team and grade updates for my class. If you have questions or concerns, I can always be reached at amy.mitchell@ops.org. Thank you for the opportunity to educate your child.

What a fantastic way start to the 2013-2014 school year. I am Mrs. Medeiros and teach Algebra and Pre-Algebra for team Pioneer. I am thrilled to be back at Lewis and Clark and on the Pioneer team. We have a phenomenal group of students who are ready to learn! So far in Pre-Algebra we have learned operations using integers. Later on this quarter we will explore decimals, fractions, and probability. Algebra students got a little break from learning new material, but instead got to show me what they learned last year. They are READY for algebra! We are starting off by learning about mathematical properties and will later explore expression, equations and functions. I am so anxious to see how these students grow over the next nine months.

**Corps of Discovery**

So far in Mrs. Wing’s Study Skills this year we have been reviewing and previewing material that we talk about in science, math, and language arts. Some activities that we have done are starting the 4 square model which helps students with their writing process. Another activity would be with rates and unit rates. Students can also utilize Study Skills for a time to catch up on things when we have a few minutes to spare at the end of class. Students need to remember to bring all materials to class just in case they do have that time to work.

Welcome to the 2013-2014 school year. I am excited to work with your sons and daughters this year. During the first two weeks of school, Mrs. Madej’s Corps of Discovery Language A students have been reviewing story elements, literary terms in preparation for a short story unit. After the short story unit, we will shift our focus to descriptive writing for the district writing assessment which will take place later in the fall. In addition to the district writing assessment, Corps students will also complete an Acuity reading assessment this fall. Data from these assessments will serve as a base line for each student. This information will be helpful in preparing for NeSA-W and NeSA-R which all 8th graders will complete during second semester. If you have any questions concerning the Corps Language A curriculum or your son’s or daughter’s progress, you may contact me by sending an email to deborah.madej@ops.org.

Welcome to the 2013-14 school year Corps of Discovery, families! Eighth-grade humanities with Mrs. Ortega is all about
Blazer News

American history from 1776 to the early 1900s. Students will learn to read, think, and write like historians in our study of important figures and events of American history. Students will work to discover various perspectives of historical events while growing as globally-minded citizens. Consideration will be given to events happening around the world during the period of time that we study. While studying many pivotal events in American history, students will be encouraged to read deeper into and ask questions of texts and documents that tell the stories of our nation.

The Corps of Discovery student historians have just finished the study of how our Constitution was written and what our national government looks like. Ask your child what delegate and state he/she represented at the Constitutional Convention.

Honors Language Arts

Honors Language Arts is the class formerly known as Honors Special Projects. When Lewis and Clark became an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme World School, the name, and content, somewhat, needed to be changed to fulfill the IB requirements. This class meets the needs of the high ability learners and takes the place of Language Arts.

Ms. Stern’s Honors Language Arts classes have started the year getting to know each other through our writing. Seventh grade students created a letter to tell all about themselves. The eighth graders wrote a personal narrative. Both grades worked through the writing process and six traits. Writing and reading are important skills to help us become life-long learners.

The 2013-14 National History Day theme is Rights and Responsibilities in History. All students will create a History Day project and have the option to compete in the district competition. Last year, many students competed and went on to state. Several 8th graders who are now freshmen in high school, won at the state level and represented Lewis and Clark at the National History Day Competition in Washington, DC.—yahoo! History Day will get under way in late October or early November. This is a major project that involves intense research in and out of school. Students find that all the hard work pays off in the end. Something amazing to look forward to!

Honors Language Arts students are required to read for a total of 150 minutes per week. This reading time should be kept in their agendas and signed monthly by a parent. The reading logs will be checked each quarter. In addition, each quarter students will do a different project.

Lastly, all HLA students have the opportunity to travel to New York on March 9-12. Information has been sent home. Parents are also able to join us on the trip. It is a great way to see a little bit of a lot of sights in New York.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns, I can be reached at melissa.stern@ops.org. I am excited for a year of hard work, new adventures and a little fun!

Honors Math

The Honor Geometry and Honors Algebra classes with Mrs. Cain wasted no time putting the new books to good use. This is a typical Geometry question, can you answer it? Point P is located on the line segment between point A(1, 4) and point D (7, 13). The distance from A to P is twice the distance from P to D. What are the coordinates of point P? Here is a typical Algebra question, can you answer it? Does the Commutative Property sometimes, always or never hold for subtraction? Explain your reasoning.

Geometry answer: P(5, 10)
Algebra answer: Sometimes; when a number is subtracted by itself then it holds but otherwise it does not.

Instrumental Music

Welcome to a new year of instrumental music with Mrs. Short. We are already off to a fantastic start! First quarter we will be focusing on how “Practice makes permanent!” The students will learn different practicing techniques to make a better performance.

This year, our Winter Concert will be a combined concert with Vocal & Instrumental Music. It will be Tuesday, December 3, 2013 at 7:00PM in the Lewis & Clark Auditorium. Please mark your calendars! We look forward to seeing you there! Mrs. Short

Spanish News

¡Bienvenidos a la clase de español! In Language B, Spanish 7 with Señora Therkelsen, we set up our composition books on Wednesday, August 21st and Thursday, August 22nd. The books will turn into the students’ personal textbooks. They are to bring their composition books to class EVERYDAY. In addition to their composition book, students should have a folder with loose-leaf paper, a pen or pencil and a daily assignment, when applicable.

We have been learning the alphabet and punctuation. Week two also added “10 Great Reasons to Learn Spanish” and numbers one to 100. Also during the pre-chapter, we focused on commands, common words and phrases, subject pronouns, and days, months & seasons. Chapter one will review what we have already learned as well as the verb-ser (to be), time and additional vocabulary. If you have any questions, I can be reached at 402-557-4300 ext. 7312 or heather.therkelsen@ops.org.

¡Hasta pronto! Señora Therkelsen

French News

Bonjour! My name is Mademoiselle Koch and I am the new 7th grade French teacher at Lewis and Clark! I’ve had a great first few weeks getting to know all of my students and I think it
will be a fun year. We have learned how to greet people by asking how they are doing and what their names are. We are also starting to learn numbers, days of the week, and months so that we can tell other people when our birthday is. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me at Stephanie.koch@ops.org

Madame McCormick’s 8th grade French classes are learning about fine dining and l’art de table. Food is a very important part of the French culture so we will spend all semester learning about eating food, preparing food and shopping for food! Our unit project is to practice dining à la française at home. Merci parents and guardians in advance for your assistance.

Excursion à la française! Twenty French students visited Joslyn Art Museum on Saturday, August 24th to see the “Renoir to Chagall: Paris and the Allure of Color” exhibition. Joined by teachers Madame McCormick and Mademoiselle Koch and several parents, the Trailblazers also enjoyed delicious crêpes at The Corner Crêperie. Look for more French class excursions in the near future!

Club Ciné began Thursday, September 5th. French Club members will learn about French cinema and be able to watch films in French with English subtitles. We will be designing a t-shirt and brainstorming ideas for a fundraiser so we can add to our film library. Members need to have an activity card and, if they use OPS transportation, need to be enrolled in the after school program.

Family Consumer Science (FCS) and Global Foods

Mrs. Krist’s FCS and Global Foods classes have gotten off to a great start this semester. We are learning all about our great lab classroom, which has four fully stocked kitchens, eight sewing machines, a washer and dryer, 13 computers and many enthusiastic and ready to learn students!

The FCS classes have started their modules. The students will work in pairs while learning about cooking, nutrition, sewing, careers, babysitting, families, interior design, fitness nutrition, and other important life skills. Global Foods will be investigating many countries and their customs relating to the food they eat. The students just showed off their cooking skills by making an American breakfast staple of pancakes and homemade maple syrup.

If you have any questions, please contact me at Christi.Krist@ops.org. Our room is a room of many needs. If you would like to help stock our room, please contact me. Thank you!!!!

Invention and Innovation (I & I)

Welcome to one of many engaging Lewis and Clark courses! The students in Mr. Nero’s 1 & 1 are off to a great start applying the Design Cycle (Investigate, Design, Plan, Create and Evaluate) to design and conduct a scientific experiment with a partner in response to their Science Unit questions: What is the greatest achievement in humanity? This challenge will allow them to research, evaluate, present and reflect on the impact of science on humanity in regard to the Community and Service, Area of Interaction through the IB MYP. Students have completed the Investigate stage and next is the Design/Plan stage. Additionally, this experience will serve as a catalyst for entry in the 2014 Omaha Metropolitan Science and Engineering Fair.

Invention & Innovation—Foundations

Welcome to another engaging course offered at Lewis and Clark! The students in Foundations are off to a great start also applying the Design/Cycle (Investigate, Design, Plan, Create, and Evaluate) to collaboratively, in small groups, create a timeline banner titled “Great Discoveries’ Timeline” to respond to their Science Unit question: What is the greatest discovery in humanity? This challenge will allow them to research, evaluate, present and reflect on the impact of five selected discoveries on humanity in regard to the Community and Service, Area of Interaction through the IB MYP. Students have completed the Investigate stage and next is the Design/Plan stage. Their completed banners will be on display throughout the hallowed halls of Lewis and Clark by the end of September.

Health

The school year is off to a productive start in Mrs. Brownfield’s Health classes. Seventh grade students have written some SMART goals that will be revisited a few times throughout the quarter to make sure they are on track in reaching them. They have also begun to practice steps in making responsible decisions. They know as they get older they will have more important decisions to make and those decisions will have an impact on their future. Ways to improve self-esteem, communication skills, healthy relationships, and first aid will also be topics we will cover in the weeks to come.

Eighth grade Health students began the semester on the topic of nutrition. We went a little outside the box of learning about the basic MyPlate and reading a food label to analyzing the obesity epidemic in this country and focusing on issues around that. We had some eye-opening experiences when learning how much sugar and processed ingredients are in the foods we eat every day. We will cover physical fitness as well. Eighth graders will also find out how gullible they are to statements and photos on the internet. We will discuss how marketers use special tactics to get us to buy their products and students will have to use these tactics to create their own commercials to influence those in the class. In October, we will discuss stress, grief, and depression and how we can recognize the signs and triggers, and what we can do to help. I am looking forward to a productive quarter!

Human Growth and Development

When is the last time you thought about being the age of your middle schooler?
Puberty is a time of many changes. In Human Growth and Development students with Dr. Allen are learning how the family is constantly changing. The 7th graders have done many projects addressing types of families and the functions that families serve. They can even evaluate what a healthy and non-healthy family looks like. This is a good way to embrace the concept of responsibilities and roles that a family serves.

The 8th graders are learning about communication: passive, aggressive, assertive and passive aggressive. We are exploring how young boys and young girls speak and listen differently.

All 7th and 8th graders are learning about making good decisions. We approach the decision making concept by applying the SODAS Model:
S - Situation - what do I need to make a decision about?
O - Option - What choices do I have?
D - Disadvantages - What would be negative about a choice.
A - Advantages - What would be positive about a choice?
S - Solution - The solution always has to KEEP SELF AND OTHERS SAFE!

I encourage you to learn how we are using this model throughout the curriculum! I encourage you to ask your child, what did you do in school today?

Please feel free to contact me with questions and concerns at: donna.allen@ops.org

Physical Education

This year the Physical Education classes look forward to a new year of challenging 7th and 8th grade students to lead a healthy lifestyle. We will run the 1 mile and complete the 15 minute run every block day. The girls will be working out in the aerobics room on Monday’s and will be learning Yoga, Pilates, step aerobics, kickboxing and much more. The girls will need a PE notebook this year to reflect on a variety of subjects as well as take notes on history and the basic rules of sports and fitness activities. We plan on playing soccer, ultimate frisbee, softball, cricket, lacrosse, volleyball, basketball, badminton, floor hockey, flag football, and speed ball. Please encourage your child and family to get out and play as often as possible.

I would love to hear from you if you have any questions or concerns. Please contact me at: valencia.leiviska@ops.org

Reading Lab

Welcome to Reading Lab with Mrs. Hesson. This class is for 7th and 8th graders who want to increase their reading ability and skills. Students have written down the areas in which they need help in their own reading. The majority of students wrote down they wanted to understand what they were reading.

Reading comprehension is using a variety of reading strategies. What do you do before you read a story? Do you look at the title and/or picture and try to make a connection to something you already know? What do you do when you come across a word you do not know? Students have learned how to create a toggle (on the computer) and will toggle between the article and Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary and Thesaurus to look up words they do not know. Students may also use this website to find the definition of words they do not know in their reading book.

The Reading Lab class will use a variety of lessons on reading. Students will be using Achieve 3000 Teen Biz computer program. They are required to complete the five step literacy routine. The first step is to reply to the Before Reading Poll which sets the stage for what they are about to read. Step two is to Read the Article where students can summarize and ask questions after they read each paragraph in the article. The article is set at the students reading level. Step three the student will Complete the Activity Questions to show what they know. The student may go back and review the article to help them answer the questions. In step four, students will respond to The After Reading Poll, and step five, student will answer the Thought Question by writing their answer in complete sentences and answering all parts of the question. Students also earn points based upon the correct answers. Students will be able to participate in various competitions throughout the year on Achieve 3000 Teen Biz. Students may also work on the computer program at home.

Parents, your child will bring a letter to you from Achieve 3000 Teen Biz. This letter will inform you on how you may log onto Achieve 3000 Teen Biz and see the work/assignments your child has completed.

Homework for this classroom is reading every day. This includes the weekends too. To raise ones reading level will take at least 80 hours or more of reading at Lexile level material. Students should be encouraged to read at their comfort level and then slowly increase the difficulty level. Students are expected to read at least four books a quarter. If a book is read in class, this will count as one book. Students have a reading book log to complete and turn in almost every two weeks.

Students have been given their Lexile score and Lexile reading range. Students may log onto www.Lexile.com and select “Quick Book Search” (located in the upper right hand corner). Next, type in title of book/author and/or ISBN and see if the Lexile of their reading book is within their Lexile reading range. Students may also put in their Lexile level, select from 28 book categories (plus sub categories), press submit, and the program will identify over a 1,000 reading books to select from. Students will set a Lexile goal they want to achieve for each semester.

Our Reading Lab class will work on reading, testing, and study skills. We will also be reading from the text Reality Central. We will have a Unit Question and a culminating project at the end of each unit. We will be doing three units each semester. For this class, students will need their Agenda book, ISN (Individual Student Notebook) – two spiral notebooks (one for each semester), a folder, notebook paper, and a pen and/or pen-
Drama Program Fall 2013

We are already having a lot of fun in Mrs. McCune’s Drama classes this year! We started with pantomime and will be moving on to improvisation, storytelling, poetry readings, scriptwriting, and performing from written scripts. We are looking forward to our performance on the evening of November 14th at 6:00 pm. This performance will include all of the students enrolled in Drama this semester and is a required part of their grades. We hope that many of the students’ families will also be able to join us at that time to see all of the hard work that their students have put into the drama program!

From the Library

The Lewis and Clark Library is off to a great start this year with lots of students reading lots of books! Ms. Leibrandt has been booktalking for every class that has come into the library to make sure that every student leaves with at least one book that is perfect for them. It’s been so much fun that I think we’ll keep it up all year long!

In other exciting news, our visiting author this year will be Ben Mikaelsen. Mr Mikaelsen will be visiting Lewis and Clark the morning of November 6th.

Ben Mikaelsen is the winner of the International Reading Association and the Western Writer’s Golden Spur Award. His novels have been nominated for and have won many state Reader’s Choice awards. These novels include Rescue Josh McGuire, Sparrow Hawk Red, Stranded, Countdown, Petey, Touching Spirit Bear, Red Midnight and Tree Girl. His novel’s Rescue Josh McGuire, Petey and Touching Spirit Bear have been optioned for screen use. Ben’s articles and photos appear in numerous magazines around the world, and he has been featured on national TV with Jack Hanna’s Animal Adventures and in Boy’s Life magazine. Ben lives in a log cabin near Bozeman, Montana, with a 700-pound black bear that he adopted and has raised for over twenty years.

Author visits serve to generate excitement for books and reading. There is nothing more exciting than meeting the person who wrote a book that you love.

Box Tops for Education

Support Lewis and Clark Middle School by clipping box tops. Our school earns ten cents for each box top collected. Here is a list of some of the brands that may have box tops: General Mills, Pillsbury, Betty Crocker, Nature Valley, Cascadian Farm, and Ziploc. For a current list please visit the website boxtops4education.com. Keri Witherell will be collecting the box tops throughout the year. Thank you for your support. I will be sending in box tops for reimbursement the end of October, the end of February, and the end of May.

Cash for Schools

Lewis and Clark will again participate in HyVee’s Cash for Schools program. Cash for Schools allows schools to earn money based on receipt totals the school acquires. To participate in the program, simply send your HyVee receipts to school with your child with instructions to give them to his/her Homebase teacher. That’s it!

Back-to-School Transitions

Getting a new school year off to a good start can influence a child’s attitude, confidence, and performance both socially and academically. The transition can be difficult for both children and parents. Even children who are eager to return to class must adjust to the greater levels of activity, structure, and, for some, pressures associated with school life.

The degree of adjustment depends on the child, but parents can help their children (and the rest of the family) manage the increased pace of life by planning ahead, being realistic, and maintaining a positive attitude. Here are a few suggestions to help ease the transition and promote a successful school experience.

- Establish after school, bedtime and mealt ime routines.
- Go through your student’s backpack with your student.
- Turn off the TV or limit its use.
- Visit with your child about their day. Ask specific questions (“What did you do in Math today?”) rather than broad questions (“How was your day?”)
- Designate a quiet place to do homework.
- Establish a homework routine with your student’s input.
- Monitor your child’s school performance and fatigue then adjust outside activities accordingly.
- Familiarize yourself with the teacher and school professionals.
- Set up a preferred method of communication with your student’s teacher.

You can also find out more by contacting your school psychologist at 402-557-2740 or listening to the School Adjustment podcast for parents at www.nasponline.org/resources/listings.aspx

From the Health Office

Please turn in immunizations as soon as possible. The Tdap is mandatory for all 7th graders. This shot includes the tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis boosters. Pertussis is a very contagious, vaccine-preventable disease that lasts for many weeks. Children have a very severe and constant cough. The cough can take the child’s breath away, or cause them to vomit. Major complications of pertussis are most common among infants and young children, and include hypoxia, apnea, pneumonia, seizures, encephalopathy, and malnutrition. Young children
can die from pertussis, and 13 children died in the United States in 2003. Transmission occurs through direct contact with respiratory droplets from infected persons.

Every child should get a tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (DPT) vaccination at 2, 4, 6, and 15 months of age, and another dose at 4 to 6 yrs of age. Immunization is required for child care and school. New booster vaccines became available in 2005 that offer continued protection against pertussis, diphtheria, and tetanus for adolescents and adults. These vaccines have been added to the mandatory schedule of vaccinations for adolescents. Adolescents and adults become susceptible when immunity wanes. If your child shows any of the above symptoms, it is important to have them seen by their physician as soon as possible. If your child has not had this shot after 4 yrs of age, they need a booster shot. Your child’s health care provider or the Douglas County Health Department #402-444-6163, would be able to advise you regarding your child’s protection from disease.

Allergy, cold and flu season is here. Good handwashing with soap and water is the best prevention. Covering your mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or coughing into your sleeve or arm, rather than your hands, and the use of hand sanitizers, helps also. When students are ill with vomiting, diarrhea, severe runny nose, cough, sore throat, or fever of 100 degrees or more, they should not come to school. These are general guidelines the school nurse uses in determining who needs to be sent home from school, so please assess your child before sending them to school, and keep them home if they are ill. Students need to have not vomited, and be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

Students with known allergies or hayfever should be taking allergy medicines in the morning if prescribed by their doctor. Allergy medicines can provide relief during allergy season and thereby keep students in class, rather than in the health office complaining of itchy eyes, runny congested nose and sneezing.

Cold medications, Tylenol or Ibuprofen can help ease some of the symptoms such as headaches, stuffy nose, cough and should be administered at home before coming to school, or can be given at school but only with a doctors order, parent permission form signed and if you bring the medication in properly labeled container. Send your child to school with tissues and a water bottle if they are coughing a lot. The nurse can give him/her a pass to carry and drink water during school day, if needed. Wearing proper outerwear for the weather conditions is also a preventive measure, layering of clothes is appropriate so layers can be added if cold, or removed if hot.

Flu shots are generally recommended for anyone with respiratory problems such as asthma , or if immune system is compromised by chronic illness. Consult your health care provider regarding recommendation for your child. Flu shots can be obtained from your health care provider or at flu immunization clinics throughout the city.

Reminder to parents of students with asthma, if you have not provided an inhaler with doctors orders and signed parent permission form, you need to do this as soon as possible. Asthma symptoms flare or are triggered by colds or flu and cold air, or exercise in many cases. You will be contacted and asked to bring an inhaler to school for your child to use if they present at nurses office with respiratory complaints and an inhaler and proper authorization is not here. Asthma can be life threatening, and having an inhaler available quickly, can make all the difference!

All 7TH graders are required by state law to have a physical upon starting 7TH grade even if they do not plan to participate in a sports. If your child intends to participate in sports this year, they will need a medical clearance for sports. Sports physicals do not meet the requirement for 7TH grade physical, so when you have the physical, ask the doctor for a complete physical with clearance for sports also.

If your 8TH grade child intends to participate in sports this year, they must also have a sports physical which is good for one year from date of the physical, so if they had one last December, they need another one for this school year. Sports physicals can be obtained at your doctors office, SBHC’s, and various Urgent care locations.

Student Based Health Centers (SBHC’s) are located at several Omaha Public Schools, including Indian Hills, Liberty, Spring Lake, Belvedere, King Science, Kellom, Bryan High School and Northwest High School. They are for OPS students and siblings. Students can get physicals, sports physicals, immunizations and sick child care there. They accept Medicaid, Kids Connection, private insurance, and have a sliding scale fee for those without insurance. You must make an appointment.

Here’s hoping everyone a healthy, happy fall season. Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns. Nurse Howeth #557-4315.

Nothing but Net

My name is Mr. Walker and I am the Program Director for the Nothing But Net Foundation. We are excited to offer the Nothing But Net Trailblazers Afterschool Program (TAP) to the students and parents of Lewis and Clark. The program will focus on academics, social skills, leadership skills, nutrition, physical activities, and family nights. We partner with various community agencies to provide enrichment activities that are academically based. The program is FREE! The students will have various opportunities throughout the school year to win incentives. There is an open registration. TAP started August 19th so if you have currently registered your child (ren) they may attend. They should report to the cafeteria after dismissal. The program time is 2:40 until 5:30, Monday thru Friday. If you have any questions please contact me at 402-557-4300.