



Journeys School of Teton Science Schools

Academic Excellence · Extraordinary Relationships · Place-based Education · Global Citizenship

April 29, 2011

Dear Journeys School Parents:

It is hard to believe that May is upon us already – despite the snow that remains in Coyote Canyon. Here at Journeys School, we are excited about an incredible end to our 10th year. Highlights include the following:

- A first public art show for Pre-Kindergarten at the Center for the Arts
- Multiple trips for the elementary school students to Yellowstone, Sun Valley, and the Pacific Northwest
- First all-school talent show and elementary school spelling bee.
- Middle school conference (including keynote) on how local organizations are addressing global climate change
- Strong showings by Journeys School students in the Wyoming Young Authors, Duck Stamp, and robotics competitions
- A first group of 11th grade students enrolled in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program
- A group of 12th grade students who were accepted at ALL colleges where they applied with many receiving great scholarship support

We are also focused on two major projects this year and next. Both of these major goals will make your child's experience even better.

- **Strategic Planning Process:** We are developing a new strategic plan in conjunction with Teton Science Schools' strategic planning process. This effort will help to guide us through the next 3-5 years.
- **Curriculum Articulation Project:** We are completing the end of a two year curriculum articulation project to ensure that the most innovative and research-supported practices are used throughout the school. The final stages of this project, with appropriate funding support, will include defining policies for curricular review, establishing an online system for curriculum documentation, refining our process of assessment review, and formalizing all curriculum guides.

Our goal is to be a leader in educational innovation and academic excellence in the United States. The short term list of objectives at the Elementary School level includes:

- Finishing the review of the elementary school math curriculum and implementing any changes
- Reviewing the afternoon schedule for students in grades Kindergarten through 2nd to maximize learning
- Creating a professional development sequence with a focus on math instruction and literacy assessment
- Evaluating the Kindergarten program to ensure smooth entry from Pre-Kindergarten
- Further refining the faculty development program to improve observation time and create a specific classroom goal setting process for all faculty

A few staffing changes have emerged over the last month. First, Kalen Kleyman is expecting a baby in September and will not teach during the 2011-12 school year. Second, both Ashley Mudge and Sydney Daniels have decided to move back to the East Coast to be closer to family and pursue other teaching opportunities. Finally, John Gillum (physical education) and Jeff Bratz (music) are both moving out of the valley. I am very thankful for all of the contributions these individuals have made to the school over the years. We have a very large number of applicants for all positions and are currently in the hiring process. Shannon Shuptrine has accepted the open leadership position left by Sydney's departure and will work closely with Betsy Trowbridge next year to help guide the Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grade program.



People · Nature · Place · Education

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At the leadership level, I will be taking a sabbatical from December through March next year. My family and I will be living on the west coast of Costa Rica where I am hoping to write and help support a local school. This sabbatical was approved four years ago and I have deferred each year. In my absence Jack Shea will serve as acting Head of School. Jack ran Journeys School for the first five years and is the Executive Director of Teton Science Schools. Financial, fundraising, board interactions, and major communication will be Jack's responsibility. Jack will work in conjunction with Betsy Trowbridge (leading the PK-5th grades), David Porter (leading the 6th-12th grades), and Tammie Van Holland (Director of Admissions and Finance) to ensure excellence at all levels. I have already met with this group and will continue to do so to ensure that the quality of education continues to get better every day. As always, lines of communication should move in the following order: 1) advisor or teacher, 2) program leaders, 3) Head of School, and 4) Board Chair. The school is in excellent shape and the major projects on my agenda will be complete by the time that I depart.

As we enter our 11th year, the visioning process is an exciting one. We have finished our growth and now are focusing on an incredible program combining academic excellence, extraordinary relationships, place-based education, and global citizenship. We are honored to have your children with us this year and know that we are making a positive difference in both their lives and the world. The growth of each student both intellectually and socially continues to amaze me.

Please mark your calendars for our **graduation and end of the year celebration at 5:30 PM on Wednesday, June 8th**. As always, feel free to contact me at any time with questions regarding the school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nate McClennen".

Nate McClennen
Head of School