



# Journeys School of Teton Science Schools

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

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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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 11<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program
- A group of 12<sup>th</sup> 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 middle and high school levels includes:

- Finishing the application for International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program
- Completing all relevant professional development for Middle Years Program
- Designing the 10<sup>th</sup> grade project component to enhance student centered research
- Aligning the technology program from grades 6-12
- 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. Pete Simpson will be moving to New York City to enroll at Teacher's College at Columbia University to earn his graduate degree. John Gillum (physical education), Annie Erdman (geometry), and Jeff Bratz (music) are all moving out of the valley as well. I am very thankful for all of the contributions these individuals have made to the school over the years. We have very large number of applicants for all positions and are currently in the hiring process. In terms of leadership, Tom Marshall will continue to lead the middle school and has accepted a permanent position to work directly with David Porter to support all 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade programs.



**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-5<sup>th</sup> grades), David Porter (leading the 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> 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. We are actively searching for a short term substitute for my math class. 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 11<sup>th</sup> 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 8<sup>th</sup>**. 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