

August 18, 2015

Hello Awesome Howard Staff!

I hope everyone had an excellent summer (and will still enjoy your final two weeks)! My Hawaii trip to visit my wife's relatives was better this time around since my kids are a bit older, but I think Kim and I are still a few years away from having an actual relaxing vacation with Grace and Josie. We also did a family car trip up to Seattle and I can report that I am not planning to take my children on any extended car rides anytime soon! I'm pretty sure my parents enjoyed the karma of that situation. But overall, the Chinn family had a relaxing summer with lots playing outside, reading books, growing handlebar mustaches (which my wife told me to shave because it looked "ridiculous") and just plain old relaxing.



With Howard continuing to grow, we have a number of new staff members joining us this year, so please join me in welcoming the following folks. Kealy Barrow-Strange (Kindergarten) did her student teaching at Howard with Carla in 1st grade and has been teaching kindergarten at Chavez the past two years. Natalie Niccum (Kindergarten) most recently taught at Edison and before that was teaching kindergarten and other grades at ATA. Natalie also has a 2nd and 5th grader attending Howard. Justine Chunn (1st Grade) has taught 1st grade at Corridor the past several years and taught kindergarten at Corridor before that. Justine is also a former Howard student. Bryan Prideaux (Learning Center) comes to us from River Road where he was the Learning Center teacher. AJ Hruby (Title 1/ESC) comes to us from Chavez where she was the Title 1 Coordinator and also the building ESC. Maria Eichner (CLC EA) is returning to her old CLC EA position here at Howard after spending the past two years at the Monroe MS CLC. Crystal Ericson (Lead Custodian) comes to us from Monroe MS where she was the lead custodian and before that she was the lead custodian at Corridor/YG. Irene Arce-Gaxiola (BEST Coordinator) has been a classroom teacher at Buena Vista and taught elementary grades in other states. She has also been a 21st Century after school program evaluator in Texas.

We're conducting interviews tomorrow for our 5th grade facilitating position, so I hope to make an announcement for that position soon. Downtown is still completing PE hiring for our second semester of PE (sadly only one day a week for second semester and not two like we had last year). We also have some CLC and Life Skills EA positions that ESS has yet to fill. They have completed their interviews, but have not yet announced who will be coming. I'll be sure to let staff know as soon I learn who's filling our SPED EA vacancies.

I think we're going to have a pretty darn good team here at Howard this year! I've had a number of principals and administrators tell me, "You picked up some great people this year!" So please welcome these fine new folks as they join the Howard Elementary School team!

Below are a few other informational updates:

- **In-service Week Meeting Schedule** – The calendar for the first couple weeks of school is on the building [Google Calendar](#) below, but I wanted to highlight that we'll be doing our Back-to-School Staff Meeting & PD on Wednesday instead of Friday this year because on Friday teachers will be attending a training at the Ed Center on the digital components of Journeys.

- **No PE PEEK-8 Grant This Year** – Downtown was unfortunately unable to fund their portion of the PEEK-8 Grant, which had given us PE all year long last school year. The grant paid for salary and 4J had to cover benefits. Downtown funded last year’s PEEK-8 grant with one-time monies and Dr. Balderas and Sara Green were concerned about using contingency funds at a time when the budget is very tight (they had 1.2 million last year for “fix-it” class size reduction funds and this year only have \$230,000). However, second semester this year will one day of PE per week, since all elementary schools adding PE time during their Music semester. Also, for next year, Sara and Gus said they will use the budget process to create a budget for this type of grant to ensure that the funding is permanent and sustainable in the future, so hopefully we can apply for next year.
- **Excess Furniture & Old Curriculum Materials Up for Grabs**– In clearing out various spaces for our new classrooms, we have some excess furniture that’s currently being stored in the cafeteria including some book shelves, teacher chairs, tables of various sizes, drawers, a rolling chalk board and other items. We also have some shelves and random pieces of furniture left behind by EEP in the portable if anyone wants to claim those as well. There are also some random old teaching materials in the cafeteria if anyone wants to take those. The deadline to claim any and all items is Thursday, September 3rd.
- **Summer Photos** – For our back to school meeting, send me one or more photos from your summer for something I’m putting together. :)
- **Howard Construction Updates** – Quite a lot has gotten done over summer, with the south west (green) wing now with drywall and glass installed. After our BTS staff meeting on Tuesday, I’ll take anyone out on the construction site who’d like to go on a tour.
 - **Move in Date** – Facilities will make a final decision early this fall whether we will do a spring break or a summer move into the new building. Ryan Spain, our project manager, seems pretty sure Facilities will go along with whatever a majority of staff want regarding the move in date, so we’ll take a vote at our September Staff Meeting to give them our final recommendation.
 - **Mock-Up Classroom Update** - In the original mock-up they sent the wrong teacher’s workstation, so over the summer they sent the correct teacher workstation (which is a two piece instead of one) if people would like to stop by Erin’s classrooms (Room 7) to check it out.
- **Breakfast Burrito Orders Due 8/27** - Lori and I would like to welcome people back with our traditional back-to-school breakfast on the first day licensed staff and some classified staff report back, Tuesday, September 1st. We'll have breakfast burritos from Burrito Amigos. If you have a preference of burrito, be sure to let Lori know your order before we place the order on Friday, August 29th. Plan to eat and visit between 8:00 and 8:30 and then the rest of the day will be yours. We’ll plan to have our BIG staff breakfast on Tuesday at our Back-to-School Staff Meeting, once all staff are back at work.



- **Schedule of Events for the Next Couple Weeks** - See the [Google Calendar](#) for all future events, but here are the events of note for the first two weeks of the school year:

September 1 (T)

Teachers Return - Planning Day

8:00-8:30, Welcome Back Breakfast Burrito Gathering (Cafeteria)

September 2 (W)

Classified Staff Return

7:30-8:00, Welcome Back Breakfast (Library)

8:00-12:30, Howard Back-to-School Staff Meeting & PD (Library)

September 3 (H)

7:30-12:00, District Staff Back-to-School Event - Breakfast & Social (SEHS)

8:30-12:00, District Staff Back-to-School Event - Speeches (SEHS Auditorium)

September 4 (F)

8:00-11:00, Digital Training for Journeys for Licensed Staff (Ed Center)

September 7 (M)

Labor Day - No School

September 8 (T)

8:00-10:00, Staff Meeting - potential meeting for any needed business (Library)

10:00, Q&A Session for New Staff - Optional (Library)

1:00-2:00, Meet your Teacher

September 9 (W)

First Day for Students

PBIS Focus: Safety

September 10 (H)

REGULAR DAY

September 11 (F)

REGULAR DAY

Enjoy your last couple weeks of summer and see you all soon!

Allan

BREAKFAST BURRITO ORDER!

Let Lori know your order by the morning of **Thursday, August 27th**.



Breakfast Burrito – Select your meat choice, with scrambled eggs, bean, potatoes, and cheese in a big flour tortilla. We'll assume you want a regular size unless you specify junior. Choices are:

- CHORIZO (mildly spicy Mexican pork sausage)
- MACHACA (beef, sautéed with onion, tomato and bell pepper with egg),
- HUEVOS RANCHEROS (spicy chiléverde pork),
- BACON
- LINK SAUSAGE
- MEATLESS (Eggs, potatoes and cheese)