PCMS
Port Charlotte Middle School

TERRIER TIMES

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 1
OCTOBER 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome back, Terriers! A new school year is upon us here at Port Charlotte Middle School, and it is my pleasure to welcome back students, staff, and families alike.

At the conclusion of our last school year, despite the various challenges faced, our students and staff together once again proved that with hard work, dedication, and perseverance, great things can be accomplished. With that said, it is an honor to report that Port Charlotte Middle School has been recognized as one of the top performing schools in the district for the 2022-2023 school year. We celebrated our success with a full day dunk tank followed by a pep rally where the Principal's award recipients had the opportunity to shave off my hair! Terrier pride was most definitely the "buzz" of the town!

Just a few of the exciting changes and offerings kicking off this year:

- New electives: 3D Art and STEM, featuring a saltwater fish tank on display in the main office
- Free tutoring in all subject areas is offered Monday-Thursdays from 4:10-5:10. See tutoring schedule for more information.
- Late buses are now available on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to accommodate our students attending after school activities such as tutoring and clubs.
- Sports/Clubs to join our wide range of after school activities: Soccer, Chess, and Spirit Squad

In the words of entrepreneur and philanthropist Jack Dorsey, "Success is never accidental." Communication and building positive relationships between home and school remains at the forefront of our mission and crucial to both academic success and student engagement.

I look forward to another rewarding year ahead. Go Terriers!

Mr. Matthew Kunder
Principal

ADMINISTRATION

Principal
Matthew Kunder

Assistant Principals
Tara Whisenant
Zachary Wheeler

Dean
Gabrielle Thompson

Guidance Counselors
Eric Grzechowiak
Alesha Jewett

ESE Liaison
Marjorie Stevens

Social Worker
Kearstin Pineda

School Resource Officer
Deputy Anderson

23000 Midway Blvd.
Port Charlotte FL 33952
Phone: 941-255-7460
Fax: 941-255-7469
Attendance Line: 941-255-7467
Office Hours: 8:00 - 4:30

PRINCIPAL'S AWARD

Principal's Award Winner John Do helped shave Principal Kunder's head during the academic pep rally on the second day of school. Former Assistant Principal - now PGMS AP - Jon Hock and PCMS mascot, Tyrone the Terrier, assisted.

AUGUST STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

6th Grade: James Polak and Isabella Torres
7th Grade: Kyle Zhang and Harper Ney
8th Grade: Phares Cleophat and Dora Gedeon

SEPTEMBER STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

8th Grade: Caroline McCloud & Aiden Le
7th Grade: Nicole Ellis (not pictured) & Anthony Martinez
6th Grade: Summit Tower & Evan Wendzel (not pictured)

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NEW PCMS ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL: ZACHARY WHEELER

Hello everyone, my name is Zack Wheeler, and I am one of the assistant principals here at Port Charlotte Middle School. I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself to our Terrier families. I am a product of the Charlotte County School System in that I attended Meadow Park Elementary School, Murdock Middle School, and graduated from Port Charlotte High School. I earned my Bachelor's degree in Secondary Social Science Education from Florida Gulf Coast University and my Master's degree in Educational Leadership from American College of Education. I was a social studies teacher at Murdock Middle School for six years before becoming the Dean of Students at PCMS last year. I am excited to be a part of the leadership team this year.

My goal is to help foster a successful educational environment as we promote a positive school culture for all students. To achieve this, we place an emphasis on the safety and security of students and staff. Additionally, I work in tandem with our Dean of Students, Ms. Thompson, to address student discipline concerns that interfere with safety, security, and the learning environment. Middle School is undoubtedly a place for students to learn curriculum, but it is also full of learning opportunities to grow and develop as individuals in preparation for high school and beyond. I am looking forward to an excellent school year as PCMS strives to be the top performing middle school in the district once again.

NEW PCMS DEAN: GABRIELLE THOMPSON

Hello Terrier families! My name is Gabby Thompson, and I am the Dean of Students at Port Charlotte Middle School. As a recent addition to the team, I wanted to take the opportunity to introduce myself to the school community. I am originally from Indiana, where I earned my Bachelor's degree in English and French from the University of Southern Indiana and began my career teaching 7th and 8th grade English Language Arts. I moved down to Florida 5 years ago where I continued to teach in Lee County while earning my Master's degree in Educational Leadership from American College of Education. I had the pleasure of joining the PCMS team last year as a 7th grade English teacher and made the transition to Dean this year.

It is my goal to work in conjunction with the leadership team at Port Charlotte Middle School to continue to promote a positive learning environment for all students. By addressing student discipline concerns alongside Mr. Wheeler and providing positive behavioral supports and interventions with Mrs. Patalano (Literacy Coach and PBIS Coordinator), it is my objective to promote growth and learning opportunities for students that prepare them for the next step in their education. I look forward to an excellent school year as PCMS continues to build on our successes and remain the top performing middle school in the district.

LATE BUS

This year, Port Charlotte Middle School has decided to utilize the services of a late bus for PCMS-zoned students on Tuesdays and Wednesdays after school. We hope this will allow more students the opportunity to be part of our extracurricular activities and tutoring services. A parent or guardian must sign the Late Bus Permission Slip before a student can ride the late bus. Permission slips were sent home at the beginning of September.

A few things to remember:

- The stops made by the late bus are not the same as the normal bus stops. Please review with your child the route that he/she will need to take home. It is the student's responsibility to know which stop to exit the bus from. Please review the stop, as well as the safest route home. This should be done before riding the late bus.
- Students will use their student ID badge to scan themselves on and off the bus.
- Please remember that normal bus rules apply. Students will be held accountable if they violate bus rules and/or the Code of Student Conduct.

OUT OF FIELD

The following teachers are currently teaching Out of Field:

Melanie Barolak	Math
Madeline De La Rosa	ESOL
Cherstin Haga	ESOL
Brittany Lynch	ESOL

Helgemo & Liou pediatrics
Dr. Benjamin Helgemo
Dr. Wen Liou
Kristy Carey, ARNP
Kristen Vulgamore, ARNP
Kendra Gerace, PNP
Emily Sears, APRN
Jennifer Dibert, APRN
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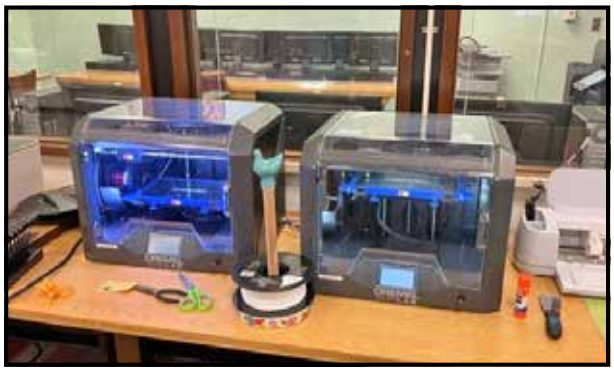
NEW SCIENCE STEM OPPORTUNITIES

We are so excited to introduce our new elective course offered at school this year. This year, we are offering STEM which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. This course is intended to integrate the STEM fields through project-based learning. Students will be engaged by frequent hands-on activities geared towards combining each of the STEM disciplines. Our first unit this year has been dedicated to the saltwater aquarium that is going in the main office of the school for all students, staff, parents/guardians, and visitors to see. The STEM classes have been working hard on preparing for the saltwater aquarium by learning all the ins and outs of ecosystems and ecology because they will be responsible for maintaining the aquarium every single day once it is set up. While waiting for the aquarium to be set up, students have been working on 3D printing. 3D printing is the process of making a physical object from a three-dimensional digital model, typically by laying down many thin layers of a material in succession. The students first designed simple keychains using a 3D design software called Tinkercad to ensure they understood the process, and now they are designing a structure that they think should be added to the saltwater aquarium! The students are finishing up their designs, and once they are printed and painted, votes will be cast to see which structures should go in the school aquarium!

Ms. Salvatore (Media Specialist), Zackary Hebert, Donald Wright, Austin Phillips, Ayla Gumabong



3D Printers

Zackary Hebert

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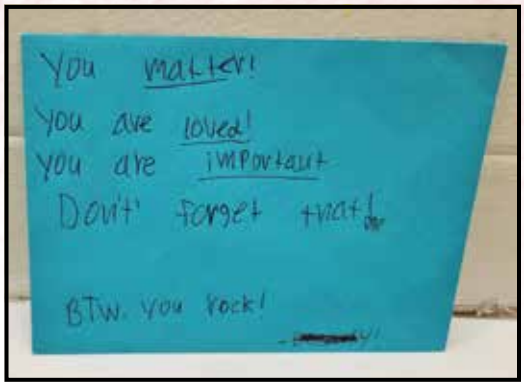
KIND KID AWARD



To help support our Terriers being kind humans and treating others the way they would like to be treated, our staff members will nominate outstanding students who perform kind acts daily. The nominations will occur once a month and two kind students will be selected to be recognized by our principal, Mr. Kunder. Staff members will recognize students who are consistently kind and helpful, who are doing the right thing, and are going out of their way to be kind to others. We believe when you focus on the good, the good gets better! You'll be shocked at how many more positive things start happening when you focus on the positive things in your life. Just a couple immediate examples that come to mind: A student left a note of encouragement for the custodians in the restroom to say THANK YOU for all you do and YOU MATTER! Another student went out of her way to help another student learn a game and patiently retaught the game to that student. Various students daily who acknowledge their teachers by saying, "Thank you," or "Have a nice day!" These are just a few things we have witnessed. We are excited to see the nominations come in and to see the greatness our PCMS Terriers share.

CHESS CLUB

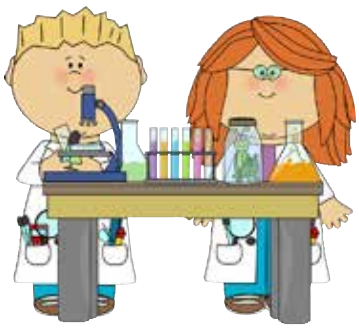
The Chess Club is held every Tuesday after school in A- Hallway. It is a great way for students to engage in critical thinking outside of the classroom. So far we have had about 20 students show up to Chess Club every week. Mr. Kunder (the principal) has also shown up to match his skills against the students. Here's what a few Chess Club members have to say:

- Peyton M- "I wanted a real challenge in chess. My brothers are not good, and I joined the chess club because they are real competition."
- Bentley H- "I joined chess because it is fun, and I enjoy playing against other people."
- McKenzie D- "I joined the Chess Club because it gets me off my phone, and it gives me something to do."

Principal Kunder matching his chess skills against the Chess Club

THE SCIENCE FAIR IS COMING TO PORT CHARLOTTE MIDDLE

The Science Fair will be held at PCMS on November 14th during the school day. 7th and 8th grade honors students are hard at work developing their project ideas and conducting research to discover whether or not their hypothesis is supported. The culmination of their hard work is the science fair where they will have the opportunity to discuss their projects with judges and also see the hard work of their peers.



Parents and community members are invited to see the projects on the evening of November 15th from 5-7 pm. Science Fair Awards and Regional Fair nominees will be announced at 6 pm during the open house.

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Neil B. Seaver, D.M.D.
WE WELCOME NEW SMILES!

PE NEWS

The PE department has welcomed a new Coach (Coach Edwards) to the team this year. He is joining Coach Hibbard and Coach Renne from Charlotte Harbor. We have been working on establishing rules and procedures for class and safe, inclusive play with peers. Students were introduced to Hands only CPR techniques and should now know the steps to help in an emergency. (Call 9-1-1, push hard and fast in the center of the chest, keep pressing until help arrives and EMT's take over) They have also been introduced to a variety of cooperative games and activities, group and individual fitness goals and concepts, and PACERS. PACERS are a cardiorespiratory endurance run that challenges students to elevate their best score each time they run. They have the opportunity to improve approximately every 3 weeks. In the coming weeks they will also be introduced to circuit training to learn even more fitness concepts.

A couple reminders regarding PE uniforms and locks and make up work when missing class:

- Changing out is a part of your student's PE grade. Black shorts and grey shirt are preferred and can be purchased with a lock for $20 at school (during PE) all year long OR you may purchase your own outside of school and only pay the $2 rental fee for the locker.
- If your child misses a class due to an "in school" or "out of school" suspension (ISS or OSS), he or she can make up the missing grade for partial credit. ISS work should be requested from the ISS coordinator (Ms. Davis) and OSS work can be found on the teacher's CANVAS page (classwork section).

Tutoring

TOGETHER, WE CAN SUCCEED!

LANGUAGE ARTS

6th Grade: Tuesdays (D8), Thursdays (E4)
7th Grade: Wednesdays (D3), Thursdays (D1)
8th Grade: Tuesdays (C4), Thursdays (C4 and D1)

MATH

6th Grade: Tuesdays (D5), Wednesdays (D7)
7th Grade: Tuesdays (E6), Wednesdays (E1)
8th Grade: Tuesdays (D6)
Algebra: Tuesdays (E2), Wednesdays (E3)

SCIENCE

All Grades: Mondays (A4), Tuesdays (N142), and Wednesdays (N142)

OTHER/ELL SERVICES

Monday
Credit Recovery (N137)
ELL Tutoring (N138A)
Tuesday
ELL Tutotring (N138A)
Wednesday
ELL Tutoring (N138A)
Thursday
ELL Tutoring (N138A)

SOCIAL STUDIES

US History: Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays (N144B)
US History/Civics: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays (B1/B2)

Bottom row: Deborah Gaspard, Lilliana Paille
Second row: Laura Polanco, Lindsey Fee, Saniya Lloyd
Third row: Judith Alvarado, Juse Felipe
Top row: Anissa, Avianna Arsenault, Ahjaah Harris, Allysonn, Yanira Vega, Leilani Byers

CHEER SQUAD

The PCMS Cheer and Spirit Squad is a cheer team that gives PCMS students an opportunity to be part of school spirit. The Cheer and Spirit Squad at PCMS is all about hard work and dedication. Ms. Pena, Cheer Coach, keeps the girls accountable with weekly progress reports that students have to turn in. Cheerleaders have to maintain a 70% or higher in every class to be able to participate in cheering for the week. The squad involves fundraising, school spirit, community, friendship, dedication, and fun. Saniya Lloyd summarized what it's like being on the Cheer Squad: "PCMS cheer team is full of positivity and happiness. Cheer has changed my life. Ever since I joined the PCMS cheer team, I became happier, more focused in school, and smiling more. Our cheer team has so much energy, and we know how to encourage our players and make them feel good."

INTRAMURALS

Image Above: Students playing flag football during intramurals

PCMS offers an intramural activity (sports) club after school (weather permitting). The club runs Monday through Thursday after school from 4:10-5:10 p.m. ANY STUDENT may stay after school to participate in a choice of activities to include soccer, basketball, flag football, and volleyball (when the gym is available). Students need to get a consent to participate form from the gym and return it to Coach Hibbard or Coach Renne prior to participation. Students may stay whichever days they choose and work for their schedule. ALL behavioral expectations and pick up times should be followed or it may be cause for your student to be dismissed.

Students playing flag football during intramurals

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HOPE AMBASSADORS

Our HOPE ambassadors club (Kindness club) held their first meeting September 28, 2023. The club gathers to promote kindness in the building and community. HOPE ambassador students do various acts of kindness for staff, students and community members and encourage others to pay it forward with kindness. Meetings are scheduled for the following dates (Thursdays from 4:10-5:10 in the Media Center): September 28, October 12, 26, November 9, 30, December 14, January 11, 25, February 8, 22, March 7, 28, April 11, 25, and May 9. ***All are welcome!***

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