

September 28, 2012

Dear Lincoln Savage Middle School Students and Families,

We have had a great beginning to the school year! Football, volleyball and Cross Country are off to a fast start and everyone is working very hard to make this a memorable and successful school year. As we begin this year, the entire staff at Lincoln Savage Middle School would like to welcome back our returning students and extend a warm welcome to our new students and families.

My name is Damian Crowson and I am the Principal at Lincoln Savage Middle School. I am extremely excited to be back for my second year as a tiger. We enjoyed a highly successful academic and athletic year in 2011-12 and we are looking to build on that success in 2013. We have an excellent reputation of being leaders in all areas of academics, athletics and activities. In an effort to continue building strong programs for students at Lincoln Savage Middle School, and preparing them for the rigors of Hidden Valley High School, we have made some changes to bell schedule and offerings this year:

1. We have created a 7 period day to give students additional opportunities for academic support and structured intramurals.
2. Each grade level has a dedicated lunch period.
  - a. Increases space to eat in the cafeteria
  - b. Decreased anxiety levels for younger students in a new environment
  - c. This schedule allows us to provide a safer and more structured intramural time and playground activities
  - d. This allows students to receive additional instructional support from their core teachers (Language Arts, Science, Math, Social Studies). This program is called ELO (Extended Learning Opportunity). Students in ELO will still receive the same amount of time for lunch that they always have, with the added benefit of receiving additional instruction from their teachers to keep them on the path of success.
  - e. This gives us an opportunity to address each grade level individually to teach and reteach expectations to support our PBIS Program
3. We have 10 Academic Support Classes built into the Master Schedule for 2012-13
  - a. Students that are performing below grade level will be given the opportunity to have an additional Math and/or Language Arts class. The focus of this class is to build their foundation of knowledge to meet the new rigors of Common Core Standards. This could mean an additional 260 minutes of Math or Language Arts each week.
4. We have hired additional ERC support at Lincoln Savage Middle School to address the growing needs of ERC students within the regular education setting.
  - a. This allows regular education teachers to receive support for ERC students in class

- b. This gives ERC student an opportunity to be placed in regular education classes with additional support from 1 of 5 educational assistants and a Special Education teacher.

There are two additional changes that you will notice at Lincoln Savage Middle School this year. There is a new grading system that will be in use starting this fall. The staff and leadership at all four TRSD middle schools will be using what is known as Proficiency Based Learning (PBL). Within this model, 80-percent of the student's grade is determined by their performance on assessments directly relating to content standards. The other 20-percent is based on professional qualities such as work ethic and attitude. It is the hope of Lincoln Savage Middle School, and the Three Rivers School District, that this change will help our students be college and career ready when they finish high school. If you would like additional information on the new grading system, please see the section on Proficiency Based Learning located within the Student Handbook, communicate with teachers, or contact me directly at (541) 862-2171.

The second change coming to Lincoln Savage is the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in the subject areas of English/Language Arts and Math. Oregon has joined 43 other states in the adoption of the CCSS. According to the Oregon Department of Education, these standards are: "...Aligned with college and work expectations; Are clear, understandable, and consistent; Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher-order skills; Build on strengths and lessons of current state standards".

Teacher teams from across the district (including all four middle schools) have been studying and working with the new standards for over a year. As a district, we have adopted an aggressive timeline for implementing these standards in our schools so that our students have the best chance of mastering these standards and applying them in post-secondary education or the work force. Despite all the work that has been done we still expect some growing pains and bumps along the way. But, we know our dedicated teacher teams are ready to meet those challenges head on. Through continued collaboration TRSD expects to continue leading Southern Oregon in its pursuit to educate the leaders of tomorrow.

We are very excited about the changes to our schedule, Common Core Curriculum and Proficiency Based Learning. Thank you again for giving us the opportunity to work with your sons and daughters this year. It's always inspiring watching the young men and young women of Lincoln Savage Middle School preparing themselves for Hidden Valley High School and beyond.

Go Tigers!

Damian Crowson

Principal