



Prairie Creek Intermediate

Questions and Answers for Students and Parents

I've been hearing about Neighborhoods and Teams, what are they?

- Prairie Creek Intermediate will have between 600 and 700 students who will be divided into three ***Neighborhoods*** in each grade. Two Neighborhoods in each grade will have 4 homeroom classes and one neighborhood in each grade will have 6 homeroom classes. The neighborhood idea is meant to build a sense of community, ownership, and personality for areas of the building.
- Students in a Neighborhood will have common Specials/Encore times and a common lunch/recess period.
- ***Teams*** in both grades will be organized in pairs to deliver core instruction. One teacher in the pair will teach Literacy and Social Studies and one teacher will teach Science and Math. Each teacher will work with approximately 50 students.

Will Neighborhoods have anything to do with where students live in the district?

- No, students will not be assigned by where they live in the district. Students will be assigned to classes and homerooms in much the same ways they have always been assigned.
- We try to provide a good mix of students in every classroom so that there are similar numbers of girls and boys, and so that every class has a variety of interests, strengths, and needs. We will ask current 4th and 5th grade teachers to help begin the assigning process since they know students very well.
- We will make sure that there are students from each of the elementary schools in every classroom. We know that kids will feel comfortable knowing some of the other students in their classes and also know that they will make new friends quickly as classes begin their work together.

What will a student's day be like at Prairie Creek Intermediate School?

Core instruction is the focus of the Intermediate Grade experience. Daily time specifications are as follows:

- Literacy - 90 min.
- Math - 60 min.
- Social Studies - 30 min.
- Science - 60 min.
- Integration (Gr. 5) - 45 min. 3 out of 6 days opposite Band
- Lunch 40 min. including recess
- Band 5th&6th 45min. 3 out of 6 days
- Choir 6th- 45 min. 3 out of 6 days
- Special Subjects/ Encore - 45 min.
- Homeroom - 20 minutes

What about specials classes?

Prairie Creek will call the special subject classes Encore.

- Band will be an option for all 5th and 6th grade students. Band will meet during the school day for 45 minutes every other day.
- 6th grade students will also have the option of joining choir, which will meet every other day as well.
- All students will participate in general music, art, world language, physical education, and technology/media.

Will there be activities outside of the school day?

- Prairie Creek is an Intermediate school and does not participate in inter school athletic competition.
- Students will have opportunities to support their learning through performances, exhibits, projects and social events that will be planned by the school community.

Will students and parents be able to visit the building and see classrooms before school begins next fall?

- The district is planning many transition activities to make sure that all students feel comfortable in their new school. Exact dates are not set but students will have the opportunity to visit the building this spring and before school starts in the fall.
- Elementary PTO groups are also planning events to celebrate moving on from the elementary buildings. Plans for these events will be announced as they are firmed up.

We know that students and families will continue to have questions. We hope to keep you informed with regular updates about new information as plans unfold.



Intermediate School

Questions and Answers for Students and Parents #2

How will students be placed into Neighborhoods and classes at Prairie Creek Intermediate?

- Neighborhoods and classes at Prairie Creek will be formed in ways that are very similar to the current practices. We want all groups to be balanced in terms of the number of boys and girls, students with academic needs for extra support, English Language Learners, students in need of extra academic challenges, and students from all four elementary buildings.
- Current 4th and 5th grade teachers, who know these children best, will complete placement cards that will be color coded by building. Cards will include information about academic achievement and special needs.
- We will also collect information about whether or not students are interested in band and which instruments they want to play.
- When all information is collected, we will sort students into groups for neighborhoods that balance all the information.
- Finally, teachers, counselors, and the principal will sort students into balanced classrooms.
- We anticipate that most classroom assignments will be completed before school is dismissed for the summer with the knowledge that some adjustments may still be needed.
- Teachers know their students very well and can be counted on to record information important to their placement. If parents have important information to share about the classroom environment or learning needs (not teacher requests) of their child they can request a placement information form from their elementary. The forms are due back to your elementary office by April 21.

How will students at Prairie Creek be graded and how will teachers report information to parents?

- We anticipate that some things will not be the same for both grades at Creek as the building opens. Teachers and leaders will need time to work together to create common procedures in the first year. This is what we DO know:
 - Reporting will be on a trimester system, three times per year.
 - Student-led conferences will be conducted at the end of the first and second trimester.
 - Conferences will be led by one of the two core teachers a student works with but include artifacts from all core courses.
 - Encore teachers will be available at some scheduled time during conferences for parents to talk to.
 - Report card markings will be the same as is presently used in each grade.
 - Parents will have access to the Parental Portal to view grades beginning in 6th grade.

- There will be a mid-term report sent to parents in 5th and 6th grade as is currently happening for each grade.
- Parents should expect monthly communication from teachers about instruction and learning through a combination of newsletters, notes, and phone calls.
- Agendas will be an important communication tool with student's recording their assignments daily.

What about the schedule for specials classes?

Prairie Creek will call the special subject classes **Encore**.

- Encore subjects will be clustered together across the year.
- Students will cycle through Art, World Language, and Physical Education for part of the time and General Music, Technology/Media, and Physical Education for another part of the year.
- Students within each Neighborhood in both grades 5 and 6 will all have Encore classes at the same time.
- Note that students will always have physical education in their rotation. We know that all children need to have physical activity on a regular basis to maintain good health. Student will NOT need to "dress out" – change clothes for gym.

Do students have to take band/choir? What will students who do not participate in band/choir do?

- Band and choir are electives that students are not required to participate in.
- Band will be an option for all 5th and 6th grade students. Band will meet during the school day for 45 minutes every other day.
- 6th grade students will also have the option of joining choir, which will meet every other day as well. Generally choir and band in 6th grade will alternate with each other.
- Students who do not choose to participate in band and/or choir will be engaged in meaningful extensions of their learning that will be planned by their teachers.

What will be the Start and End times for Prairie Creek Students?

- Prairie Creek Intermediate classes will start at 8:00. The day will end for students at 2:45.
- General information about bus pick-up and drop-off times will be given out in late spring as bus routes are finalized and schedules are developed. **Final bus stop locations and bus times will be given to families just before registration as has been done in the past.**



Prairie Creek Intermediate

Questions & Answers for Students & Parents #3

Who will be allowed to participate in band?

Band will be offered at Prairie Creek for both fifth and sixth graders! All future PC students will be trying out the band instruments this spring to discover what instrument suits them best! Band directors will send an instrument recommendation home with all students, based upon student interest and their success while trying the instruments. Then all parents of students interested in participating in band should plan to attend the band open house nights to “officially” get signed up and have all of their questions answered. Current fifth graders are *strongly* encouraged to sign up for beginning band summer school, while current fourth graders will start to learn their instruments next fall. This is an important process that you don’t want to miss out on! Please watch for detailed information coming home with your child.

Important Band Dates

Week of March 23- Current 5th graders try band instruments at PMS

April 6 & 7, 4:00-7:00 PM- 5th Grade Beginning Band Open House, PMS band room

Week of May 4- Current 4th graders try band instruments at PMS

May 18 & 19, 4:00- 7:00 PM- 4th Grade Beginning Band Open House, PMS band room

June 10- Beginning Band summer school starts for **incoming sixth graders only**

What are the requirements to play percussion?

Current Fourth Graders- It is highly recommended that current fourth graders who are interested in playing percussion have at least one year of piano lessons by May of 2009. Interested fourth graders will be given a rhythm and coordination evaluation to assess their percussion-playing capabilities. If recommended for percussion, students would start on bells and then move to drums. After this initial year for ‘08-‘09 fourth graders, the band program will require that any student interested in percussion have at least one year of piano lessons by spring of their fourth grade year.

Current Fifth Graders- Any student interested in playing percussion is required to have at least one year of piano lessons by this spring. Students will have a rhythm evaluation as well as demonstrating their piano ability when they try the other band instruments.

How will students currently identified for ELP be served?

We will not re-identify students for the Extended Learning Program as they move into the 5/6 building. Identification criteria in the four elementary buildings is very consistent so all identified students have a similar level of need for challenge. However, we all know that each student has unique strengths and challenges as well, and may need to be grouped and served in different ways. The plan is to distribute students across a neighborhood within their grade while at the same time clustering several students together for group work and social interaction. We will offer a range of ways to deliver instruction. Students may be grouped together for enrichment or challenge in a particular subject so that content can be differentiated within the classroom. They may participate in projects and programs outside of their classrooms specifically designed for gifted students and based on student interests or passions. Or the gifted and talented teacher may go into the classrooms to differentiate and extend work with students as they learn core subjects. We will provide a range of options to best meet students' needs.

Will students have to dress out (wear different clothes for P.E.)?

No, students will wear street clothes when they go to P.E. As always students will be required to wear athletic socks and shoes (no crocks, flip flops, or heelys) on the days they have P.E. Students are allowed to keep a pair of athletic socks/shoes in their locker if they prefer to change their shoes before going to P.E.

Will students visit the building before the end of the year?

Typically fifth grade students visit the middle school for a tour and learn about how they will move from class to class. In addition a sixth grade student comes to each building to talk about the routines in the middle school. The structure of the building will change for next year and students will not have as many changes from the elementary to the intermediate school. We will take all 4th and 5th grade students to the current middle school (Creek Intermediate next year) for a tour of the facilities. There will also be pictures posted on the Creek web link for students to view if they wish. We will arrange for students to get a chance to ask any questions they have.

Will there be an Open House?

There will be an open house scheduled for next fall. Parents and students will be able to participate in the Open House Night. You and your child will be able to see their classroom, meet their teachers and tour the building as a part of the Open House. The date must be set in collaboration with all of the schools to allow for families with students in multiple buildings to attend. We will keep you informed as the dates are decided.



C R E E K
Intermediate School

Questions and Answers for Students and Parents #4

What supplies will students need to bring?

There are supply lists for 5th and 6th grade that have been developed. All neighborhoods for each grade will have the same supply list. Teachers may ask for donations of items that are specific to the needs of their individual rooms. The supply list is printed on the back of this Q & A. Fourth and fifth grade students will get a copy of the supply list from their teacher to bring home on the last day of school and it will be posted on the web under the Prairie Creek tab.

Do students need to purchase a combination lock for their locker?

Combination locks are on the supply list for both 5th and 6th grade. Students will use their lockers to store not only their coats but also their school supplies and a lock is recommended to keep items secure.

Q. Will students have special folders for students to take things home in and will they go home on a certain night?

A. The folder system has been very beneficial in sharing information at the elementary level. Since communication with parents is one of the goals for Prairie Creek Intermediate we will supply heavy-duty plastic folders for all students to use to organize papers, handouts and announcements to send home. We will identify one day a week as the day that all "flyers" will be sent home.

Q. Will there be detentions and suspensions?

A. The majority of students in any elementary school will not be serving detentions or suspensions and that will certainly be the case at Prairie Creek. The purpose of discipline is to teach students appropriate behavior. We will work with students and families to support student growth in the area of behavior. Detention or suspension will be reserved for the most extreme cases.

Q. When will students and parents find out who their homeroom teacher is?

A. Parents will find out student's homeroom assignment at registration. We will also share the names of all the teachers in each neighborhood and the teachers who will be partners at that time so families will know the other teachers who will be working with their child.

Prairie Creek Intermediate 2009-2010 Supply List

Fifth Grade

- 1 padlock for locker
- 1 pair of scissors
- 2 boxes of 20 #2 pencils (no mechanical pencils please)
- 1 box of colored pencils
- 1 pkg. dry erase markers
- 1 highlighter marker
- 1 pencil pouch
- 2 large glue sticks (no colored glue please)
- 2 boxes of tissues
- 2 pkgs. wide-lined loose leaf paper
- 5 wide-lined spiral notebooks (1 of each of the following colors: red, green, blue, purple, yellow)
- 5 three prong pocket folders (1 of each of the following colors: red, green, blue, purple, yellow)
- 2 three ring binders 1 inch in width (no zipper or velcro)
- Students with the last name beginning with:
 - A-M please bring a box of sandwich size Ziploc bags
 - N-Z please bring 1 package 3" x 3" Post-it notes

Donations Welcome:

- Markers
- Black Sharpie markers
- Red ink pens
- Handheld pencil sharpeners
- Big erasers
- Rulers
- Note: All supplies, excluding binders, pencil pouches, spiral notebooks, and folders will be collected by classroom teachers for community supplies. Please do not label student supplies prior to the first day of school.

Sixth Grade Supplies

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|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2+ inch binder-zippered or Velcro | Pencil pouch |
| pencils and erasers-no mechanicals | ink pens-black/blue-no gel pens |
| scissors | padlock for locker |
| 2 boxes tissues | glue sticks-2 |
| wide-lined paper (2) | a spiral-(spare) |
| non-toxic white out | 4-3 prong folders with pockets |
| colored pencils | dry erase markers |
| 1-5 subject spiral for literacy | 1-package markers |

highlighters: pink, yellow, green for literacy and choice for science