

MITCHELL MESSENGER

Volume 25, Issue 1

Principal's Corner by: Paula Klapesky

**ORIENTATION EDITION
APRIL 2020**

Principal

Paula Klapesky

Assistant Principal

(for 2020-2021)

To Be Determined-5th

Stephanie Johnson-6th

Counselors

Marianne Mote-5th

Terrie Rascoe-6th

Summer Office Hours

July 20-August 11
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and
1:30-3:30 p.m.

July 28, 30, August 4, 6, 11
9:00 a.m.-12:00 pm and
1:30-6:00 pm

Mitchell Intermediate

6800 Alden Bridge Drive
The Woodlands, 77382

Phone (832)592-8500

To Report an Absence

(832)592-8516

Fax (832)592-8518

Clinic (832)592-8457

(832)592-8525

Transportation Department

(832)592-8800



The next milestone in your child's educational journey is about to begin. Your child will begin intermediate school as a new fifth grader at Mitchell Intermediate School. For many families, this transition may be a return trip an older sibling has already experienced. For others, this may be your oldest child to attend Mitchell Intermediate. I can assure you, as the principal of this exceptional school, we will do whatever it takes to make the next two years in your child's school career positive ones as we continue our quest to junior high school.

The transition process for every fourth grader is quite extensive. While this year is quite different from other years due to distance learning and remote learning plans, we are still in the process of making plans for our incoming 5th graders. I have conferenced with all of the fourth grade teachers, principal, assistant principal, and counselor from each of the feeder elementary schools: Buckalew, Bush, Galatas, and Powell to learn more about our future Mitchell Mustangs.

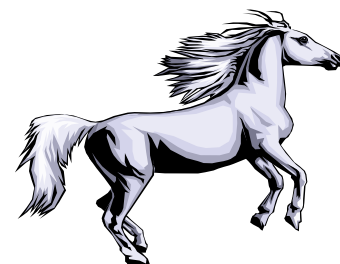
Information regarding elective options will be disseminated electronically at this time. We anticipate being able to conduct more thorough instrument evaluations closer to the first week of school.

One of my favorite events is the day your child visits Mitchell for 4th Grade Orientation. While that can't happen now, we will still plan on "Meet the Teachers" so you and your child can tour the school. I will, instead, send an electronic version of the orientation.

You won't want to miss our annual "Meet the Teachers" event on Monday, August 10. Your child will have the opportunity to show you their new school, meet their teachers, pick up or purchase Mitchell spiritwear and school supply packages, and open their new locker. If you are unavailable on August 10, your child will receive their LC placement on the first day of school.

We look forward to meeting you and your child. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. We are looking forward to an exciting excursion with you and your child. Have a memorable summer vacation!

Paula Klapesky



A True Learning Community

Mitchell Calendar of Events

May 4

4th Grade Orientation Presentation, Fine Arts Presentation, & Enrollment Intentions emailed to parents

August 10

5th Grade "Meet the Teachers" for last names:

5:30-6:15 p.m.- A-G

6:15-7:00 p.m. H-O

7:00-7:45 p.m. P-Z

August 12

First day of school

August 27

5th Grade Parent Information Night (LC-specific times)

September 1

6th Grade Parent Information Night (LC-specific times)

September 7

School Holiday

September 10

Parent Information Night for Band, Choir, and Orchestra

6:00-6:45 PM-Band (Commons) & Orchestra (Room 128)

7:00-7:45 PM-Choir (Commons)

Check out our campus web site at:
<http://mitchell.conroeisd.net/>

Be sure to bookmark this site to retrieve the *Mitchell Messenger* in the future.

The Conroe Independent School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding these non-discrimination policies: **Title IX Coordinator, 3205 W. Davis, Conroe, Texas 77304; (936) 709-7700 and the Section 504/ADA Coordinator, 3205 W. Davis, Conroe, Texas 77304; (936) 709-7670.**

Mitchell Intermediate PTO

The Mitchell staff and students are very fortunate to have the support of the Mitchell PTO. Members of the PTO help by:

- Volunteering during school activities
- Maintaining garden areas
- Providing special treats and luncheons for the faculty
- Organizing fundraisers to support students and teachers with instructional materials and field trips
- Submitting articles and photographs to local newspapers
- Assisting with textbook distribution
- Supporting students and teachers in the classroom
- Creating the annual yearbook

For more information, feel free to visit the PTO website at:

[Mitchell PTO Website](http://www.mitchellmustangsppto.org)

www.mitchellmustangsppto.org

Counselors' Corner

By: Marianne Mote and Terrie Rascoe

The counselors at Mitchell Intermediate are here to help. We meet with the students individually, in groups and through our classroom guidance lessons during the year. We cover many topics from test anxiety to staying on track. We try to give the children information that helps them develop into successful, independent students.

As you make the transition to Mitchell Intermediate, we thought you would like to know how things work. If after things have gotten into a routine, say three weeks or so, and you have a concern or question about your child's grades, homework or what is going on in class; you will want to check the teacher's Canvas course or your child's planner for more information. Check Student and/or Parent Access. Next contact the teachers via email and try to get your questions answered. If you still need further clarification, contact the teachers directly to set up a conference. At Mitchell Intermediate, we don't schedule mandatory parent conferences as many elementary schools do twice a year. Parent conferences can be scheduled by the teachers or parents. This could be a phone conference or face to face. If after that conference you do not feel like your concerns were addressed, you should then contact the grade level counselor or assistant principal. We would be glad to meet with you and the teachers to help resolve any concerns that you have. So to review:

- Check teacher's Canvas course
- You and your child can review their planner
- Your child can check Student Access
- You can check Parent Access
- Email teachers
- Set up a Parent/Teacher conference
- Contact grade level counselor or assistant principal

5th Grade "Meet the Teachers"

Monday, August 10

Please attend the session indicated by the first letter of your child's last name.

A-G	5:30-6:15 PM
H-O	6:15-7:00 PM
P-Z	7:00-7:45 PM

CLINIC INFORMATION

We are so fortunate to have a full time nurse on staff at Mitchell Intermediate. Our nurse will be accessible to all students and their health needs.

In the interest of safety for our students, Conroe ISD policy dictates that no medication for students will be transported either to school or returned home with the child. If it is necessary for your child to take medication during the school day, it is the parent's responsibility to deliver the medication in its original container to the school clinic. This policy is directed for all types of medication which includes prescription and non-prescription such as Tylenol. The nurse will also have you complete the "Medication Permission Form". Please contact the school nurse for any concerns with delivery of medication and clinic hours. Just a reminder, please check the expiration date and the recommended dosage for all medication.

We appreciate your assistance in these procedures for the safety of all our students. Please feel free to contact the clinic for any concerns or questions at 832-592-8457. The nurse will be available during "Meet the Teachers" on August 10 to accept medication from parents and complete the "Medication Permission Form". In addition, if your child has a serious health condition, please bring a written summary of the health condition that includes a treatment plan and directive, preferably from your child's physician. The nurse would prefer all critical cases be brought to her attention prior to the first day of school.

Frequently Asked Questions

• What are the school hours?

Classes begin at 8:50 AM and end at 3:55 PM. However, all students need to be in the building no later than 8:30 AM to prepare for the day and put their backpacks/lunches in their lockers. Doors open at 7:45 AM for students attending before school activities or tutorials. All students arriving to school in the morning will enter the building through the gymnasium doors. Students may not be dropped off prior to 8:00 AM

• How are the students placed in classrooms?

Students are assigned to a Learning Community (LC), typically consisting of four teachers responsible for each of the content areas: language arts, social studies, math, and science. Each LC is balanced with children needing a variety of instructional services which include: gifted/talented, special education, Advanced Math, English Language Learners (ELL) and Section 504. Also, we make every attempt to evenly distribute students from each of our feeder elementary schools and "new to the district" students.

• May parents request specific teachers or Learning Communities?

We spend a great deal of time reviewing every child's educational records and meet with fourth grade teachers at each elementary school to learn about your child. We try very hard to match your child's educational needs with our teachers' instructional styles. You may hear information from neighbors and friends recommending specific teachers. However, we feel we can best match teaching and learning styles with our careful placement criteria. Parents may request their child be placed with a teacher an older sibling had while at Mitchell Intermediate.

• Can you explain "looping"?

Our students are assigned to an LC for fifth and sixth grade. The children will remain with the same teachers and approximately 75 or 100 classmates for fifth and sixth grade. This allows the teachers to begin the curriculum in sixth grade much sooner than normal because it usually takes at least 6-8 weeks to complete beginning of the year literacy and math assessments. Teachers are able to bypass the evaluation time and begin teaching much sooner. This enables the teachers the opportunity to teach more of the curriculum and present innovative lessons they otherwise might not have time to teach. We feel this is an advantage to the teachers and the students. It has proven to be very successful for 24 years. In addition, the relationship between the teacher and the child is one of the most indicative indicators of a student's success. Our goal is to ensure every child feels comfortable and confident before transitioning to junior high school.

• How are Gifted and Talented children placed in classes?

Identified GT students are placed in every LC. Each child will be served based on their area of eligibility. While not every child in the class may be GT-identified, those who are, will have a differentiated curriculum. Math is accelerated while the other content areas are enriched and offer more depth and complexity. The *Texas Performance Standards Project (TPSP)* is used to enrich the grade level curriculum. Parents may be unsure whether their child should be screened for the GT Program. We highly encourage you to have your child tested prior to intermediate school if you and his/her teachers recommend consideration. Testing is offered in June. Nomination forms are available at every school until the end of April. Parents must nominate their child at their current elementary school.

• Can my child take advanced math if they aren't identified gifted/talented? Students identified gifted/talented in math are placed in the program. Math is the only area that is accelerated, so specific criteria must be met. Because students won't take the Advanced Math Placement test at the end of 4th grade due to school closures, parents will be informed at a later date if the test is going to be administered. Because our math teachers have a variety of learners in their class, they can easily meet the needs of children who excel in various aspects of the math

curriculum. We don't feel it is detrimental at this time not to have Advanced Math placement test data.

• How many children are in each classroom?

Conroe ISD allocates, in most cases, an average of 26 students in each fifth and sixth grade homeroom.

• Do Mitchell students "dress out" for Physical Education?

Our students will attend PE every other day for 45 minutes. Our students do not dress out for PE; they participate in PE activities in their daily school clothing. Therefore, it is important that students are dressed to be able to participate in rigorous, physical activities. Students also have daily recess time for approximately fifteen minutes.

• May my child have a cell phone/airpods/Smartwatch at Mitchell?

Cell phones really are unnecessary since staff members or the school nurse are always accessible to phone parents if a child becomes ill or if an emergency arises. On the rare occasion when a student may need to clarify dismissal routines, they can use the phone in the front office. Though they aren't necessary, your child may bring a cell phone but it must remain turned off at all times between 7:45 AM-4:15 PM and in the child's locker. Smart watches are nearly identical to cell phones and are to be kept in lockers during the school day. Consequences for non-compliance will be enforced.

• How can students make a fine arts decision if they are unfamiliar with the programs?

All fourth graders will be introduced to Fine Arts options via online information created by the Mitchell fine arts teachers. Fourth grade parents and students will complete an online survey to indicate preferences. However, fourth graders have until August 21 to finalize their decision. Fifth graders will attend the class of their choice on the second day of school. Once a child makes a fine arts choice, they will remain in that class all year.

• If my child attended a Conroe ISD elementary school, do I need to enroll him/her at Mitchell?

No, every child's records will be sent from their elementary school to Mitchell. However, you will need to update information on the electronic registration InfoSnap form to ensure emergency contact numbers are updated. That form is emailed around the first of August.

• Can a sixth grader enroll in band or orchestra if they took art/music in the fifth grade?

Sixth grade band or orchestra is a second year, continuing course that follows the fifth grade beginner course. A new sixth grade student will not receive regular instruction apart from the second year students; therefore private lessons would be required over the summer to be prepared. McCullough does not offer a beginner band or orchestra program. Therefore, the only beginning instruction in band or orchestra would occur in 5th grade. If your child is interested in learning how to play an instrument, 5th grade is the ideal time to enroll in band or orchestra.

• Is there a specific dress code?

Details will be included in the "Mitchell Student/Parent Handbook" that can be found on our Mitchell website. However, for parents wanting to purchase school clothes over the summer, here are a few items that are not permitted: tank tops/spaghetti straps, short shorts/skirts-they should be at least mid-thigh to the knee in length, sandals without back straps or flip flops, inappropriate/obscene messages on t-shirts, graphic/violent images on clothing, yoga-style leggings with short tops, and cosmetics.

How do I find information about my child's bus number and the bus arrival and departure time? Visit the following website and follow the online directions prior to the first day of school:

<http://www.conroeisd.net/transportation/>



Making a Smooth Transition

Many children feel a little anxious when they transition to a new school. Reassure your child that it's normal to have concerns about:

- **Friendships**-Your child may be concerned about making new friends and being separated from old friends from their elementary school. Most children do very well making new friends. Remind your child that they won't be the only new kid at school. Everyone in his/her grade will be new. We have four elementary feeder schools that all come together for the first time and new students moving in from other places. Everyone is a brand new Mitchell Mustang.
- **Campus**-Mitchell may seem larger than the elementary school, but even though the school itself may be larger, your child will be assigned to a Learning Community in which he/she will stay in one hallway (except for Fine Arts/P.E., and lunch), with only three or four homerooms.
- **Lockers**-This is the first time many students use lockers. Most children are very excited about having a locker, but some may be feeling anxious that he/she won't be able to open it. You might have your child practice on a combination lock at home to give him/her extra confidence.
- **Teachers**-Most students will have four LC teachers. Each teacher may have a different teaching style, but all are elementary/intermediate certified and child-centered, not just content-focused. Our goal is for each child to feel comfortable with every staff member.

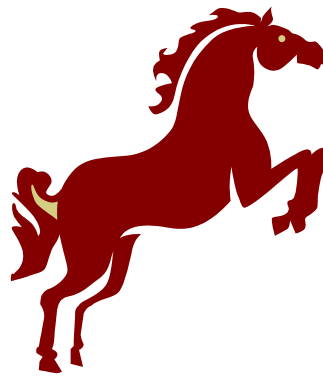
What can you do to make the transition a smooth one?

- **Get Involved**-Join the PTO. Many parents think they aren't needed or wanted when their children get older, but that's not true.
- **Arrival/Dismissal**-Talk about how they will be getting to and from school now. If they are going to walk or bike, practice that route over the summer often so they will feel confident next year.
- **Listen**-Listen carefully for unstated feelings. Be ready to talk when your child has questions or concerns. Give your full attention whenever you can.

Change can seem scary. Parents can help their children be excited about this new adventure if they approach it the right way. Help to ease their concerns and be prepared for a wonderful experience.

MITCHELL INTERMEDIATE ALMA MATER

HAIL MITCHELL MUSTANGS,
HAIL THE TEAL AND WHITE.
YOU WILL PREPARE US
FOR A FUTURE SO BRIGHT.
HAIL TO OUR SCHOOL,
WE'LL ALWAYS STAND BY YOU.
TO MITCHELL MUSTANGS,
WE WILL ALWAYS BE TRUE.



Mitchell Mustangs!

COOL SCHOOL FACTS TO KNOW

- Mitchell Intermediate was named in honor of George P. Mitchell, founder of The Woodlands
- Mitchell Intermediate opened in 1996
- Mitchell Intermediate's mascot is the mustang
- Mitchell Intermediate's school colors are teal and white
- Mitchell Intermediate's motto is "A True Learning Community"
- Mitchell Intermediate teachers and staff members have a combined total of more than 1,500 years of experience! WOW!

Helping Students Become Independent Learners

Intermediate school is a time when children are learning more responsibility. Responsible children do better in school and grow up to become productive, responsible adults. Here are some ways that you, as a parent, can help your child become more responsible.

- Never do for a child what he/she can do for himself/herself (example: making lunches)
- Make sure your child learns that actions have consequences
- Let your child make choices such as whether to take art/music, band, or orchestra for their elective
- Have your child use an alarm clock or set an alarm on their phone and have them assume the responsibility for getting up in the morning
- Praise and encourage more than punishing
- Let your child make mistakes
- Admit your own mistakes when you make them
- Review assignments, progress reports, report cards, and the student planner on a regular basis
- While it is important to review Parent Access Center, encouraging your child to access their own Student Access Center puts the responsibility for their grades where it belongs-on the child
- Have a specific location in your home and set time to review school work and the student planner each evening

Mitchell Fine Arts Options-5th Grade

Fifth graders at Mitchell Intermediate will have several choices for their fine arts class. We are fortunate that the Conroe ISD is a huge supporter of the fine arts and that every child attends the fine arts option they select daily for 45 minutes. Every child will make a selection that will last for the entire school year. We encourage you to carefully read the "Fine Arts" information as the options are completely different than when your child attended 4th grade. Fifth graders have the option of the following choices:

- ♦ Art/Music (alternates each quarter)
or
- ♦ Band
or
- ♦ Orchestra



A more detailed description about each choice is included in the Mitchell Fine Arts brochure. Future Mitchell Mustangs interested in band or orchestra will be evaluated thru a process that will be determined at a later date.

In order for us to plan for the 2020-2021 school year, we need to know which class your child prefers. That will be indicated on the Fine Arts survey.

This past school year, we implemented a new schedule to allow students to choose a preferred option and to better prepare students for the elective transition to McCullough. As a sixth grader, your child may have four choices based on student interest levels and space availability. These sixth grade choices could impact what your fifth grader chooses. Options for sixth graders for the 2020-2021 school year include:

- ♦ Art/Music
- ♦ Band
- ♦ Choir
- ♦ Orchestra



Any fifth grader, regardless of their Fine Arts choice, may participate in the Mixed Choir. Mixed Choir rehearsals will be held on Monday and Wednesday from 7:45-8:30 AM. Your child also has the opportunity to audition for the Mitchell Chorale. Rehearsal for the Mitchell Chorale will be on Tuesday and Thursday from 7:45-8:30 AM. Students will need to have transportation to and from rehearsals.

<p>Email Addresses</p> <p>Principal Paula Klapesky pklapesky@conroeisd.net</p> <p>5th Grade Counselor Marianne Mote mmote@conroeisd.net</p>
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<p>2020-2021 Conroe ISD Calendar</p> <p>The 2020-2021 Conroe ISD Calendar can be accessed at:</p> <p>2020-2021 Conroe ISD School Calendar</p> <p>The calendar can also be found on the Conroe ISD website under "Calendars".</p>
