

Weekly Eagle News – Middle School

Happy New Year Middle School Community!

I hope you have enjoyed a blessed and restful Christmas and New Year season. Before launching into my first Weekly Eagle, I want to thank Mr. Bennett for his leadership at Redlands Christian Middle School. In our time working together, he taught me the importance of keeping Christ at the heart of every aspect of life, both personally and professionally. I also want to emulate Mr. Bennett's desire to see every student at RCMS grow academically, socially, and spiritually. Please join me in praying for Mr. Bennett and his wife as they discern God's will for the future.

I also covet your prayers as I move into a role for which God has been preparing me for many years. I am incredibly blessed to have had the opportunity to teach middle school history at RCMS for over twenty years. In that time, I worked for some incredible principals who mentored and encouraged me to pursue leadership myself. In 2017, I earned a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Calvin University (Go Knights!) and God opened the door for me to begin working as assistant principal at RCMS in 2019. I wholeheartedly believe that God's timing is perfect and that my experiences and education have prepared me well for this new role. I am energized and excited for what lies ahead!

The middle school team has been incredibly supportive, gracious, and encouraging as we have navigated this transition together. I want to highlight a few key people who will be taking on additional responsibilities for the second semester to fill in any organizational gaps as I move in the principal position:

- Matt Van Soelen will take on many of the assistant principal duties while continuing to teach his 8th Grade history classes. As a result, his role as technology integrationist will take a back seat for the time being.
- Kim Batalo will continue to be at the heart of everything going on at RCMS with many additional responsibilities as needs arise.
- Ameris Williams has been a tremendous help at the front desk and will continue to fill that position on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- Ivonne Mendoza (student activities) and Rebecca Poortenga (organizational logistics) are also supporting me with additional responsibilities.
- RCMS Parents (yes...you!!!) continue to support our middle school policies and procedures. The start of the second semester is an excellent time to review [The Parent Student Handbook](#) (especially the sections on **tardies** and **dress code**) and remind your student of the expectations.

A few additional notes for the week:

- This week's schedule is slightly different on Wednesday and Thursday to keep our elective classes balanced:
 - Wednesday, January 3 – MONDAY schedule
 - Thursday, January 4 – TUESDAY schedule
 - Friday will be a regular Friday schedule.
- Winter MAP Testing will take place on Wednesday, January 10. No regular classes will meet.
- First Semester Report Cards will be emailed on January 12.
- 8 international students will be joining our middle school community for the next six weeks. Encourage your student to connect and help them see what RCMS is all about!

Prayer Request – 8th Grader David Stan continues his battle with leukemia. I was able to visit him over break and he was so excited by the gifts and letters! Thank you to all who have donated and/or written to David. The hope is he will undergo a bone marrow transplant in the coming months, but David's continued hospitalization and treatment has put a tremendous financial strain on the family. If you feel so led, you can donate to this [GoFundMe](#).

Have a blessed New Year,

Matt Wiers
MS Principal