



JANE ADDAMS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mrs. Sonia E. Ruiz, *Principal*
Dr. Andrea Heil, *Assistant Principal*

Dear Parents/Guardians of Eighth Grade Students:

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year! I hope you and your family have been enjoying a wonderful summer filled with opportunities to relax, recharge, and make lasting memories together.

Like many of our students, I have also been learning this summer. In addition to spending time with my family, I have been working towards my Ph.D. As both a principal and a lifelong learner, I truly believe that learning never stops. There is always an opportunity to grow, challenge ourselves, and become better than we were yesterday. It is a mindset that I hope every Mustang embraces throughout the school year.

As we prepare to begin another exciting year, I want to warmly welcome back our returning Mustangs and extend a very special welcome to our new sixth-grade students and families. Starting middle school is a big milestone, and we are excited to partner with you as your child begins this new chapter.

For those who may not know me, my name is Sonia E. Ruiz, and I have the privilege of serving as the principal of Jane Addams Middle School. This school year marks my fifth year leading this incredible school community. Over the past four years, I have had the opportunity to watch our students grow academically, socially, and emotionally while working alongside an amazing staff and supportive families. Together, we have celebrated many accomplishments, including earning the Illinois Exemplary School designation for the past three consecutive years. While I am incredibly proud of this recognition, what means the most to me is the culture we have built together where students feel connected, challenged, and supported every day.

I am also the proud mother of three wonderful children, Karina, Hannah, and Jeremiah. Like every parent, I want my children to attend a school where they feel safe, valued, challenged, and excited to learn each day. Like every parent, I want my children to learn in a school where they feel safe, supported, challenged, and genuinely excited to come each day. That perspective guides every decision I make as principal. My goal is to ensure that Jane Addams is the kind of school I would want for my own children, a place where every student is known, valued, challenged to grow, and inspired to reach their full potential.

At Jane Addams, being a Mustang means that we **LEAD**. We **Live Respectfully**, **Embrace Diversity**, **Act Responsibly**, and **Demonstrate Kindness**. These values guide how we learn together, how we treat one another, and how we build a school community where every student can thrive. This year is especially meaningful because Jane Addams Middle School is celebrating its 50th anniversary! For five decades, Jane Addams has been a place where students have learned, grown, built lasting friendships, and discovered their potential. Throughout the year, we will celebrate this incredible milestone and honor the students, families, staff members, and community partners who have helped shape our school's rich history. We look forward to creating new memories together as we celebrate this special occasion.

As we begin this new school year, my hope is that every student who walks through our doors knows they belong. Middle school is a time of tremendous growth, discovery, and opportunity. Our staff is committed to challenging students academically while helping them develop confidence, build meaningful relationships, and discover their strengths. Together with our families, we will continue creating a school where every Mustang is inspired to learn, lead, and succeed.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children. It is a responsibility that we do not take lightly, and we are grateful for the opportunity to partner with you. Here's to an amazing school year and to celebrating 50 years of Jane Addams Middle School!

In Partnership,
Sonia E Ruiz
Principal

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