



# MHSD NEWSLETTER

A quarterly newsletter brought to you by the Mountain Home School District Office.

QUARTER 1, 2017

10/16/2017

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## Superintendent



I'd like to welcome everyone to a new and exciting school year. The school year has gotten off to a great start and we are all very excited to see the happy and smiling faces of all the students. There are many intriguing new things going on in the district from curriculum changes to building projects. Every quarter the school district administration office will release a newsletter to our parents and patrons

with some of the things that are going on in the Mountain Home School District. Along with my message, each newsletter will contain an update from our Director of Operations, Will Goodman, our Director of Student Services, Albert Longhurst, and our Director of Instruction, Jeff Johnson. I hope you find the information useful and that it gives you a person of contact should you have questions.

Starting October 18<sup>th</sup>, the Mountain Home School District will have an active Facebook page and a [Twitter account](#). It is my hope that through our social media platforms we will be able to provide you with information in a quick and reliable manor as well as highlighting things that are going on throughout the district.

Fall activities are in full swing and it won't be long before we begin our late fall/winter activities. In other activity news the Idaho High School Activities Association revisited the petition they approved in September that would have moved Mountain Home High School to the 3A level. The IHSAA re-voted on this issue in early October and voted to leave Mountain Home High School at the 4A level. As a result we continued to look at opportunities to give Mountain Home students the opportunity to be more competitive with their high school peers in high school sanctioned activities. Through input from our community and coaches it was determined that the best route to give our students the equity of competition was to move from the Southern Idaho Conference (SIC) and join the Great Basin Conference. This conference is made up of schools from Jerome, Wood River, Burley, Twin Falls and Rupert. I strongly feel these communities more closely align with Mountain Home and will give our students the opportunity to be competitive. For the remainder of this school year, we will continue to compete in the 4A classification of the Southern Idaho Conference. Starting next fall our high school athletic programs will compete in the 4A classification of the Great Basin Conference. Our junior high school programs will continue in the Intervalley League, their current league.

Our Plant Facility Levy has really helped make some much needed repairs throughout the district. Through the use of plant facility funds we have been able to replace several leaking roofs, repair dangerous playgrounds, install technology upgrades, install security cameras, improve parking at Tiger Field, paint classrooms and buildings, and a variety of other projects.

I want to thank this amazing community for the tremendous support you provide to all the students and staff of the Mountain Home School District. I

look forward to a great school year! Should you ever have a question for me please do not hesitate to e-mail me at [gilbert\\_jg@mtnhomesd.org](mailto:gilbert_jg@mtnhomesd.org) or call at (208) 587-2580.

Respectfully,

James Gilbert  
Superintendent  
Mountain Home School District #193

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## Technology



We are happy to announce that the Mountain Home School District was awarded a \$1,000,000 grant on September 29<sup>th</sup>. The grant is a five year grant that will allow the district to have a device for every student in every classroom (one-to-one). This is the third Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA) grant the district has received in the last three years. The district's combined DODEA grant total is now \$4,000,000. The first grant allowed the district to go "one-to-one" kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. The new grant will allow the district to go "one-to-one" in the remaining grades. It will also allow the district to hire a technology integration specialist, send teachers to technology integration and computer science training, and will bring in Boise State University professors to help integrate computer science and technology into every classroom. This process will be phased in over the 5 years of the grant.

The Mountain Home School District will formally unveil its new updated [Facebook Page](#) and [Twitter](#) account this Wednesday, October 18. The [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts are intended to get information out to the public in a timely fashion and will include school cancellation notices as well as other information that will be sent out on the district wide distribution list. The public, teachers, staff, students, and administrators are invited to send information to the district emailing to [publicinformation@mtnhomesd.org](mailto:publicinformation@mtnhomesd.org).

Respectfully,

William Goodman  
Director of Operations and Technology

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## Curriculum



The purpose of this letter is to briefly introduce myself and tell you about the amazing things happening in the Mountain Home School District. My name is Jeff Johnson, and I am in my third year serving as the Director of Instruction, Federal Programs Director, DoDEA Math Grant Project Director, AVID District Director, and Professional Development Coordinator for the Mountain Home School District. I graduated from Mountain Home High School and have had the privilege of working as a math teacher, PE teacher, District Activities Director, Assistant Principal at Mountain Home High School for 2 years and Principal at Mountain Home High School for nine years. My wife is the counselor at Bennett Mountain High School, and I have 3 daughters, one of which is a graduate of MHHS and two that are in 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade respectively. I have a vested interest in the education program in Mountain Home and look forward to being part of continuing to provide the best educational opportunities for our students.

What exciting things are going on in the district?

- We were able to adopt new ELA (English Language Arts) curriculum for grades K-6. The new Journeys program has many resources, including digital resources that students can access at school and home. Like any new program, it is taking teachers some time to get used to everything the program offers and adjusting lesson plans as needed. Our teachers will be receiving additional training during the October 6th PLC day to help with the transition to the new program.
- As mentioned in a Blackboard message earlier, we are now using the BSU DMTI (Developing Mathematical Thinking Institute) math modules K-4. While it is not ideal to have two new curriculums in the same year, we recognized that these changes needed to happen for the best interest of our students.
- Enrichment Programs - Each school is in the process of finalizing their enrichment programs. The goal with these programs is to expose students to activities they normally would not have the time for during the regular school day. These activities will include coding, forensics, Lego robotics, art, etc. In addition, we are hoping to create 10 teams of 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders to compete in the Mars Rover competition. Look for more information coming from your child's school. Please let your child's school know if you would be interested in coaching a Mars Rover team.
- AVID(Advancement Via Individual Determination) - The AVID program is going strong in grades 5-12. Some of the AVID strategies you may be seeing are the AVID binder focusing on organizational skills, focused note taking (may also be called Cornell notes, two column notes or three column notes), and multiple AVID strategies our teachers use during instruction. This marks the first year we have had AVID seniors, so we are excited for these students to graduate and to see how AVID has prepared them for their future.
- PACE Project - Through our continued partnership with Boise State and Dr. Lindsey Turner, staff and students are part of a research project that focuses on tracking student engagement when using activity breaks throughout the day.
- October 6<sup>th</sup> PLC day - As mentioned earlier, our K-6 staff received additional training on the new Journeys curriculum. In addition, we had 19 staff members attend an AVID regional training, 10 staff members attended state meetings, and our secondary staff worked with the Mountain Home Police Department to go over school safety and current trends law enforcement has noticed in our youth.
- Our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will once again participate in the Direct Writing Assessment, along with all of the other schools in the Treasure Valley. The purpose of this assessment is to give students some writing practice that will be beneficial for them on the standardized state tests in the spring. This will also give teachers a better idea of what each student needs to improve on throughout the year. Also, this event will bring about eighty 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers across the valley to score the writing samples, along with an opportunity to share best practices with each other.
- Finally, I am excited to announce that we have the opportunity to bring Jon Gordon to the Mountain Home School District on January 8, 2018. Jon is a best-selling author and speaker on the topics of positive leadership, culture, and teamwork. We have had many book studies the past couple years centered around Jon's books, so this will be a great culminating event. More details will be sent later, but the public is welcome to attend as well.

I am looking forward to a great school year, and hope your child has a great year. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Jeff Johnson  
Director of Curriculum  
[johnson\\_jm@mtnhomesd.org](mailto:johnson_jm@mtnhomesd.org)  
208-587-2580

Special Education



I would like to welcome you to the 2017-18 school year. Regardless of what grade or how old your child may be, there are always concerns we have when we send our children off to school each day. Some of those concerns may be tied to academics, social, and safety or all of the above. We believe that we can improve the social and emotional well-being of the students by addressing how we as adults respond to behaviors by reinforcing the desired behaviors and choosing researched based strategies when responding to behaviors that are not appropriate or tolerated. We are very fortunate to have received a DODEA grant that is allowing us to work with Boise State University and the Idaho Positive Behavior Network (IPBN) in implementing Positive Behavior Interventions Systems district wide.

Each school has sent out information through newsletters, back to school night, or BlackBoard about PBIS and the expectations for the students. The biggest take away for this school year with PBIS is to effectively implement Tier 1 interventions throughout the school year. Tier 1 focuses on the adults and trying to get all the adults on the same page with how we communicate and respond to behaviors. If kids feel safe and supportive, we believe the implementation of PBIS will positively impact students grades. Please keep in mind, this is a process and not to expect a quick fix with how we address behaviors of concern. We are continually creating and planning professional development with the IPBN that will allow us to grow and make changes as necessary.

If you have any concern, please don't hesitate to call or email.

Sincerely,  
Albert Longhurst  
Director of Educational Services

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