

January 22, 2015

Dear Parents of Fifth Grade Students:

It's hard to believe that we are fast approaching the time for middle school selection and enrollment. While there are many opportunities to learn about the different options for your child, **registration will be held January 26 through February 6**. Most students choose to attend their neighborhood school, while others may choose to apply for a magnet school or a specialized academy. If you choose your attendance zone school, your child will automatically be assigned there for next year, provided you still live in that attendance zone. If you have moved, you **MUST** change your address to guarantee assignment at your attendance zone school. Address changes may be made on designated days at St. Mark's or the Student Registration Office. Magnet school seats are filled by a computerized random selection if requests for enrollment exceed the number of available seats, and there will be no numbered waiting list. When additional seats become available, students who did not get assigned initially will be entered into a new random selection. There are middle school magnet programs at Dunbar International Studies/Gifted and Talented, and Mann Arts and Mann Science, and a specialized academy at Forest Heights STEM School. Students who choose to attend their neighborhood school will be provided a bus if they live more than two miles from their assigned schools. Bus transportation is available to all LRSD students accepted into a magnet program or specialized academy. Remember, if you have not changed your address and your child will be attending his or her attendance zone school, you do not need to do anything; your child will be automatically assigned.

Magnet forms for Little Rock students will be available online at www.LRSD.org or at Jefferson Elementary from January 26-February 6, from 9 am until 1 pm. You may also register at St. Mark Baptist Church, 5722 W. 12th Street, during the week of January 26-January 30, or the Student Registration Office at 501 Sherman Street (447-2950) beginning February 2 until February 6. New rules apply at St. Mark, with specific days assigned to specific grade levels, but the following week at the Student Registration Office is open to everyone. Please see the LRSD website for more information regarding the St. Mark schedule.

Just a little personal note to help alleviate any anxiety: assignment is *not* prioritized by being first in line or the earliest to arrive, as long as registration takes place by February 6, 2015.

The middle schools have each had open houses this past fall, as well as the district-wide "Check us out" days that were held at all early childhood, elementary, middle, and high schools in the Little Rock School District. I would encourage you to call any school if you still have questions regarding any programs or course offerings or you may visit www.LRSD.org, or call the Student Registration Office at 447-2950.

I will meet with students to determine course selections and prepare the Course Selection Forms in March. Teachers will make recommendations for placement in the core courses. You will receive a course selection guide to review with your child and will be contacted to sign for the final course selection. If you plan to attend your attendance zone school, I may be able to complete your child's registration form before the assignment letters are sent in March, but if you are awaiting a magnet school assignment I will only have a short time once the assignment is made to make any changes appropriate to the magnet school program. Please watch for these papers and return them as quickly as possible to ensure your child's enrollment into his or her selected classes.

Please be advised also that the Groundhog Job Shadow Days for Jefferson Elementary School fifth grade students will be from Friday, February 13 through Monday, February 16 (students are out of school those days already, but keep in mind that the 16th is also Presidents' Day, and some workplaces are closed). Your child has already received a packet of information regarding this wonderful learning opportunity, but please visit with your child well in advance of those dates in order to make arrangements for him or her to shadow someone in the community. Parents and students will need to be responsible for all job shadowing arrangements, interviews, or research. Completed job shadow responses and a thank you letter are due Thursday, February 26, 2015.

This is an exciting time for your children to practice setting goals and planning for their futures. If I can be of any help or answer any questions, please call and leave a message on either my voice mail (447-5004) or email melissa.brown@lrsl.org. I look forward to working very closely with your children in the next few months!

Sincerely,

Melissa Rather Brown, counselor