

THE TITAN TIMES



We are Nova...We are intelligent, sophisticated, and hold very high expectations of ourselves.

Dr. Ricardo Garcia, Principal
Raheela Bello, Assistant Principal
Reginald Pierre-Jerome, Assistant Principal
D. Gail Thompson, Assistant Principal

Nova Middle School
3602 College Avenue, Davie, FL 33314
Tel (754) 323-3700 Fax (754) 323-3785

www.novaschools.com

Published Quarterly for the Stakeholders of Nova Middle School

Volume 5, Issue 2

December, 2008

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE...



A total of 865 students, close to sixty-five percent of our population, accomplished the feat of being part of the prestigious Nova Middle School Honor Roll during the first quarter of the year. Our children accomplished this in spite of everyone's acknowledgment that it is not easy thing to get an "A" at Nova Middle. Our students work very hard and deserve to be recognized for their effort. Hence, it was quite a thrill for me to shake all of their hands in person during the honor roll assemblies. Moreover, we must also acknowledge the hard work, cooperation, and support that we get from our parents, community, and teachers, for instilling in our students their high level of sophistication and expectations. This is what gives us our reputation as an educational institution of excellence. Congratulations are in order once again to our untiring Parent-Teacher-Student-Association (PTSA), led by **Mrs. Mercedes Gunst**, for the fantastic fund raising assembly and opening of the school year. We are most grateful for their active involvement in the process of educating over 1,300 middle schoolers.

As the Nova Innovation Zone Facilitator, I am now officially informing our community of the upcoming Spring Career Fest which will involve all of the Nova schools and McFatter Technical High School. The Career Fest will take place on April 29th, 2009, and will showcase the career explorations of all of the students in the I-Zone through content-based material, research, and deep levels of critical thinking. Additional information will be disseminated as the date approaches.

Lastly, I want to thank all who were involved in our Protein Drive for Haiti. The response was astounding! We sent numerous cases of protein items to Haiti through a partnership we established with Food for the Poor in Coconut Creek. Our students learned a true lesson in civil service and humanity while working on this project.

On behalf of the school administration and staff, our best wishes for a joyful holiday season. And... as always, please have your children allocate some time to reading during the winter break.

READING DEPARTMENT NEWS

By Juliet Rezende

The Reading Department has been working assiduously teaching and reviewing various reading strategies with our students. We would like to remind parents with children in the intensive reading courses that the students should be working on **RIVERDEEP**, and that this program may be accessed from home. **FCAT Explorer** is also being utilized with every student taking reading, and there has been a lot of positive feedback.

Don't forget that the reading policy states that students are reading for a minimum of fifteen minutes each night at home. Please take the time to discuss with your children what they are reading.

Happy Holidays from the Nova Middle School Reading Department

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT AND SCIENCE COMPETITION NEWS

By Usha Verma and Susan McKinney

The Nova Middle Science Department has been working with many new ideas. Teachers have been collaborating with each other to share best practices and labs according to the grade level. There is the "Science, Science Everywhere" segment, which is going to be introduced on the morning announcements. Students will have a chance to win free ice cream and gift certificates, if they answer science questions aired on the announcements. Entry slips are available from all science teachers.

A second group of science teachers is attending the CRISS Reading Workshop to enhance our skills. The ideas from the workshop are already being implemented.

Finding Nemo and **Gone Fishing** students visited the IGFA museum in Dania Beach. They got an opportunity to observe wildlife and perform dissections. A trip to Sea World has also been planned.



**Nova Middle School
Science Fair**
coming soon

Your child has been invited to take part in the Nova Science Fair, an exciting event that encourages students to think like young scientists. During the next few weeks your child will be designing a science project that uses the scientific method to solve a problem. We hope you agree that the educational benefits are numerous, as students develop skills in writing, creative thinking, and problem solving.

Each student will be given instructions and handouts during science class for the various steps of the project. Most of the work will be completed at home. I ask that you encourage your child and monitor his or her progress on the way. Your support is key to a successful project, but please do not allow your involvement to extend any further than that in order to assure equity and promote student learning! It is important that your child wrestle with problems and try to solve them. Guide your child whenever and wherever you can, but let the final project reflect your child's individual effort and design.

On behalf of the entire science department, "Happy Holidays".

**NOVA COMMUNITY SCHOOL OFFERS
CLASSES AFTER SCHOOL**

Math Fantasy Sports

Wed 4:45-6:45 p.m. with Mr. Prisco
\$72 8 weeks

Marine Art Science

Wed 6-9 p.m. with Ms Freidel
\$103 8 weeks

Golf

Mon 5-6 p.m. with Mr. Yao
\$53 7 weeks

Board games

T/Th 5-7 p.m. with Mr. Bentley
\$67 8 weeks

PLUS MUCH MORE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**Register on-line at: www.mycommunityschool.com
or in person in the Nova Community School Office.
For more information, please call (754) 323-1740.**

THE NOVA MIDDLE STEP TEAM

By J. Aliesea Smith



Nova Steppers 2008 - 2009

The girl and boy steppers of Nova Middle School would like to wish you a happy holiday season. Although the girls' step team has been in existence for three years now, the boys are just beginning. We have many excited and enthusiastic members on both teams.

The step teams have already made some outstanding contributions within the community. On Sunday, November 17, 2008, the steppers marched in the county organized Bullying Prevention March which was held in downtown Ft. Lauderdale. Additionally, the girls' step team contributed to the Feed the Hungry Protein Drive for the victims in Haiti.

The teams continue to meet monthly outside of the regularly scheduled practices under the leadership of boys' coach, **Mrs. Traci Arnemann**, and girl's coach, **Mrs. Aliesea Smith**. Both coaches agree that each team member has the ability to exhibit true Titan pride. "We are looking for students who possess academic excellence, excellence in behavior, and, of course, the ability to stroll, clap, and stomp in rhythm".

MATH COUNTS

By Lewis Prisco

The mission of MATHCOUNTS is to increase enthusiasm for and enhance achievement in middle school mathematics throughout the United States. With the generous support of all MATHCOUNTS

sponsors and volunteers, and leadership of the National Society of Professional Engineers at the local and state levels, MATHCOUNTS is providing today's students with the foundation for success in science, technology, engineering and mathematics careers.

The MATHCOUNTS Competition Program provides the extra incentive and the perfect atmosphere for students to push themselves to achieve more in mathematics. Consisting of fun and creative problems, the MATHCOUNTS competitions have written and oral rounds, as well as individual and team components. Though challenging and non-routine, the competition problems focus on the 6th through 8th grade standards of the National Council of Teachers in Mathematics.

Each year, more than 250,000 students utilize MATHCOUNTS materials at the school level. They tell us that their experience as a Mathlete® is often one of the most memorable and fun experiences of their middle school years. MATHCOUNTS provides middle school-aged students with the following benefits:

- A challenging and fun activity that helps students in their math classes
- A chance to share common interests with new and often long-lasting friends
- An opportunity to meet students from other schools
- The experience of developing teamwork skills
- A chance to compete for scholarships and prizes
- A sense of accomplishment that comes from setting and achieving goals
- An opportunity to explore mathematics and mathematics-related careers
- A chance to explore a variety of math that isn't always taught in middle school classrooms

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Nova MATHCOUNTS team please stop by Saturn 164 to see Mr. Prisco about details. Our team meets Mondays and Tuesdays after school. All are welcome to join.

*Pure mathematics is, in its way, the
poetry of logical ideas.
~Albert Einstein*

THE TRADITION LIVES

By Linda Casey

An annual event to honor our wonderful "lunch ladies" is the School Lunch Poster Contest. This years winners were: 6th Grade - **Christina Aponte, Jazmine Alvarez, and Brianna Wolin**; 7th Grade - **Brianna Chin and Nigera Lawrence**; 8th Grade - **Nala Velez, Aliyah Gowdy, and Mindy Tsui**.

As is the tradition at Nova Middle School, the winning poster is matted, framed, and presented to **Mrs. Jean Ryan**, Cafeteria Manager. She has quite a collection of "cafeteria" art hanging on her office wall.



The art students created over 100 posters to remind staff and students to bring in non-perishable food items to contribute to the food drive for Haiti. Students gave the posters to all our teachers and staff to hang in their rooms.

STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

By Lisa Scott

Congratulations to the 2008-2009 Student Council Officers who were recently elected:

President – **Jenna Gonzalez**
Vice President – **J. P. Castro**
Assistant Vice President – **Brent Grant**
Secretary – **Paige Coddington**
Treasurer – **Nechelle Davis**

Thanks to all who made our Dolphins Fundraiser a huge success. We raised over \$2,000.

Please look for information regarding the following upcoming events: Holiday Dance, our chocolate bars fundraiser, and our Valentine's Dance.

EIGHTH GRADE GUIDANCE NEWS

By Andrea Coy

CLASS OF 2009

Our rising 9th grade students have done a terrific job for the first quarter. This is a very important year for our eight grade students, as the A++ School Reform will impact them. The A++ Legislation states: Students entering sixth grade in 2006-2007, will

be required to meet the promotion criteria of House Bill 7087-A++

Promotion to 9th grade will require passing three middle school or higher, year- long courses in each of the following subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and one course in career and educational planning.

Parents, encourage your child to work hard for the rest of the school year. Continue to visit Pinnacle at least once every two weeks to monitor your child's academic progress. In addition, most of our teachers have web sites on our Nova Middle School site (www.novaschools.com) which provides information and a schedule of activities.

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

By Helaine Moore

Gifted Advisory Council Meetings are located at Indian Ridge Middle School at 7:00 p.m.: December 22, 2008, January 22, 2009, and February 26, 2009. For more information or questions, please contact browardcountygac@yahoo.com.

ESE Advisory Council Meetings are located at Piper High School at 7:00 p.m.: January 26, 2009 and February 23, 2009. For more information or questions, please call (754) 321-2252 or visit the website at www.browardadvisory.com.

ESE Parent Education Workshop information is available on the ESE website: <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/studentssupport/ese/html/WORKSHOP.htm>

LANGUAGE ARTS DEPARTMENT NEWS

By Phyllis Galinkin

Our language arts teachers want to wish all of our Nova Family a healthy, happy and peaceful Winter Break.

To get ready for this quality "down time," we are super busy reading, writing, and teaching our students what to do when they don't know what to do. We are absolutely hoping that reading and/or writing will be one of those "what to do's!" Some of us will be requiring a novel to be read over the Break and/or suggesting books that can be read for enjoyment. Also students should know that they can always put their creative talents to work, and write a poem, story or use any other genre to get their thoughts or feelings across during this holiday season. They may even decide to submit some of these pieces for our Literary Fair competition which will be held in the Media Center on the evening of March 31, 2009. Attendees to the Fair will find even more awesome efforts from our students, since all through the year, our language arts teachers are setting aside outstanding written work to enter in this year's competition.

Winter Break may, also, be a wonderful time to check out Schooltube.com and see the awesome podcasts produced this fall by **Mrs. Nodarse** and **Mrs. Galinkin's** gifted classes. Through the efforts of **Mrs. Snipas**, a "Pod Squad" will soon be available to help other students produce their own podcasts. Again, from all of us, Happy Holidays.

NOVA MIDDLE SOCCER

By Jill Slesinski

The 2008 soccer season is off to a phenomenal start! The boys and girls each have played four games this season. The girls are off to a 2-2 start and the boys were handed their first loss of the season and have a record of 3-1. The players for the girl's soccer team are 8th graders **Shylah Soares, Emily Hamilton, Hannah Katz, Daniela Mejia,** and **Aramis Dominguez,** 7th graders **Alyssa Wright-Brown, Kayla Repole, Tori Tihibault, Amina Ali, Christina Jaramillo, Chelsi Robinson, Milani Perez, Lubee Dandressol, Alexis Sorunmu, Vanessa Guevara,** and **Brianna Chin,** and 6th graders **Eden Yaucobi** and **Jessica Wallace.** The girls soccer team also has a promising future with 6th graders **Ashley Brown,**



Stephanie Rodger, Mariagracia Castillo, and **Emily Kraut** as practice players. The players for the boy's soccer team are 8th graders **Juan Benavides, Evan Blaine, Matthew Gibson, Kyle James, Chris Kalogerakis, Kevin Leguizamon, Majd Leyous, Nicolas Ramirez, Santiago Rojas, Oren Shaltiel,** and **Juan Vargas,** 7th graders **Eric Marino** and **Samuel Stanley,** and 6th graders **Luciano Ghysels** and **Juan Trujillo.** Come out and cheer us on!

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT NEWS

By Susan Meyer

We are so very proud of our Nova Titans. On Monday, November 24, 2008, we congratulated over 865 students, or 65% of our student body, at our first quarter Honor Roll Assemblies. We are intelligent, sophisticated, and hold very high expectations of ourselves.

At the end of each month, teachers select students whom they feel show outstanding character traits. Academic departments take turns in selecting the students. The students are presented with certificates during our broadcasted morning announcements. We would like to thank our PTSA and **Mrs. Angel Welsh's** Broadcasting class for supporting and helping us with this worthwhile program.

We just finished our BAT testing and would like to thank all of the Nova Staff for an excellent job on the testing program.

We are sorry to say good-bye to our guidance intern, **Mrs. Kia Shinholster.** She has been an excellent part of the guidance team and we wish her all the best. Kia will make a wonderful guidance counselor.

Our seventh grade students are presently working on Career Visions through their literature classes. This computer program helps the students consider their future career choices. After they complete the Career Vision Program, they will develop an ePEP (electronical personal education plan). When the seventh graders become eighth graders, the school will use these ePEP plans to schedule the students so they can follow a pathway to help them reach their future career goals. The plan is not written in stone. The students always have the option to change them.

See the following Top 10 Career Choices for teens!

TEENS' TOP 10 CAREER CHOICES

Gallup asked teens to pick three careers they would like to pursue. Here are the most popular choices.

Teacher

Doctor

Lawyer

Sports field

Science/biology

Architecture

Business

Military

Engineer

Nurse



SOURCE: GALLUP YOUTH SURVEY 2005

MATH DEPARTMENT NEWS

By Isabel Olivera

The math department is encouraging all students to do the math winter packet found on Nova Middle School web site. All the teachers will be going over the problems with the students after winter break. The packet will have to be returned to the core math teacher and will be worth ten points of extra credit towards homework/activities. On behalf of the mathematics department, have a wonderful holiday season.

MY TRIP TO HAITI

By Reginald Pierre-Jerome

During the week of October 13, 2008, I had the privilege of going to Haiti. My father, a registered nurse, asked me to join him on this mission during the summer of 2008. I decided to be a part of a group that consisted of doctors, dentists, educators, and

many other professionals to help Haitians who have been devastated for so many years. Many of the professionals came from Green Bay, Wisconsin. The group from Miami was mainly comprised of members from the **Haitian American Nurses Association (H.A.N.A.)**.

While on the mission, I actively served as a translator, advisor, and consultant to many schools that were in need of direction to achieve their goals. The impact of our visit was evident by the response we received from the school leaders throughout Thomazeau, Haiti. The genuine appreciation of our advice and support has helped the educators in Haiti provide a new direction with their goals in teaching Haitian children.

My objectives were fulfilled during my trip to Haiti as we were able to assist many individuals in need who have been suffering for years. My ultimate goal is to continue serving as a source of support to the wonderful people of Haiti for many years to come.



A recent picture of the Haitian mountainside, taken by Mr. Pierre-Jerome.

OUT-OF-FIELD NOTIFICATION

By Randi Morales

All of our professional teachers are continuously upgrading their teaching skills and developing increased levels of content expertise.

We are particularly recognizing a teacher at Nova Middle School who is expanding her expertise beyond her current certification by pursuing college coursework and/or training sessions to become certified in another subject. While doing this, she is teaching that subject to students. Her out-of-field

status is scheduled to be approved at the January School Board Meeting. This teacher is: **Carlene Felix**, ESOL.

POLICY 6000.1 REVISIONS

On August 5, 2008, the School Board of Broward County adopted a revision to Policy 6000.1, Student Progression Plan. The new policy is available online at <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sbbcpolicies/>.

This new language removes the grades earned in high school courses taken during middle school from the District's Weighted Grade Point Average (GPA) used for class ranking. Class rank will now only include grades earned after promotion from 8th to 9th grade. This new rule applies to ALL students.

*Please note: The grades earned in high school courses during middle school may still count towards all other important GPA's including, but not limited to:

- State of Florida's Unweighted GPA used for graduation
- Bright Futures Scholarships
- State University System admission requirements
- Florida High School Athletic Association eligibility
- Broward County extracurricular activity eligibility
- NCAA Clearinghouse eligibility for Division 1 and 2 college athletics
- Core course GPA

Forgiveness Rule

Also in policy 6000.1 is the "Forgiveness Rule." The Forgiveness Rule, as outlined by State Statute, allows students who earn grades of "C," "D," or "F" in high school courses taken during middle school to subsequently retake the same or comparable course. If the student earns a grade of "C" or higher in the retaken course, then the original low grade will be removed from the student's GPA for both graduation and class ranking purposes. The forgiven grade will always remain on the permanent transcript, but will not be calculated into these two GPA's. Please note that the Forgiveness Rule may not be recognized by many colleges, universities, and scholarships.

Retaking B or B+ Grades

As stated earlier, only grades of "C," "D," or "F" in the courses taken during middle school are eligible for the Forgiveness Rule. Unfortunately, students who

earn grades of "B" or "B+" are not eligible for the Forgiveness Rule. But, they might not have acquired the skills to be successful in more rigorous courses during high school. So, the new policy also allows students who receive grades of "B" or "B+" to retake these courses and develop a stronger foundation of skills and knowledge. However, students may not receive credit or grades for these repeated courses because they can only earn credit and grades once for each course.

For more information on the new policy changes related to high school courses during middle school or GPA calculations, please contact your school guidance counselor.



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY,
FLORIDA
www.browardschools.com

Maureen S. Dinnen Chair
Jennifer Leonard Gottlieb Vice-Chair
Robin Bartleman
Beverly A. Gallagher
Phyllis C. Hope
Stephanie Arma Kraft, ESQ.
Anne Murray
Robert D. Parks, Ed.D.
Benjamin J. Williams

James F. Notter
Superintendent of Schools

Transforming Education: One Student at A Time
Broward County Public Schools Is An Equal Opportunity/
Equal Access Employer

The School Board of Broward County, Florida, prohibits any policy or procedure which results in discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, national origin, marital status, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Individuals who wish to file a discrimination and/or harassment complaint may call the Director of Equal Educational Opportunities at (754) 321-2150 or Teletype Machine TTY (754) 321-2158