



# HILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Volume 2, Issue 5

February 2008

Hille Middle School

Mrs. Courtney Orzel,  
Principal

Mr. John Orth,  
Assistant Principal

## From the Principal...

Dear Parents,

Great things continue to happen at Hille Middle School. Hille Middle School was just named to the Illinois Academic Honor Roll for Academic Improvement! To receive an Academic Improvement Award, schools must achieve the following:

Make significant academic improvement by either:

- Showing at least 7.5 point improvement in state test scores in both reading and mathematics between last year and this year **OR**
- showing at least 15 point improvement in state test scores in both reading and mathematics over the last three years.

Schools must also show an upward trend in state test results in both reading and mathematics. Congratulations to Hille Middle School on this distinctive honor!

With that said, the Illinois State Achievement Tests (ISAT) are right around the corner. Students will be tested beginning the week of January 25th. These tests are used to gauge our effectiveness in curriculum and instruction. We also use these tests to work on individual student strengths and weaknesses. How can parents help prepare children for

ISAT testing?

- Please stress the importance of the ISAT test. We want all students to take the test seriously so that we can continue to improve our instruction for students.
- Attendance is vital.
- Students should get a good night's sleep and eat a healthy breakfast each and every day.

Our 6th grade students will test in Reading, Mathematics and Writing. Our 7th grade students will test in Reading, Mathematics and Science. Our 8th grade students will test in Reading, Mathematics and Writing.

Our school has also been awarded with a grant from the State of Illinois for Social and Emotional Learning. Learn more about the grant on page 10 in the newsletter.

Finally, thank you to all students, staff and parents who contributed to our Family Science Night. We had an excellent turn out and a great evening of interactive science. Congrats to all!

Have a great February!

Courtney Orzel, Principal

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Grant Information
- Mobile Dentist
- CAREER DAY SPEAKERS NEEDED! (Pg. 2)

## 8th grade reminders

Did you know that 8th grade information is posted online at [www.d142.org](http://www.d142.org)?

- Graduation Information– D142 Handbook
- 8th Grade Bulletin Info
- Washington D.C. Information

## Read to Succeed

In our Read to Succeed class we have been working very hard on reading strategies and study skills. We concluded a unit on inferring with an activity using the poem *The Night Before Christmas*. Last month we worked on visualizing techniques and began a fluency program called 6 Minutes. We have also recognized our successes with two celebrations.

## Hille Library

Hille Library is getting ready to rumble as students prepare for "battle". Lit/LA classes were invited to the Library in order for Mrs. Cook to go over ground rules for this years' "Battle of the Books". A PowerPoint presentation introduced students to the eight books that need to be read by the end of April in order to participate. Student sign-up has begun for the contest that will take place in spring. Victory will go to the team that will correctly answer the most amount of book-related questions. A fabulous array of prizes will be awarded to the high scoring teams from each grade level.



## Hille Career Day...Calling All Speakers!



On Thursday, March 20th, Hille Middle School is holding a Career Day.

Speakers are needed from 8am until 11:15am.

If you would be willing to come speak to our students about your career, please contact Mrs. Udziela at [tudziela@d142.org](mailto:tudziela@d142.org) or 708.687.5550 x4144.

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## 6th Grade Team

Hot off the press!



### Classroom Happenings

January 2008



**Math with Mrs. Reilly, Mrs. Stalla, and Ms. Leahy:** Ratios and Proportions Away! Students are delving into how many great things their calculators can do for them while continuing to work on refining their writing skills. ISAT is only a few weeks away and we are full speed ahead.

**Advanced Math with Mrs. Reilly:** Shapes, Formulas, and Theorems, Oh My. Students are discovering geometric formulas and applying them to various shapes. They also learned how algebra and geometry connect by learning the Pythagorean Theorem.

**Science with Ms. McGoogan and Mrs. Voris:** Souper Duper Science Night was great! Thank you to the student presenters for working so hard to put on an awesome show. Many thanks also to the parents for your never-ending support at home, which helped make the event memorable. Many families and children of the community enjoyed the event. As we begin 3rd quarter, we are closing in on the end of Astronomy. Currently we are working with stars and their life cycles. Next on the agenda are galaxies and the universe. Then, we will move closer home and explore the Earth, its seasons and moon phases.

**Social Studies with Ms. Zamora and Mr. Thorsen:** During the month of February, we will be focusing on the civilizations of Ancient Greece. Students will learn the many achievements and ideas that came from these people, and learn how much these achievements and ideas have impacted western civilization as we know it today.

Ms. Zamora's classes will partake in a Webquest research project. Our goal is to compose a 4th grade level "book" related to the ancient Greek civilization.

**Language Arts/Literature with Mrs. Ciesiun, Mrs. Lewandowski, Mr. Myrmingos, and Mrs. Leahy:**

We closed out our unit on "Growth and Change" by concluding the novel *Touching Spirit Bear*. During the span of the novel great conversations were held and creative projects were completed to demonstrate the understanding of the book and its themes. Now we are examining the theme "A Sense of Fairness" in our new, third quarter unit. Students are also using their power of persuasion as they compose different persuasive writing pieces while continuing to focus on the 6 plus 1 traits of writing.

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Well, that wraps up our news for this month; don't forget to check for current class updates on [schoolnotes.com](http://schoolnotes.com).

The 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Team



## 7th Grade Team

"The human mind is our fundamental resource." - John Fitzgerald Kennedy

### Math (Ms. Bonk and Mrs. Stalla)

During the third quarter that students have been working on proportions, percents, and solving equations. In solving one- and two- step equations the students are also working with integers. These concepts are also extended into applications stressing problem-solving.

In seventh grade pre-algebra classes, we have been also working with proportions and percents. During the third quarter the students will be working on solving multi-step equations and inequalities. We will also be discussing functions and slope.

### Social Science (Mr. Thorsen and Mr. Tselepis)

During the month of February, we will focus on the three branches of our government and how the checks and balance system works. This is a fundamental part of understanding how the Constitution works and why it has been so effective for all these years. The study of the three branches of government will lead to the U.S. Constitution test tentatively scheduled for March 18th. There will be another reminder in the March newsletter. Students will also be doing a current event project, where they explore some of the candidates running for President.

### Lit/LA (Mrs. Carney, Mr. Kantor, Mrs. Carlson, Mrs. Lewandowski)

We are coordinating with the Social Science teachers on an unit about the presidential campaign. Our students have done research and have chosen a candidate to support, and will write a persuasive piece on that candidate.

We are all reading novels in class but constantly encourage independent reading. There will be a project based on their independent reading. The students are working to prepare for the upcoming ISAT tests which will occur at the end of February.

### Science (Mrs. Voris and Mr. Krol)

Congratulations to all the 7<sup>th</sup> graders on their excellent engineering projects, which were displayed on Science Night! There were many unique and high-quality designs. All the planning and hard work that the students put into their projects definitely paid off. We had bridges and towers that held in excess of 2000 g. Great Job!

7<sup>th</sup> graders continue to study Newton's Laws of Motion and take part in a variety of experiential activities that are being used to reinforce each law. We are also beginning our study of the relationship between mass and volume and how it eventually leads to the concept of density.

Thanks again to all parents and students for attending our Science Night and making it a great success! We would also like to thank the PTA for their assistance with the night!



## 8th Grade Team

### Math

Pre-Algebra students have been working diligently to increase their understanding of rational numbers. They have practiced all operations with rational numbers so they are able to solve multi-step algebraic equations involving rational numbers.

Algebra students have moved on from slope and are now analyzing linear inequalities. They must apply their understanding of slope to solving and graphing compound inequalities. After ISAT testing the students will begin solving systems of equations. The goal is to solve complex real-world problems by writing, then solving the systems, thus solving the problem. Busy learning days ahead for all students!

### Lit/La

The 8th Grade Language Arts/Literature students are working diligently to achieve various goals. Demonstrating the application of figurative language, sentence fluency, strong word choices, voice, and proper conventions is a focus of persuasive essays that are currently being revised and published. Students continue to hone their skills in comprehension, using context clues, and answering I.S.A.T.-style multiple choice and extended response questions as they read, analyze, and enjoy *The Outsiders*, *Freak the Mighty*, or *The Skin I'm In*.

### Social Science

Students have just recently finished studying the Jazz Age where they learned how music played such a big influence during a very prosperous time in history. We are now working on the Great Depression. The contrast between the Roaring Twenties and the Depression is showing students that our economy can sometimes act like a roller coaster. This will all eventually lead to the study of World War II.

### Science

Students demonstrated the concepts they learned in their unit on electricity by designing and creating electronic games and toys. Mr. Krol's students displayed their engineering genius by designing and creating protective containers for eggs.

Both the games and the egg drop were on display at the Family Science Night. The crowd was impressed with the knowledge displayed by our students.

Next up the 8th grade will be learning about electromagnetism and how it affects our lives, from motors to the generation of electricity. They will be tracking their electricity usage and learn about ways to conserve energy and save money!!

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# Encore Team News

## Foreign Language Survey

Welcome new students! The quarter is off to a good start as we begin exploring French spoken areas and practice our new vocabulary. This class will focus on French for the first nine weeks of class then we will transition to Spanish history, culture, and vocabulary. In order to be successful in any foreign language, it is important to practice new concepts nightly. Bonne chance!

## French 7

The seventh grade classes are progressing well. We are continually learning new concepts and reviewing ones that were previously taught. The moment they have all been waiting for is almost here – verb conjugation! Once students develop this challenging speaking and writing tool, they are able to express themselves in a variety of ways. It is always fun to watch them learn and develop the French language.

## French 8

The Oak Forest High School placement test is over, and the students did very well. All students placed in the French II program, with a majority of them in the Honors program at that! Congratulations to all of you! The students are beginning to learn even more demanding concepts as they increase their knowledge of grammar and writing. Let's stay focused and have a good third quarter.

## International Club

Our next meeting for International Club will find the students celebrating Mardi Gras. They have ordered a pack of their choice, and they will make masks symbolic of Mardi Gras.

Thanks to all of you who participated in the annual holiday international buffet. Senora Daley and I received many compliments about the delicious recipes.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade computers

Second semester is the beginning of Computer Science class for many seventh grade students. At this point, student typing proficiency has been encouraged. Students have been working in our typing program and have created typed documents in Microsoft Word. Students have set typing goals and will continue developing typing skills throughout the semester when other assignments are complete. The typing program stresses speed and accuracy.

MS Word assignments are twofold; typing from a previously created document and typing an original document. When students type previously created documents, the formatting toolbar and design features are used as per teacher direction. Student generated creative writing documents require the use of the formatting toolbar and MS Word tools such as the proper use of the thesaurus, spell check and grammar features. Assignments in Microsoft PowerPoint, Excel, and Access will be forthcoming.

## EIGHTH GRADE VISUAL ART

Eighth grade art students have been working on some very significant concepts within their art projects. They completed wonderful 1/2 face shaded value drawings creating near perfect renderings of their chosen magazine portraits.

Currently, they are problem-solving in groups of 3/4 students to complete sculptures which will demonstrate their knowledge of various art techniques and criteria. Their projects are extremely interesting and exciting, thus far.

## Physical Education

The month of January is over and our students continue to progress in their skills in PE class. The students have started Badminton and it is definitely a favorite of all the activities we do in class. Badminton will continue for the next three weeks and then we will start Volleyball. Hopefully by the time Volleyball starts, our fitness room will be open. The weights have been delivered and we have picked up four new treadmills from Life Time Fitness.

## Industrial Arts

In Industrial Arts we are gearing up for a great semester! Eighth graders have taken over and we started off our classes reviewing some basic skills that will come in handy for the rest of the year. Students will be working on drafting hand-skills and measurement initially and transferring that knowledge a step further into AutoCAD.

Students are treating this class as if it were a job situation and "clocking in" for points each day with their ID's. We will also be incorporating career goal setting as we look at some of our options in entry-level employment.

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# Encore Team News

## 7th Grade Spanish

The students are studying family and school vocabulary and verb conjugation while learning about Los Angeles and Mexico. They are construction family trees to show off their knowledge. Look for them on display in the E hall.

At the end of the month, we will begin an Internet based project on Mexican tourism.

## 8th grade Spanish

The students took the OFHS Spanish placement test in January and did quite well. Our students will earn high school credit for the work they've done at Hille and begin at Spanish II or Spanish II Honors! Great job, everyone!

We are beginning a unit on handicrafts, bargaining, and shopping. We are also studying Oaxaca, Mexico. The eighth graders will soon begin an Internet based project on festivals in the Spanish speaking world. Look for their products on display in the E hall.

## Band

All of the bands are hard at work learning new music and preparing for upcoming contests. The Intermediate Band is working on music for the Band-O-Rama contest in April, while the Advanced Band is putting the final touches on their music for the South Suburban Band Contest at the end of February. Meanwhile, the Jazz Band is getting ready to attend a jazz festival at Prairie State College in mid-February. Everyone wishes Mr. Royer a healthy recovery, and it looks like he will be returning to Hille in March!

Ten members of the Advanced Band have been selected as South Suburban Band All-Stars. Congratulations to the following students:

MIRANDA DEUTER-FLUTE

ELIZABETH TOPPEN-BASS CLARINET

JOHN BUSCH-TENOR SAXOPHONE

R.J. ADEMA-TUBA

KATY SHEEHAN-OBOE

KEVIN STAEHLIN-ALTO SAXOPHONE

NICK PEREZ-TRUMPET

MIKE FORTUNA-PERCUSSION

NATE HOERGER-CLARINET

ADAM ALKAWAS-BARITONE

## Music Drama

Mr. Schmetterer's music drama classes are currently in the middle of their unit on music notation and performance. They have already learned how to identify, describe, and draw the musical concepts of rhythm, time signatures, note names, and clefs. Now they are applying these skills to the recorder. As students improve their musical abilities on the recorder, they will begin to learn more advanced music, including duets. They have also started to use drumsticks to reinforce their understanding of rhythm.

## FACS

7th grade students are looking forward to this quarter's sewing project. First year students are making a decorative project, a bandana pillow while second year students are advancing their skills and choosing a project to use. They have chosen between a back sack, locker pockets, tote bag, or an apron. They are anxious to see the finished product.

FACS Club meets Wednesday, February 13th until 3:30.

## Boys Basketball

The boys' basketball teams are off to a hot start and are excited for the second half of the season. The 7th grade team is lead by Tommy Zale who is averaging over 12 points a game. The 8th grade team is lead by Tim Loeding, Tevin Coleman, and Kyle Funkhouser. As they continue to gel as a team, they should make another run at the conference title. It should be an exciting month of February in the world of athletics.

## Hille Paper Drive

Hille has been recycling paper for three years in an effort to help the environment. We will be having a paper drive Saturday February 16th from 9-11am. We are trying to recycle 15% more paper this year than last. Please help us help our environment!

## Gifted News

If you were part of the fun on Family Science Night you already know about the great projects that our gifted kids have been working on lately. Our 8<sup>th</sup> graders reenacted our alien warfare scenario titled "The Robot Wars of Mars." With a race to deliver munitions and an attack on the opposing "robot king," this really challenged the kids to come up with a creative & efficient Lego robot. Congratulations to Kevin Staehlin, Eli Tracy and Joe Buckley for coming up with the winning design. Good job to all involved!

7<sup>th</sup> graders completed some really amazing Rube Goldberg mini golf holes for the kids and adults to try. They each included some fascinating tricks & turns that illustrated simple machines as well as mathematical design principles. The planning and effort that went into the display was greatly appreciated by everyone who tried them.



Our 6<sup>th</sup> graders took on the task of assembling a scale model of the solar system in the 6th grade hallway. It wasn't easy, but we figured out our own conversion factor in order to fit the entire thing into a 100m span. (The sun, normally over a million km in diameter needed to be shrunk to 20 mm!)

## International Club

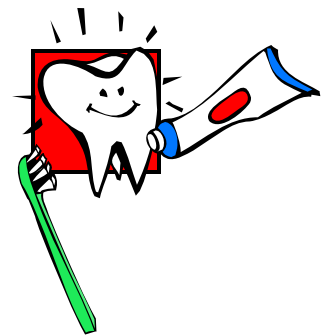
Our next meeting for International Club will find the students celebrating Mardi Gras. They have ordered a pack of their choice, and they will make masks symbolic of Mardi Gras.

Thanks to all of you who participated in the annual holiday international buffet. Senora Daley and I received many compliments about the delicious recipes.

## Mobile Dentist

The Mobile Dentist Smile Illinois will be visiting Hille on February 19th.

Permission slips should already have been turned in, but if you still need a form, Mrs. Kirkton can fax the forms to the Mobile dentist up until the 14th of February.



# Student Council

Student council officers and representatives have been busy planning events for each month of the school year. In January, we sponsored a door decorating contest for all Connections groups. We elected special judges Mrs. Orzel and Mr. Orth, who had a very difficult task because groups did such a wonderful job. In the end, 3<sup>rd</sup> place went to Mrs. Daley's group, 2<sup>nd</sup> place to Mr. Thorsen's group and 1<sup>st</sup> place to Ms. Zamora's group. A special thanks to all that participated, and congratulations to the winners!

On January 29, the Hille Boys Basketball team played Hamlin Heights at 3:30, with our Hille cheerleaders rooting them on. In order to encourage the largest fan section we could, the student council sponsored a "Pack the Place" event. Our purpose was to show support for both the basketball players and the cheerleaders. Both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade teams were victorious! We look forward to doing more events like this in the future for Hille teams.

For the month of February, the student council has scheduled a Valentine's Dance for February 8 in the cafeteria. The dance will be held from 2:30-4:30. There will be a DJ and refreshments for sale. All grades are welcome to attend. Also in celebration of Valentine's Day, Candy Grams are back by popular demand. They will be sold during lunches for only one day, February 14<sup>th</sup>. We will do our best to distribute the Candy Grams on that day, but depending on the number we may need to deliver them on Friday. Either way, students will receive Candy Grams during 9<sup>th</sup> period.

Keep watching for special events as the year goes on. We are looking forward to a "Pennies for Patients" fundraiser in March that will put the boys and girls in competition to raise money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. We appreciate the participation and support of students, parents and teachers for all student council activities.

## PTA FAMILY FUN NIGHT

FRIDAY, MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2008

6:00 – 9:00 AT HILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

*The PTA is looking for volunteers for Family Fun Night to run games, face paint and serve food. If you can help please fill out the form and return it to any of the schools.*

The PTA funds assemblies, intramurals and after school activities for each of the Schools in the District. So, if you can spare a few hours on March 7<sup>th</sup>, you will be helping every child in our District.

Thank you for your help.

Judy Mazzuca, Forest Ridge PTA, Hille VP

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### PTA FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle your preference: **Face Painting**   **Games**   **Food Counter**

Shift Preference: \_\_\_\_\_ 5:30-7:30

\_\_\_\_\_ 7:15-9:15

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## National Junior Honor Society

Once again, I would like to thank our industrious NJHS students who worked so hard to shop and wrap Christmas presents for over 40 students in our district this year. Thanks to their efforts, many of our children had a better holiday than they would normally have experienced.

If your child has maintained a 3.6 or better grade point average for both the first and second quarters this year, invitations to apply for National Junior Honor Society will be out in the next few weeks. If your student is interested, he/she must fill out the application form as completely as possible and return it to me, Mrs. Carlson, in a timely fashion. Those who are accepted for induction into NJHS will be notified by letter approximately one month later. Our induction this year is set for April 1.

Finally, please don't forget that our Honor Society students are ready and willing to help each Tuesday and Thursday during our Homework Helpers sessions after school. We meet from 2:30 to 3:30. Students can get some extra help if they need it, or they can just find a quiet spot to get some work done.

## Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Goals

We all may be aware of state learning goals for the core subjects of school. What we may not know is that the state of Illinois has taken a stance on the development of social and emotional learning goals as well. These standards, referred to as SEL standards, are being regarded as equally important in the development of students as the core concepts of math, literature, language, science and social science. At Hille, we have taken the initial steps in the planning phase of becoming a school that strives to achieve these goals for every student.

Earlier this year, several staff members attended a two-day training to learn about the SEL standards and how to best apply them here at school. As a result of this training, a team comprised of several teachers, a social worker, counselor, administrators, and two parents of Hille students was formed to continue the planning and implementation of these goals. We have been awarded a grant to continue with this process next year.

As we investigate these learning goals, we have realized that Hille Middle School is already practicing the SEL goals in many ways. We will continue to work towards the focus of building character skills in every student and looking for any opportunity to recognize students as they develop these skills. Our ultimate goal is to create an atmosphere where all students feel safe and encouraged to develop into their best selves not only academically, but within the social and emotional realms as well.

### **The state goals are as follows:**

**Goal 1: Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.**

**Goal 2: Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.**

**Goal 3: Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.**

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## From the Desks of Mrs. Berry & Ms. LaBerge

Happy New Year from Mrs. Berry (Social Worker) & Ms. LaBerge (Counselor/Dean)!

The Snowflake program has begun for those students who have experienced a family change (divorce/separation/death in the family). If you have a student that would like to participate in the program and hasn't signed-up yet, we will still do our best to be sure they can join a group. Contact Ms. LaBerge or Mrs. Berry at your convenience.

Round two groups started the week of January 14<sup>th</sup> as well. Current offerings include a 6<sup>th</sup> grade organizational group, 7<sup>th</sup> grade goal setting, 8<sup>th</sup> grade goal setting, a new volunteer group for students who want to help plan events at Hille, 6<sup>th</sup> grade middle school skills and several lunch groups to build social skills. As always, Ms. LaBerge is taking referrals from students, parents and teachers for those that would benefit from any type of group.

After school help continues! If your student needs a place to complete work after school, Hille offers several options.

Homework Helpers is every Tuesday and Thursday in Mrs. Carlson's room. Students can come as needed to receive help from NJHS members or complete work independently.

Several teachers have help sessions available during lunches or after school on designated days of the week. See individual teachers for details if you would like to work with them during these times.

Ms. LaBerge offers a smaller setting work session after school on Monday-Thursday. Students can come as needed and take the activity bus home.

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HILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

MRS. COURTNEY ORZEL,  
PRINCIPAL

5800 W. 151st St.

Phone: 708-687-5550

E-mail: corzel@d142.org

“CHILDREN ALWAYS  
COME FIRST!”

Congratulations to  
Hille Middle School  
on being named to the  
Illinois Academic Honor Roll  
for Academic Achievement!



## Meet more of our new staff!

Hello, my name is Mr. Myrmingos. I teach 6<sup>th</sup> grade Language Arts/Literature here at Jack Hille Middle School.

This is my sixth year teaching, and I am happy to be back with the 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Previously, I taught 6<sup>th</sup> grade for my first two years of teaching, and the past three have been with 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

I have been very active at all of my previous schools, and coached Boys 16” Softball, Soccer, Football, and Cross Country. Also, I have done many intramurals, yearbook, newspaper, and many after school activities.

I try to come to as many home games

as possible, and support our student athletes. Expect to see me there!

In my spare time I love to watch sports. I am a big sports fanatic.

Typically, I watch hockey, football, baseball, basketball, and just recently rugby. Also, I go to quite a few concerts to see my favorite bands. My family and I usually vacation in the summer. Last year my brother and I went to Canada to fish for a week. We rented a cabin and had a great time.

Finally, I just wanted to say how excited and happy I am to be working in District 142. I look forward to com-

ing to school every day and working with students and teachers.

If you see me at games or walking around in the hallways, then do not hesitate to come up and say hello to me!



Welcome to Hille, Mr. Myrmingos!