



# Paw Prints

Grant Ranch School  
5400 S. Jay Circle  
Denver, CO 80123

Office  
(720) 424-6880

Attendance  
(720) 424-6961

September 2017

GRANT RANCH SCHOOL ECE-8



## About Paw Prints 2017-2018

These publications are available online @  
[http://grantranch.dpsk12.org/?page\\_id=432](http://grantranch.dpsk12.org/?page_id=432)  
Grant Ranch Webpage - <http://grantranch.dpsk12.org>



Paw Prints is a monthly newsletter for Grant Ranch School. This is an important communication link for parents and includes important happenings at our school.

You can read, download, and print this newsletter monthly on the Grant Ranch Webpage.

<http://grantranch.dpsk12.org>



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 **The School  
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## Message from the Principal



Dear Families of Grant Ranch Students,

Welcome back to school! It was a joy to see the building fill up with children this week after a summer of preparation. There are a few changes for this school year that I would like to share with you. We are now offering breakfast to every child in the classroom each morning free of charge. In addition to this, each teacher is conducting a daily morning meeting with a weekly group meeting in the gym. We are using this time to reinforce our behavioral expectations and to implement the Random Acts of Kindness curriculum. This is in response to the concerns I heard from students, parents, and staff members last year. The goal is to create a family atmosphere where we are responsible for our own actions and are aware of how our behavior impacts others. I will send out more information as we progress through the curriculum. I invite you to come in and visit! The front doors will be open before the end of the day from 2:30-2:45 should you want to come into the foyer to wait for your child. I am always looking to hear from families about ways we can make Grant Ranch stronger, so please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns to our staff or me. Thank you for all of your support!

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Hurrieta



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## Mensaje del director

¡Bienvenido al nuevo año escolar! Fue un placer ver la escuela llenarse de niños esta semana después de un verano de preparación. Hay algunos cambios para este año escolar que quisiera compartir con ustedes. Ahora ofrecemos el desayuno a cada niño en el aula cada mañana gratis. Además de esto, cada maestro está llevando a cabo una reunión cada mañana con una reunión semanal del grupo en el gimnasio. Estamos aprovechando este tiempo para reforzar nuestras expectativas de comportamiento e implementaremos el plan de estudios Aleatorias de la Bondad. Esto es en respuesta a las preocupaciones que escuché de los estudiantes, padres y miembros del personal el año pasado. El objetivo es crear un ambiente familiar donde somos responsables de nuestras propias acciones y somos conscientes de cómo nuestro comportamiento afecta a otros. Voy a enviar más información a medida que avanzamos en el plan de estudios. ¡Te invito a que venga a visitarnos! Las puertas delanteras estarán abiertas antes del final del día de 2:30-2:45 si desea entrar en el vestíbulo para esperar a su hijo. Siempre estoy buscando modos de mejorar Grant Ranch, por favor comuníquese conmigo o el personal de la escuela si tiene preguntas o preocupaciones. ¡Gracias por todo el apoyo!



Sinceramente,  
Sra. Hurrieta

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## Upcoming Dates

September 4 - No School - Labor Day Holiday

September 7 - PTO Meeting 6:00 pm in the library  
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# SEPTEMBER



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## Welcome Our New Staff Members/Bienvenidos al personal nuevo

Michael Atkins, Principal Resident

Kelly Burger, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher

Scott Burns, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math and Science Teacher

Emily Dekker, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math and Science Teacher

Jacquie Hemphill, Teacher Librarian

Kristen Hyde, Dean of Instruction

Laura Martinez, Kindergarten Grade Teacher

James Nicholas, Assistant Principal

Tom Philip, Dean of Culture

Rick Pike, Principal Intern

Laura Prow, World Language Teacher

Nicholas Spencer, Physical Education Teacher

Stacey Strong, ECE Paraprofessional

Sandy Zamudio, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher

A 3D graphic of the word "WELCOME" in a colorful, blocky font. The letters are white with a rainbow gradient fill. The text is set against a white background with a subtle shadow effect.

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**CONTACT: Minda McGurk**  
DPS Academic Activities Coordinator

E-mail: [malinda\\_mcgurk@dpsk12.org](mailto:malinda_mcgurk@dpsk12.org)  
Website: [www.dpsdi.weebly.com](http://www.dpsdi.weebly.com)  
Phone: 720-423-2065



### WHAT IS DESTINATION IMAGINATION?

Destination Imagination (DI) is an international, educational program that gives kids an amazing outlet for their creativity, while teaching them leadership, teamwork, positive thinking, project management and so much more. Teams of 2 to 7 kids from 3rd grade through university level solve one of six open-ended Challenges (Scientific, Engineering, Fine Arts, Service Learning, Improvisation, or Technical) in their own unique ways, and present their solutions at Regional Tournaments in late February or early March. Teams also solve an on-the-spot Instant Challenge at the tournaments, where they must think quickly on their feet and work together to solve a problem in around five minutes. There's even a noncompetitive Rising Stars category with a special Challenge for K-2nd grade. Winners advance to the Affiliate (state/country) Tournament, and winners at the Affiliate Tournament move on to Global Finals to compete against more than 1,400 teams from around the world.



### WHY SHOULD MY CHILD BE INVOLVED IN DESTINATION IMAGINATION?

Teams involved in DI learn higher order thinking and learn to excel in creative and critical thinking, collaborative problem solving, and project management. Students who have participated in Destination Imagination say they believe participation helped them improve their grades and do better in school, improved their self-confidence, helped them become better communicators, enhanced their respect for others, and improved their creativity and problem solving skills.

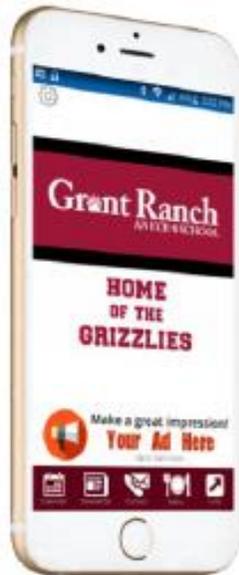
### HOW MUCH WILL IT COST AND WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?

The cost of starting a team is low—only \$150 for one team. Some schools and PTOs may cover this cost. Teams meet at their own convenience with an adult volunteer (parent/faculty) Team Manager, making it easy to work around other activities. (Team Managers are given a Roadmap resource to guide them as they lead the team and have great support from other Team Managers and local DI officials as well as several training opportunities.) Teams usually meet through the fall and winter months for about an hour each week, with time commitment increasing for extra practice and preparation time as they draw closer to tournament, much like other competitive teams.

[www.dpsdi.weebly.com](http://www.dpsdi.weebly.com) (720) 423-2065 [malinda\\_mcgurk@dpsk12.org](mailto:malinda_mcgurk@dpsk12.org)

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2. Search for "The School Communications Agency" app and download it to your device
3. Open the app, type "Grant Ranch" into the search box and select it to open your school app
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<http://www.teachhub.com/how-motivate-students-love-homework>

## How to Motivate Students to Love Homework

By: Janelle Cox

Can you imagine a world where students can't wait to get home from school to **do their homework?** As you laugh at that notion, just know that it can happen. With increased **technology in education**, coupled with student interest and study buddies, there is a way to learn **how to motivate students** to enjoy doing their homework. Here's how.

### **How to Motivate Students: Appeal to Their Interests**

The key to homework success is simple; make it fun, interesting, and relevant. If you want them to enjoy their homework, incorporate what they know. Find out **how to motivate students** by taking a poll. If you find that the majority of your class is into sports, then create a way to integrate sports into their homework. Studies have shown that when teachers merge student interest into their homework assignments, students are more likely complete the assignment. Appealing to student interest is a great motivator that keeps them engaged, as well as enjoying their work.

### **Keep It Short and Sweet**

The purpose of homework is to practice a concept learned, or extend what they have just learned. The duration and the frequency is dependent upon the purpose for the homework assignment. The National PTA recommends 10-20 minutes of homework starting in 1st grade, then add 10 minutes for every grade thereafter, capping at 120 minutes for a student in 12th grade. It's going to be very tough to get a senior in high school to enjoy 120 minutes of homework. Consistent studies have suggested that shorter more frequent homework assignments tend to be more effective. Students are more likely to complete these assignments, which in turn make them more enjoyable.

### **Study Buddy Club**

The concept of a study buddy isn't something new, it's actually been around for a very long time. There is an abundance of research that proves group assignments can be highly effective. Have you ever seen a group of kids gathered around the lunch table or in the hallway all huddled together? Students love being with their peers, and they thrive when they get the opportunity to be together. If you really want your students to love doing homework, create group homework assignments, or connect them with a study buddy to complete the task together.

*continued...*

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## How to Motivate Students, *continued...*

### Utilize Technology

Embrace the use of new technologies by giving students the opportunity to do their homework online. Studies show that students thrive when given computer-based homework assignments. Websites such as [Kidblog.org](http://Kidblog.org), [Smartkiddies.com](http://Smartkiddies.com), and [Brainly.com](http://Brainly.com) are fun, interactive ways to keep students engaged, as well as motivate them to do their homework. **Brainly** is a network where students can find peer support and ask and answer questions, while the other two sites offer student rewards and certificates for homework completion.

### Mix it Up

Students get bored if they have to do the same old homework assignment day in and day out. It's hard to assign homework that meets the interests of all students, so to increase the chances that your students will actually enjoy doing their homework, try mixing it up by varying assignments. To peak student interest and keep assignments fresh try changing your usual style of homework. For example, if students are used to writing out the definitions for new words, mix it up by having students create a symbolic representation of the word instead.

### Make it Personal

Give homework assignments that make learning personal. Students are more likely to enjoy and get into their homework if it means something to them. If students are learning about their community, or other cultures, create a way for them to relate their own lives with that of what they are learning. These types of assignments helps students learn to appreciate what they are learning about.

Homework can improve student learning, and help students develop habits that will bring them far beyond the classroom. By appealing to their interests and utilizing technology, we can motivate our students to not only do their homework, but actually like it.

**How do you motivate students to love homework? Do you have any tricks or tips that you would like to share? Feel free to leave a comment in the section below. We would love to hear your thoughts.**

*Enrich your [Back to School](#) curriculum with TeachHUB.com's [Ultimate 5-Week Prep Guide!](#) Each week, you'll get [tips](#), [tricks](#), and [ideas](#) designed to help you be a more effective educator! Janelle Cox is an education writer who uses her experience and knowledge to provide creative and original writing in the field of education. Janelle holds a Master's of Science in Education from the State University of New York College at Buffalo. She is also the Elementary Education Expert for [About.com](#), as well as a contributing writer to TeachHUB.com and TeachHUB Magazine. You can follow her at Twitter [@Empoweringk6ed](#), or on Facebook at [Empowering K6 Educators](#).*

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