number of hours of school attendance rather than days. Districts will be required to schedule 1,044 hours of instruction time plus build in a maximum of 60 additional hours of make-up time for hours missed because of inclement weather (60 hours is the approximate equivalent of the previous rule of 10 six-hour school days). However, as long as schools have 1,044 hours of school attendance at the end of the school year, they have met the calendar requirements set forth by DESE.

The California School District has traditionally scheduled 169 days of student attendance and that will not change for next year. Based on the length of our school days, that equates to 1,118 hours of school attendance at the high school and 1,135 hours at the elementary and middle schools. Even if our district were to miss the maximum number of hours required to be made up, 60, we would still have more than the 1,044 hours that DESE requires.

As confusing as all of this may seem, the bottom line is that California students would not be required, under the new DESE standards, to make up any snow days. With that being said, our Board of Education wants to ensure that our students are receiving a top level education and has determined that our students will not be required to make up the first 4 snow days each year. However, any days beyond the first four will be considered for make-up by our Board of Education on a case-by-case basis.

Attention students! The good news is that we have averaged just three snow days a year over the last eight years and only two of those years did we exceed four days missed—this year we missed six days and in 2014 we missed eight days. So, the odds are in your favor that you will not have to make up snow days in future years.
A field trip’s purpose

By Kayla Wehmeyer

Many people may ask what makes a good field trip for students, and some may ask why they even go on field trips. The key to a good field trip is parental participation, nice weather, good behavior from the students, and good listening.

Wendy Barker, a third grade teacher at California Elementary School, said that field trips can be both educational and fun based for the students. Going on field trips for any grade level is a great way for hands-on learning.

“Our third grade field trip is based on science and social studies units that students are learning about in the classroom,” Barker said.

To be able to go on the field trip, the teachers have to take it up with the principal for approval.

Although there are not any disadvantages for trips, there are many benefits. Students make memories with their friends, and it is a great learning experience.

Each grade level goes on a field trip(s) throughout the year whether it is a big trip, several small field trips, or both.

First grade took a trip to Arrow Rock. Second grade went to Stark Caverns in Eldon. Closer to the end of the year, they will walk to the Historical Society, the park, Sonic, and to the library to learn about their summer reading program. Second grade will also take a trip to the high school for the FFA Barnyard.

The entire third grade took a trip to Jefferson City to visit both the Capitol and Runge Nature Center. The students’ favorite part was at the Runge Nature Center. Picture are students waiting to go inside. Meanwhile, they enjoy the beautiful weather. Runge put on an interactive show about the food web, and students got to go up on stage to participate.

The fourth grade class went to the Columbia Movie Theaters to watch Wonder Park and went to Bonkers afterwards.

In March, the fifth graders took a trip to Jefferson City for Archives Alive and roller skating. Last September, they walked to the Historical Society and the Finke Theater. In May, they will also be walking to the courthouse and Wood Place Library.

“Overall, the students enjoy every field trip we go on,” Barker said.

Close to the end of the year third graders go on small, rewarding and fun trips. The students who pass their multiplication all the way through get to go bowling for a reward. They also take a trip to the library to listen to some stories and learn more about the summer reading program. They will also get to walk to the park to enjoy the nice weather.

Continuing the learning experience

By Kody Bisges

As the school year comes to an end, the elementary school staff begins to prepare for summer school May 28 to June 21.

Summer school for kindergarten through fifth grade is more about continuing to learn and engaging with their teachers and other classmates. The main goal for the elementary school is to get a lower ratio of teacher to student to provide more one-on-one instruction.

Gary Baker, elementary school principal, said he “develops rosters and makes sure there are teachers and support staff to make things positive for a good day-to-day experience.”

For incoming kindergartners, summer school is more about getting used to the building like walking into school and walking through the hallways. The purpose is to get rid of student and parent anxieties so when the students come back in August they are ready to learn.

For the older students summer school is more focused on building teacher relationships, revisiting areas of weakness, and doing exploratory skills.

“If the kids feel like they’re playing while learning at the same time, then we’re doing our job right,” said Baker.

The curriculum taught in the summer is based on the Missouri state standards, but the school also uses their collected data to control what is emphasized for some students over others. All of their time is spent on ELA, math, social studies, and science due to not having any specials like P.E. or art.

There are about 280-350 students that come back for summer school out of the 625 in the school. Each year the state covers all of the meals for the summer school students and teachers.

The free meals come from a state funded program, and to get that the school has to document how many students and teachers go through the meal line each day; then the school gets reimbursed for that money.

There are also no busses run during summer school due to cost and the difficulty of scaling down the routes to only get certain kids.

Summer school is not required for elementary students, but is highly encouraged to keep students engaged in school and prepare them for the next school year.
Exploring higher education
By Jesse Wingate

This April the California Middle School sixth grade students went to the campus of Central Methodist University in Fayette. The students toured many interesting places on campus.

They were separated into groups and then rotated on tours at the Ashby-Hodge Art Gallery, Stephens Museum of Natural Science, the sports complex, and the Little Theatre and library. After the tour they were taken to Fayette City Park for lunch. When they finished with lunch, the students toured the Morrison Observatory.

Every year, the sixth grade class goes on a field trip. In the past, the trip has been to the St. Louis Zoo. The teachers decided to change it this year because “that’s a three hour drive one way and we wanted something a little bit closer to home,” said Elizabeth Dick, sixth grade English teacher.

The teachers chose CMU because from an educational standpoint, it helps younger students realize some of the amazing small colleges that they may not have otherwise known about.

This type of trip can be helpful to students at this age. They may not know what they want to do or where they want to go, so trips to small colleges like CMU can be helpful in making future decisions.

Middle school administration, faculty host sixth grade orientation
By Alex Meisenheimer

Orientation was held April 8 at the middle school for upcoming sixth graders and their parents.

Parents and students started out in the gym for the introduction of staff, dress code clarification, chromebook information, and bus eligibility.

After the introduction families were split into groups for a mock bell schedule. Each “class” in the rotation lasted for about six minutes and covered topics like homework help, school supplies, cell phones, star party, library basics, exploratory classes, and band/choir.

If a family decided not to come, there is no alternative option, so they will miss some key information.

Marcia Bibb, the middle school counselor, said, “This incoming sixth grade class is on the larger end of the average class size.” It is currently at 106, which is a little bigger than both the seventh and eighth grade. With this number there will be around 20 kids per core class.

The week before the orientation school. Then in August, the students come to registration to receive their schedule and find their lockers, so by the time school rolls around, they are prepared for their first day.

Marcia Bibb, said, “they are nervous at first, but after a week or two they get it down pat.”

In an hour and a half time span, a lot of helpful knowledge was given. Overall the orientation was a success.
In my room . . . Mrs. Silvey prepares kids for college
by Anthony Strauch

Diana Corona and Marlena Heath watch an instructional video that shows what to do on their algebra 2 homework assigned by Mrs. Tabitha Silvey.

There are currently 17 students in Silvey’s algebra 2 fifth hour class. Algebra 2 is content heavy and involves graphing, logarithms, and exponent rules, etc. There are some math equations from previous math classes. According to Silvey, “most of the knowledge you gain from Algebra 1 is used in algebra 2.”

The current work the class is doing is rational functions and reciprocal functions.

“It is a lot of simplifying fractions, fractions that include variables and then being able to identify things about them and graph them. There are x, y tables that they have to come up with and then be able to graph them and tell me things about them like domain and range,” Silvey said.

Taking algebra 2 has its advantages. According to Silvey this can be good prep for college. Likewise, if students take dual credit college algebra, algebra 2 can help significantly.

Algebra 2 also covers most of the math portion of the ACT.

Silvey said, “Most students tell me that after they have taken algebra 2, they feel like they know how to do a lot more of the math problems on the math portion of the ACT.”

Algebra 2 is a huge part of college and will help prepare students for what lies ahead in their future careers.

Silvey also teaches algebra 1 and geometry.

Prom traditions come and go through the decades
By: Rebekah Farmer

One of the most popular high school traditions for juniors and seniors is attending prom. This was the same fifty years ago; however, traditions have changed drastically.

Prom in 1969 was much more involved than it is today as it included many more events. Prom was catered by the sophomore class and their parents. The parents made the meal while the students served the meal to the juniors and seniors.

The sophomores also did the entertainment including both skits and singing.

Debbie Sparks, 1969 CHS graduate, said, “Proms were much more extravagant than they are now. We all also came as commoners. There were no cliques and prom royalty. We were all together there as one.”

Sparks feels prom is as big as it used to be because people just aren’t as involved anymore. “People used to be much more family centered, so many times people are too busy to put much effort into these events.”

For today’s prom, students that are juniors and seniors may invite students from surrounding schools or students that are in a lower grade. In 1969, that was not the case. Only the juniors and seniors that year could attend, with the sophomores catering.

“I think that less people made prom safer, especially because we knew everyone there,” said Sparks.

MacKenzie Swillum, 2019 Prom Queen, said “my favorite prom tradition had definitely been the senior walkout.”

The senior walkout is an event at the end of prom where seniors are formally introduced and honored since it is their last year and they are about to graduate. She also enjoyed being around her friends, eating with them, and dancing.

For Swillum, this was a memorable prom event and being crowned queen made it all that more special to her.

With the addition of prom royalty, people have given these titles a connotation that is not always positive. Sparks believes that many times these are popularity contests.

On the other hand, Swillum believes having prom royalty brings more of a crowd to the prom, as it is something that gets people excited. “It gives people something to look forward to as you do not know who’s going to win.”

Prom has changed throughout the years. Trends have come and gone. Either way, for Sparks, Swillum, and several other prom goers, it will be a night they will never forget.