

PANTHER PERIODICAL

WHY I LOVE TEACHING AT NMS

By Paul Baker, Activities Director, Leadership and Design Teacher

My name is Paul Baker. I am married with 2 kids and I live in a small town called Galt. I didn't start off in the education profession. In fact the job I had before I started teaching was in corporate transportation. As a middle schooler I struggled in school. The struggle mostly laid in the ability to stay engaged and interested in what my teachers

help students stay engaged while learning but to also help them feel like their school is a place they can feel a sense of safety and family. I love teaching at Natomas Middle School because everyone is a part of this big family. We might have our disagreements with one another but at the end of the day we are in this together, every day striving to be the best we can be and helping each other through. We make a point to guide our students to be leaders and help each other on campus so the support comes from within. For these reasons I am proud to be a part of living and teaching the Panther Way.

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were trying to teach. There also was not a sense of community in the middle school I attended. I had a dream to become an educator who could not only

WILLKOMMEN
By Antonio Hueza, 6th Grade

On February 28th, the NMS Drama Club made their performing debut at our PTSA meeting. This is one student's story of his experience that evening: In Willkommen, I was a musician. This song (play) takes place before the Nazis took over. I myself was nervous before the show and after I was so happy. I was happy because we had only practiced three weeks. I was very proud of us.

ONE CHOICE

By Valeri Garcia, Parent

There are a lot of options for schools in the Natomas District—maybe too many. When my oldest, Annelise, was approaching middle school, I knew our options but we only made one choice: Natomas

Middle. When it was time for Mia and Mickey to go to middle school, we only made one choice: Natomas Middle. It wasn't because they didn't get into one of the charter schools. We didn't even try.

It was always going to be Natomas Middle. We chose NMS for lots of reasons and we are getting out so much more.

First, I love the teachers. We've been at NMS for 4.5 years and have had a run of amazing, attentive, creative, and fun teachers that provide a foundation of curiosity and skills for success. Shout outs to some of my daughters' favorites: Ms. Ludlum, Ms. Carpenter, Mr. Sawaya, Ms. Helm, Ms. Rocha, Mr. Jones (before he became Assistant Principal), Mr. Battle, Ms. Dudley, Ms. Yamigishi Kobayashi, Ms. Santamaria, and Mr. Layne (retired – and fondly referred to as “my homie” by Annelise).

Second, the music department! We're a sports family; our family gatherings usually involve some type of sport or competition. I never thought we would be a music family, but here we are—proud owners of a trumpet! I've seen every Winter and Spring Concert for the last 6 years. Seeing the beautiful mix of discipline and creativity through music and the growth from their first beginning band performance to their last advanced band performance is extraordinary. Mr. Galindo and Ms. Deems truly create magic. It's impressive to know that many of their students go on to participate in award winning performances in high school.

Now let's talk sports! Whether it's flag football, volleyball, basketball, or soccer, NMS almost always finishes in the top 3 in the league, often in 1st place championships. Every season I am amazed by the untapped talent of these young athletes. And, yes, I said “untapped”. Many of these girls and boys, for various reasons, don't play sports outside of school, so what they do on the field and on the court is pure athleticism and raw talent. I hope to see more

Inderkum and Natomas High coaches at our games, talking to our athletes and getting them connected.

Finally, I am grateful for the administration. Ms. Borges took over as principal in the middle of Annelise's 6th grade year when things were not going well. Over the next few years she unraveled the chaos and created order and vision. And she was so present. It wasn't just her height that made her presence felt, but her genuine attentiveness. After being promoted to the District Office, NMS was searching for a new principal. As a PTSA board member, I was asked to help interview candidates. I was impressed by some but not quite sold until a man with a bowtie came in. Again, we had lots of options but there was only one choice. Principal Baker, Assistant Principal Cayabyab, and Assistant Principal Thomas are true representatives of our school. Our students can see themselves in our administration and they are excellent role models for our students. They are intentional and focused on the services they provide and how they connect with students. They truly want to see every child succeed. Ms. Borges got the train on the track and Principal Baker and his team are taking us to our destination.

We have just over a year left until Mia and Mickey leave NMS, but we will always be a Panther family. I'm grateful to the staff and administration. My daughters and the rest of the students are better people because of you.

NEXT PTSA MEETING:

Thursday 3/28/19 at 6:00 in the NMS Library

“A celebration honoring our athletes and
activists”

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