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NIU VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL
310 Halemaumau Street
Honolulu, Hawaiʻi 96821

March 12, 2026

Subject: Quarter 3 Appreciations & Important Information

Aloha Niu Valley Middle School Families,

As we approach spring break, please take necessary precautions to prepare for the inclement weather predicted to impact our community over the next few days. Stay tuned to weather reports and consider reaching out to your neighbors, especially to kupuna, to check in on how they are doing. Be safe.

Promoting Peace & Global Friendships
In late December we officially unveiled our peace pole that prominently stands at the front of our main driveway. The peace pole is a symbol of our intentional efforts to prepare our students to embrace compassion, empathy, and to be builders of peace as they grow up in a world that is filled with conflict. The peace pole has five languages: English, ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi and the three world languages that our school offers: Chinese, Japanese and Spanish. Starting next school year, Spanish will be offered to incoming 6th graders.

Last school year a couple of faculty members and I visited **Guang Wu Junior High School** located in Hsinchu, Taiwan. In late January, we were fortunate to host about 30 students from that school for a week-long Niu Valley Middle School (NVMS) experience. Students interacted with each other, shared cultural activities and we even had a few students from both schools who were teary eyed as they said their goodbyes, so heart warming. Prior to their departure, we signed a memorandum of understanding to establish a sister school partnership. This marks the third official sister school for NVMS. Our other two sister school relationships are with Sera town in Hiroshima, Japan and Seonhwa Middle School in Busan, Korea.

Faculty & Staff Recognitions
Congratulations to Mathematics Teacher, **Mrs. Gina Hyun** for receiving her **National Board Certification!** The application process of becoming nationally certified is rigorous and requires a comprehensive assessment of content knowledge, a portfolio review of student work analysis, reviews of video recordings and purposeful reflections. National Board Certification is one of the most respected teaching certifications in the field.

At the Hawaii Association of Middle Level Education Summit held last month, Science Teacher **Mrs. Darrah Brown** and Librarian **Mrs. Carla Hallin** were recognized as the **Adult Advocates of the Year** representing all middle level educators in our Farrington-Kaiser-Kalani Complex Area. Go NVMS!

(continued on the back)

Administration Updates
Please join me in welcoming **Mr. Michael Takemoto** to our faculty as a Temporary Assignment Vice Principal. Mr. Takemoto brings a wealth of teaching and teacher leader experience from multiple schools in the Honolulu District and most recently served as an academic coach from Kalihi Elementary School. Mr. Takemoto is assigned to support the 6th and 7th grade and will be with us for the rest of the school year. Here's the updated grade level VP and counselor assignments:

Grade	Vice Principal	Counselor
Grade 6	**Mr. Riley Jaeger** riley.jaeger@k12.hi.us **Mr. Michael Takemoto** michael.takemoto@k12.hi.us	**Ms. Maya Dougherty** maya.dougherty@k12.hi.us
Grade 7	**Mr. Kekoa Carvalho** kekoa.carvalho@k12.hi.us **Mr. Michael Takemoto** michael.takemoto@k12.hi.us	**Mr. Gavin Yaji** gavin.yaji@k12.hi.us
Grade 8	**Mrs. Lisa Mendonca** lisa.mendonca@k12.hi.us	**Ms. Valerie Fujitani** valerie.fujitani@k12.hi.us

Encourage Exploration in Clubs and Sports
Middle school is the perfect time for students to explore interests and friendships, develop leadership and social skills, and to try new experiences! It's never too late to get involved. We want to improve your child's sense of belonging with our school. If you have any questions on our clubs and sports teams, email Mr. Maika Nagata, our Student Activities Coordinator, at maika.nagata@k12.hi.us.

Important Dates
- March 14, 2026 - March 22, 2026 - **Spring Break**
- March 26 (Thursday) - **Kuhio Day Holiday**
- March 27 (Friday) - **Movie Night - Sponsored by Friends of Niu Valley** - Doors open at 5:30PM and the movie starts at 6:00 PM in our cafeteria
- April 2 (Thursday) - **Career Day** - We are still looking for speakers who can speak to our students from 8:00-11:15 AM. Breakfast and lunch are provided to speakers. If interested, fill out this form.
- April 3 (Friday) - **Good Friday Holiday**
- April 11 (Saturday) - **Aloha in Action Day**
- April 17 (Friday) - **Principal Talk Story** at 8:30 AM
- May 25 (Monday) - **Memorial Day Holiday**
- May 28 (Thursday) - **Last Day for Students & Grade 8 Aloha Assembly (Time TBA)**

Please take a moment to rejuvenate and to build family relationships during spring break. Feel free to reach out to me via email at jeffrey.shitaoka@k12.hi.us or via phone at (808) 307-6800, should you have any questions or concerns. Mahalo for entrusting us with your child's education.

Kind regards,



Jeffrey Shitaoka
Principal