



PLDMS FAQ
Frequently Asked Questions
October, 2016

How does the PLDMS FAQ work?

Each month, the principal (me!), takes questions posed in email and by our School Advisory Counsel and responds. If you have a question you'd like to ask, please email me at nathans@leeschools.net.

- 1) *Q: My child excels at math, and is often bored during math instruction, even in advanced math classes. Do you have anything to accommodate his need to be challenged in math?*
A: PLDMS offers an accelerated math track for students with additional needs – we call it Fast Track – placing sixth grade students in a seventh grade advanced math class, placing seventh grade students in a ninth grade level Algebra class and placing eighth grade students in a tenth grade level Geometry class. The students completing the ninth grade level Algebra class and/or the tenth grade level Geometry class take the State End-of-Course Exam and receive high school credit for those classes.

- 2) *Q: My child LOVES singing, acting, drawing, painting, really anything to do with the arts. I heard that PLDMS was not a good school for the arts, is this true?*
A: ABSOLUTELY NOT! PLDMS offers students opportunities in Technology, Industry Certification – such as 3D Printing, Web Design, Business Technology, Robotics and Culinary Arts – and especially the Arts. PLDMS has award-winning programs in Art, Theater and Band. In 2015-2016, PLDMS student artwork was on display in the airport, mailed out on the district holiday card, and won awards throughout the year. Our Theater program sent 19 students to the State competition and brought home 13 Superior Ratings, as well as Best in Show Award. Our Band program is second-to-none in the South Zone, with 21 of the 80 students in the All County Band coming from PLDMS. Though we were not the Center for the Arts in the South Zone, our program is undeniably a dominating force.

- 3) *Q: I heard there is a lot of fighting and violence at PLDMS, is this true, and if so, what does the administration do about it?*
A: Come by for a tour, any time, and I'll walk you through our halls – you'll see happy kids, happy teachers and lots of learning. Heresay is a hard thing to debunk, and in my experience, the best way to seek the truth is to go to the source. Our kids are kids, they get in to disagreements like kids at any other middle school, but they respect our school and our culture enough to seek out the incredible supports we have, like Peer Mediation, our Restorative Justice program, and our Parental Involvement Specialist. Ronald Reagan famously said, "Trust, but verify" – I encourage you to come by, and I'm certain we'll either verify the good things you've heard, or we'll help undo the perceptions you may have.

- 4) *Q: Does PLDMS offer any programs or classes for students with an engineering interest?*
A: You've got to see it to believe it. Our Robotics program includes a semester exploratory and a year-long team that competes around the district and state. Newly added is 3-D Digital design, where students design and print items on a 3-D printer. Additionally, we offer STEM Life Science and Environmental Science as electives – both are experiment-heavy and a great complement to our traditional Science curriculum.

- 5) *Q: What intramural and team sports does PLDMS have?*
A: If it's offered in the district, we have it. In 2015-16, we were district champions in Boys Basketball, and we showed well in Volleyball, Soccer and Track. In 2016-17, our basketball teams are strong, and our Cross Country team is excelling – winning first and second place victories at their meets.