

# FRANK BLACK MIDDLE SCHOOL

**Paolo Castagnoli**  
*Principal*

Houston Independent School District  
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A VANGUARD MAGNET CAMPUS



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Hello Parents, Students and Community Members of Frank Black Middle School!

It is with great excitement that I welcome you to a wonderful new school year here at Frank Black. As a new principal I can hardly wait for the school year to begin and to meet each and every one of you to form new and lasting relationships. As your Principal it is my intention to continue on the tremendous path to success that has been evident over the past few years here at Frank Black. As we embark on this educational journey together I would like to take some time to tell you of the new and exciting changes that we have been working hard on all summer.

This year we will be implementing the seventy minute 10 period class schedule. Students will attend five classes each day which will rotate on an A/B basis similar to last year's schedule. All students will attend math and ELA classes each day which will ensure mastery of the fundamental skills necessary for success in all subject areas. We have added new academic electives including science fair, history fair and creative writing in order to help develop students' natural inquisitiveness and to further enrich their understanding of the world around them. For our Vanguard students we will be implementing the TPSP project based learning model which allows students to select a cross curricular activity that they can display at the district GT Expo in the spring. We will also be offering Biology and Geometry for the first time and will be re-introducing Spanish for Native Speakers as well as 8<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish for high school credit.

Our facilities have been improving daily! This summer we were able to replace all the windows in the fine arts building facing 43<sup>rd</sup> street, increase the drainage on the outside patio area, and refinish the gym floor and theatre stage. We also updated our existing computer lab and added a new lab in the sixth grade annex building. As we move forward we will continually be looking for ways to update and improve our facilities while bringing our classrooms to the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Our administrative team will be implementing the Dean system this year. Each Dean will work to ensure that all students' needs are met. The sixth grade class will be handled by our new team member, Terese Pollard, who brings a wealth of middle school experience to the table having worked as both a teacher and administrator at Hamilton Middle School as well as Grady and Patrick Henry. Ms. Ardoin, who has the longest tenure of the team and who has been instrumental in many of the great changes over the past few years will head up the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. Mr. McClish will be moving up from 6<sup>th</sup> Grade with his students to 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and Ms. Riley will serve as Dean for all of the Vanguard students across grade levels. Having a smaller amount of students for each dean will allow for more one on one contact and will offer each student a truly individualized learning experience here at Frank Black.

We have a number of great faculty joining us this year, and I am sure that they are just as excited as I am about the upcoming school year. I am looking forward to continuing to ensure that Frank Black is a place for all learners, where all students can find a unique learning environment that helps to foster their talents in academics, athletics and the arts. I want to personally thank all of the people and community members who continue to support Frank Black, especially our PTO, our trustee Ms. Rhonda Skillern-Jones, SSO Charles Foust and CSO Michael Cardona. Once again I'm looking forward to meeting each and every one of you. If I can ever be of any assistance to you please do not hesitate to contact me. Together we can continue on our mission to make Frank Black Middle School the top choice in HISD.

Sincerely

Paolo Castagnoli  
Principal, Frank Black Middle School