

April 2014



Dr. Myra Misles-Krhin, Principal

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Dear Parent,

The month of April is well underway with many events and activities in progress. This week, we welcomed Kathy Schmitt, Cesa 6 Literacy Coach, to visit our first grade classrooms and talk with our staff. Literacy is Kathy's area of expertise and we were excited to learn more from her to help strengthen our reading and writing instruction. Initial feedback indicates that we are doing great things in this critical area of instruction. As Kathy indicated, "your staff has a very sophisticated awareness of literacy instruction." We await her feedback later this month. It is important to note that while meeting with Kathy, we were also told of the incredible value of each child reading six books over the summer! What a simple way to avoid the "summer slide!"

This week we also welcomed visitors to Journey from the Rubicon School District. Their superintendent along with a kindergarten and first grade teacher came to see Project Based Learning (PBL) in action. As you may suspect, their day was scheduled to visit classrooms and engage in conversation over lunch about the "journey" that we have embarked upon over the past two years as we planned and opened our charter school. I know they will be impressed with what they see and hear.

Speaking of impressed, I was impressed with the music demonstrations that took place this week. I enjoyed the variety of music pieces that Mrs. Stracy selected and I enjoyed watching our students as they performed for a "standing room" only audience on three separate nights! The music skills that our students are learning at the K-2 level are the foundational skills that prepare our children for the choirs and ensembles they become a part of and the instruments they choose to learn to play as they move through the divisional levels within our school district. To this end, we're excited for the 5th Grade Choir performance that will take place at our school on April 28th!

Impressed you will also be when you attend Technology Night at Barlow Park Elementary School on April 24th. Our evening begins at 5:00 pm with classroom visits followed by dinner. Invites have been sent home and we are excited for our students to show you how we use technology throughout each day to support our learning. If you have not already done so, parents are asked to send back their forms so that we can plan for the night and dinner. We don't want to run out of food!

Finally, Summer School booklets will be coming home soon. As always, parents are being asked to read and review the 2014 Summer School options, check the teacher recommendations for your child on Form A and return your registration to your child's teacher by May 9th. This year, we are also asking parents to sign the front page of the booklet if you do not wish to enroll your child in our summer program. While our new promotion policy (5410b) allows for the transfer of students from one grade to another, our goal will always be to help all children acquire the benchmark skills they need to be successful in order to be promoted to the next grade. I encourage you to contact your child's teacher or me if you have questions or want to meet to talk about your child's academic performance this year.

Regards,

Dr. Myra Misles-Krhin



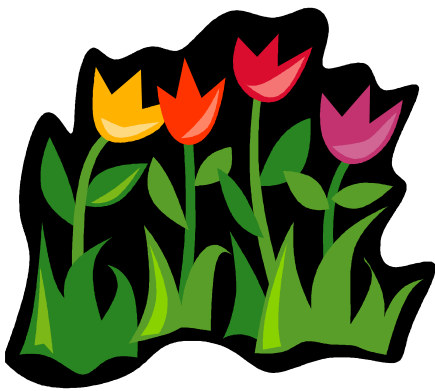
Calendar of Events

April 9th
ELL Family Night

April 13th
Pickett Community Center
Country Breakfast

April 24th
BPES Technology Night
5:00-6:30

SPRING BREAK
April 14th - April 18th.



Emergency Contact Information

Is the information in the office and on Infinite Campus your current contact information? In the event of a health issue or an emergency, will the school be able to contact you?

We find that cell phone numbers and secondary contact numbers and/or the correct individual to contact may frequently change during the school year. We also find that your work contact information may change throughout the year too.

Please be sure to notify the office in writing regarding any change in contact information affecting your child as soon as possible.

School Day

Our first bell rings at 8:00 a.m., and our second bell rings at 8:05 a.m. signaling that all students should be in their classroom seat ready for their instructional day.

In the afternoon, Kindergarten students need to be in their classroom seat ready to learn at 11:45 a.m. first graders at 12:10 p.m. and second graders at 12:40 p.m. Our 4PS classes begin at 12:30 p.m. respectfully, and end at 3:00 p.m.

If your child is sick or will be absent, please call the Barlow Park and Journey attendance line at 748-1540 and leave a message indicating your child's name and the reason for the absence. If you do not call your child in as absent, the school office will attempt to contact you by 9:00 a.m. to see if your child is safely home. You must call in your child's absence to avoid any unexcused absences.

Prearranged Absence

Although the district discourages absence from school during regularly scheduled school days, a parent/guardian may excuse a child, not more than 10 days in a school year. This request must be made in writing at least one day prior to the child's absence. The following questions will be considered prior to approval of a prearranged absence:

1. Is the student in good academic standing?
2. Is the student's attendance record good?
3. Has the student previously completed homework and make-up assignments responsibly on time?



Being Creative in Art

Kindergarten students have worked on two projects this past month. We created symmetrical mittens using patterns and painted them. We also made primary color fish (inspired by Dr. Suess' *One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish* book). They painted their fish primary colors, their backgrounds secondary colors, and then they “wrapped” their fish in yarn for added texture and details.

First grade students have been creating weaving robots. They have learned how to use a loom with warp and weft strings to make a weaving. They are now turning those weavings into robots by adding cut paper. They have also created a snake coil pot using clay. They learned how to roll out the clay and create coils to build up their pots. They used score and slip techniques to make the pot “stick” together.

Second grade students have been working with felt and stitching to create a hand puppet or a stuffed animal. The students have learned to stitch felt together to create a piece of art work. Some students have chosen to stuff their puppet and turn them into a stuffed animal instead of the hand puppet. They glued on felt, beads, buttons, eyes, etc. to finish their final details of their project.

Sincerely,
Ms. Willett & Mrs. Dreifuerst



Summer Reading Program

It's hard to think that summer is right around the corner. Last year we began a Summer Reading Program for all K-12 students. At Barlow Park and Journey, children were allowed to check out up to 10 books over the summer. They could then return and check out other books during Summer School hours if they wished. Each child who participated, was given a bright orange bag to carry and store the library books in to read over the summer.

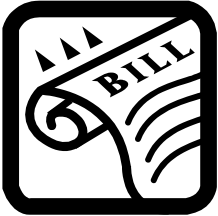


Why do we want students to do this? Studies show that children who do not read during the summer tend to slide backwards in their reading skills. When school starts in the fall, they are not at the same level they were at when school let out for summer. Students who DO read during the summer can even improve their skills. Please watch for permission slips to be coming home soon to give your child the opportunity to participate in this great program.



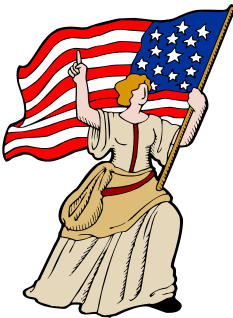
April 9: Prisoners of War Remembrance Day

Commemorates the date during World War II when the largest number of Americans were captured in the Conquest of Bataan. Customarily observed through gubernatorial proclamation, the day recognizes those who suffered captivity in foreign countries while in active service with the U.S. armed forces.



April 13: American's Creed Day

William Tyler Page, a messenger in the U.S. House of Representatives, wrote the American's Creed in 1917. His essay was the winning entry in a national contest for the "best summary of American political faith." The House of Representatives adopted the 100-word statement in April 1918.



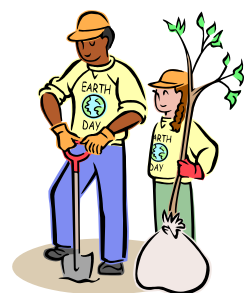
April 19: Patriot's Day

Patriots were colonists who wanted independence from British rule. Most hoped to find peaceful ways to settle their differences with England. When the British decided to look for Samuel Adams and John Hancock, who were hiding in Concord, Paul Revere and Billy Dawes rode through the night warning other Patriots in New England. The American Revolution began when the first shots were fired at Lexington on April 19, 1775. Each side said the other fired first. Patriots' Day was established to mark the beginning of the Revolutionary War.



April 22: Environmental Awareness Day

Former Wisconsin governor and U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson founded Earth Day in 1970 to organize a national public demonstration that would bring attention to the environment. His efforts made environmental issues an integral part of political debate. Environmental Awareness Day marks the anniversary of Earth Day. Schools are encouraged to conduct a day-long program, using all educational subjects, to enhance the students' understanding of the environment and to promote an ethic of environmental stewardship.



April 25: Arbor Day

The Arbor Day movement began in the 1800s to promote conservation and beautification of the environment. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Puerto Rico observe Arbor Day with annual tree planting ceremonies. Wisconsin celebrates Arbor Day on the last Friday in April.



“We are a School Family”
Barlow Park and Journey Social Skills Program
April : Empathy
“We can manage our feelings.”



The discipline skill of “empathy” is the focus of the Social Skills Program during the month of April. Empathy is the heart of emotional intelligence and the key to intellectual development. People are emotional beings. The desire to be understood is a powerful human motivator. Brain research indicates that emotions are indispensable to rational thought. The more children receive true empathy the more “whole” they become and the more efficient is their brain organization. Research has shown that children who demonstrate the highest empathy also perform better on achievement and intelligence tests. Receiving empathy stimulates the development of the quality of compassion in children. .

Empathy is understanding what another person feels and having insight into their thoughts and actions. Empathy allows us to understand another’s perspective, but this does not equate to agreeing or disagreeing with their judgments of themselves, others, or the situation. Empathy is not taking on the distress of others as our own. Empathic responses to others also do not include sharing similar experiences from your own life, gushing with sympathy, giving “fix it” advice, offering humor to “lighten” the situation or giving reassurance that everything will be alright. These types of responses do nothing to help children gain the self-awareness and insight required for sound emotional development. Truly empathic responses provide the “mirror” for children to become aware of their own feelings and thought processes. When others understand them, then children can begin to understand themselves. As children are helped to accept and process their own feelings they also begin to see the world from others’ perspectives. How adults respond to a child’s upset teaches the child how to self manage emotions and how to respond to the upset of others. Since it is impossible for adults to teach children skills they themselves have not mastered, it is essential that adults learn to identify their own emotions and express them in acceptable ways. If the adults in a child’s life express their feelings in destructive or unacceptable ways, the child lacks role models needed for positive emotional growth.

When you empathize with children, they realize you care about their ideas and feelings even when you can not allow their behaviors that are hurtful to themselves or others. An empathic response includes:

- Mirroring: the process of accurately reflecting back the content of the child’s message.
- Validating: the process of indicating to the child that his/her message “makes sense”.
(This does not mean you agree or disagree with the viewpoint expressed.)
- Empathizing: the process of recognizing the child’s feelings and giving a name to the emotions without judging them or the child.

Before you can empathize, you must stop equating disobedience with disrespect and punishment with instruction. When children are upset (“fussing and fits”), offer empathy or positive intent first. Your task is to notice, describe and reflect the child’s emotions. Ask guiding questions and facilitate problem solving once the child is motivated and able to operate from a rational point of view. Over time, experiencing empathy helps “wire” the brain to be able to process disappointment, frustration and anger without acting out these emotions in a hurtful manner. Empathy wires the brain for self-control, allowing children access to the higher cognitive processes required for productive problem-solving. Understanding does not change the limits on behavior, it just helps children to become better able to accept these limitations.

The discipline skill of empathy recognizes the power of acceptance. Acceptance is quietly observing “what is” without upset. The power of acceptance gives you the frame of mind that promotes change instead of resistance. Too often, adults focus their energy on trying to control children’s feelings in hopes this will control their behavior. Children have a right to all of their feelings. Feelings serve us as our core system for discerning right from wrong. They are our “moral navigators.” We all need to become acutely aware of our emotions and then learn how to express them in appropriate ways.

Lessons in our Social Skills Program in the month of April include the following:

1. We notice our feelings.
 - a. Notice how your body feels.
 - b. Think about what feeling(s) might match.
 - c. Use words to tell others how you are feeling.
2. We can manage our feelings.
 - a. Go to a safe place.
 - b. Ask for help if you need it.
 - c. Set your “energy dial” to match the situation.
3. We notice how faces and bodies show feelings.
 - a. Look at someone’s face.
 - b. Look at someone’s body.
 - c. Think about what feelings might match.
 - d. If it is appropriate, ask someone how s/he is feeling.
4. We can wish each other well.
 - a. Share in others’ happiness and excitement:
Say, “I’m happy for you” or “I’m glad that happened.”
 - b. Show caring when others are having a hard time:
Say, “I’m sorry that happened to you.”
 - c. Show encouragement to others:
Say, “I hope things work out for you” or “You’re doing a good job” or “I think you’re getting better at that”.



Addison	Conner	Joseph
Addyson	Dakota	Kaitlynn
Alexander	Emily	Kyra
Allison	Eva	Madelynn
Allison	Everett	Marianne
Alyssa	Holden	Marshall
Ayden	Ian	Preston
Brody	Isabella	Remington
Cain	Jenna	