

The *Polar Bear Express*

April 2017

**“Poly Drives Students
to Succeed”**



Poly Drive Elementary School

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Dear Poly Drive Families,

Spring is here and we are on the final leg of the school year. That means we are already starting to make plans for next year. Kindergarten registration is in full swing so if you know of anyone that intends to have a child attend kindergarten next year, please encourage them to come enroll ASAP.

We also want to make sure all families are aware of the district boundary changes that are taking place for next year. I will try to accommodate for families wishing to stay at Poly Drive but class size is the most significant determining factor. We also may not know of final placements until as late as August. Make sure an out-of-area form is turned in if you wish to attend an out of area school and are affected by the new lines. If you have any questions regarding boundary changes, please contact me.

This is also the start of our busiest testing season. K-2 students will be assessed with the FAST reading and math probes in May to help us measure student growth that occurred this year. Students in 3rd-6th grade will take the NWEA Measured Academic Progress (MAP) assessment along with the state mandated Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) April through May. Your teacher should be communicating specific dates of testing with you. We truly use this data to help us guide student learning so it is important that students are present and do their best. If you plan to be gone when your child's class is taking a test, please let us know so we can make plans for make-up days.

Another piece we start discussing this time of year is class placement. Many factors are considered as we assign students to classrooms including peer relationships, social factors, academics, teacher & learning matches and many others.

Medical and instructional needs take precedence over all other factors. I am asking that you first and foremost trust the judgment and wisdom of those who observe your child on a daily basis in the learning process. I assure you that every effort will be made to do what is best for your child regarding his/her placement. If your child has a medical or instructional need that I should be aware of please complete a parent input form that is available at the office or download from the Poly Drive website.

Coffee with Croff in April will take place on Friday the 21st at 8:30am. With upcoming levys, redistricting, new middle schools, district assessments and summer around the corner, this is a great time to get your questions answered. Please RSVP to me via email or call Vicki to let us know you will be attending.

Sincerely - Kevin Croff

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

We are inviting parents to register their child **now** so that we can begin planning for next year. Please don't wait. This can be done in one of two ways:

1. Come to the school office and request a registration form.
2. Log on to www.billingschools.org Click on "Parents" tab, and print a registration form (3 pages).

The requirements for kindergarten have not changed. The child must be five years old by September 10th, we need to have a copy of the complete immunization record, and a copy of the birth certificate.

If you have any questions, please call the school at 281-6217.



ART NEWS

CHECK IT OUT

4th Grade Photography Art Exhibit at the Billings Public Library from April 3rd-12th

Free Reception on April 6th 5-7pm



SCHOOL CALENDAR

April

- 03 NO SCHOOL (PIR)
- 11 Last PTA Meeting 3:15
- 12 EARLY OUT 12:00
- 13-17 Vacation Days
- 21 Coffee with Croff 8:30am
Please RSVP with the office
- 24 Star Lab in building
- 28 Spirit Day- wear Poly Dr. shirt

May

- 1-4 Teacher Appreciation
- 3 Midterms Go Home
- 5 VACATION DAY
- 9 Select Choir Concert
7:30am in Gym
- 16 Lewis & Clark Parent
Open House 6:00pm
- 18 Orchestra Concert 2:30
- 23 Field Day
- 26 Spirit Day
- 29 Vacation Day

June

- 2 Last Day of School
NOON DISMISSAL

Aug

- 24 First Day of School



By Mrs. Reas

Friday Fun Runs begin on April 7 from 8-8:15am on the playground. This replaces the Friday morning Fitness Club. Students in 2nd – 6th grade are welcome to run.

PEAK days for 4th, 5th, and 6th grades are as follows: 3:05-3:45 on April 5, 10 & 19.

Friday, April 21 is a PEAK Track Meet, 4:00 at the Rams track on Colton Blvd. After school PEAK will be finished for the year on April 21, following the track meet.

Friday Fun Runs will continue into May.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Have you moved this school year or planning on moving? It's important you notify the office of any changes in address or phone numbers so we can keep our records current.

Some families neglect to inform us that they have moved in fear of being out of the Poly Drive school area and worry about being forced to change schools. Please know we keep our students through the end of the school year and the parents can fill out an Out of Area Request form for their children to attend Poly Drive the following year.

Families that move and do not inform the office tend to create an awkward or difficult situation. Please do not hesitate in informing the school of address changes and getting an Out of Area form filled out and returned to the office as soon as possible.

Library News

April is poetry month! Watch for some cool creations coming out of the library!

May is Makerspace month where we focus on STEAM (Science, Technology Engineering, Arts, & Math) through creative exploration.

To FOLLOW what happens in the library, FOLLOW the library on Twitter - @polylib

Overdue Books

Please help your child get all library books returned! It is getting close to the end of the school year and all books need to be returned. Watch for information coming home about deadlines!



BOOKS FOR OUR BACKPACKS

WHAT IS BOOKS FOR OUR BACKPACKS?

This is a new program at Poly Drive to kick off summer reading. Students who might not have a good collection of books to read at home are less likely to read over the summer. *Books for Our Backpacks* provides free books for students to have and keep.

WHY BOOKS FOR OUR BACKPACKS?

Studies show that the amount of books children read affects their reading levels and their ability to score well on standardized tests. Research also shows a direct benefit to a child's view about school, reading and relationships. At Poly Drive, we want every student to have the opportunity to read good, age-appropriate books.

HOW DOES BOOKS FOR OUR BACKPACKS WORK?

Throughout the school year, Mrs. Caskey has been collecting books that have been donated. In May she will have classroom teachers review the books and select ones that are grade appropriate for their classrooms. Then, classroom teachers select the students that would most benefit from the program and will slip a book in their backpack with a note.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

If you have any children's books that are in good condition and need a new home, please drop them off at Poly Drive library. Mrs. Caskey will then organize them and get them into the hands of the classroom teachers to place in backpacks.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email or call Mrs. Caskey:

caskeyd@billingssschools.org

406.281.6562



BULLYING: Bully behavior occurs when there is deliberate intent to harm, dominate, inflict pain, exclude or otherwise cause distress to the person being targeted. The person who bullies purposefully misuses his/her power (size, age, popularity, confidence, verbal ability), usually repeatedly. The balance of power between the bully and target is NOT EQUAL.

Maybe My Child Is Over Tired (O.T)?

Do you have a tantrum throwing, fussy, emotional child? If so, you may be dealing with a case of the over tired child – the dreaded “O.Ts.” The correct amount of sleep is incredibly important for all of us, especially our children.

A Childhood Sleep study in the Netherlands examined more than 35,000 children ages 5 to 12. The study focused on the question, “How sleep or lack of sleep affected school performance and behavior.” The Netherlands study concluded, shorter episodes of sleep often resulted in poor academic performance in school age children, and these same children had more behavioral issues than their well-rested peers.

So how can you tell if your child needs more sleep?

Whether your child is a toddler or school age, the following signs may indicate childhood sleep deprivation:

- Overly emotional (explosive temper tantrums, easily hurt feelings, no patience)
- Difficult to wake in the morning
- Difficulty concentrating or focusing during play
- Taking long, or excessive naps
- Hyperactivity
- Defiant or contrary behavior
- Difficulty falling asleep (overtired)

If you suspect that your child isn’t getting enough sleep, you can help him get more sleep by following these tips:

Toddlers and preschoolers need an average of 13 hours of sleep, divided up between two hours of naps and 11 hours at night. Although your preschooler may no longer nap, encouraging a period of quiet time in the afternoon can help keep your child rested, and help him to sleep better at night.

Do Not Exceed Your Child’s Wakefulness Window

Wakefulness windows are the period of time that your child can remain awake without needing sleep. Infants obviously have very short wakefulness windows, while toddlers and preschoolers wakefulness windows will be longer. When your child is awake for longer than the recommended time, you may find that he has a hard time settling, relaxing, and may fight sleep later in the day.

Be Aware of Appropriate Bedtimes and Wake Times

For most children, a bedtime between 7 and 8:00 p.m. is entirely appropriate, which coincides with starting the day between 6:30 and 7:30 a.m. Many parents don’t realize that a later bedtime can actually result in your child fighting sleep, which can result in nap resistance, and, not surprisingly, a number of the above symptoms of sleep deprivation.

Limit the Things That Disrupt Sleep

Be aware of your child’s caffeine intake, as well as the amount of television (or any screens, for that matter) he/she is watching. Try to schedule your errands or outings around your child’s naptimes, and don’t agree to extracurricular activities if they interfere with bedtimes.

Know Your Child’s Sleep Cues

Chances are that by the time your child acts ‘tired’, it’s already too late. Watch for tired cues, such as rubbing his eyes, yawning, lack of focus, or general crankiness. When you miss your child’s sleepy cues, you may notice that he is suddenly wired, jumpy, and frantic. This also means that it will be harder for him to wind down for sleep. So watch carefully.