

The *Polar Bear Express*

April 2019

**“Poly Drives Students
to Succeed”**



Poly Drive Elementary School

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Dear Poly Drive Families,

April showers bring May flowers!! The last of the snow piles are slowly disappearing. Spring is finally here. This is our busiest time and that means we are already starting to make plans for next year. Over the past five years we have been over state accreditation in Kindergarten and have had to bus students to another school that has physical space. We nearly have enough enrollment forms to be at capacity already, so if you know of anyone that intends to have a child attend kindergarten next year, please encourage them to come enroll ASAP. Having enrollments early helps us prepare for next year and ensure we have appropriate staffing.

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, 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. Two years ago I had 69 parent requests and it was impossible to honor them all. 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.

This is also the start of our busiest testing season. K-2 students will be assessed with the FastBridge reading and math probes in May to help us measure student growth that occurred this year. Students in 3rd-5th 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.

With warmer weather, more students are walking and riding bikes to school. Please remember to slow down and watch out for our very active students.

Sincerely - Lorrie Wolverton

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.billingsschools.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.



SCHOOL CALENDAR

April

- 8 No School – Staff Training
- 9 PTA Meeting 3:15
- 12 Talent Show, 6pm
Lewis & Clark
- 18-22 Vacation Days
- 24 Ms. Vicki Day
- 26 Spirit Day-Wear your
Poly Drive shirt
- 29-May 2 Staff Appreciation

May

- 3 Vacation Day
- 6-10 Walk//Bike to School
- 12 Mother's Day
- 24 Field Day, K-3rd 9:00-11:00
4th-5th 1:00-3:00
- 27 Vacation Day
- 31 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Aug

- 22 First Day of School



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.



MUSIC NOTES

The month of May is filled with music fun!

Tuesday, May 7

- Select Choir – 7:45-8:15
- 3rd Grade – 9:30-10
- 2nd Grade – 10:15-10:45

Tuesday, May 21

- 1st Grade Family Music
8:30-9:00 Mrs. Bell
9:05-9:35-Mrs. BlakesWilcox
9:40-10:10-Mrs. Whittmeyer

Thursday, May 23

- Kindergarten Family Music
8:30-9:00-Mrs. Watson
9:05-9:35-Ms. Swigart

YOUR LIBRARY

Library News
By Mrs. Caskey

Makerspace May in the Library

The month of May is right around the corner and that means **Makerspaces** in the library. During this time students focus on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math) activities. The activities allow students to explore, design, create, problem-solve, collaborate...oh yeah, and **HAVE FUN DOING IT!!** You can get many birthday/Christmas ideas from these activities. Watch the Poly Drive library website for details and photos.

WANTED: ALL OVERDUE BOOKS

It is that time of year when your friendly neighborhood librarian turns into the book nazi. You will start to see more notices coming home as I work to get all books returned to the library for inventory. **I NEED YOUR NEED HELP!** Please visit with your child about library books and the responsibility of returning them on time.



APPEARANCE

As spring approaches our wardrobe switches from turtlenecks and jeans to t-shirts and shorts. Take a few minutes to review appropriate dress for warm days with your child.

In the past, the attire which distracts learning and that I want to bring to your attention are these:

Low cut and spaghetti strap tops must have t-shirts underneath.

Undergarments must not be showing.

Short and skirts must be at least past the fingertips when standing.

I ask you to keep this in mind when shopping for spring clothing. Students who violate these guidelines will be asked to change their clothes or will be sent home to change. Thank you



APRIL MANNERS

- √ Hold the door open for others
- √ Push in chairs after using
- √ Gossip, whispers, and stares are hurtful
- √ Practice good sportsmanship
- √ Use words that are school appropriate

END OF YEAR FIELD TRIPS

Many classes will be embarking on field trips as we get close to the end of the school year. Field trips are determined by each classroom teacher. Information on field trips will come directly from the classroom teacher.



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.

Empowering Our Youth Solving “Big” Problems and “Small” Problems

As parents and educators, how do we help to empower children to become healthy problem solvers?

First, it’s important for children to understand the difference between “big problems”, that require help from an adult to and “small problems”, that they can work through on their own. “Big problems”, are problems such as a student injury, a stranger on the playground, or when a student could be in danger. A “small problem” is when there is a minor conflict between students, such as a disagreement. It’s important for students to also learn the difference between telling and tattling. When students “tattle”, they’re trying to get another student into trouble. They are going to an adult when they have a “small problem” and could have solved this on their own. When they “tell”, they’re trying to keep another student safe, and getting help for a “big problem”.

It’s beneficial as parents and educators that we empower students to become problem solvers, so as they grow, they don’t always need to rely on an adult to solve the problem for them. Students can learn that when they’re dealing with a “small problem”, they should try at least two healthy choices before they seek help from an adult. When students have these tools and are able to resolve “small problems”, teachers have more classroom time to focus on academics, because less time is spent on solving “small problems” between students.

Children can choose two of the following healthy choices to help them work through “small problems” that arise.

- *Apologize when you make a mistake
- *Walk away
- *Ignore the bad behavior
- *Ask them to stop
- *Make a deal with another student
- *Wait and cool off if you get angry
- *Go to another game
- *Talk it out with the other student
- *Share and take turns.

If children have tried using at least two healthy choices to solve the “small” problem and the behavior continues, they can ask for help from an adult. For example, if a student is being teased on the playground they could choose to walk away from that student and to ask that student to stop. If the teasing continues, the student should then seek help from an adult since he/she has tried to solve it first on his or her own. Children benefit greatly by being able to problem solve on their own, it gives them confidence and makes them feel they have control over their situation, which results in healthy problem solvers and happier children.