

The
***Polar Bear
Express***

December 2017

“Poly Drives Students
to Succeed”



**Poly Drive
Elementary
School**

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Dear Poly Drive Families,

By now you have had a chance to look at our new standards-based report cards for Billings Public Schools. You will notice that “grades” will be marked with an E, NP or P for English Language Arts and Math – remember that the goal for the end of the year is to have P (proficient) in all areas. A mark of E or NP indicates the student is still developing mastery of that skill, which is to be expected. This is a new process and format for the entire district, so if you have questions or would like some clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the teacher or myself.

We are once again coordinating a “Giving Hands Wreath” in which you can help out a family in need by grabbing a hand from it and providing the item requested. This project directly benefits Poly Drive families and any assistance you can provide is appreciated. Look for the wreath by the office.

Our holiday music concerts will all be held on the same day this year, so put December 20th on your calendar. Look in this newsletter for exact times for each grade. Additionally, our band and orchestra concert will be held on December 14th at 2:30, so it will be a music-filled month.

This always seems to be the busiest month of the year for me. There is plenty of shopping, basketball, concerts, parties and, of course, more shopping. In spite of the rushing around I usually end up in a good mood and look forward to the time spent with family. I hope you take time this month to truly enjoy some quality time with family and friends.

Sincerely - Kevin Croff



HOLIDAY MUSIC PROGRAMS

Tis the season for fun holiday music performances from our amazing Poly Drive students.

Schedule of Performances

Band & Orchestra: 2:30-3:00
Thursday, December 14

General Music
Wednesday, December 20
Kindergarten - 8:30
1st grade - 9:15
2nd grade - 10:00
3rd grade - 10:45
4th & 5th grade – 1:15-2:00

Watch for more info to come home in your child's Wednesday Watch



KINDNESS & COMPASSION CLUB

The KC Club has put together a "Giving Hands" wreath to collect items to give to Poly Drive children and families for Christmas.

You can take a hand from the wreath that is hung by the main office. The hands each have an item listed on

them that is to be purchased and then returned to Poly Drive by Wednesday, December 13th.

The items range from specific girl/boy items to general health care items. You may choose to wrap the more specific items if you wish, attaching the Giving Hand to it so it can be identified.

HALLOWEEN CANDY COLLECTION YELDED OVER 79 POUNDS OF CANDY! WOW!



LIBRARY NEWS

EPIC is yet another digital library for students 12 and under

Epic! is the leading digital library for kids, with unlimited access to an incredible selection of 25,000 high-quality books, learning videos, quizzes and more. You can access Epic! on any device, including your smartphone, iPad or computer — so your children can read and learn anytime, anywhere. If you visit www.getepic.com/teacheroffer, you can sign up for a 30 day free trial. After that, you can

receive 25% off the monthly subscription price of \$5.99 per month.

You can check with your child's teacher to see if they are using EPIC. Classes with parents that sign up for EPIC will receive points that can be redeemed for free books and supplies. All grades are enrolled in the library account (Mrs. Caskey), but many classroom teachers are using the tool too! If you have questions, feel free to email Mrs. Caskey - caskeyd@billingsschools.org.

Books are to borrow

Just a reminder that library books can be returned at any time; students do not need to wait until library day. If you think your child has lost a book, please have them visit with me. If you have any questions about the book policy, please contact me at caskeyd@billingsschools.org.

Poly Drive Will Participate in the Hour of Code

We live in a world surrounded by technology and we know that whatever field our students choose to go into as adults, their ability to succeed will increasingly depend on understanding how technology works.

But only a tiny fraction of us are learning how technology works. Fewer than half of all schools teach computer science.

That's why our entire school is joining in on the largest learning event in history: The Hour of Code, during Computer Science Education Week (December 4-10). More than 100 million students worldwide have already tried an Hour of Code.

Our Hour of Code is making a statement that Poly Drive is ready to teach these foundational 21st-century skills. If you are interested in learning what we are doing for this event, you can visit polydrivelibrary.weebly.com/coding.html



MANNERS ARE A TRUE REFLECTION OF OUR CHARACTER...

Poly Drive Manners of the Month

December

- ✓ Arrive to school and appointments on time
- ✓ Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze
- ✓ Volunteer to help



SCHOOL CALENDAR

December

- 1 Report Cards Go Home
- 13 Butter Braid Delivery
- 20 Music Programs
- 25-Jan.2 No School

January

- 3 School Back in Session
- 9 PTA Meeting 6:15
- 15 PIR - NO SCHOOL
- 18 Pizza with the Principal 1:00 - RSVP
- 24 Blood Drive 2:00 Gym
- 26 Spirit Day



"Tis the season: Box Tops & Labels for Education

The holiday season is upon us, and many of us use products that contain BOX TOPS.

Please remember to clip the logos and send them to school. The more we collect, the more funding Poly Drive will receive! Thank you for your support of Poly Drive School.



BPS School Counselors



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.

Positive Communication with your Student

Positive communication is an essential part of all healthy relationships. It builds mutual respect, trust and connection while fostering your child's self-esteem. The parent/child relationship is one of the first ways that children learn what relationships look like. Therefore, when we set the standard for healthy, positive communication now, children can develop skills that will guide them to build healthy relationships throughout their whole life. Here are some guidelines for having positive and respectful communication with your child.

DO:

Actively listen to your child:

Oftentimes, we listen to respond rather than to understand. We want to quickly offer our advice, but by doing so we may be shutting down open lines of communication. Actively listening means that you listen attentively without interrupting. You seek to understand their words, emotions and the message that they are trying to get across. While actively listening, it is helpful to put away or turn off any distractions like phones or the television. Show that you are interested in what they are saying by using positive body language: nods, eye contact and an open posture can all be useful strategies. It can also be helpful to repeat in your own words what your child has said or to ask questions to be involved in the conversation.

Speak Respectfully:

Tone is as important as the words that we use. Speak in a positive and even tone while being aware of and managing your own emotions during conversations. It can be very frustrating when children don't seem to listen or when they behave in ways that we don't like, but speaking respectfully will encourage cooperation and a positive tone for your relationship and other relationships in your child's future.

Empathize:

Try to see things from your child's perspective. When we dismiss or reject our children's feelings, opinions, and ideas with "it's not that bad," or "there's no need to be upset," they can feel invalidated. That shuts down communication. Empathy not only helps us communicate our thoughts to others in a way that makes sense to them, but it allows our children to feel heard and understood.

Don't:

Lecture While Angry:

It's unlikely that you'll communicate effectively or that your child will take in much of what you are saying when you reach a certain point of frustration. Wait until you are calm and rational before confronting your child. Try saying, "We need to talk about this soon, but first, I need to calm down."

Criticize:

Rather than criticize, describe what needs to be done. Instead of "your room is always a mess," say "Your room should be cleaned by this afternoon." When you focus on what you want done in the future, rather than on what your child did wrong in the past, you're much more likely to have a positive outcome.

Use these guidelines for effective and positive communication. When you model these strategies, your children will also begin to use them. You are setting your student up for healthy and positive communication skills for life by modeling what healthy and constructive communication looks like.