

The *Polar Bear Express*

February 2018

**“Poly Drives Students
to Succeed”**



Poly Drive Elementary School

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Dear Poly Drive Families,

February is “I Love to Read” month but loving to read extends well beyond one month - it is a lifelong skill we want children to develop. We continue to foster the joy of reading at school with an extra emphasis this month.

Friday the 2nd we will support Jersey’s for Backpacks Day. Students are encouraged to wear a team jersey and donate \$1 to the backpack meal program for students in our district. This event is sponsored by the United Way and the Billings Education Foundation.

The 28th marks the end of the 2nd Trimester and means we are 2/3 through the school year - report cards will come out the following week. A reminder that report cards are standards based for math and reading, meaning that students will receive marks of Emerging, Nearing Proficient or Proficient based on their progressions through a series of specific skill sets. The goal is to have students reach proficiency on these skills by the end of the school year. If you have questions about the targeted standards or how evidence of learning is collected, I encourage you to contact your child’s teacher.

We have just completed our Winter Benchmark assessment of every student at Poly Drive and am happy to report we saw school wide growth in math and reading. This is a combined effort from home and school, so please continue to help your child by having them read or read to them every night. Practicing math by counting objects or reviewing facts at home is also a huge help to them. The less time students have to think about the basic computation, the more time they can focus on problem solving. Every child has an account with an online program called MobyMax that allows them to practice skills at home and some teachers have additional tools – if you would like login information, please contact the teacher.

Friday the 16th at 8:30 will be another session of Coffee with Croff. Items of interest might be district leadership change and the impact on Poly Drive, class placement processes and report card review, as well as anything else you would like to cover. Just call or email to let us know you are coming.

Sincerely,

Kevin Croff, Principal



KINDNESS & COMPASSION CLUB

The KC Club is continuing to meet weekly and are working on several upcoming events.

KC Club plans on taking over the school with "Share the Love", a Valentine's special event.



MANNERS ARE A TRUE REFLECTION OF OUR CHARACTER...

Poly Drive Manners of the Month

- √ Be proud of your accomplishments without bragging
- √ Follow adult instructions
- √ Put -downs to others are not acceptable
- √ Take responsibility for your actions

Please refrain from sending your child Valentine gifts to school. Save those special flowers, balloons, stuffed animals and such to be enjoyed at home.



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.



Lights! Camera! Action!

Poly Drive Talent Show to return to Lewis & Clark on Friday, March 2nd

Back by popular demand, Poly Drive Elementary PTA proudly invites you to the 2018 Talent Show! Please mark your calendars for **Friday, March 2nd** and plan to join our school community for this action-packed and beloved event. The evening will feature vocal, dance and instrumental performances by Poly students in all grades, along with a few surprises. Dessert Reception and Art Show immediately following.

Showtime is 6:00pm

Everyone is invited to audition! Please take note of these important dates:

- Tuesday, February 8th - Official Talent Show Audition Forms due to Mrs. Langeliers
- Thursday, Feb 15th - Talent Show auditions Day 1 @ 3:10pm in the library
- Friday, February 16th - Talent Show auditions Day 2 @ 3:10pm in the library

For more information, or if you are interested in joining the planning committee, please contact Ursula Richter at 818-599-2977 or ursrichter@gmail.com Angie Langeliers at 406-697-3445 langeliersa@billingsschools.org



SCHOOL CALENDAR

February

- 2 Wear your favorite jersey for a \$1.00 donation to the backpack meals program
- 8 Talent Show Audition Forms Due
- 9-12 NO SCHOOL
- 13 PTA Meeting 3:15
- 15-16 Talent Show Auditions
- 16 Coffee with Croff 8:30
- 23 Spirit Day- wear Poly gear
- 28 End of 2nd Trimester

March

- 2 Talent Show 6pm L&C
- 7 Class Picture Day
- 9 Report Cards Go Home
- 11 Daylight Saving Time Begins
Set clocks forward 1 hour
- 13 PTA Meeting 6:15
- 23 PTA March Madness
- 29 Snow Day to make up or Vacation Day?
- 30 NO SCHOOL – Vacation Day

ZING! Look for the bright green Poly Connection PTA Newsletter in next week's Wed. Watch



FEBRUARY is filled with activities for our kids!

- 👉 Poly Readers (Tuesdays in Feb)
- 👉 Talent Show Auditions - form due Feb. 8/ Auditions Feb. 15 & 16
- 👉 LEARN MORE about the Igloo Membership Drive, Talent Show and March Madness

Let's stay connected! Find us on:

facebook.com/polydrivepta

text @polypta
to 81010

www.polydrivepta.com



LIBRARY NEWS

By Mrs. Caskey

EPIC! Unlimited Reading & Learning

Studies show that kids who read at home do significantly better academically during the school year and beyond . **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. We use Epic at Poly in grades K-5 in the library and in classrooms. Educators can create free accounts for students to use while at school. This is possible because Epic has an incentive program for home use.

Epic! is offering an exclusive 25% OFF discount to families in our school, available for a limited time only when you sign up at www.getepic.com/teacheroffer. You'll be given a FREE 30-day trial and instant, unlimited access to the Epic! library. If you decide to continue using Epic! after 30 days, the exclusive teacher offer price is \$5.99 per month (a 25%

discount from the regular price of \$7.99/ month). Sign up at www.getepic.com/teacheroffer to encourage your child's love of reading and learning, and get immediate access to 25,000 books, learning videos, quizzes and more!

Feel free to contact Mrs. Caskey if you have any questions!



February is I Love to Read Month

At Poly we will be doing different activities to share our love of reading. Here are some things you can do at home:

- Let your child see you read.
- Encourage your child to read on her own at home
- Keep a variety of reading materials in the house
- Make sure to have reading materials for enjoyment as well as for reference.
- Encourage your child to practice reading aloud
- Write short notes for your child to read

For more ideas to encourage your child to read, visit www.readingrockets.org/article/encouraging-your-child-read

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.

ENCOURAGING KINDNESS IN KIDS

Research suggests that children have a strong, perhaps innate, propensity for kind or altruistic behavior, which involves acting to promote someone else's welfare, even at a cost to oneself. However, research also suggests that there are particular ways kids can be encouraged—or discouraged—from acting on this propensity.

In particular, their penchant for kindness can be influenced by how adults praise or criticize them. Sometimes, even subtle actions and word choices by parents, teachers, and other adults can make a big difference. This practice offers specific techniques that can help nudge kids toward kindness and generosity, behaviors that are not only good for the people they help but for their own well-being, too: Studies have found that altruistic people tend to have better social relationships and experience greater happiness.

HOW TO DO IT

1. **Avoid using external rewards** to reinforce altruistic behavior. For instance, you may want to think twice before telling kids that they'll get a special treat if they share their toys, or promising them extra TV time if they help clean up after dinner. As tempting as it may be to reward kids when they do something kind, that approach can backfire: They may learn that kindness is only worth performing when they'll be given some kind of prize as a result. Instead, kids should get to experience the feeling that kindness is its own reward—a view backed up by neuroscience studies showing that pleasure centers of the brain light up when people behave altruistically.
2. **Praise character, not behavior.** Research suggests that children are more likely to make kindness a habit if they are praised for being kind people rather than just for doing something kind. For example, saying, "You're such a helpful person" may be more effective than saying, "That was such a helpful thing to do." Praising their character encourages children to see kindness as an essential part of who they are and seems to be especially effective around age eight, when children are forming their moral identities.
3. **But criticize behavior, not character.** In other words, it's OK to induce guilt but not shame. Children who feel guilt ("I did a bad thing") after wrongdoing are more likely to feel remorse and make amends than those who feel shame ("I am a bad person"). Criticizing a behavior conveys that it's possible for the child to change his or her behavior and make better choices in the future. Such criticism may be especially effective when it also includes positive affirmation (e.g., "You're a good person, and I know you can do better.")
4. **Model altruistic behavior.** Ultimately, actions speak louder than words when it comes to cultivating altruism. Research shows that when children witness adults behaving altruistically, they are more likely to behave altruistically themselves, regardless of what the adults say to them about the importance of altruism.

Strategies and ideas are from **Adam Grant, Ph.D.**