

The *Polar Bear Express*

March 2017

**“Poly Drives Students
to Succeed”**



Poly Drive Elementary School

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Dear Poly Drive Families,

After a long winter I think we are seeing signs of hope for a much-needed spring. March also signals the start of testing time for schools in Billings. Students in grades 3rd-6th will take the NWEA MAP test and the Smarter Balanced assessment. The MAP assessment is a norm-referenced test that is administered three times a year and allows us to measure a student's growth over a period of time. The Smarter Balanced assessment is in replacement of the state mandated MontCAS test and will be an excellent measure to compare our growth with about 40 other states. This assessment is more rigorous, is done on-line and has interactive features to it. It is important that all students are present for the assessments and they do their very best so we have an accurate picture of how we can drive instruction to meet the needs of our clientele. Here are some suggestions to help your child perform their best on any test:

- Be at school and on time
- Have a good breakfast each day of the testing.
- Get plenty of rest during the testing period.
- Remind them that taking tests is a part of life. We take tests to get into college, get jobs, obtain driver's licenses, hunter safety classes, etc.
- Encourage your child to do their best. We want the tests to reflect their true potential.

As you may recall, passage of the technology levy several years ago and support from the PTA allowed us to purchase a variety of technology related items for students to access. Due to that support, next year each student will have an iPad or Chromebook assigned to them to use for instruction, assessment, enrichment and as a general tool within the classroom. Thanks to our PTA, parents and community we will be one of the only schools with a 1 device to 1 student adoption in all of Billings Public Schools.

We have noticed a larger number of vehicles coming into the parking lot to drop off students in the mornings. The reason we discourage this is that it is a narrow area and we have had several near misses with vehicles and people. Now that it is warming up, please drop your kiddo off on Poly and have them use the sidewalk to get down to the school. Students should go directly to the playground for morning walk.

We will do Coffee with Croff on March 23rd this month. I have already had some requests to discuss possible grade configurations for next year, questions about the different assessments and upcoming district decisions. If you are interested in any of those items or have other questions/comments (or just want to have some coffee and treats), please RSVP me at croffk@billingsschools.org or call 281-6217 to set up your "reservation". Thanks again for letting us work with your children and be on the lookout for spring....it's coming...

Sincerely,
Kevin Croff, Principal

NO PEAK OR KC CLUB MARCH 27-31



By Mrs. Reas

The next PEAK sport is track starting the first week in March.

Friday mornings from **8:00 – 8:15** 2nd – 6th graders can participate in Fitness Club. **Meet outside at door #3.**



LIBRARY NEWS

By Mrs. Caskey

March 2nd is Read Across America Day!

To celebrate, Poly Drive will have two authors visiting our school! Gary Robson (Who Pooped in the Park) and Precious McKenzie (Rourke World Adventure Chapter Books) will be doing a read aloud of one of their books for 2nd and 3rd graders.

On a side note, please remember books are checked out for 1 week. If you see a Poly library book around the house, please have your child return it.



STUDENT NEWS

By 2nd Grader McKenna

Have you been wondering what the kids have been doing in Project Lead The Way? Well, let me tell you... In kindergarten, Mrs. Whittmeyers class, Ryan has been learning about pushing and pulling. His favorite part is to write all the facts and opinions down on paper. In Mrs. Blakesley's class, Poppy has been learning about the planets. Her favorite part is coloring how you would explain it. In 3rd grade, Mrs. DelCamp's class, Abbi has been learning how to make paper airplanes and her favorite part is building them. In 4th grade, Mrs. Robinson's class, Leela has been learning how to transport one thing to another place. In Mrs. Bauer's 5th grade class, Caleb has been learning about how to build robots and his favorite part is programing them. **THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!**



SCHOOL CALENDAR

March

- 6 Class Picture Day
- 12 Daylight Saving Time
Set clocks forward 1 hour
- 23 Coffee with Croff,
8:30 - RSVP
- 21 Music Program
5th grade – 2:00
6th grade – 2:30
- 24 3rd Quarter Ends
- 31 Report Cards go home
- 31 PTA March Madness

April

- 3 NO SCHOOL (PIR day)
- 11 PTA Meeting 3:15
- 12 Early Out 12:00
- 13-17 Vacation Days
- 21 Coffee with Croff,
8:30 RSVP
- 28 Spirit Day-Wear your
Poly Drive shirt.

LUNCH ACCOUNTS

Did you know you can check your child's lunch account balance online? Go to billingssschools.org, click on PARENTS tab, choose MealTime Online. From there create a profile with your login information. You will need your student's ID number. If you don't know it, you may call the office and Ms. Vicki will give it to you.

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.

Keeping Your Children Safe Online

Dr. Michele Borba is the parenting expert on NBC's "Today" show. Her interview in Excellence & Ethics newsletter included valuable advice for parents to keep children safe online.

Dr. Borba suggests specific rules and guidelines for parents that she calls her "6 P's of Internet Safety":

- 1. Parental Presence:** A parent will check your online activity.
- 2. Public:** The computer is public; anyone and everybody can see what you write. You are representing yourself and our family online by where you go and what you say. Your password and accounts will be public to your parents, and we will monitor your online presence together.
- 3. Posts:** There are no "take-backs," so don't click unless you want the world—including Grandma—to see your post.
- 4. Privacy:** Insist that your children not share personal information such as their real name, address, phone number, or passwords with people they meet online. Encourage kids to keep their passwords secret—even from friends. Don't store passwords in your backpack, wallet, or on a file in your computer. Criminals look there first. Never provide your password over e-mail.
- 5. People:** NEVER physically meet anyone offline that you've met online. In real life, people may be very different from what they seem like online.
- 6. Please tell:** If you ever feel uncomfortable about something online, please tell me.

Parents can hold kids accountable to their family's Internet rules with the following expectations:

- * **Have kids sign a pledge** to follow the rules. Have frequent chats to follow up. (SAFEKIDS.com offers a contract for younger kids [here](#).)
- * **Daily Internet time limits.** Give Internet freedom based on your child's past trustworthiness and age. Increase those limits slowly as you verify trust.
- * **"Walk-By" Rule.** Announce that if at any time your child covers the screen, closes programs, or quickly turns off the device, Internet privilege is lost. Do walk-bys as often as needed.
- * **"Collect and Drop."** Have your children drop their devices into a designated basket each night. Review personal posts, texts, or emails periodically—reading only enough so your child knows you're checking often and that you will limit or remove online privileges if warranted.

From Excellence & Ethics newsletter