

RHMS WEEKLY NEWS



December 11, 2020

Dear Rose Hill Middle School Families,

This week I would like to talk about **Connection**. One of the big challenges we faced last spring when we transitioned to remote instruction was maintaining existing relationships we had with students who we already knew well through in-person learning and keeping them connected to school. This year, the challenge was even greater because we had to establish and build relationships with students remotely from the start without the benefit of more than a semester of time together in the building. Our teachers have worked really hard and intentionally to build community and welcoming and inclusive classroom cultures by providing ongoing opportunities for students to get to know each other and to collaborate in small groups while engaging in learning. In addition, Pride Time on Monday and Advisory on Thursday provide extended time with their 1st period classes for students to connect with each other and the school.

In mid-October, we began our **Student Connection groups** during Tuesday's Pride Time. Each month, students sign up for a Student Connection group from a list of over 40 options. Every teacher, administrator, and counselor, as well as several of our school support staff are the "adults in the room" in one of 56 different groups (due to interest there are multiple groups of some topics) representing a wide variety of interests and affinities where students can connect with each other in a social environment. We know that positive social interaction is an important part of a student's school experience. It also fulfills a

basic human need. During in-person instruction this occurs before and after school, through sports and clubs, on the school bus, in the halls during passing periods, during lunch time, and in classrooms. In the remote learning environment, there is an obvious void that these Student Connection groups are designed to address, even if it is only for 45 minutes a week. I look forward every Tuesday morning between 10:10-10:55 to joining my group of passionate and knowledgeable football fans as we talk about the NFL and College games from the previous weekend, often celebrating a Seahawk win or sometimes lamenting a Seahawk loss. I have heard from many staff and students that Student Connection groups have become a valued part of their week during remote learning. We plan on continuing something similar when we eventually return to in-person instruction.

Next week will be our first **Virtual Spirit Week**. During the first period of the day on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday teachers will be asking all their students who are participating to turn on their cameras to capture their class's spirit. The top two classes with the most spirit will be invited to a "live event" in January 2021. Spirit Weeks are a fun way for students to connect with each other and the larger school. Please encourage your student to "dress up" for each of the different days:

- Monday-Mustache/Beard Day,
- Tuesday-Crazy Hair/Hat Day,
- Thursday-Crazy Cup/Silly Straw Day,
- Friday-PJ's (Comfy) Day.

The last thing I want to talk about is **cameras**. We are not requiring students to turn on their cameras. I know there are many reasons why students are not turning on their cameras during remote learning. In some cases, it is because of the effect the use of video has on limited internet bandwidth, and in others there might be a lot going on in the background that the student would rather not share with the whole class, especially if they are not able to blur their background. However, for a large number of students, they are choosing not to turn on their cameras because they are shy, there is a degree of discomfort, or in some cases, they'd just rather not. During in-person instruction we ask students to step outside their comfort zone all the time. If given the choice, most students would rather not come up to the board to work a problem, stand

in front of the class to give an oral presentation, or answer a question when randomly called on by the teacher to share. Helping students learn how to cope with this discomfort and develop skills that will enable them do this is part of helping them grow. The ability to see their classmates is an important way of connecting with each other. From the academic side of things, the teacher can glean a lot of information about student engagement and their learning from being able to see their students. Has the student logged in to the class meeting and then walked away from their computer? Do they have a puzzled look on their face that would tell the teacher that they might have a question that they are reluctant to ask? Are they following along with the class activity or do they appear to be doing something different? Many students when asked by their teacher why they don't turn on their cameras say they would do it more often if more of their classmates did too. In other words, it might take a critical mass of students to lead to a domino effect where it becomes the norm. Again, we will not require students to turn on their cameras but would appreciate you encouraging your student to do so. I know just from my Student Connection group, that I am much more able to connect with the students whose faces I can see than those who I only know by their avatar.

Warmest Regards,

Joe Gorder
Principal

Coffee with the Principal

I'd like to invite you to join me via MS Teams on Monday morning, December 14th, from 9:00AM-10:00AM for an opportunity for us to meet and for you to ask questions and share successes and challenges your student is having during remote learning. If we were in person, I'd get the Keurig up and running, but since we will be remote, you'll have to provide your own coffee or tea. You can access the meeting at the following link. I look forward to meeting with you. In the future I will change up the times (afternoon and evening) and day of the week to accommodate conflicts that some of you might have with a Monday

morning meeting.

Join on your computer or mobile app [Click here to join the meeting](#) on Monday at 9:00AM.

Advisory This Week

In this week's advisory students looked at helping. Specifically, the best ways to help people in challenging situations. You can support your students by letting them know the best ways to help you and strategies you have learned regarding how to help people.

Next week's Advisory topic is Gratitude.

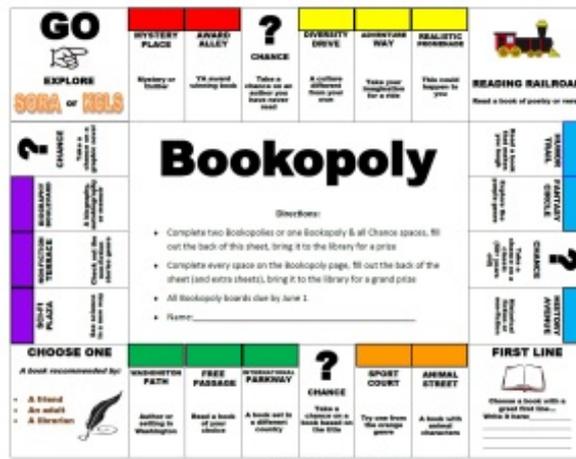
Library News

eBooks!

RHMS/SSMS students can access eBooks through Sora! The eBook app for LWSD students. Students can access Sora through the [Sora link](#) or from their Library Teams page, and use their school credentials to log in.

Bookopoly

Bookopoly is an exciting year-long reading challenge all students can participate in. Bookopoly boards can be found on the Library Teams site and on the [RHMS Library webpage](#).



Is your family traveling soon?

Does your family have upcoming travel plans? Remember to let us know ahead of time if you plan to have your student miss school. Mr Bauman, our attendance specialist, can be reached by phone at 425-936-2461 or by email at rosehillmsattend@lwsd.org .

Absent students are still expected to complete any missed assignments when they return. Teachers are not expected to provide assignments ahead of time. Students who have an excused absence are given two days for every one day they are out to make up for missing work.

PTSA News

PTSA Holiday Donation Drive ends TONIGHT!

There's still time to donate to the PTSA Holiday Donation Drive in support of RHMS families who are experiencing financial hardship. Just [visit our website](#) and click on "Donate" tonight to make your donation. RHMS PTSA is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit so all donations to our organization are tax-deductible and qualify for employer-matching. If you have any questions, please [email PTSA](#)

President, Yumna Green.

Staff Appreciation Slideshow pics due on Monday!

PTSA is planning a 2nd Staff Appreciation slideshow - this time the theme will revolve around traditions, festivals and holidays that are important to our families (for example, Thanksgiving, Diwali, Hanukkah, Christmas, etc.) Students can submit pictures of themselves with either physical (posters) or digital messages of thanks for our amazing RHMS staff. Pictures that are emailed to president@rhmsptsa.org before December 14th will be included in the slideshow. Thank you.

RHMS PTSA Online Resources

RHMS PTSA launched a Facebook page this year! [Follow Us on Facebook](#). [Visit the RHMS PTSA website](#) to find links to resources, articles, and events. Questions about RHMS PTSA? Please email our [PTSA President, Yumna Green](#).

Calendar

Upcoming Events

Dec 11 - [Choice School applications](#) due by 4 pm

Dec 16 - Curbside Book Pick-Up, 3-4 pm

Dec 21-Jan 1 - NO SCHOOL: Winter Break

Jan 01 - Happy New Year 2021!

Jan 04 - School resumes after Winter Break

Jan 08 - Order books by 9 am for Dec 13 Pick-Up

Jan 13 - Curbside Book Pick-Up, 3-4 pm

Jan 18 - NO SCHOOL - MLK Jr Day

Jan 22 - Last day of first semester

Rose Hill Middle School

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Attendance Hotline:

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