

THE MORNING STAR

<http://ms.bsd7.org/>

Principal's Place

Thank you to the 279 parents who completed the Parent School Engagement Survey, providing us with important insights about Morning Star's environment & parent involvement. As many of you know, we are modifying some of our practices as a result of our involvement in Project REAL (Responsive Education for All Learners). REAL brings together the ideals of MBI (Montana Behavior Initiative) & the processes of RtI (Response to Intervention) into one system referred to as MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support). MTSS supports student's social, emotional and academic growth by acknowledging the connections between behavior & learning. Our PLAY recess program along with careful behavior monitoring/data collection & strategies such as Olweus class meetings are all part of our on-going work to effectively support student learning in a safe environment.

In addition, implementation of the new Montana Standards for English Language Arts, Math & College/Career Readiness is resulting in shifts at school & at home as teachers no longer rely upon textbooks as a primary resource. One of the comments shared in the Engagement Survey is a need for greater understanding of instruction & resources to support parents' work with their children at home. Last spring we held a parent night to help with the transition to our new standards & we are working to schedule a similar event in the next few weeks. In the meantime, there are a few websites on page 3 that provide tips on how to help your child at home.

(cont'd on page 4)

We are Morning STARS



We **S**olve problems in a respectful manner by attempting to work it out, getting adult help & reporting concerns.



We **T**ake responsibility for our behavior by following directions, being prepared & caring for equipment & materials.



We **A**ct safely to ensure all students may move through the hallways & participate in activities appropriately.



We show **R**espect for ourselves and others by actively listening, using appropriate language, waiting patiently & using good manners.

Handbook Highlights Respect

→To prevent hurt feelings & awkward situations, we ask that you mail party invitations to children your child wishes to invite to his/her party rather than sending them to school. We appreciate your sensitivity & cooperation in finding other avenues for delivery of invitations.

See Student Handbook p 13

Spotlight on Third Grade

In each newsletter a grade level or content area and some of the innovative, creative ways they are engaging your children in learning will be featured. This week I'd like to highlight 3rd grade & their study of equivalent fractions. Using pattern blocks & other manipulatives students have been playing "I have, who has," "the silent game" & making tangrams that are equivalent. This kind of skill application creates meaning & a deep level of understanding. Third grade is extending their math application into art with recent projects such as grid art depicting Chief Dull Knife (Morning Star) & Geo Clings. Our third graders are also learning to use a variety of tools on the computer & as we prepare for the upcoming Smarter Balanced state assessment they practice several times a week. Among the many materials and strategies being used to teach math are Georgia units, Rocket Math, number talks, Marilyn Burns' Math Solutions, Brain Pop, and Kidspiration; each provides an opportunity to develop & use emerging skills in a meaningful manner. What kind of in-class activities are your child's favorite?

FEATURED EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Morning Star Bike Safety Week

During the week of May 5-7 students will learn how to maintain their own bikes & interact with people from local bike shops. Students & families will learn to check tire pressure, change a flat, oil the chain, seat adjustment, parts of the bike, bike signals & riding techniques for dirt trails. This week is being planned as part of Screen Free week & National Bike to School Day on May 7. Events will take place from 3:45-4:45 each day & families are encouraged to attend.

We need volunteers to help guide students through different learning stations each day as well as help lead our Fun Ride on Friday, May 9.

Please sign up for one or more 45 minute time slots. Thank you for your time – if you have questions contact Robin Arnold, Jamie Gowdy, Barbie Huber or Lorrie Maffey. <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4DA4A72EA0FC1-bike>

Intent to Return Forms due Monday, March 31

Intent to Return Forms were sent home March 28 for students in Grade K-4. If you aren't sure of your attendance area school, please call the Enrollment Office at 522-6005. Please look over the form closely, make your selection and return the Intent to Return Form to your child's teacher on Monday, March 31, 2014.

Morning Star Book Fair

Tuesday, April 8 from 12:00 – 4:00 pm

Wednesday, April 9 from 8:00 – 4:00 pm

Thursday, April 10 from 8:00 – 4:00 pm

SPRING MUSICALS ARE ALMOST HERE!

All events will be held April 21-29 in the music room. A reminder: NO BEVERAGES ARE ALLOWED IN THE MUSIC ROOM DURING PERFORMANCES - thank you! Questions about your child's performance, see classroom newsletters or contact Mrs. Reynolds at 522-6522!



M ★ Fit Kids

Four days a week before school even starts nearly 30 Morning Star 3rd, 4th and 5th graders arrive to start their day with some heavy duty exercise and a little bit of fun. Some love it so much they show up 15 minutes early to get a good solid 45-minute session of exercise before school begins. They work hard and get to end each session with a fun active game. Fit Kids Club has been made possible with a grant from Big Sky State Games. "I'm inspired by their dedication and watching them grown in their confidence. They are so fun to work with."
~Fitness Coach Dover.



Lessons from the Library - Favorite Author Report

Calendar of Events

April 4 No School for elementary schools

April 8 Thurs. April 10 – Book Fair

April 14-18 5th grade Smarter Balanced assessment

April 16 Early Release, 1:45 dismissal

April 21 – Walk/Wheel to School, Earth day flowers theme

April 21-25 4th grade Smarter Balanced assessment

April 25 End of 3rd Mid-Trimester

April 28-May 2 3rd grade Smarter Balanced assessment

May 2 Mid-Trimester Reports go home

May 5-9 Bike Safety Week

May 21 Early Release, 1:45 dismissal

May 26 No School – Memorial Day

June 11 Last day of School – All students dismissed @12:35



How to Help @ Home

This issue focuses on some online resources to support math at home. Since this is our first year using Montana core math standards, we are still learning which material best meets the needs of our students. As we become more comfortable with the standards, we will provide additional parent resources, including some for review and reinforcement at home. Thank you for your patience as we build our parent supports.

Engage New York Math Resources (4th grade, 5th grade)

http://www.engageny.org/sites/default/files/resource/attachments/parent_workshop_what_parents_can_do_handout.pdf

Georgia Math Resources (Kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade, 3rd grade)

<https://www.georgiastandards.org/Resources/Pages/Videos/VideosandPodcasts.aspx>

Number Talks (all grades)

<http://www.insidemathematics.org/index.php/classroom-video-visits/number-talks>

Various Resources to Support Montana Core Math Standards

<http://blog.wowzers.com/helping-your-students-parents-understand-the-common-core-math-standards>

<http://commoncore.scholastic.com/parents/basics/common-core-mathematics>

<http://nlvm.usu.edu/>

How much time should my child spend on homework?

How Much Is Appropriate?

The National PTA recommendations fall in line with general guidelines suggested by researcher Harris Cooper: 10-20 minutes per night in the first grade, and an additional 10 minutes per grade level thereafter (e.g., 20 minutes for second grade, 120 minutes for twelfth). High school students may sometimes do more, depending on what classes they take (see Review of Educational Research, 2006).

What are the benefits?

Homework usually falls into one of three categories: practice, preparation, or extension. The purpose usually varies by grade. Individualized assignments that tap into students' existing skills or interests can be motivating. At the elementary school level, homework can help students develop study skills and habits and can keep families informed about their child's learning. At the secondary school level, student homework is associated with greater academic achievement. (Review of Educational Research, 2006)

National Education Association (2013). "Research spotlight on homework." Retrieved from (<http://www.nea.org/tools/16938.htm>)

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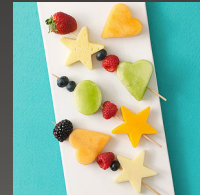
This week we hosted middle school and high school musicians during the "Music in our Schools" concert – we are so fortunate to have the opportunity for our students to be part of such an amazing musical community. Thank you to our middle school and high school musicians for sharing their expertise and enthusiasm.

Our 5th graders participated in the Ski P.E. program at Bridger Bowl. We observed many acts of inclusion, kindness and thoughtfulness from our students! A resounding THANK YOU to all parents and community members who chaperoned, making field trips like this a huge success!

Finally, **the last day to order yearbooks is April 7.** As our yearbook committee wraps up collecting photos and preparing the final draft, we'd like to thank them for their time and expertise. We appreciate all you do to produce a beautiful yearbook that represents the many activities in which our students participate. Way to go Jen Schultz, Mollie Pugh, Laura Merante, Kristin Hamburg, Kim Boyle, Ashley Mansfield, Laura Huggins, Barbie Huber, and Amy Stoddard!



PAC SNACK



Recipe

- 4 melon slices
 - 2 ounces reduced-fat cheese
 - 4 fresh blackberries
 - 4 whole fresh berries
1. Use 1- to 1-1/2-inch cookie cutters to cut shapes out of cantaloupe and honeydew slices and cheese. Thread fruit and cheese onto 4 small skewers. Place in a flat storage container and chill until serving time (or up to 24 hours). Serves 2.

Please contact us with changes to your child's after school plans, absences or other information

**Office phone:
522-6500**

**Reporting an absence or tardy? Please call the attendance line:
522-6510**

Morning Star PAC Corner



March 28, 2014

2014-2015 PAC Board Confirmed:

On March 20th the following nominees were confirmed to serve during the 2014-2015 school year.

Elected Positions:

Co President A	Gerri Lewis
Co-President B	Anne Gibson
Treasurer	Janet Yeomans
Secretary	Mandie Leipheimer
Enrichment Chair	Sasha Gavica

Appointed Positions:

Cultural Enrichment	Molly Pugh
Volunteer Coordinator	Erica Renslow
Fun Run Co Chairs	Kama Werner & Stacy Lundent
Communications Coordinator	Julianne Williams
Year Book	Laura Merante & Jen Schultz
Book Fair Liaison	Lori Faure
Science Fair	Dennis Jorgensen
Spirit Wear	Megan Decker & Jamie Perlinski
Ice Rink	James Irving & Tom Gibson
Holiday Program	PollyAnna Snyder & Kirsten Blunck
Box Tops	Kalina Vanderhoff
Bike/Walk to School	Barbie Huber & Lorrie Maffey

Volunteers Needed:

Participate in the all School Assembly on Friday, May 23rd. It promises to a great time!

Still looking for committee chair for the 2014-2015 School Year

Carnival Co-Chairs

Staff Appreciation Co-Chairs

Please contact Gerri Lewis for additional information at gerri.lewis@6l-inc.net.

Thank You!!

A BIG THANK YOU - Kathy Handelin, CPA for once again volunteering to complete and file PAC's 2013 tax documents and thank you in advance for volunteering your time again next year!

March 20th PAC meeting highlights...

Robin Arnold discussed a plan to make the school newsletter into a format that garnered more attention from our parent community. She is looking for feedback at the next PAC meeting about the new pumped up Morning Star.

Book Fair is coming up and both teacher and librarian wish lists strategies were discussed. There will be an online station set up in the book fair to allow for direct ordering of e-books for the Morning Star Library. Once the library owns the e-book, it can be checked out by more than one student vice the currently used subscription programs that only allow one student at a time access to e-books.

Rob Watson, BSD7 Superintendent presented the group with a District update on enrollment, projected growth and future facility needs. Currently, the district is considering adding space onto Sacagawea Middle School, as it is the smaller building of the two middle schools. New construction of a 3rd Middle School is unlikely due to the Bonding Capacity in our community and projected enrollment numbers suggest that enrollment numbers may not support a 3rd school in the long term. Most importantly they are working towards a 2nd High School as the student population is expected to exceed capacity by 2019-2020.

The work of the District Calendar Committee was also covered. The committee comprised of district administration, teachers and parents were working on the 2014-2015 calendar. It was presented to the Board and approved on Monday, March 25th and will be available shortly on the district website. The committee proposed several positive changes with students, teachers and parents in mind. Students are required to attend school 1080 hours a year. By requiring hours and not a certain number of days, this allowed for the school day to be adjusted by 10 minutes now 8:30am – 3:30pm. This change facilitated several things to include; a start date of September 2nd after Labor Day, the elimination of early release days, additional planning days for the teaching staff, a spring conference and PIR days strategically placed on a Monday or Friday.

Mark Your Calendars

4/8-4/10	Book Fair Dates
4/17	PAC Meeting
5/15	PAC meeting – Last for the year!