

Wilson District Newsletter

December 2022

A message from Mr. Rose

Happy Holidays to my Wilson School District Family and Friends. It is amazing how quickly the school year can go! It seems like yesterday that school started yet here we are in December already.

As we reflect on the semester it is important to highlight the many acts of KINDNESS that has been shown by all stakeholders. I take comfort in visiting our campuses and witnessing our caring adults and scholars exhibiting random acts of kindness to ensure that we have safe environments that are conducive for learning. The month of December will be filled with celebrations and opportunities to appreciate one another, please cherish each moment. During this holiday season, celebrate every moment you have with loved ones. Hug them, breathe in their spirit. Let everyone know beyond any shadow of a doubt, "I love you; you are a gift to me."

The winter break gives us an opportunity to reflect, extend a kind hand, re-center on our values and connect around those many things we have in common. Here at Wilson, we are continuing to "Capture Hearts and Change Minds," This can be observed daily on each of our campuses.



Wilson Primary School

This time of the year brings lots of joy and excitement around. Here at Wilson, we are especially excited for the wonderful holiday party that is planned on the last day of school before we go on break. Every year for multiple decades, we have had this wonderful tradition where each classroom is sponsored by one of the community organizations and companies for the holiday party. Each child writes a letter to Santa listing their wish list and, on this day, they receive gifts and clothes for the holiday season. The sight and sound of all the students opening their gifts at the same time is magical! The gasps, laughter, and squeals of enthusiasm are deafening. It is something that these students will cherish forever.

This amazing event would not have been possible without the kindness of our community leaders. We are extremely grateful for their generosity and dedication to ensure that each student's Santa letter wish is met and delivered. We are looking forward to another wonderful holiday party day to create another incredible memory.

We wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season.

Mrs. Wojcicki

Wilson Elementary School

As we begin December, I look back to think how quickly this school year has gone so far. Throughout these first few months, in my role as principal, I would like to express an abundance of gratitude. I thank each and every one of you for your understanding, patience, and support. I truly sincerely connected the wonderful families and community that we have at WES.

As the holiday season approaches, please give your child the gift of extra time. Put an I.O.U. for a special event or activity in their stocking. When students are asked to write about a memorable event in their lives, it isn't a special gift they usually choose to write about, but a particular experience they have had with someone special.

This is a great time to review the first part of the year and make plans for the next. Looking at your child's school attendance should be part of this important process.

Did your child attend school every day unless they were sick or there was a family emergency?

- If so, congratulations! Let them know you're proud of their strong attendance. Help them keep up the good work for the rest of the year and beyond. Strong attendance is one predictor of success in school.
- If not:
- Remind your child that regular school attendance is a priority.
- Emphasize the need for rest, nutrition, and exercise to stay healthy and stay in school.
- Consider the reasons you take your child out of school. Can you make some appointments outside school hours?

We have many exciting activities happening around WES. Our PBIS Store is now open weekly. Winter sports, basketball, football, and cheer are in full swing. Please see our website for dates and times of games.

Important Dates:

- Santa Pictures – December 5th
- Quarter 2 Benchmarks December 7th – December 19th
- Winter Concert – December 7th
- Coco, Kids, and Community (Hot Chocolate and sweet treats with the Principal) – December 19th
- Classroom Holiday Celebration – December 23rd
- Winter Break – December 26 – January 6th
- In-Service No School for Students – January 9th
- Classes Resume – January 10th

In conclusion, I hope that each one of you have a safe and joyful holiday season and take time to enjoy your family.

Happy Holidays, Blessings, and Best Wishes,
Capturing Hearts and Changing Minds

Demetra Baxter-Oliver, PhD

Community Center

Wilson Community Center wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year!

We thank all of our wonderful sponsors who make the Wilson Holiday program a huge success and for their kindness! Without their support towards our community, our events and programs could not be possible. We look forward to a new year filled with new programs and events.

[**Community Center Website**](#)

[**Community Center Facebook Page**](#)

WINTER BREAK

DECEMBER 26TH-JANUARY 9TH



Human Resources

The Power of Kindness at Work

By Ovul Sezer, Kelly Naully and Nadav Klein May 12, 2021

Everybody wants to be happy. But how can we meet that sometimes elusive goal? This was a difficult question even before the global pandemic, but nowadays just thinking about it can seem futile. Parents are trying to balance the demands of remote work and online schooling; people who live alone try to keep their focus in isolation. When life is measured by back-to-back Zoom meetings, even taking a shower can seem like a win.

The transformation of the workplace into scheduled online meetings has led to another source of deprivation: The removal of serendipitous encounters. For many people, hearing a colleague say, "Thank you so much" in the hallway, or a manager telling you "Great job" after a presentation, were a highlight of office life. Now these seem like traditions from another lifetime. Without water cooler interactions, casual lunches and coffee breaks with colleagues, we don't have the same opportunities for social connection as before. Without them, it can be much harder to find joy in our work. So what can we do about it?

We offer a humble suggestion: Kindness. This past year, most management advice has focused on how to sustain productivity during the pandemic, yet the power of kindness has been largely overlooked. Practicing kindness by giving compliments and recognition has the power to transform our remote workplace.

The Benefits of Kindness

A commitment to be kind can bring many important benefits. First, and perhaps most obviously, practicing kindness will be immensely helpful to our colleagues. Being recognized at work helps reduce employee burnout and absenteeism and improves employee well-being, [Gallup finds](#) year after year in its surveys of U.S. workers. Receiving a compliment, words of recognition and praise can help individuals feel more fulfilled, boost their self-esteem, improve their self-evaluations and trigger positive emotions, [decades of research have shown](#). These positive downstream consequences of compliments make intuitive sense: Praise aligns with our naturally positive view of ourselves, confirming our self-worth.

Second, practicing kindness helps life feel more meaningful. For example, spending money on others and volunteering our time improves wellbeing, bringing happiness and a sense of meaning to life. Being kind brings a sense of meaning because it involves investing in something bigger than ourselves. It shapes both how others perceive us – which improves our reputation – and how we view ourselves. We draw inferences about who we are by observing our own behavior, and our acts of kindness make us believe that we have what it takes to be a good person. In the remote workplace, where cultivating moments of joy is difficult, this may be a particularly important benefit that translates into long-term job satisfaction.

Third, as we found in a new set of studies, giving compliments can make us even happier than receiving them. We paired up participants and asked them to write about themselves and then talk about themselves with each other. Next, we asked one of them to give an honest compliment about something they liked or respected about the other participant after listening to them. Consistently, we found that giving compliments actually made people happier than receiving them. Surprisingly, though, people were largely unaware of the hedonic benefits of being kind.

Why does giving compliments boost our happiness to such a degree? A key ingredient of wellbeing that we've sorely lacked during the pandemic plays a role: social connection. In our studies, we found that giving compliments engendered a stronger social connection than receiving compliments because giving them encouraged people to focus on the other person. Sure, receiving a compliment feels great, but making a thoughtful, genuine compliment requires us to think about someone else – their mental state, behavior, personality, thoughts and feelings. Thinking about other people is often a precondition to feeling connected to them. In this way, compliments can become a social glue, enhancing connections and positivity in relationships and making us happier.

Nonetheless, people are often hesitant to give compliments. Why? The idea of approaching someone and saying something nice can trigger social anxiety and discomfort, [recent research](#) by Erica Boothby and Vanesa Bohns shows. For this reason, we assume people will feel uncomfortable and be bothered by receiving a compliment, when the opposite is true. In addition to these psychological barriers, working remotely has added more structural barriers to random acts of kindness, compliments and recognition. Before the pandemic, organizations often recognized employees through formal programs, while serendipitous encounters could easily generate a simple thank you or words of praise. By contrast, today's Zoom meetings tend to follow strict agendas that leave no room for any other topic, let alone compliments.

Organizations benefit from actively fostering kindness. In workplaces where acts of kindness become the norm, the spillover effects can multiply fast. When people receive an act of kindness, they pay it back, research shows – and not just to the same person, but often to someone entirely new. This leads to a culture of generosity in an organization. In a [landmark study](#), analyzing more than 3,500 business units with more than 50,000 individuals, researchers found that acts of courtesy, helping and praise were related to core goals of organizations. Higher rates of these behaviors were predictive of productivity, efficiency and lower turnover

rates. When leaders and employees act kindly towards each other, they facilitate a culture of collaboration and innovation.

Bringing Kindness to Work

How can leaders promote kindness in the remote workplace? First, they can lead by example. People are naturally sensitive to the behaviors of high-status team members. By giving compliments and praising their employees, leaders are likely to motivate team members to copy their behavior and create norms of kindness in teams.

Second, leaders can set aside time during Zoom meetings for a "kindness round" in which team members are free to acknowledge each other's work. This need not take much time – even a few minutes a week will suffice. But these few minutes can boost morale and social connection, especially when months-long projects are mostly completed over Zoom.

Third, consider small spot bonuses. Companies such as Google have used "peer bonus" systems to encourage employees to send small amounts of money (from a fund in the organization) to each other to show appreciation for particularly effective work. Even a few dollars could have a positive effect; research finds that people appreciate small acts of kindness as much as large ones. A gift card or a small gift sent through the mail might work just as well. Simply knowing that one is appreciated can trigger the psychological benefits of kindness without costing the organization substantial sums.

The power of kindness can mitigate the ill effects of our increasingly online social world. It is an essential leadership skill that can cascade through people, changing the culture of the workplace along the way.

Business Services

It's December! Can you believe it?

Like the Elves in Santa's Workshop, the Business Services Group has continued to work on your behalf. The Tech Department has been running a marathon of 12+ hour days – working to image and inventory new laptops for the Primary school to use. Randy and Chelsea, Thank you, both of you! Truly!

Over Winter Break, Roy's crew of elves (LOL!) will be hard at work to complete projects that can only be done when school's out. (By the way, Quick shout out to Michael – word gets around! Thank you for your attention to detail with your cleaning over at the primary – we've heard good things! Thank you!!)

The Food Service crew – wow! What a great Thanksgiving dinner they provided to the students and the staff. Thank you! Did you know?

Yvette has been working non-stop to collect as many Free and Reduced Lunch applications as the families will turn in. We are getting closer. If you and your family have not yet turned in a Free and Reduced Lunch application – please do so before winter break!

The Finance Dept is working away. Anthony has been slaving over the federal programs – learning them inside and out, finding funding here and there! Ken, our Budget Specialist, spends his days buried in the unending amount of data that must be tracked and reconciled, keeping up on changes in the law, or the budget, training people in the ways of purchasing... But when the Elementary School needed 109 certificates for the 4th and 5th grade recipients of the Principal List and Honor Roll awards, he jumped right in to help, created, and printed out certificates for Dr. Oliver. Thank you, Ken!! And to Alicia in Payroll and Brett in A/P – Thank you! It is not easy to make sense of the maze of Payroll and Benefits, or to put the puzzle pieces together in A/P.

Business Services – Thank you! You are a great bunch to work with, and goodness, you are hard workers!! Like George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life*, you may not always feel you make a difference, but you do, every day. Thank you!

Happy Holidays!

Catherine King

Child Find

Child Find, a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), enables states to locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth through 21, who need early intervention or special education services. Special education services are available for children of any age (birth through 21 years). Wilson School District is responsible for locating, identifying, evaluating, and serving all children with disabilities (ages 3-21) and referring children ages 0-3 to AzEIP for evaluation and appropriate services. AzEIP is the Arizona Early Intervention Program for infants and toddlers. Wilson provides free and appropriate public education that includes special education and related services to children at public expense, under public supervision and direction without charge to parents. For all school-age students who are new to the district, the classroom teacher will complete screening activities within 45 days of enrollment. If any concerns are noted, the child will be referred for help. Parents who have concerns regarding their child's education may contact the Special Education Department at Wilson, (602) 683-2400, ext. 4205.

McKinney-Vento

Are you currently experiencing temporary living arrangements due to eviction, job loss or a traumatic event? Wilson School District offers services to families through the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act. Services such as enrollment and immunization assistance, uniforms or school supplies, community referrals and in some cases, transportation can be available. Your family may qualify due to living with another family or friend due to financial hardship or living in a shelter, transitional housing, or motel. Please contact your school office or Mariana Melendrez at 602-683-2515, ext 6002 for more information about this program.



Wilson School District No. 7

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