



The Buzz



Be on the Lookout for Suspicious Emails

Have you been getting suspicious emails that look like they came from someone you know? Say Rich Murdock just emailed you, excited as can be for you to see this really cool video he found with a link that tells you to "Click Here to Watch!" Knowing Rich probably has some really cool videos, you are definitely tempted to click on it, but ask yourself first...is this typical behavior of Rich? Would he just randomly send out super cool videos that you just have to see? Probably not.

Pick up the phone and give Rich a call to verify it is legit BEFORE you click on the link. Although Rich probably does have some cool videos to share, chances are he is not going to send them out in a mass email! ...You would hate to miss a really cool video if it

was legit, but you certainly would not want to click on it without confirming or you may find you suddenly have strange pop-ups, a laggy computer, or no files at all! Not a good situation!

Staff Recognition

Myriah Becker led a meeting for a student who was not going to attend his home school district. It can be confusing when families choose a different district for preschool and then plan to enroll in another district for grade school outside their home district. Myriah did a fantastic job of explaining the plan to everyone while informing the home district simultaneously. I appreciate her professionalism and exceptional organizational skills.

-Mary Krause

I want to recognize Amy Mehl for her grace, enthusiasm and dedication to her work as an Assessment Specialist. She always has a smile. She offers time and patience with staff and parents when working on pressing matters of due process obligations. Her energy is vibrant. She shows she cares about the students, families and staff she works with by giving 110%.

-Kristina Harstad

***To give a shout-out to a Freshwater co-worker to recognize them for their efforts, email Eric Weber – eweber@fed.k12.mn.us**

Winter Travel



As we continue to navigate through the heart of Minnesota's winter, please take a moment to remind yourself of the unique challenges posed by this season, particularly concerning our daily commutes and safety on school premises.

1. Slippery Roads: Winter in Minnesota brings with it slippery roads. Please exercise caution while driving, especially in the early mornings and late afternoons when temperatures can cause roads to freeze over. Adjust your driving speed to match the road conditions and keep a safe distance from other vehicles.

2. Icy Parking Lots and Sidewalks: Our school parking lots and sidewalks can become icy and treacherous. Our maintenance team is working diligently to manage these areas,

but we urge you to be vigilant. Wear appropriate footwear for better traction and walk cautiously to avoid slips and falls.

3. Extra Travel Time: With the unpredictable weather patterns, it's wise to allocate extra time for your morning, midday, and evening commutes. This extra buffer will help you navigate safely through slower traffic and reduced visibility, ensuring you arrive at your destination without feeling rushed.

Your safety is our top priority. Let's all do our part in making this winter season a safe and enjoyable one. Stay warm and safe!

Vacation/Personal Leave

As we approach the spring season, I would like to remind everyone about the importance of early planning and approval for any vacation or personal leave you may be considering. It is crucial that you plan your leave as early as possible. This will not only help you secure your preferred dates but also allow us to manage staffing levels effectively, ensuring that our school's operations and the educational needs of our students are not compromised.

Approval from Supervisors:

All vacation or personal leave requests must be approved by your supervisor. Please discuss your plans with them and submit your leave request form well in advance. This ensures that we have adequate time to review staffing needs and make necessary arrangements.

Priority for Early Submissions:

Please be aware that in cases of conflicting leave requests, priority will be given to those who have submitted their requests first. This policy is in place to encourage early planning and to facilitate a fair and organized approach to leave scheduling.

Impact on School Operations:

Our primary objective is to maintain a high standard of education and care for our students. Balancing the personal needs of our staff with this goal is essential. Therefore, your cooperation in planning and communicating your leave requests early is greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your ongoing commitment to our school and students. Let's work together to ensure a smooth and effective operation this spring.



DID YOU KNOW?

**From our
Together
Improving Care
Team**

*Vision: A
compassionate
community that builds
relationships and
empowers individuals*

PRACTICING "THE GOLDEN RULE" IN ALL INTERACTIONS IS TRAUMA INFORMED

The Golden Rule is the principle of treating others as one would want to be treated by them.

In all of your daily interactions; whether they are with your clients, co-workers, family, or complete strangers, we want to practice the golden rule. This is especially true when working with someone in crisis or who has experienced trauma.

There are 5 key components of a trauma-informed program.

1. Safety – Physical and emotional
2. Trustworthiness – Prioritize trust and maintain appropriate boundaries
3. Choice – For the person in crisis
4. Collaboration – Work with, NOT against the other person
5. Empowerment – Prioritizing the individual's empowerment and skill building

These situations can be stressful for the individual as well as the person interacting with them. Try to remember to be flexible, be caring and gentle with stated expectations. PRACTICE THE GOLDEN RULE and use humor only when appropriate.

Information summarized from 2020 Ukera

"Why I Chose to Work in Education"

At the All-Staff Meeting, Special Education Director Jamie Wothe asked staff to share their reasons or "Why" for working in education. Below are some of the responses:

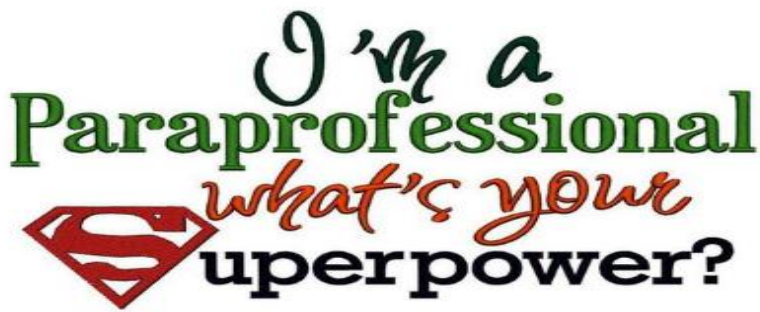
I went into education to work with children & families. In ECFE, I enjoy getting to also meet and work with parents and families.

My parents were teachers, so I grew up with teachers. Also, I loved babysitting and I was a wanted babysitter by many families in our neighborhood. I loved spending time with children, therefore, education here I come!

My third grade teacher was horrible and didn't treat the Special Ed kids in my class kindly and I wanted to change that.

Change to my life. Always have loved kids. Make a kid smile.

I believe it's in my blood! From an early age, played "teacher". I was always the teacher. Fast forward a decade or so... met my birth family. All in education. Meant to be! I love seeing the light "come on"! 😊



**Paraprofessional
Appreciation Week was
celebrated the week of
January 21-27**

Happy Paraprofessional Recognition Week! As an Occupational Therapist for Freshwater Education District, I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for all that you do for our students. Your dedication and hard work do not go unnoticed, and it truly makes a positive impact on the learning environment at your school.

In many ways, you are the superheroes of your school, going above and beyond to support and uplift students. Your unwavering commitment to their growth and well-being is nothing short of extraordinary. Whether it's providing extra assistance in the classroom, offering a comforting presence, or simply being a beacon of encouragement, your efforts are noticed.

As we navigate the challenges of education, your superhero qualities shine through, making a significant difference in the lives of students. Your superpower is the ability to make a lasting impact on the lives of your students, fostering an environment where they feel supported, valued, and capable of achieving their goals.

Once again, thank you for being an integral part of your school community and for embodying the spirit of your school.

Sincerely,

Bryan Winkels
Occupational Therapist



Terrie Aho	February 1 st
Miranda Sazama	February 1 st
Meghan Robertson	February 2 nd

Kylie Olson	February 4 th
Trent Becker	February 10 th
Lisa Wright	February 10 th
Marlo Benning	February 11 th
Margaret Grondahl	February 15 th
Jesse Ashbaugh	February 17 th
Kirstin Noska	February 18 th
Sam Tumberg	February 18 th
Matthew Parker	February 25 th
Kaitlin Spar	February 28 th