



The Buzz

As we step into March, let's embrace the promise of spring and the opportunities it brings for growth, learning, and community. Your dedication and hard work continue to inspire our students and each other. This month, we have several key events and reminders to keep us engaged and connected.

REMINDER:

The FED
Administration
Office will be closed
on March 29

Celebrate National Reading Month

March is National Reading Month, and we're excited to foster a love of reading across our school. Let's get involved in Read Across America Day on March 2nd (Dr. Seuss Day). Encourage your students to explore new worlds through books!

More information:

<https://www.nationaldaycalendar.com/national-day/national-read-across-america-day-dr-seuss-day-march-2-unless-weekend>

<https://www.seussville.com/educators/dr-seuss-birthday/>



Enjoy Your Spring Break

Spring Break is just around the corner! For most of you, currently, you will have off March 28, 29, and April 1st. The Business Office Staff and some others will only have March 29th off. We hope you find time to relax, recharge, and enjoy the break. You've earned it! (Please check with your supervisor if you don't know what days you have off.)

State Testing Approaches

As state testing nears, let's ensure our students are prepared and confident. Share your best test preparation strategies and stress reduction tips to support our students' success.

Technology needs

It's that time of the year to begin thinking about your technology needs for next year. Please get in touch with Rich or Erin so that they can get you scheduled. Please do NOT wait until August or September to mention your needs. You will then possibly need to wait a lot longer before they can get to you.

Snow and Ice

A huge THANK YOU to Josh for keeping our parking lots and sidewalks clean from snow and ice.

Job Postings

This is a busy time for Freshwater to be posting for jobs. Please help us out by sharing the postings with others. We generally post via email, our website, our Facebook page, newspaper ads, and EdPost.

Spring Forward - Daylight Savings Time

Remember to set your clocks **forward** one hour on Sunday, March 10th.



Staff Evaluations

Staff evaluations are currently happening. If you haven't been contacted by your supervisor yet, you will be shortly.

PLORD Hours

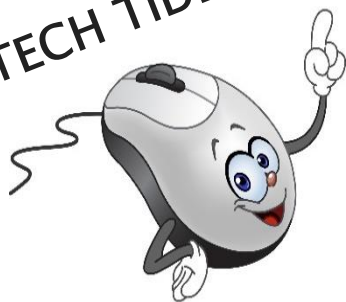
Teacher-Itinerant Staff: As a reminder, you are required to do 8 hours of Professional Local Options Research or Development (PLORD). This is part of the 181 duty days. Examples of PLORD include Professional Learning Communities, Curriculum Development, Learning Project Research, Curriculum Writing, Job Site Safety Training, parent/teacher meetings, etc... PLORD hours are to be conducted outside of normal workday hours. Teacher-Itinerants choice of PLORD needs to be reviewed and approved by Administration. This needs to be completed by June 30, 2024.

A Parting Thought

As March unfolds, let's continue to support each other and our students with the same passion and dedication that define Freshwater. Here's to a productive and fulfilling month ahead!

- Eric

TECH TIDBIT



Easily Transition to Google Drive

To help make transitioning to Google Drive for your storage a breeze, be sure to refer to the email that was sent out by Erin on how to install Google Drive for Desktop! The instructions can also be found [HERE](#)

Introducing the newly established MTSS Leadership Team for FED!

The purpose of this team is to lead the design and implementation of a Minnesota Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework at Freshwater. The team members include Erin Potter (Coordinator), Eric Weber, Jamie Wothe, Shawn McAllister, Kelsey Brakke, Sally Christenson, John Fox, Sheri McKeever, Meghan Robertson, Katie Smith, Melanie Walberg, and Lisa Wick.

Monthly meetings began in December and will continue through June. The team is participating in the MnMTSS State Cohort Training and will be completing a self-assessment of our implementation of MTSS that will help to guide action steps toward implementing the framework with fidelity. The team plans on eliciting feedback from staff periodically and will post updates in The Buzz regularly.

For more information go to: <https://education.mn.gov/mde/dse/mtss/>



Staff Recognition

Kim Thoennes has worked above in so many different settings from being our union president to the negotiation team and to her ECSE teaching job. She is such a team player with the itinerant and school staff and always incorporates my suggestions. She is in charge of many paraprofessionals and is in different classrooms and is able to keep it all together. A parent today, at a meeting, told her that she loves how she works with her daughter and doesn't want her to transition to kindergarten due to that reason.

- Missy Tabery

I was lucky to be part of a conversation with two parents. Talk turned to Freshwater, and how much I love my job. One parent didn't know much about the services Freshwater provides. The other parent spoke up. Her son has received services through Freshwater and she sang Corry Cook praises! She relayed a few stories, at least one that had both of the mothers in tears, about how amazing Corry is and the wonderful things she has done.

- Maureen Baymler

I want to spotlight Kim Becker, OT. Kim is dedicated, thoughtful, and she gives her services wholeheartedly. She brings a wealth of knowledge to her teams. She offers consultation and collaboration for individual students as well as the general population of the schools she serves. She pushes for excellence in the role of an Occupational Therapist: she attends meetings virtually and in-person (to support IEPs or child study teams). Kim offers consultation for many students with sensory, motor, and adaptive functioning needs. She is creative with solutions for students such as bringing in adaptive equipment to try out. She is always willing to jump in and support Freshwater's mission to increase and improve educational opportunities for all learners.

- Kristina Harstad

Maureen Baymler was fabulous! She was so wonderful with our little guy. He had one of his best days I heard. She is so good!

-Tara Dravis

I'd like to take a moment to recognize a colleague for going above and beyond consistently. Kristina Harstad is always willing to step up and take on leadership duties, research tough topics to find solutions in line with ethical codes and the legal statutes and be a listening ear. Most recently, she has organized efforts to help support colleagues going through difficulties to help them feel supported on a human level as well as communicating that their work is being covered and to focus on wellness. We are all busy, but Kristina prioritizes others and recognizes the importance of the human factor in the workplace.

- Erin Potter

I need to express how much I appreciate Mary Krause. She is a great home visitor and is driving all over the districts of Freshwater. I have had a few visits where I am the primary service provider and Mary is the ECSE teacher, but as a consultant. These visits have needed either an evaluation for Part B or a new IFSP plan. I have only recently been asked to do the paperwork for being the primary service provider and Mary has gone above and beyond to assist if not taken over the paperwork for me. I have loved working with Mary over the years and her warmth with the families is so genuine.

- Missy Tabery

I want to spotlight Lori Murdock as the Special Education Director Assistant. I appreciate her support in a member district. She supported the team with a calm and positive demeanor. She offered guidance and supported the team on the safety and wellness of staff and students. I am grateful to lean on her knowledge for policy and procedures. She demonstrated supporting Freshwater's mission to increase and improve educational opportunities for all learners. Thank you for giving me a space to share my gratitude and appreciation of the amazing co-workers from Freshwater Education District.

- 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**



DID YOU KNOW?

**From our
Together
Improving Care
Team**

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

If someone has only
experienced
CHAOS
they will resist
calm and safety

Normalization of Chaos: For individuals who have only experienced chaos, calm and safety may feel unfamiliar and uncomfortable. When chaos becomes the norm, individuals may develop coping mechanisms that are adaptive within chaotic environments but are maladaptive in environments characterized by calm and safety. The absence of chaos may be perceived as threatening because it disrupts the familiar patterns of behavior and coping strategies developed in response to chaos.

Hypervigilance and Sensory Overload: Individuals who have experienced trauma may develop hypervigilance, a state of heightened alertness and sensitivity to potential threats. In calm environments, this hypervigilance may lead to discomfort or anxiety because the absence of chaos can create a sense of vulnerability. Additionally, individuals who have experienced trauma may have heightened sensitivity to sensory stimuli, and calm environments may feel overwhelming due to sensory overload

**WE WISH
YOU ALL A
VERY
HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

Kathy Salo	March 1 st
Jenna Storry	March 1 st
Aimee Keller	March 2 nd
Kristen Bouwman	March 6 th
Alyssa Rieland	March 10 th
Whitney Wegscheid	March 10 th
Aaron Lorentz	March 11 th
Kayla Kneisl	March 12 th
Sheri McKeever	March 12 th
Jody Fischer	March 13 th
Emily Warner	March 19 th
Lisa Hubbard	March 20 th
Missy Becker	March 25 th



How much “Nature” should we be getting?

Challenge Yourself this Month to see how much time you can spend outdoors. Use the guide below to see what the recommended doses of nature are.



THE SHIFT RX CHALLENGE

TAKE YOUR DOCTOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OUTSIDE



ANNUALLY/BI-ANNUALLY

LOCATION: Wilderness – No urban intrusion
DOSE: Multi-day excursion

MONTHLY

LOCATION: “Restful” natural areas (e.g. national parks, lakes, rivers) with minimal urban intrusion
DOSE: One weekend per month

WEEKLY

LOCATION: bigger/wilder city, state, regional parks and waterways with less urban intrusion
DOSE: Two hours per week

DAILY

LOCATION: Nearby nature (e.g. outside in daylight with fresh air gardens, neighborhood parks, fountains, urban wildlife)
DOSE: 30 minutes per day

RECOMMENDED “DOSES” OF NATURE

Should be taken in conjunction with The U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services’ Recommendation for Physical Activity.

At least 30 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity at least 5 days per week for a total of 150 minutes outside in nature.

OR

At least 25 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity outside at least 3 days per week for a total of 75 minutes outside in nature.

OR

A combination of moderate and vigorous intensity aerobic activity outside in nature.

PLUS

Moderate to high intensity muscle strengthening activity at least 2 days per week outside in nature for additional health benefits.

Nature Exposure Pyramid

Other information/challenges:

- Take the 1000 Hours Outside Challenge! <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/1000-hours-outside/id1568551599> (There is a \$3.99 fee for this App)
- Listen to the Podcast “Our Better Nature: How the Great Outdoors Can Improve Your Life”. <https://www.npr.org/2018/09/10/646413667/our-better-nature-how-the-great-outdoors-can-improve-your-life>
- Enhance your Gut Health with Forest Bathing: <https://memnutritionwellness.com/forest-bathing-and-gut-health/>

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:

Make a positive impact in people’s lives.

I believe that my students deserve a chance that many others will not give them.

Finding I can help make a difference in student’s lives and that they remember and appreciate everything you do.

I am in Special Education because God trained me and got me ready by putting certain students in my life.

I found the place where I feel I can make a positive impact in the world.

To help the littlest learners get a head start on their educational journey.

I’m a cleaner at Freshwater. I’m doing this job to stay active and love cleaning and being able to keep the classrooms looking great for the teachers!

Because Margaret told me to. To show love and support to kids.

To help those in need. I understand what it is to be in the position of the student and wanted to help others as I was helped.

Influenced by my sister’s special needs – However, more so, my natural and instinctual concern for the less fortunate and my ability to see them as equally important and valued.

To hopefully make a positive difference in future students’ lives. Also, liked my field of study a great deal!

I wanted something different.

I came to education because I wanted to help others. I wanted to help students achieve their goals and help in any way.

To help youth gain the confidence with the skills to be successful as they go through life and the obstacles and hurdles that they will face.

I love working with children and making a difference in their lives.

I love to help kids have a positive first year being in a school.

I’m able to share my struggles during school with children so they can succeed in everyday life activities/experiences.

I went into Special Education to make a difference in student’s lives.

To work to make learning more accessible to ALL students.

Similar to Jamie, I struggled to catch up in school. I didn’t understand why until recently. I was diagnosed with ADHD and suspect dyslexia. I began to understand the importance of educators and their support staff. I hope to use my skills and personality to help kids learn.

Because people told me I was good at it, finding ways to increase independence, finding ways to get all people to do all things.

Figure this kid out.

I have always wanted to help students with special needs achieve their full potential.

To be a bright spot in the lives of those who need it. RELATIONSHIPS.

I wanted to be a part of instructing children in a unique way and to help them meet academic and behavior goals.

I went into education to provide children the skills they need to communicate effectively and get their needs met appropriately.
EMPOWERING OTHERS.