



Every child, every opportunity, every time!

Milwood Elementary
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August 12, 2024

Dear Milwood Elementary Parents and Families,

I am sending you this letter to welcome you to our 2024-25 school year! I think it's safe to say that we are all looking forward to being back together. What I hope to do with this letter is share some specific information about what we do at Milwood Elementary so that you feel well-prepared to be a part of our Panther-Family.

Our School Structure

At Milwood Elementary, we are scheduled to have the following classes for 2024-25*:

K	1st	2nd	2nd/ 3rd*	3rd	4th	5th	Spec. Ed. - Lower	Spec. Ed. - Upper	ASD	ECSE
2 Classes	2 Classes	2 Classes	1* Class	2 Classes	3 Classes	3 Classes	1 Class	1 Class	1 Class	1 Class

**** Please Note that should our enrollment increase,
there is a possibility that our split-grade classroom
will be dissolved and become one grade level.***

- ★ Our K-3rd Grade classes are self-contained.
- ★ Our 4th/5th Graders move to different Teachers for their core instruction.
- ★ In addition, we have shared support with our School Psychologist, Clinical Social Worker, Speech Therapists, Teacher Consultant, and Instructional Coaches for Reading and Math.
- ★ At Milwood Elementary, we pride ourselves on taking a Student-centered approach which looks to use all of our resources to the best of our ability.

Arrival and Dismissal at Milwood Elementary

School begins at **8:50 am** / Students may be dropped off **AFTER 8:25 am**

School ends at **3:50 pm**

***We strongly encourage Parents / Families to have
Students remain in school for the full school day.***



Bus Riders

Students who are Bus Riders will arrive at the front, main entrance.
Students who are Bus Riders will exit / depart through the front, main entrance.



Walkers

Students who are Walkers go with their Teacher(s) to our Rear Pickup Area (Parking Lot) and are dismissed from there.

Arrival and Dismissal at Milwood Elementary (CONTINUED)

School begins at **8:50 am** / Students may be dropped off **AFTER 8:25 am**

School ends at **3:50 pm**

Drop Offs and Pickups

- ❖ Students who are driven to school and picked up at dismissal will be dropped off (after 8:25 am) and picked up in our rear parking lot.
- ❖ AM Drop Offs are available from 8:25 am - 8:50 am. After 8:50 am, Students should be brought to our front, main entrance and enter through the office. **Please note that for Drop-offs, Staff are available to supervise AFTER 8:25 am. Drop-off Students are able to use the Playground until Lineup at 8:44 am.**
- ❖ The lot can be accessed off of Lovers Lane.
- ❖ Once you enter the lot, cars can form two (2) lanes of one way traffic, following the route around the yellow pylons.
- ❖ We ask that drivers remain in your vehicle during pickups. An adult will escort your child to your vehicle.
- ❖ Once you have your child, we ask that you wait to allow us to move you out of the lot safely.
- ❖ Students are available for pickup in the rear lot until 3:55 pm. If you arrive after that time, your Student(s) will need to be picked up at the main, front entrance.



Parent Family Communication

We use a variety of methods to communicate daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly important events at Milwood Elementary. Among them are:

- **Class Dojo** - Many of our Teachers utilize Class Dojo as a way to communicate directly with our Parents and Families. We encourage you to sign up with your child's Teacher.
- **School Messenger (via email)** - Usually sent by your principal with reminders about important upcoming activities and events. They will come to you in the form of an email. It is vital that you keep our office aware with your most up-to-date contact information including phone and email.
- **Grade-Level Newsletters** - Various Grade-Levels send information home specific to their Students and Parents.
- **Milwood Facebook Page** - For those who follow Social Media, we use this page to post important school-related information. ([@milwoodelementary on Facebook](#))
- **Milwood Home Page** - Similar to our Facebook Page, it will also include information on specific Classroom and Grade-Level activities and events. ([KPS Website - Milwood Homepage](#))
- **Google Classroom** - Used by many Teachers to post/share assignments and other specific classroom information. Parents find it helpful to stay aware of their Student's activities.



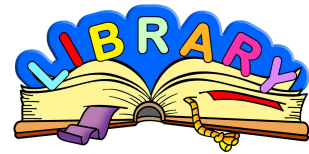
Academic Instructional Focus

We have an experienced and dedicated group of Teachers and Support Staff who utilize a variety of methods and approaches to working with our Students.

Among them are:

- Whole Group Instruction -
 - Teaching delivered to an entire class
- Small Group Instruction - (One of our Focus-Areas for this school year)
 - Teaching delivered to a specifically identified smaller group of Students
- Interventions -
 - Delivered in Small Groups (Most often in Reading) by Title 1 Tutors
- Reading Recovery -
 - Delivered to identified 1st Graders by our Reading Recovery Teacher
- Students are assessed 3 times each year using:
 - *NWEA/MAP Test* (3rd-5th) and the *Fastbridge Assessment* (K-2nd)
 - (Fall/Winter/Spring)
- 3rd-5th Graders also take the statewide MStep Test each Spring

Within our instruction, our Teachers place an emphasis and focus on “Higher Order Thinking” skills, strategies, and activities. This approach helps Students to make connections between concepts by: Exploring / Problem-Solving - Considering / Critical Evaluation / and Making Reasonable Judgements. While this will look different depending upon the Grade Level, it will be a consistent approach throughout our school.



Specials Classes

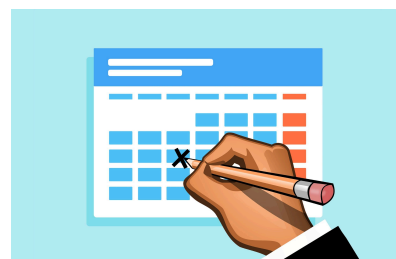
Our Milwood Students will have three (3) focused “Specials” Classes each week plus Library Time. The Scheduled time usually works as follows for each class:

- ❖ **Art Class** = 1x per week / 50 minutes
- ❖ **Physical Education Class** = 2x per week / 30 minutes each
- ❖ **Music Class** = 2x per week / 30 minutes each
- ❖ **Library** = 1 x per week / 30 minutes

Upcoming Events

Please note the following important upcoming dates:

- Tuesday August 20th, 5:30-6:30
 - ◆ **Milwood Elementary Ice Cream Social**
- Monday August 26th
 - ◆ **First Day of School (Half Day, Dismissal @ 12 Noon)**
- Tuesday August 27th
 - ◆ **First Full Day of School (Dismissal at 3:50 pm)**
- **Friday August 30th - Monday, September 4th**
 - ◆ **No School (Labor Day Weekend)**
- Week of September 9th
 - ◆ **Milwood Open House**
(To Be Determined - It will most likely be Tuesday 9/10 or Thursday 9/12)
- Thursday September 19th
 - ◆ **Our 7th Annual Milwood Elementary Family Fitness Night (5:30-7:00 Outside)**



Supply Lists

The following supplies are requested for each Grade Level:

<p><u>Kindergarten</u> *Regular Sized Backpack *Change of Clothes (Including Underwear and Socks) Crayons (24 Pack Crayola) Dry Erase Markers, Black (Fine Tip, 12 Count) Pencils (Pack of My First Ticonderoga, PreSharpened) Markers (10 Pack Crayola) Clorox Wipes Box of Kleenex Gym Shoes/Sneakers - to keep at home and wear on P.E. Days *Slippers/House Shoes (with rubber or hard bottom) - to keep at school *Please LABEL starred Supplies with your child's name. All other supplies are communal and should NOT be labeled.</p>	<p><u>1st Grade</u> Pencils, Crayons, and Colored Pencils Pocket Folders Notebook (Spiral) Kleenex Hand Sanitizer Glue Dry Erase Markers Wipes Erasers (Large Pink) Gym Shoes/Sneakers for P.E.</p>
<p><u>2nd Grade</u> Pencils and Crayons Erasers Dry Erase Markers (Black, fine tip) Folders - 2 pocket Notebooks - 70 page Composition book Supply Box Earbuds / headphones Water Bottle Gym Shoes/Sneakers for P.E. <u>Classroom Community Supplies:</u> Tissues, Sanitizing wipes, Hand Sanitizer, Ziploc Bags - quart or gallon</p>	<p><u>3rd Grade</u> A "Take Home Folder" - This can be any color/design. Recommend: Plastic Folder Hard Pencil Case Skinny Expo Markers (Any Color) Crayons (24 Pack Crayola) Colored Pencils or Markers Pencils Child size - Scissors >>>> <u>One set of durable headphones - not USB</u> (headphones are used consistently throughout the year so please make sure they are kid-friendly) One box of tissues One bottle of hand sanitizer One Container of Clorox Wipes Gym Shoes/Sneakers for P.E. Backpacks and water bottles are highly recommended. We ask that ALL items are clearly labeled with your child's name.</p>

Supplies (CONTINUED)

<p>4th Grade NO 3-Ring Binders! (space is an issue) NO Sharpies! (or other permanent markers) NO Hand-Held Pencil Sharpeners (except those with a cover to catch shavings!) PLEASE DO consider these items - they'll be used all year long! 3 - 70 or 100 Page Spiral Notebooks in different colors 2 - Composition Notebooks 1 - Pencil Pouch with Rings 1 - Pencil Box to store extra supplies in locker 1 - Heavy Duty Plastic 2 Pocket Folder with Clips (a take home folder) 12-24 Pencils (Wood, 0.7 mm Lead Mechanical, or 1.3 mm Lead Mechanical) 1-2 Big Erasers and/or a Handful of Cap Erasers 1 Backpack or Bookbag 2-4 Skinny Dry Erase Markers, Black 1 Box of Crayons, Any Size 2 Ink Pens, Blue or Black 1-2 Highlighters, Different Colors A personal set of inexpensive earbuds or headphones (optional) Gym Shoes/Sneakers for P.E. Water Bottle</p> <p>Throughout the school year, a donation would be appreciated for the following items (especially in Jan-Mar): 1-2 Boxes of Tissues (Any Brand) 1-2 Containers of Disinfectant Wipes (Any Brand)</p>	<p>5th Grade Backpack to Carry Things Home Trapper Keeper with pocket to carry Chromebook between classes 2 Boxes of Pencils (#2) 1 Box of Colored Pencils 1 Package Lined Notebook Paper 5 Plastic Folders (2 Pockets) 5 Spiral Notebooks / 70 or 100 Pages 1 Pair Earphones or Earbuds 1 Pencil Pouch 3 Composition Notebooks 2-4 Dry Erase Markers 1 Hand Held Pencil Sharpener (That Collects the Shavings) Drawstring Bag - To Carry Material from Class to Class Gym Shoes/Sneakers for P.E. Water Bottle</p> <p>Classroom Supplies Needed: Kleenex Disinfectant Wipes Hand Sanitizer Paper Towels</p>
<p><u>Ms. Ali's Class</u> Change of clothes to keep at school (including underwear and socks) Pencil Box or Pouch to keep at school Box or Tissues Hand Sanitizer Disinfectant Wipes Gym Shoes/Sneakers for P.E. Peanut Free Snacks for the class to share (goldfish crackers, fruit snacks, chips, cereal bars, crackers, cheese sticks, etc.)</p>	<p><u>Ms. Freer's ECSE Class</u> Backpack Change of Clothes (Including Underwear and Socks) Diapers and wipes (if your child needs them) Box of tissue Canister(s) of Clorox Disinfecting Wipes</p>

Our School Themes

Our CHAMPS Expectations are taught, emphasized, and recognized daily.

CHAMPS	RESPECT	RESPONSIBILITY	RESULTS
CLASS-ROOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ACTIVELY LISTENING •USE KIND WORDS AND LANGUAGE •WAIT TURN TO SPEAK •STAY IN PERSONAL SPACE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •PUT FORTH BEST EFFORT •WORK COOPERATIVELY •TAKE CARE OF LEARNING TOOLS •ASK QUESTIONS •SEEK HELP WHEN NEEDED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT •PANTHER PRIDE
HALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ALWAYS WALK IN HALLWAY •STAY IN LINE WITH YOUR CLASS •"PAWS AND JAWS" •USE APPROPRIATE VOICE LEVEL •OPEN AND CLOSE LOCKERS QUIETLY •AT WATER FOUNTAIN: "1-2-3, THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •WALK ON THE BLUE LINES •WALK DIRECTLY TO YOUR DESTINATION •ALWAYS HAVE A PASS •REPORT ANY PROBLEMS TO YOUR TEACHER 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT •SAVE TIME •PANTHER PRIDE!
CAFE-TERIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •WAIT IN LINE QUIETLY •USE TABLE MANNERS •LISTEN TO ADULTS AND FOLLOW ADULT INSTRUCTION •USE PLEASE, THANK YOU, AND EXCUSE ME 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •EAT YOUR LUNCH •FIND YOUR TABLE AND STAY SEATED •KEEP YOUR TABLE AND AREA CLEAN •HOLD YOUR TRAY WITH TWO HANDS •RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU NEED HELP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT •BETTER NUTRITION AND DIGESTION •LESS WASTE •PANTHER PRIDE
PLAY-GROUND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •TAKE TURNS •INCLUDE EVERYONE •USE ALL EQUIPMENT APPROPRIATELY •LISTEN TO ADULT IN CHARGE •USE: "PLEASE" "THANK YOU" AND "EXCUSE ME" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •REPORT ANY PROBLEMS TO ADULTS •SHOW "PANTHER KINDNESS" WHEN PLAYING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, HEALTHY, POSITIVE PLAYING ENVIRONMENT •MORE FUN FOR EVERYONE •PANTHER PRIDE
BATH-ROOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •RESPECT THE PRIVACY OF OTHERS •USE A LEVEL 1 VOICE •TAKE YOUR TURN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •GO/FLUSH/WASH/LEAVE •PUT ANY PAPER INTO THE TRASH •ONE SQUIRT GETS THE DIRT •1-2-3 THAT IS ENOUGH FOR ME •REPORT ANY MESSES TO TEACHERS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT •PANTHER PRIDE
OFFICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •WAIT PATIENTLY •USE LEVEL 1 VOICE •USE PLEASE, THANK YOU, AND EXCUSE ME •SPEAK COURTEOUSLY TO VISITORS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •REMAIN IN FRONT PART OF OFFICE •STOP AT THE FLOOR LINE •HAVE AN OFFICE PASS •WAIT PATIENTLY FOR YOUR TURN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT •INCREASED EFFICIENCY •PANTHER PRIDE
BUS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •ENTER AND EXIT BUS IN AN ORDERLY WAY •STAY IN LINE WITH YOUR TEACHERS •STAY SEATED WHILE RIDING •USE LEVEL "1" VOICE ON BUSES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •STAY IN YOUR SEAT •FOLLOW <u>ALL</u> BUS DRIVER INSTRUCTIONS •STAY IN LINE WHILE WAITING FOR BUSES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT •EVERYONE RIDES SAFELY •PANTHER PRIDE

ASSEMBLIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LISTEN TO TEACHER/ADULT IN CHARGE •STAY WITH CLASS / SIT IN PERSONAL SPACE •USE APPLAUSE TO SHOW APPRECIATION •USE APPROPRIATE VOICE LEVEL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •KEEP HANDS, FEET, AND OBJECTS IN YOUR PERSONAL SPACE •EYES UP FRONT •ENTER AND EXIT QUIETLY •ACTIVELY LISTEN TO THE SPEAKER •STAY SEATED UNTIL DISMISSED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT •MAKE TIME FOR LEARNING •EVERYONE CAN HEAR •PANTHER PRIDE!
BUILDING AND LIBRARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •WELCOME GUESTS INTO OUR BUILDING •BE POLITE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •NEVER OPEN AN OUTSIDE DOOR •BE POLITE •SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT •PANTHER PRIDE
PICK UP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LISTEN TO TEACHER / ADULT IN CHARGE •STAY IN LINE •WAIT YOUR TURN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LET YOUR TEACHER KNOW WHERE YOUR RIDE IS •WAIT FOR AN ADULT TO WALK YOU TO YOUR VEHICLE •FOLLOW YOUR TEACHER'S INSTRUCTIONS •STAY IN THE LINE AGAINST THE FENCE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •CLEAN, SAFE, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT •EVERYONE GETS HOME SAFELY •PANTHER PRIDE

ADDING TO OUR CHAMPS THIS 2024-25:

Character Traits	Respect (internal thought)	Responsibility (action)	Results (what happens)
Solution-focused - finding positive options in the face of a challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on an answer, not a problem • What works for everyone? • Use empathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer ideas to fix things • Listen to and use others' ideas • Work together • Compromise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less conflict • Peaceful outcomes • Teamwork • Forgiveness • Strong community
Empathy - putting yourself in someone else's shoes; being able to relate to another person's feelings; feeling with, as opposed to feeling for (sympathy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be curious about others' experiences / feelings • Think of another perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check on others • Practice the pause (pause judgements / assumptions) • Ask sincere questions • Listen carefully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patience with others • Forgiveness • People feel understood • Strong friendships • Strong community
Impulse Control - the ability to control yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think before you act or speak • Consider the consequences • What do I need? • What will happen if I...? • Is there a better way? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use coping skills (take a breath, count to 5, find a distraction etc.) • Ask for help • Pro / Con list • Make a choice you are proud of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-advocacy • Less conflict • Safe bodies • Safe environment • Improved sportsmanship
Integrity - building and using a strong moral compass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing who you are when no one is watching • Respect others' belongings/rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the whole truth • Make a right choice the first time without being asked • Stand up for others (respectfully) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a leader / role-model • People trust you • People rely on you • Strong community
Resilience - the ability to bounce back from adversity / challenges. Never giving up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach a task with a positive attitude • Believe in yourself • Give yourself grace • Positive self-talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work through challenges • Take breaks • Ask for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from mistakes • Self-advocacy • Accomplish goals • Learn new skills • Pride in self • Share knowledge



3 R's/CHAMPS

We focus on living by our 3 R's: "Respect," "Responsibility," and "Results." These 3 areas are emphasized as we teach our Students what our building-wide expectations are ("CHAMPS"). Our CHAMPS expectations are clear on what "Respect" looks like in the Cafeteria or Playgrounds, and what "Responsibility" looks like in our Classrooms and Hallways. We strive for positive "Results," and look to achieve them by teaching and reminding our Students of our specific expectations consistently throughout the school year.

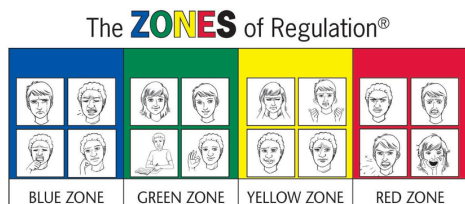


"Kindness" Theme

Our definition for "Kindness" at Milwood Elementary is very simple:

"Always treat others the way you want to be treated."

This theme is one of our central focus areas, and one which Students hear daily during announcements. *We appreciate Parents reinforcing that message and definition with your Panthers.*



Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

We focus on SEL with our Students as a way of both connecting with them, and helping them to cope with all that comes with being a healthy and successful young person. Always looking to work consistently to connect our Students, Staff, and Families, our Milwood SEL Task-Force has developed a calendar which outlines each of our monthly SEL Themes for 2024-25. Each grade-level, Kindergarten through 5th will focus on the same theme each month. The activities used to teach and introduce our themes will vary by grade level, but the goal is for us to be focused on a consistent monthly topic. Our

SEL Monthly Goals are as follows:

- All Year - "Kindness"
- September - Growth Mindset and Perseverance
- October - Bullying Prevention
- November - Friendship and Acceptance / Diversity
- December - Conflict Resolution
- January - Feelings, Emotions, and Coping Skills
- February - Self-Esteem
- March - Self-Control and Mindfulness
- April - Problem-Solving
- May - Self Care and Mental Wellness

Social Emotional Learning



Restorative Justice

We at Milwood introduced Restorative Practices to our program back during the 2018-19 school year. We expand our knowledge and use each year. Simply put, Restorative Practices look to help Students and Staff seek to repair (or restore) any harm which may result from a conflict. Both Students and Staff will engage in a "Restorative Conversation" when necessary which revolves around three (3) specific questions:

- 1) **What happened?**
- 2) **Who was impacted by what happened?**
- 3) **What is needed to repair the harm?**

The goal of these conversations in grades K-5th is to help Students see and understand how their words or actions can affect others which helps develop "empathy." In the majority of our situations, we are able to reach a positive outcome.

Other Restorative Practices at Milwood Elementary are:

- ★ **Classroom 'Community Agreements'** - Procedures and expectations developed by Students and Teachers together.
- ★ **Class "Circle Meetings"** - A daily or weekly check-in time used as a way of getting to know classmates and discussing important topics.



9.58

Our "9.58" theme reflects the world record time for the 100 meter dash set by Usain Bolt in 2009. Each year we share the YouTube video with Staff and Students of him as he breaks down what he is striving to accomplish in each of his races. (YouTube ["Usain Bolt - How to Win the 100M"](#)) The lesson in his efforts for us is that he (and we) have "lots to accomplish in a very short time" (180 school days). It is a constant reminder for us to make positive and effective use of the time we have together each day.



Parent Teacher Student Organization (P.T.S.O.)

I encourage you to consider becoming a member of our Milwood Elementary P.T.S.O.. This group meets monthly to provide ideas, energy, and support which helps our Students to have beneficial extracurricular resources and experiences. Among their contributions are:

- Supporting K-5th Grade Fundraising for Field Trips
- Providing Yard Signs to celebrate our 5th Graders as they move to Middle School
- Hosting two (2) Scholastic Book Fairs each year (Fall and Spring)
- Helping to organize our School Dances

Our monthly PTSO Meetings are also a great way for our Parents to receive helpful instructional information and resources about Milwood and KPS. Meetings are for one (1) hour each month. Please consider joining us.

We are aiming to meet on every 2nd Monday of the month with the exception of January (just back from Winter Break).

PTSO will meet 5:30 - 6:30 in the library (any changes will be sent via email):

Monday, September 9 (before Family Fitness Night on the 19th)
Monday, October 14
Monday, November 11
Monday, December 9
Monday, January 13
Monday, February 10
Monday, March 10
Monday, April 14
Monday, May 12

I hope this information has been helpful. As we move toward our return to school, all of us will be pointing our attention toward both a SUCCESSFUL start and a GREAT 2023-24 school year. We are here for you and your Students, and look forward to working with all of our Panther families. **We hope to see you on Tuesday 8/20, 5:30 - 6:30 pm for our Ice Cream Social.** Other Groups that will be joining us will be Gryphon Place, Integrated Services of Kalamazoo, Girl Scouts, Boys Scouts, Milwood PTSO, and Premier Athletics (Basketball information).

Please contact us with any questions at (269) 337-0660.

Sincerely,

C. LeSuer
Principal