

# CONSTELLATIONS

MORNING STAR PRINCIPAL NEWSLETTER

## Fall Focus on Safety

Morning Star Families,

Thank you all for an exceptional start to the school year. I have thoroughly enjoyed connecting with all of you at Open House, the Fun Run, and throughout the day as you show up to volunteer and support our students.

Please take the time to review the upcoming events in the side bar. We are rapidly heading towards a season of celebration. Here at Morning Star, we treat this time as an opportunity to connect and support each other.

I've included some information on our supports for students well being and safety in the following pages. **Please look for several opportunities to engage with each other and support our remarkable group of students.**

I have also included information on two new very important additions to our team.

Finally, I'd like to extend our sincere thanks to the PAC for their hard work fundraising and making sure that we continue to support the growth and learning of all of our students. **Remember to get those Fun Run Donations in!**

Will Dickerson  
Principal  
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406-522-6500

### LOOKING FORWARD

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- 10/17-10/18 No School (MEA Days)
  - 10/22 Picture Retakes
  - 10/31 Fall Costume Parade 2:40 PM
  - 11/1 Last Day for Fun Run Donations
  - 11/6- Fun Run Prize Assembly
  - 11/7-11/8 No School (PT Conferences)
  - 11/11 Veterans Day Assembly
  - 11/9-23rd Can the Griz!
  - 11/12 K-5 Walking Field Trip to MSU Basketball
  - 11/20 PAC Meeting 6:00-7:00
  - 11/22 Family Bingo Night
  - 11/27-11/29 Thanksgiving Break
  - 12/20 Winter Program at Morning Star
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# SEL (SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING)

Our mission statement here at Morning Star includes a commitment to help all students learn and grow. In order for students to truly be successful citizens, we dedicate 15 minutes of every school day to social emotional learning (SEL). This kind of learning can be misconstrued as “touchy feely” or referred to as “soft skills”. I had the privilege of spending some time envisioning the future of education in Montana a couple of weeks ago and in that session we were provided with this information. These are the top skills for career readiness as compiled by the World Economic Forum:



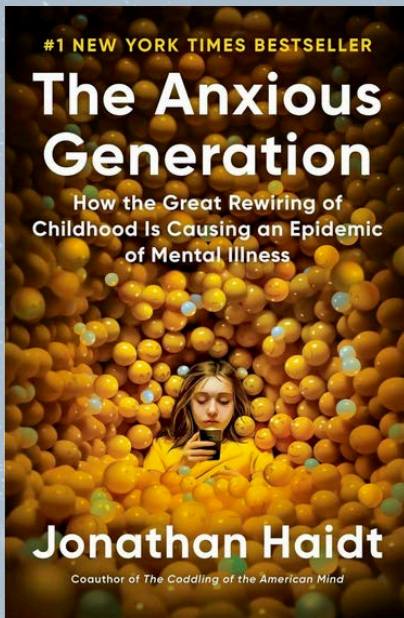
Twelve out of twenty six, or almost half of these skills are the types of skills that are defined in our SEL standards for students.

In addition to our daily lessons for all students, we provide increasing levels of support and instruction for students who demonstrate a need for more intensive intervention. Whenever we have a specific goal for students, and especially when it might impact the child’s access to other activities, we notify you as parents and make sure that you are part of the conversation.

We also run extension groups such as structured play groups, student leaders, and student recess mentors.

Finally, we work hard to help students actively give kindness to each other. Sometimes students struggle with conflict. Occasionally, one or more students will be mean and unkind and; occasionally, this “mean” behavior rises to the level of bullying. At that point we work directly with families to protect all of the students. We do the important work of setting clear limits and teaching the children who are exhibiting bullying behavior the skills they need to be more empathic, kinder, and safer citizens. [HERE](#) is an important resource for understanding our definitions related to meanness, conflict, and bullying.





Thank you to everyone who was able to joined us for our discussion concerning social media use, devices, and new factors impacting the mental wellbeing of our students. In November and December we will be meeting 4-6 times to connect as a community around the book *The Anxious Generation*. Our first meeting will be the first week of November. If you are interested please answer the questions in **This Survey** so that we can schedule these discussions to meet as many families needs for scheduling as possible.



# There and Back Again... Safely



Getting to and from school can be a lot of things all at once: An opportunity to connect with friends and family, routine, and a source of stress. Here are a few things to keep in mind to make sure that Morning Star is a place students can get to and from safely:

- Bozeman is growing, and with new construction all around us it is absolutely imperative that we abide by the speed limit signs surrounding our school.
- Please car pool if possible. We have an amazing resource that is specific to Morning Star **Please click on the image to the left to access this amazing resource.**
- Please refrain from using your phone while driving. It is the law and it keeps the children and our pets safe.

- The bus is actually a really great way for kids to discover independence and unplug for a bit. If you live outside of our 1 mile walking radius, you are eligible for free transportation. The rides might sound long but it might be faster than waiting in the car line! Go [HERE](#) to sign up.
- Please review the updated map below to ensure the safest and smoothest pick up and drop off.
  - **Snow is coming, plan for more time during inclement weather.**
  - **Please do not idle in parking spots. Keep little lungs healthy.**
  - **Please only use the disabled parking spaces if you have a disability.**

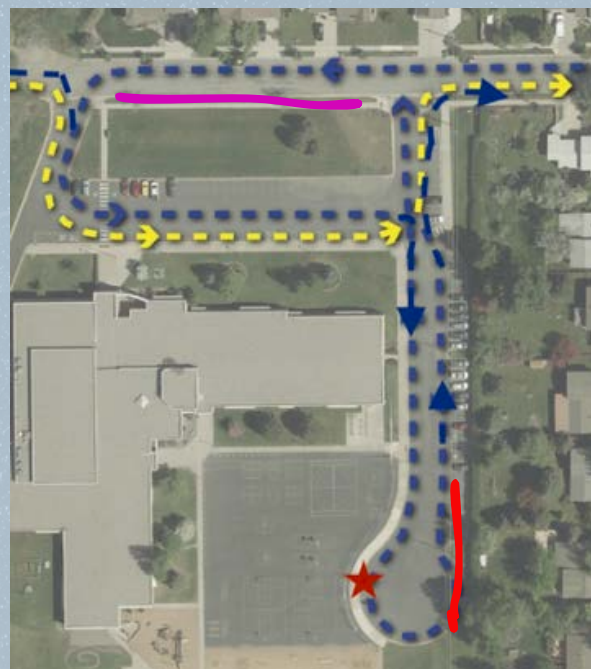
**CLICK HERE TO BE A PARENT SAFETY VOLUNTEER!**

- Yellow Arrows indicate Bus Traffic
- Blue Arrows Indicate Parent Traffic
- Please Do Not Block Bus Flow !!
- Please use Crosswalks

**Our Parents and Crossing Guards Are The Best!**

**This Line represents a new loading and unloading zone for Pre K parents. We are working on improved signage with the city**

**This Line represents a no Parking, even for loading and unloading. Please Do Not park here as it is not a safe place to load and unload**



# Welcome Our New Staff

Most of you are aware that Mr. Gary and Ms. Francine are entering into a well deserved retirement. We are incredibly lucky to have found two highly capable replacements to fill the roles of Head Custodian and Executive Secretary. Neither of them are exactly new, but make sure to give them a warm welcome if you see them around the school.

**Lee Dickerson**  
“Mr. Lee”



Lee Dickerson brings a wide range of experience to the job of maintaining and improving the facilities here at Morning Star. Most people don't fully realize the complexity of keeping a 30+ year old facility in working order. Lee trained with Gary for most of last spring. He was also the lead in getting the school ready for the 24-25 school-year, including many changes. He is most excited about supporting the teachers and students here at Morning Star.

**Kirstie Workman**  
“Mrs. Workman”



Kirstie Workman has a degree in business, 6 sons who all attended Morning Star, and has been a staple substitute in our building for years. Kirstie has been training with Francine already to learn how to navigate the hundreds (this is not an exaggeration) of tasks that our executive secretaries navigate throughout the year. Kirstie's love of children and commitment to this community makes her the ideal person to be your first point of contact in the front office.