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April Monthly Update

Good Morning Orchard School!

As we close the books on April, we look forward to more beautiful spring weather. A reminder, Monday is our first day of May lunch, so please remember to [order lunch for your student!](#)

This week, we had two beautiful community moments in school that I'd like to share with you. For one, I was surprised at CBA on Thursday with a "Thank You Mrs. Ferreri" moment! A student from each grade spoke about my work at the school and it left me very emotional and 100% surprised. For those of you who weren't in attendance, I then had an opportunity to thank our wonderful school community - students, staff, and parents - for making my time at work seem like the furthest thing from a job. We have a remarkable school and I am so very proud to be here each and every day! Thank you all, from the bottom of my heart!

Our second moment was on Friday afternoon where we watched an amazing Drama Club performance of "Peter Pan". This production was terrific! Our students did an exceptional job learning their lines and even delivering some with comedic flair. We were all quite impressed with the size of the cast and the energy they brought to the show. It was truly a wonderful experience! I invite you to attend tonight - Saturday evening, at 7 PM - at Orchard School. To our cast members, break a leg!

Please read on for some updates and information...Happy May!

Community Outreach Programs:

We had an informative evening with Dr. Catherine Steiner-Adair to discuss Family Relationships in the Digital Age. She is the author of [The Big Disconnect: Protecting Childhood and Family Relationships in the Digital Age](#). As a related point, we will be working to plan those informal gatherings next year as discussed in my prior monthly update. We will host some informal discussions on this topic or similar (screen time, media use, etc.). As a community, I would imagine that we have similar views and beliefs, but an overall difficulty putting that into practice, particularly with the social norms that exist for our students. Please feel free email me directly with your thoughts - mkferreri@ridgewood.k12.nj.us - and stay tuned. Thanks!

After our evening with Dr. Steiner-Adair, many collaborative discussions began. It was clear that her talk resonated with many of us. To try to summarize for you, here are 10 of my big takeaway points from the night...though admittedly I took 5 pages of notes. Here goes!

1. 80% of what kids do online isn't bad. The 20% that is? Is really bad.
2. We are modifying our social norms of communication. Texting does not allow for face to face contact and the ability to judge how one's statement can impact another person. It is often difficult to identify the "tone" of a text because the context of a face to face interaction is missing.
3. Electronics at the dinner table: Giving a child the use of a device during dinner provides the message that they are not important to the conversation, or that the conversation is "above" them. Instead, have a collaborative family conversation. Cross gender, and let boys/girls hear about Mom's work day, or specifically have girls help solve Dad's work problems. This has the significance of inviting them into the conversation and opening the door that you can do this one day, too! (Do not make dinner about performance/grades/sports or anything that can be perceived as criticism).
4. Have a responsible use agreement for home, just like the one students have in school. Follow through if your child breaks the contract.
5. When adults are using their phone, elementary students are vying for attention and want mom/dad present. Middle/High schoolers report hypocritical behavior (I can't text at the dinner table, but Mom/Dad can email work? I can't text and drive, but Mom/Dad can?) Think about how your modeling of technology use affects your family.
6. Too many 4-5-6-7-8th grade students have access to a fully loaded phone with NO FILTERS. Set filters!
7. Take all devices and charge them in the master bedroom closet overnight.
8. Middle Schoolers/first phone recipients: all texts should be read and screened by a parent. Students should be aware of this. (This is a phone that we have purchased for you and it belongs to our family. We will read your texts. If something happens we will talk about it and you may lose privileges for a time). And - follow through on your consequences!

9. Follow through on the limits you set. Giving access to apps that are 13 and older tells them that they are above the law and you are giving into peer pressure. Think about the ramifications of that for future issues (drugs, alcohol).
10. If 30% of a grade doesn't _____ (text, use social media, etc.), it can bring down social isolation.

8 Behaviors we can do to Help with Self-Regulation

Dr. Steiner-Adair also left us with 8 behaviors we can do to model good technology behavior and help your child self regulate. Admittedly, I only jotted down 7. (If anyone got the 8th one, let me know!)

1. Get up a 1/2 hour (or more) earlier than your kids so you are present, less stressed, and off of technology.
2. On the way to school do not be on your Bluetooth. You should be helping your child anticipate their day.
3. Do not let your kids play a game or on a phone on the way to school. You are giving them a stimulant. They should be anticipating their day.
4. Do not take a call when picking up your child. Give them an opportunity to talk with you.
5. When kids come home from school they should be playing in the real world. Get them outside or have them playing physically with toys - not on media or technology.
6. When you come home from work don't come home plugged in. Don't walk in the door on a device.
7. No devices at dinner bed or bath. Kids want that transition to be supportive and ritualistic. It's a vulnerable time of the day.

Please mark your calendars for the final date on Tuesday, May 23, when we will host Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg, a pediatrician at CHOP and a professor for UPenn's school of medicine. He will be with us for the day, providing two separate discussions: 9:30 AM @ the Ridgewood Library (Fostering Resilience) and 7 PM @ GWMS (Authentic Success). For more information, please visit the [RPS website](#) to view the folder for the 2016-17 Well-Being series. Hope to see you there!

PARCC Testing

As a reminder, students in grades 3-4-5 will be taking the PARCC assessments beginning this Thursday, May 4. These are statewide assessments which are given annually. The schedule below should help you keep track. We plan to start at 9 AM and 1 PM, respectively:

Thursday, May 4:

ELA Section 1 - AM (90 minutes)

ELA Section 2 - PM (90 minutes - 75 for grade 3)

Friday, May 5:

ELA Section 3 - AM (90 minutes)

Monday, May 8:

Math Section 1 - AM (60 minutes)

Math Section 2 - PM (60 minutes)

Tuesday, May 9:

Math Section 1 - AM (60 minutes)

Math Section 2 - PM (60 minutes)

For more information, or if you have additional questions, please contact Mrs. Ferreri directly (mkferreri@ridgewood.k12.nj.us).

Sectioning for next year

It is time, once again, to begin planning for next year. We have set our lineup of teachers and are beginning to create class lists. We also have information regarding the numbers of sections at Orchard School. Please [click here](#) for a letter from Mrs. Ferreri regarding the upcoming plans for 16-17. This information will also be linked to e-news on Tuesday, 5/3.

Teacher Appreciation Week

On Monday, we begin our celebration of Teacher Appreciation Week! Please be sure to check your emails from class parents regarding our need for assistance during the teacher luncheon on Friday, May 5th. Also, your child can still bring in their thank you letter to a teacher/staff member. Please [click here](#) for another copy and bring to the main office on Monday. Thank you to our terrific staff! We can't wait to celebrate you!

Mark your Calendars...May Book Fair!

We will be having an end of year book fair to support summer reading on May 24-25. Research shows that a child who reads four (or more) books over the summer will fare better on schoolwork in the fall than their peers who do not read. See [this quick, one page document](#) on 10 critical facts about summer reading, and consider purchasing books through our book fair! Details to come!

As with every monthly update, we need some short reminders. Please read below on items of note:

- Toiletry Tuesday: This Tuesday, 5/2, please send in toiletries! Shampoo, soaps, toothbrushes, toothpaste, toilet paper...you name in. This benefits the Ridgecrest Senior Housing and we are proud to support this drive annually. Our boxes are looking empty...please help us fill them by this Tuesday!
- Change Drive: Now through 5/12, send in your extra change! We are participating in a “Send a Kid to Camp” initiative through the Social Service Association. Thank you!
- Dogs - A reminder: no animals are allowed on school property. This is a town-wide ordinance. Please do not bring a pet for pickup or drop off.
- Playground - During the normal operating hours of a school day (8:30 - 3 PM), the playground structures are off limits. If you are here with a younger sibling or a Kindergartner, please do not use equipment during the school day.
- Bikes/Scooters - If you are biking, or riding a scooter to school, please remember to walk your bike or scooter once you are on school property.
- After-school hours - The school is not open after dismissal. This includes for bathroom facilities or for drinks of water.
- In addition to ordering your lunches for May, please note that Orange Leaf VANILLA Frozen Yogurt is offered at Orchard School on Thursday MAY 18th ! (The selection can be made from the Village Fresh Dessert/Snack section of the order form).
- Crazy Sock Spirit Day is Thursday, 5/18!
- Link and follow our Google Calendar for HSA events! [Go to this link](#) and click on the +Google Calendar in the right bottom corner.
- Please remind those you know to register for Kindergarten (or other grades) at Orchard School for 2017-18. Registration is now open!

Please review the list of dates below for upcoming events at our school. Thank you for reading our monthly update!

Warmly,

Mrs. Ferreri

Upcoming events:

5/4: PARCC Testing, ELA Section 1 @ 9 AM; Section 2 @ 1 PM; CBA @ 2:40 SHORT

5/5: HSA Staff Luncheon

5/8: PARCC Testing, Math Section 1 @ 9 AM; Section 2 @ 1 PM;

*5/9: PARCC Testing, Math Section 3 @ 9 AM; Section 4 @ 1 PM; Teacher Recognition Ceremony, 7 PM
@ Ed Center*

5/18: Spirit Day - Crazy Socks

5/20: HSA Garage Sale

5/23: Spring Concert, 1:30 PM, OMA, 3:00 PM, Shakespeare 3:30 PM

5/24-25: May Book Fair

5/26: HSA Meeting, Spotlight Grade 1

5/29: No School - Memorial Day