

Mary K. Ferreri, Principal
201-670-2730
mkferreri@ridgewood.k12.nj.us



December Monthly Update

Good Morning Orchard School Families!

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! We less than 48 hours away from the close of 2016, which seems impossible and exciting all at the same time. For me, the school year seems to be speeding by...which I'll take as a good thing, considering the old adage! It is my sincere hope that you have enjoyed the week with your families and that our students are ready to come back re-energized for the new year. I look forward to seeing you all on Monday, January 2!

As we head into January, here are some highlights:

[New Year's Resolutions for Families and Kids:](#) Whether or not making formal resolutions is your practice for this time of year, it is a naturally reflective time as one term comes to a close and a new chapter begins. Being reflective and honest about your goals as individuals and as families is a healthy practice that helps model for your child the value of a growth mindset. It can also help support your child's growing independence, and subsequent self confidence in their new skills and abilities! You may also consider how this is a natural time for your family to embrace new values or jumpstart your existing ones. Here are three great resources to help you get started:

- Starting with one of my favorite websites....[Common Sense Media](#) has a quick read with 7 tips for us as families. Especially notable is their goal to "seek out diverse characters" with your child. I often turn to this site as a source for balance in our increasingly technological world. This is also a great connection to Dr. Fishbein's December [column](#) on the use of social media.
- Here's a great post from [parenting.com](#) with 10 family friendly ideas for re-centering your family. While I'm not exactly advocating for #2, I'll admit, you do know your child best, so perhaps this is what they need!

- A tried and true resource for parents, [PBS](#) has some tips as well, and also advice for how to make this more of a discussion point than a hard and fast new “rule”.

Whatever your goals may be as a family this year, I hope that we as a school can work collaboratively with you to help your children learn and grow not just academically, but as a whole individual.

Community Outreach Programs: Once again, a terrific program was held in December when columnist Ron Lieber (NYT) visited us on 12/6. Entitled “How to Talk to Your Kids About Money”, his talk was enlightening for many of us simply because we typically don’t do just that; instead, telling our children “that’s none of your business”. Here are some key takeaways/highlights from his talk:

- When kids ask about money (how much do you make, how much does our home cost, why don’t we have a vacation home, can we afford...), don’t dismiss them with the typical “that’s none of your business”. Do a little probing, and find out their motivation. Start with, “that’s a great question - why do you ask?”. Typically, their thoughts center around the following questions:
 - are we okay?
 - am I normal?
 - if we aren't (okay)? Did you do something wrong? Did I?
 - is it (not buying this, having this) just a choice you're making?
- Conversations about money keep the door open for other “taboo” conversations, and send the message to your child that any and all conversations are welcome and encouraged in your home.
- Use a wants/needs continuum for your child as they begin to request certain things - particularly as they grow and are more influenced by peers. This is a fascinating concept, so bear with the longer explanation if interested:
 - Ron discussed that in his home, when their children want something, particularly that which has been established in their social scene as the “it” item, he and his wife present it within the scope of what they would be willing to pay for. For example, they did this a few years ago with his daughter over her desire for Hunter boots. Recognizing that rain boots are likely a need, not just a want, (particularly in their pedestrian Brooklyn neighborhood), he and his family discussed the purchase of these boots with a continuum. One end of the spectrum - rubber boots from various retailers, ranging less than \$20 in price. The other end - those Hunter boots, valued well above \$100. He and his wife decided that the cost of a Land’s End rain boot would be their midpoint on the continuum. They discussed this with their daughter, sharing that Mom/Dad are willing to

pay the Land's End value for the boots. If she still wanted the Hunter boots, she would make up the difference from her own allowance (more on that later). This way, she received a lesson in economics and pricing, while setting her own goals for saving/spending. *While it turns out that Grandma swooped in and bought the boots as a gift for her granddaughter, (of course!), Ron did explain that they continue to do this in their home with various items (Razor scooters, iPhone, etc.). This connects further to his point on allowance.*

- Allowance. Ron is a believer in allowance and using it to help children recognize the value of money and to make decisions about their money. He adheres to the principle that chores are a responsibility for a household that everyone participates in, not for monetary value but for the intrinsic value and the benefit of everyone living in the home. He suggests starting around K or 1, about the time the “tooth fairy visits”, as he put it. Start with the age of your child per week (e.g., \$5/week for your Kindergartener). Divide it evenly in three categories:
 - Give: teach generosity and gratuity, allow your child to decide where to “help” (one place to start - family histories and connections for kids help them get the “why”)
 - Save: helps children learn patience, delayed gratification
 - Spend: instill your family values as your child spends (e.g., experiences trump ‘stuff’)

As the values grow in each of these areas, periodically exhaust the “accounts” as needed.

- For more information, visit his [website](#), read his books, and sign up for tips from Ron on how to have meaningful conversations about money.

Upcoming events include “Just Talk About It - A Suicide Prevention Presentation” on 1/10/17, and “The Gift of Failure” on 2/1/17. For more information, please visit the [RPS website](#) to view the folder for the 2016-17 Well-Being series.

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

- School is OPEN for students and staff on 1/2/17 for a full day. We look forward to seeing everyone back in the halls of Orchard!

- Please remember to follow all regular traffic rules and regulations in and around the Orchard School area. This includes parking in designated spaces, and not double parking in the lot. Everyone is busy, everyone has things to do - please be smart and safe - and follow the rules!
- Link and follow our Google Calendar for HSA events! [Go to this link](#) and click on the +Google Calendar in the right bottom corner.
- Kindergarten Registration for the 2017-18 school year is coming up soon! We will start on 2/7 and 2/9. More information to follow.
- A Long Range Planning Team meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 1/19, at 7:30 PM. All are welcome for our first meeting of this school year!
- Lunch Ordering: A reminder for ordering lunch through [Village Fresh](#). All orders are placed online. Orders must be in by 8:00 AM, otherwise, they will not be delivered on that day. January menu is up! Thank you!

Please review the list of dates below for upcoming events at our school. All the best for a fantastic 2017!

Warmly,

Mrs. Ferreri

Upcoming events:

- 1/2/17: School Open!
- 1/12: Team Spirit Day; CBA @ 2:25 PM
- 1/16: No School (MLK Jr. Observance)
- 1/19: Long Range Planning Team Meeting, 7:30 PM
- 1/20: HSA Meeting, 8:45 AM; Bingo Night @ Orchard, 6:30 PM
- 1/24: Winter Concert, 9 AM (Grades 4 & 5)
- 1/27: Harlem Wizards Game, 7 PM (RHS)
- 2/7: Kindergarten Registration, 3:30 PM
- 2/9: Kindergarten Registration, 3:30 PM