November 29, 2020

Happy Sunday Murray Parents:

We hope you and your families are safe and well.

**Retirement**

**Dr. Anona Dixon-Brown** recently retired from teaching. During her long and lustrous career as a teacher, she educated over 1000 students. (More than half were Murray students). Dr. Brown joined the Murray school community in 2005. The school community was fortunate to have had Dr. Brown for so many years as an educator and coach. Also, we watched her grow as a teacher/leader, all while achieving one of the highest degrees a university can award: Doctor of Education. We will all miss her charm, smiles, laughter, humor, kindness, grace, computer skills, intellect, passion, and her amazing husband, Mr. Sam Brown.

**Spam Emails to Students**

CPS reported today they received multiple reports of inappropriate emails sent to all district elementary students starting at roughly 10:17a.m. After investigation, CPS discovered that a Google Group established for elementary school students was set to allow “Comment Posting.” CPS systems were not compromised by an external hack or breach. The erroneous setting has been fixed, blocking further group posts. Moreover, the ITS team is working to remove any unread communications to the extent possible.

**Algebra**

Back in August of this school year, our Network 9 kicked off an Algebra initiative for 8th grade students. We had six students apply and enroll. Five of the 6 students made the Honor Roll for Quarter 1. We are so excited to have our Murray students participate and thrive in this Algebra Access & Equity Initiative. Additionally, our Murray math team is currently working on a curriculum alignment to include a full course of algebra for future 8th grade students.

**Family Income Information Form (FIIF)**

Thank you all for continuing to submit these forms. Our FIIF current rate is 91%! Our goal is 100%.

**The FIIF deadline has been extended to Friday, December 11th.** There are several options for submitting the Family Information Form:

* CORRECTED Email (murrayschoolforms5335@gmail.com)
* Fax (773-535-0590)
* Drop-off at Murray (M-T 9:00AM – 5:00PM or Fri. 9:00AM -4:00PM)
MOY Assessments
The NWEA assessment tool is not available to our students during remote learning. As a result, we do not have formal measures of achievement and growth data for our students. The NWEA data provided teachers “with accurate, and actionable evidence to help target instruction for each student or groups of students regardless of how far above or below they are from their grade level.”

As a work-around, our staff created Kg-8th grade Middle of the Year (MOY) assessments for math and reading. The assessment will be administered during the week of November 30, 2020.

Why do we assess students' learning?
We assess student learning to find out how well students are retaining what we are teaching. In other words, we want to know to what degree our students are accomplishing the learning outcomes we set for them. Ongoing assessment of student learning allows teachers to use the evidence of student learning to make judgments on student achievement against goals and standards.

To create the best assessment environment, we need your help. During these MOY assessments we ask that you:
  • Make sure the testing space is extra quite
  • Do Not assist students with any portion of the assessment
  • Not allow the students to use a calculator
  • Make sure that your student is present in all classes everyday
  • Make sure students turn on cameras

Accurate assessment data is key to supporting the teacher’s ability to develop new learning goals. Please note that these tests will not count towards a grade, nor will they be entered into Aspen. The assessment is for teacher planning only.

If the student is absent from school, a make-up will be administered the following week. Again, the assessment window for our MOY begins the week of November 30, 2020.

CPS Reopening Guidance
As we continue preparing to safely reopen school buildings in early 2021, we want to be sure you have all the information you need to make the choice that is right for your family. To make sure you receive information in a way that is clear, transparent, and easy to understand, our district has created a Reopening Guide for Parents.

This handbook summarizes our plan to safely welcome students back to school while also providing high-quality remote instruction for those children who will continue learning at home. As a reminder, CPS plans to welcome students in pre-k and moderate and intensive cluster programs back to in-person learning on Monday, January 11, with students in grades K-8 following three weeks later on Monday, February 1.

Our Reopening Guide is a living document that will expand over time and include helpful information on:
• Learning models and schedules for both in-person and remote learners
• Attendance and grading policies for all students
• Our plans for keeping all students and staff healthy and safe during in-person learning
• Tips on helping your children understand the health and safety protocols they will need to follow if they return to school, including wearing cloth face-coverings, maintaining social distancing, and engaging in good hand hygiene
• How we will prioritize students’ social-emotional health during this time of uncertainty and transition

STEM Opportunity for Students
Expand Your Horizons, a volunteer-based organization in Chicago, will host a one-day conferences to excite and inspire students to pursue careers in science and technology. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we will be fully online. We are happy to announce that we will be hosting our winter event virtually on December 5th, 2020 from 11 am - 4 pm.

At our December event, students will work side-by-side with women-identifying scientists and engage in three workshops that cover topics from fields within science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). In addition, the conference will feature an interactive panel of women in various science careers and a keynote speech by the science communicator Raven Baxter. More information about the organization and event are available on the EYH Chicago website, https://eyhchicago.com/.

Our conference is targeted to an audience of girls from 6th-8th grade, but anyone is welcome. Registration for the conference is open until December 1st for all students at: https://eyhchicago.com/student-registration-winter/

QUESTIONS? Shobhana Panuganti (shobhana@u.northwestern.edu) Jenny Wang (jennywang2022@u.northwestern.edu)

PARENTS – STAY CONNECTED WITH EACH OTHER!

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Upcoming dates
November 30th MOY Assessments
December 9th PTO/PAC Meeting @ 6:00PM
December 11th GoCPS Application deadline

We are Murray. We are one!
https://murray.cps.edu/