

February 2016

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Dates to Remember

Tuesday, February 2 -
3rd Marking Period
Begins

Friday, February 5 -
Report Cards Posted in
IC

February 8 - 12
Blue Ribbon Week

February 15 - 19 Winter
Recess
NO SCHOOL



Letter from the Principal



Dear Bay Trail Community,

It is hard to believe we are beginning our third marking period and the 2015-16 school year is half over. We are continuing to work with students around the character trait of Integrity. We are asking students to not only be honest with themselves and others, but also to "talk the talk and walk the walk." This is reflected in Bay Trail's motto:

Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Others, Take Care of Bay Trail

The Spirit Cup challenge relating to our character trait of Integrity took place at the end of January. Students and staff were asked to wear shirts representing something they stood for or believed in.

Penfield School District will once again be holding Blue Ribbon Week, February 8 to 12, to work together at spreading kindness and reducing bullying. Bay Trail and Penfield High School have Cool 2 Be Kind Clubs that are organizing dress up themes for the week. Details can be found under the News Tab on Penfield's website (www.penfield.edu). Bay Trail will have an assembly for each grade level on Tuesday, February 9. The presenter will be Sara Bayerl and she will be speaking to students about upstanding and spreading kindness when they are on social media.

Bay Trail's spring musical is Willy Wonka Jr. and will be held March 4, 5 and 6. Our Arts in Education Festival will also take place through the weekend. We hope you are able to come and experience the many talents our students will have on display.

This time of year our focus shifts to begin planning for the 2016-2017 school year. As a district we are in the midst of the budget process, continuing to balance the delivery of a high quality educational program while being fiscally responsible.

At Bay Trail, we will begin our scheduling process with the 6th graders selecting their LOTE class (Languages Other Than English) for next year. The 7th graders in General Music will be selecting from General Music, Guitar or Keyboards. Band, Orchestra and Chorus students will be scheduled for the same performing music classes they had this year. If students want to make a change in their performing music class, they should speak to their music teacher or counselor.

We will also be making house placements for our incoming 6th graders after the February vacation, with the incoming 6th grade parent orientation scheduled for the beginning of May. More information on that will be forthcoming.

I hope you have a safe and enjoyable mid-winter vacation.



Winton Buddington

Bay Trail Principal

[>>Our Mission](#)

Classroom Round Up

An innocent question from a sixth grader caused me to consider the Classroom Round Up in a new light this month. He asked, "Mrs. Graham, what do you do during all of your breaks? Do you go to that teacher room and hang out with your friends?" He asked so sweetly it made my teeth hurt. And then I tried very hard not to laugh out loud uncontrollably as he stood there waiting for an answer.

I took the time to explain that teachers have to plan and grade, talk to parents, answer emails, attend lots of meetings and...that's about when he was done listening and didn't really care about the answer any more. I think this particular student was secretly wishing I was going to tell him all about the game consoles in the faculty room.

But as I said, his question got me thinking... are there questions students and parents might have about the secret lives of teachers? Yes, everyone has gone through school, and known many teachers throughout their K-12 years, but education has changed a great deal since many parents sat in a classroom. You hear the buzz words: Common Core, learning targets, smartboards, assessment, etcetera, but what do they mean and how do they affect your child?

Which leads me to my point - I would like to take some time in the next several articles in the coming months to address specific questions you and your students may have about teaching and learning at Bay Trail. What would you really like to know besides what goes on in the faculty room?

Please send me your questions or ideas for topics and I will happily address them in the Trailblazer. And no, we don't have any game consoles in the Faculty Room (sigh).

Submitted by Karen Graham

PTA Faculty Liaison

From the BT Health Office

The SPRING Sports Season will begin in March. The Athletics Tab on the Penfield.edu website contains Coaches' contact information, the first day of try-out dates, Athletic forms and other relevant athletics information.

Hard copies of the Athletic forms are also available for middle school students in the Nurses' Office at BT. Please follow the checklist provided in the Athletic Forms packet. Forms are due in the Nurses' Office at least one week prior to the start of try-out/practices for each specific sport (see Sports By Season 2015-2016/1st Practice-Physical Dates) on the Athletics website, but no sooner than 30 days before the first try-out/practice date.

All completed sports paperwork for BT students should be submitted to the Nurses in the BT Health Office regardless of the level at which the student will be playing.

Physical Education This Month

Swimming

We have just completed our swimming unit. The students have been terrific and seemed to have a ball! Swimming is a lifetime activity that provides fun, outdoor recreation and especially fitness. Our area is well known for its lakes, boating and swimming-it is an important safety skill that we feel all children should have. The Penfield Community has many opportunities for your child to advance their swimming skills.

Intramurals

The students are finishing up their last week of floor hockey. Our new session of activity will begin on Monday, February 1st, which will be Badminton.

Interscholastics

As the winter season is coming to an end, congratulations to all who participated on their winter sport teams. As one season comes to an end, another will soon begin. There is no time like the present to start preparing yourself mentally and physically for your spring season. We wish you the best of luck.

[Penfield Sports Calendar](#)

Mental Health Minute

Ohmmmm...

School officials are frequently involved in conferences with parents. Most often, we gather for a conference when there is some level of concern with regard to a child's school performance. That is no secret. And while I don't keep strict data on this, I'd bet that 90% (and that's a conservative estimate) of the conferences I'm involved in have to do specifically with issues related to a child's work completion or lack thereof. It's often something to do with a kid's lack of organization, a lack of turning in assignments, a lack of writing in their planner (what planner?!), a lack of this, a lack of that.

Broadly speaking, these conferences most often have to do with problems with a child's executive functioning skills. It wouldn't be a bad idea, in fact, to rename the conferences. Instead of parent-teacher conferences, we should start having executive functioning conferences since that's really what we're talking about.

Sometimes medication is discussed, but that is almost always when ADHD is a known contributing factor. Parents might leave the conference with plans to check in with the pediatrician about a medication change, or they might bring in Vanderbilt forms for staff to complete to help determine the effectiveness of a certain medication.

What I don't recall happening is parents ever leaving with plans to get their kid a membership to a yoga studio, and yet there is a growing body of research indicating that, in fact, that might not be a bad idea. And while yoga is an easy example because of its huge popularity, what the research is really pointing to is the development of mindfulness. A brief mention of three studies helps to illustrate the point:

In one study at UCLA, Lisa Flook et al. (2010) looked at the effects of a school-based mindfulness program on executive functioning in elementary school students in Los Angeles, California. Pre- and post-tests by teachers and parents indicated an overall improvement in behavioral regulation and executive functioning in kids who participated in the mindfulness.

Looking more specifically at attention (just one of the skills that make up executive functioning), Dr. Maria Napoli and colleagues (2005) found that students who participated in an integrative mindfulness program at The

Attention Academy in Arizona showed improvements in attention and decreases in test anxiety.

In 2015, Drs. Diana Quach, Kristen Jastrowski Mano, and Kristi Alexander looked at mindfulness and its relationship to working memory (another executive functioning skill) in adolescents. Interestingly, they divided participants into three groups: a) meditation, b) yoga, and c) controls. The meditation group showed significant improvements in working memory whereas the control and yoga groups showed no improvement.

So will mindfulness help your kid turn in their next science lab? It's probably not that simple, and no one is saying that it's a panacea, even though the media attention it has garnered in the past decade might cause you to think so. There are other factors involved, such as simple motivation, basic brain development and biology, etc. But the research does indicate that there are ways to help kids improve their executive functioning skills, and one such way that might be worthy of our consideration is through the development of mindfulness. Wouldn't it be something if, at some future parent-teacher conference, a question were asked not about a child's medication, but rather, his meditation?

In lieu of APA style citations, the studies mentioned above, as well as others, can be found on:

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/854641>

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X15003808>

<http://mindfulyouth.org/research.html>

<http://www.pbs.org/thebuddha/teachers-guide/#sixteen>

NURSES' NOTES

ATTENTION PARENTS:

Meningococcal Vaccine

School Requirements for September 2016

If your child has a physical exam scheduled with his/her doctor, you may wish to discuss this upcoming immunization requirement with them. [Click here](#) for information regarding the state's requirements.

The Social Cognition Approach to Teaching Social Skills

Wednesday., February 24 @ 7pm - 8:00pm

Bay Trail Library

Presenter: Marybeth Fussa; M.S. Ed., Owner/Director of ProSocial Thinking

Learn about the social cognition approach to teaching social interaction. As owner and director of ProSocial Thinking in East Rochester, Marybeth has provided innovative methods for helping students understand what most learn intuitively. Social cognition is for anyone who struggles with making and keeping friends, reading social situations and the intentions of others, and understanding social roles in family, school and peer contexts. When students can learn to predict the outcome of their choices, they can take control of the impact they have on their world and be more satisfied and successful in their interactions throughout life. Many students of social cognition have diagnoses of ASD or Non-Verbal Learning Disability, but many do not! It's for anyone who wants to enhance social relationships!

*****All are Welcome to Attend*****



<http://penfield-septa.org> Find us on Facebook

This

s program is offered for informational purposes only and does not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the PTA or the Penfield Central School District.

Last Chance to Register for Penfield Little League

The final days of Penfield Little League Registration are upon us! February 15th is the deadline for registration with anyone registering after being put on a waiting list. We are in the process of putting teams together now, so don't miss out! Register now at www.penfieldbaseball.com.

The deadline for submissions to the next Trailblazer is **February 26th**.

Please email submissions to trailblazer@baytrailpta.org