



McPolin Elementary Office Updates February 2nd, 2022

Dear parents and caregivers,

Where is the time going? I barely remember welcoming us all back from the December break and here we are welcoming February. Another mile marker to recognize and celebrate. All of our success and continued consecutive days of perfect in-person learning is possible only because of US and our collective commitment to our students, school, and each other – ALL for One and One for ALL. Given these circumstances, I thought it best to share some reminders and thoughts on supporting our young students.

Thank you to all of us for finding ways to adapt to the on-going and evolving changes not just in school, but our daily lives caused by the COVID 19 pandemic. Fortunately, our schools continue to offer in-person learning, but many of our usual activities and interactions outside of school continue to be drastically different. Along with the unfortunate closing of certain businesses that have impacted our community and McPolin families, all of us have been adjusting to the new normal. This includes trying to keep children occupied, feeling safe, and attempting to keep up with schoolwork as best as possible. NONE of this is easy, and it helps to stay focused on what is possible to establish a certain amount of control and to reassure our students they are okay, and that the situation will get better.

A reminder that it is important to recognize that children look to adults for guidance, especially during stressful events. Acknowledging some level of concern, without panicking, is appropriate. Teaching and/or supporting children with positive reassurances, talking with them about their fears, and giving them a sense of some control can help reduce anxiety. This is also a tremendous opportunity for adults to model for children problem-solving, flexibility, and compassion as we all work through adjusting daily schedules, balancing work and other activities. I thought to offer some “tips” and creative ideas on how to spend time, support friends and family members, and basically manage our on-going COVID 19 environment:

- Stay calm, listen, and offer reassurances:
 - Children will react and follow our lead.
- Be aware of how we talk about COVID 19:
 - We can decrease our child's fear. Remind them that your family is healthy, and you are going to do everything within your power to keep loved one's safe and well. Have them draw or write out their thoughts and feelings and respond with truth and reassurance.
- Focus on the positive:
 - Celebrate having more time to spend as a family. Make it as fun as possible. Do family projects. Sing, laugh, and go outside, if possible, connect with nature and get needed exercise.
- Establish and maintain a daily routine/schedule:
 - Keeping a regular schedule provides a sense of control, predictability, calm, and well-being.
- Monitor watching television, social media, and screen time in general.
- Take time to talk – let your children's questions lead you.
- Stay connected to school:
 - Take advantage of these “Updates” the McPolin Moment videos, and Classroom DoJo are just a few ways to stay connected.
 - ATTEND PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES.

Be on the lookout for changes in your children's behavior such as irritability, aggressiveness, clinginess, nightmares, school avoidance, poor concentration, and withdrawal from activities and friends. If you do recognize any of these changes, do not hesitate to contact us for assistance.

In the end, these suggestions are just as important for adults. We have made an explicit effort at McPolin to make our personal well-being our #1 priority. We understand, we need to first take care of ourselves as we are to be at our best for others. So far, I am confident we have done all we can as a school and a community. As this unprecedented situation continues, we will continue to honor this priority of self-care and the care of others.

I am resolute in my belief that we have done all we can. This marathon is not over and our resolve to be here for our students, our staff, and our community only grows stronger. Thank you to all of us for doing our best. By keeping safety our #1 priority I continue to share with absolute confidence – We Got This!

Sincerely,
Bob Edmiston

Important Dates:

- REMINDER: Friday, February 4th – Last day of GOAP:
 - Best to arrive at school early to help students with equipment:
- REMINDER: Parent/Teacher Confs – Mon., 1/31/22 – Thurs. 2/10/22
 - Be looking for information from your teachers

ONGOING - COVID INFORMATION:

- STAY HOME UNTIL YOU RECEIVE COVID TEST RESULTS. We have a number of situations when families tested and kept coming to school to only learn later they are positive creating a number of challenging situations
- WE WILL NO LONGER BE CALLING HOME ABOUT COVID. We will send notes and always welcome your feedback.