



LITTLE BEARS' WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

In the news...



First PTA Meeting will be held this Thursday, October 22nd @ 3:45 in the outdoor pavilion located in the elementary playground. Attendance is limited to 25 people due to COVID restrictions. Please bring a chair and masks are encouraged. A Virtual Meeting Invite will be sent to all current members Thursday morning. Hope to see you there!!

Bear Wear is expected to be delivered by October 23rd.



Halloween Costumes and Parties

We want everyone to have a fun but safe day on October 29th. Our leadership team is going to be sharing more details soon, but we are considering covid restrictions and possible activities we can hold while abiding by mandates. So far, we talked about allowing students to wear school appropriate costumes. Kindergarteners can wear them to school, and 1st-5th graders can change before class parties. Please plan on costumes with no gore, no weapons, and no full-face coverings. Store bought or restaurant prepared treats can be shared at parties, but not homemade goods until our safety and health mandates are lifted. We hope to share more details soon! Thank you!

Principal's Corner

Dear Little Bear Families,

No apologies for the dirty clothes... I walked past our sandbox this week and a student was knee deep with the proudest grin on his face. I couldn't help but smile and tear up a little. Seeing all of those grins on the children's faces just warmed my heart so much. Hearing them squeal "Ms. McCormick, LOOK!" as they pulled me towards their sand sculptures was the highlight of my day! School is so much more than academics...I am so very grateful to be here in-person! I will never be able to convey that enough.

While social interactions are awesome, our curriculum is to be applauded, too! I included a couple of pictures below from our classrooms with teachers implementing our Core Knowledge curriculum. Many are adding creative touches like using puppets, reading outside, having students create their own books to read, and much more. I'll be so glad when parents are allowed in schools again, so all of you can see the effects of using this engaging curriculum in person!. Until then, I'll try to share as much as I can and hope your children will tell you about their experiences, as well! I hope you enjoy your long weekend and thank you for sharing your children with us during the week! We are honored by the privilege!

Warmly,
Lurleen McCormick





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Upcoming events:

- October 22nd – Report Cards go home
- October 26th at 5:30 to 6:30 PM – District Accountability Committee meeting at the District office.
- October 26–29th – Red Ribbon Week
- October 29th – Costume class parties (details coming soon!)
- Oct. 30th – No School



IMPORTANT UPDATES:

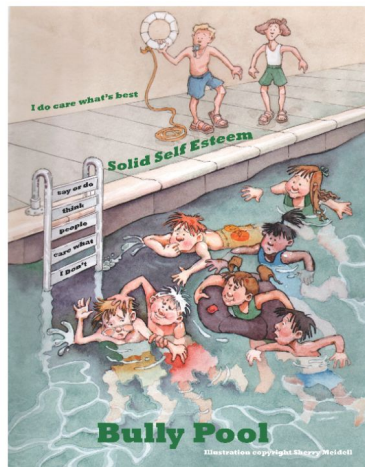
***Masks:** We have noticed that many of the same students are requesting masks when they enter the building in the mornings. Will you please have children clean out backpacks to see if they can find any of the cloth ones we have given away? If you can put a spare in their backpacks for use each day that would be helpful, too. We will only be giving out the disposable ones from now on and really appreciate your help with this!

***Volunteer packets and background check:** please request a packet and return it soon if you plan on helping with any of our up-coming outdoor parties and activities! Thanks so much!

Counselor's Corner

The three steps to follow if someone is being mean:

#1. Quit caring about the put down, or in other words, get out of the bully pool! (Remember . . . safe school violations need to be reported immediately. As enumerated last week . . . they are physical harm, property damage or any kind of sexual harassment or sexually inappropriate behavior). For everything else, if they don't get any kind of a reaction, the majority of children will stop being mean. And if it happens to be a true bully (very rare) and all they get is pity . . . they will definitely stop.



#2. Keep track in private on paper. Paper is power and even a kindergartner

Other Announcements:

Kindergarten enjoying Core Knowledge curriculum:



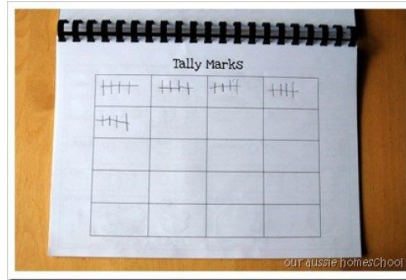
3rd graders focused on



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can make tally marks to indicate how often the cruelty is occurring. Keeping a record of the mean behavior accomplishes a number of very important things. First, it shows frequency. In order to prove you are being bullied you must show that it has happened over time.

It is also accurate. Our brains tend to distort things related to time. It might exaggerate and make you feel like it happens all the time, when in fact it only happened once or twice. On the flipside, some brains will minimize and make you feel like it hasn't happened that often, when in reality it is happening multiple times a day, every day. No wonder you feel like crying so much lately!



It is also empowering. If your record shows that the cruelty is happening a lot, it helps you to see that it is not your fault. If your record shows that it is not that frequent, it helps you to let it go. If your record shows frequency at first and then a drop off and finally an end to the cruelty, then you know you have solved your own problem. Celebrate! If it shows that the problem has not stopped and is not getting any better or it is getting worse, then you know it is time and you won't be afraid to report. If it keeps getting worse despite acting like you don't care, do not let it go more than a week or so before turning in your report.

It motivates you not to "Bully Back!" You don't have to bully back because you know you can put it on your report. There is no need to perseverate and ruminate on the cruelty either, because it is written down . . . that will free your mind to think about happier things and that in turn prevents depression. You will be able to put a stop to the cruel behavior. Knowing this helps keep you from getting discouraged, which discouragement is what motivates the "bully back."

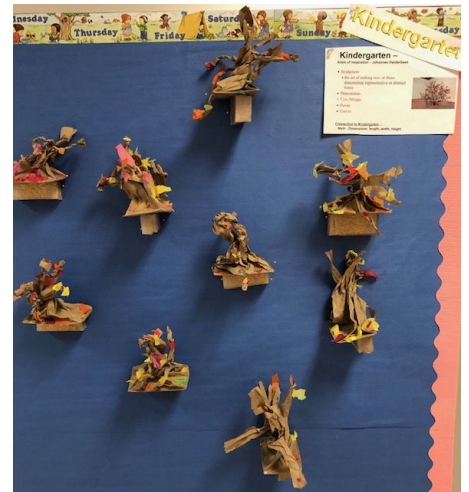


Parents need to know that most children will need help keeping the report. I recommend keeping track on a calendar or in a notebook near where you do homework. If your student is getting bullied you can ask . . . "Is there anything to report today?" Encourage them to remember it is the bully we feel the most sorry for. Help them make a plan of who ELSE they will play with or where

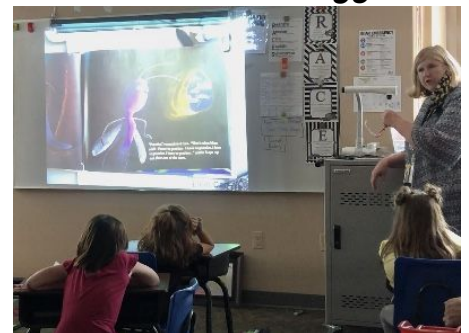
Core Knowledge Read aloud:



Kindergarten Fall art sculptures:



Counselor Susan Miller gives lessons on "Yet, Else, and Me" strategy





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ELSE they will play. Also make sure you help them mark the date and any other information you can . . . where it happened and who else was present. Did the other people stand by or did they speak up to help you in any way? An extinction burst is when it gets worse before it gets better. Help your child see that that is a good sign and an indication that it will probably go away for good soon. One final note . . . if they let the bully know they are keeping track and making a written report . . . that is a bully back and shows them how much you do care about what they think. If they tell all their friends they are keeping track . . . that is gossip and also a form of bullying back. Help them not to be tempted to do it. The report must be kept in private and turned in privately as well.

#3. Don't bully back. The other piece crucial to proving that you have been bullied is that you need to prove there was an imbalance of power. The bully can have the power because of age, size, strength, numbers, aggressive personality, etc. But if you don't bully back and you don't react in any way . . . in spite of the fact that you have the internal psychological power . . . externally, for discipline purposes, you have given the bully a sense of temporary power. It helps you prove that you have been bullied. Please don't mistake this for weakness. You are managing the bully's aggressive behavior: a masterful skill that will benefit you for the rest of your life.

Many parents encourage their kids to bully back. "Hit them back! Then they'll leave you alone!" or "Just say this: _____ back to them" and they help them formulate the perfect put down as a come back. While sometimes this will put a stop to the bullying for that child, it reinforces bullying in general. We fight cruelty with cruelty and everyone learns that cruelty is the answer. Every

superhero movie reinforces this myth. What we don't advertise and what is the most important reason of all not to bully back is that it de-stabilizes the self-esteem of the victim . . . when before their self esteem was usually in tact. Almost all school shooters are bullying back. Victims almost always have good social skills and supportive families and they bounce back from bullying in most cases without any permanent repercussions. Bullies on the other hand have severe social and or empathy deficits . . . a lifelong disability that needs professional help. Bullying back sends the message to their own soul that this is the behavior we value. It literally turns them into the bully and in fact puts them at much higher risk for depression and possible suicidal tendencies than they ever had before . . . even if depression was not a part of their genetic make-up to begin with. Even wishing and hoping and fantasizing about the bully back will put them at higher risk for depression.

Don't Bully Back



Emotional Support Dogs visit playground during recess





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These three steps are powerful. They are empirically sound. Dan Olweus, the world's leading authority on bullying has made it clear that the two most powerful ways to put a stop to bullying are to #1. Increase supervision and #2, Empower bystanders. Keeping a record is a powerful way to increase supervision when putting cameras in the school or more adults at recess is beyond a child's control or the district's budget. Teaching all the students that the bully is the one we feel sorry for . . . empowers them all . . . victim and bystander alike to not be afraid and it takes away the bullies sense of power. Not bullying back teaches the bullies that no one cares. We can put a stop to it before it starts and if it has already started we can put a stop to it in a much more powerful and long lasting way!

The fact of the matter is bullying is messy business. These three steps will help clean up that mess. Remember, bullying is not just against the school rules, it is against the law. And these steps work just as well for adults as they do for children. As always feel free to contact me if you have any questions or your child is being bullied or needs to feel more empowered.



Sincerely,
Susan Leavitt Miller

Community Announcements:

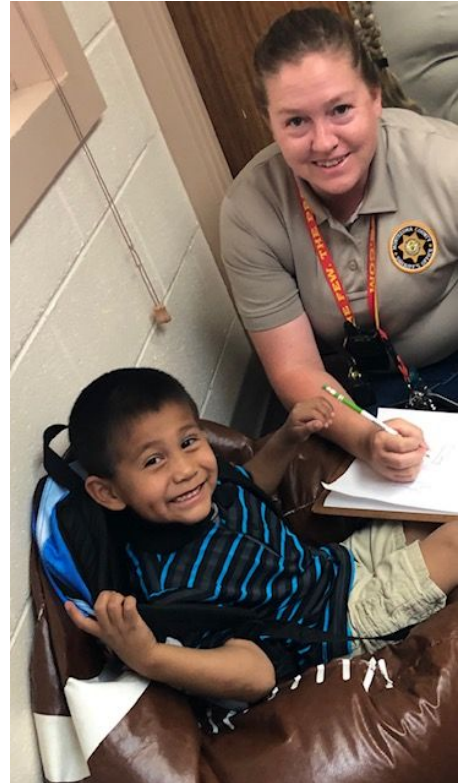
Tech Tuesday

Oct 20 | 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm



Have a basic tech question you'd like to troubleshoot? Come by the Dolores Library on Tuesdays between 2-4 p.m. and a staff member can assist you.

SRO, Deputy Green, sharing her artistic talents:



Launching fitness in PE

