Hello MBES families!

It is hard to believe that it is already December! Your students and their teachers have been working extremely hard this semester to meet teaching and learning goals. Our overall target is to meet your students where they are and to support their needs so that they can achieve growth this school year.

December is a full month – and it goes by very quickly! Please continue to support your student(s) in being at school on time, every day, ready to learn, so that they don't miss out on the critical learning and instruction that will take place during this time.

As always, parents/guardians are invited to attend PTO meetings held on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm and take place in our Community Room.

Please join us for our next PTO meeting on Tuesday, February 4th!

On Tuesday, January 7th in lieu of PTO we will joining/attending the DAC (District Accountability Committee) meeting at High Plains K8 school.

I hope you all have a wonderful winter break!

Happy Holidays!

Valerie Lara-Black
Important Dates

December 2nd-January 10th - Open Enrollment Window
December 3rd  
December 5th  
December 13th  
December 20th  
December 23th- January 3rd - Winter Break (No School)

January 6th  
January 8th  
January 20th  
January 22nd  
January 31st

Upcoming Spirit Days

12/20/2019  
1/31/2020  
2/28/2020  
3/27/2020  
4/24/2020  
5/15/2020
Open Enrollment

Thompson School District’s open enrollment period for the 2020-2021 school year has now begun. Please see the image below for more details.

To learn more and to apply, please visit www.thompsonschools.org/
Winter break

There will be NO SCHOOL from Monday, December 23rd-January 3rd. Students will resume school on January 6th. Have a safe and enjoyable Winter Break!

Maintaining Academic Growth over Break

Students have worked very hard so far this school year to make gains toward their end-of-year academic goals! It is common, however, for some students to slide back a bit over a long break, such as Winter Break.

How can you encourage your child to maintain their academic growth over a break? Consider a variety of games and activities that you can do as a family or while traveling.

Here is an article that might support you in the area of math…

Doing Mathematics with Your Child
ERIC Digest
by Martin D. Hartog and Patricia A. Brosnan

Parents have the wonderful opportunity and responsibility for nurturing children. This nurturing process takes place in several areas of development: physical, emotional and intellectual. While parents can usually find time to read a story to their children; thereby, instilling a love for literature, they are often at a loss as to how to instill a love and appreciation for mathematics.

Like reading, mathematics is a subject that is indeed necessary for functioning adequately in society. More than that, mathematics is a subject that should be more enjoyable than it sometimes is. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) has identified the appreciation and enjoyment of mathematics as one of the national goals for mathematics education. This goal, coupled with the task of nurturing children’s confidence in their ability to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve real-life problems, is a challenge facing every parent today.

http://www.math.com/parents/articles/domath.html

Additionally, there are many opportunities to support students in reading…

All students have access to RAZ-kids, and online reading program that offers a fun and interactive way to support student growth in reading.

https://www.kidsa-z.com/main/Login

Our computer lab page also has links to lots of educational and typing websites.

https://www.thompsonschools.org/Page/14186
Middle-of-the-Year Academic Assessments

All students in grades 1-5 will be taking the iReady Reading and iReady Math Diagnostic assessment during the month of December. The testing window opened on Monday, December 9th. Kindergarteners will also be taking middle-of-the-year FAST and Kinder Math assessments. These are what we refer to as “benchmark assessments”. These assessments are administered three times per year in order to allow us to see how our students are growing along their grade-level standard continuum. We also use this information to make instructional decisions to ensure that we are all on track to meet our end of the year goals. Students are also working with their teachers to set personal goals and to decide what they need to do to help themselves to grow as a learner! We will be sending “Parent Reports” home with students just before break.

Winter Program

We want to congratulate Ms. Hines on her first winter program at Mary Blair. The winter program, “Around The World: Celebrating Winter and it’s Holidays” was a hit! Parents and staff were very impressed with the great vocal arrangement and musical instruction from the students and Ms. Hines. We owe a very big “THANK YOU” to Thompson Valley High School for their support, and use of their auditorium.

A Musical Note

Winter Program Thank You!

Thank you to all of you who attended and supported our winter program, *Around the World, Celebrating Winter and Its Holidays*, at Thompson Valley High School. By now, your child should have a handmade instrument that they made for the performance. If not, please let me know.

*Continued....*
A very special thank you to our amazing volunteers, families, teachers, staff, and principals who helped with so many behind the scene aspects of the program, including transporting 40 drums and instruments to and from TVHS. I especially wish to thank parent volunteers Erin Lambert and Janelle from Big T and David and Holly Mann from Mary Blair who literally and physically did the heavy lifting. And I understand we had several parent volunteers at Mary Blair who assisted students in making instruments alongside our wonderful art teacher.

Conrad Ball (Middle School) Ambassadors were also tremendous help at the Mary Blair concert. They helped set up the stage, put away drums after the performance, helped with instruments, and much more.

We also had a number of other volunteers, including LoveUke and Djembe Jive. Nancy Brauhn-Curnes and Djembe Jive came into the schools and worked with 5th grade students for over a month on drumming. Catherine Huang assisted 3rd grade with their Mandarin Chinese song, Bei Fang Chre or The North Wind Blows.

Students are writing thank you notes to volunteers. A sincere thank you to all!

**Fall Musical Activities** K-5 students had the opportunity to explore ukuleles, keyboards, music composition in the style of J.S. Bach, seasonal songs and games, hip hop, and more. In addition to the winter program, students also presented a memorable Veterans Day program with support from the Veterans of Foreign Wars. At both schools, students lined their schools with American flags honoring our military members. Mary Blair students were also invited to sing the Star-Spangled Banner on the TVHS field before a Mountain View High School football game.

**Upcoming Winter Musical Activities** TVHS Choir If the TVHS Choir can fit us into their schedule, they will be stopping by to sing at both schools. We can’t wait!

**10-Minute Talent Shows** Starting the week before winter break, students at both schools are invited to perform in our 10-Minute Talent Show. All presentations are optional. Students can sing, dance, play an instrument, tell a school appropriate joke, do gymnastics or sports such as karate, or show off any other talent they have. Talent shows are planned for once a month in the music room with a school-wide talent show at the end of the school year.

**Loveland CreatorSpace** The Board of Directors at Loveland CreatorSpace have invited our 5th grade students at both Big T and Mary Blair to work with them on creating their very own musical wooden tone-boxes. Students will first be instructed on how to use software to design their boxes and then CreatorSpace members will travel to the school to help the students actually make the tone-boxes. This will be a pilot program. If successful, other grade-level students will be invited to create their own musical instruments. CreatorSpace members have also graciously and quietly been repairing school instruments for us, including ukuleles, dulcimers, and more. Members will also help us put together our modern band instruments donated from the organization, Little Kids Rock, over winter break so that we can begin using these instruments in January.

**FACE Vocal Group**~ The entire 4th grade at both schools have been invited to hear FACE vocal group at the Rialto Theater in February. Stay tuned for more information.
A Musical Note, continued...

_CardioDrumming and STOMP_ In collaboration with the P.E. teachers at Big T and Mary Blair, I plan to get cardio-drumming and STOMP classes going. If you have the following items to donate, please let us know:

- Large exercise balls
- Drumsticks
- Metal pots and pans
- Large plastic bins

_Recorders for 4th Grade_ All 4th grade students in Thompson School District have received their very own recorders to keep. 4th graders at both Big T and Mary Blair will begin instruction on their recorders after winter break. When the students are finished with instruction, students can take their instruments home.

Heads up from the Health Office

With the change in the weather, the hats came back out, and now is a good time for parents to be on the alert for head lice. Head lice are a common childhood affliction. All places where children get together are places where head lice can be transferred. Clean hair and home are no guarantee that head lice will not find your child.

From time to time as a precaution, school staff may check for head lice in the classroom on an _as needed_ basis just to be certain that there is no notable incidence of lice. If any concerns arise, the family of affected students will be notified. **PLEASE remember that although lice can be a communicable condition, having this condition poses no real threat to health. Schools are _not_ often the place where head lice are spread. State Health Department guidelines note sleepover with friends and relatives is a common way the condition passes from home to home.

Please feel free to contact the Health Office (613 6403) should your child present with itching of the scalp, but you are uncertain if lice or nits are seen in the hair. We can help you gain clarity and to guide you in treatment options, should the presence of nits or lice be confirmed.

Thank you,

Barbara Ramsay RN, School Nurse

Cold & Flu Season

Cold and flu season is upon us and during the school year schools are prime areas for sharing germs. To help defend against illness, here are a few tips:

- Ensure your child/children get the proper amount of sleep each night. This will help with their defense against illness and allow them to have a productive day in school.
- General good hygiene practices and good hand washing is recommended. We ask kids to “cover their cough” and wash their hands after blowing their nose.
- Talk with your health provider about the benefits of a flu shot this season.
It’s Cold Weather Time

Please help your child remember to dress warmly and to wear coats, hats and gloves on cold days. Recess is a very important part of our day, so we'll go outside for morning/afternoon and lunch recess unless the temperature is 15 degrees or below. We do account for the wind-chill factor. It is very helpful if their names or initials are written somewhere on their belongings so that they can be claimed if misplaced. Stop by the Lost & Found to reclaim any lost items. All items left at school will be donated to the local charity before we leave for Winter Break. Please feel free to contact the office with questions.

Attendance at school on party/celebration/event days

If a student is not present at school on days when there is a pre-planned party, celebration, or event, we ask that you also do not send them for the party, celebration or event. This is especially important in instances where they are ill. Please contact Mrs. Lara-Black with questions.

Veterans Day and Flag Sales

Thank you Mary Blair families for your help with the Mary Blair Veteran’s Day Project, the flags looked lovely along 29th Street. The flags were displayed for 4 days total, during school hours, approximately 140 flags were sold and on display. We raised $290.00 to donate to the Associated Veterans of Loveland Association. Awesome Community support! Thank you!!

Conrad Ball Middle School

We want to recognize the “Conrad Ball Student Ambassadors” These are a group of students that take time out of their busy schedules to support students at Mary Blair. These students were a tremendous help with the handcrafted musical instruments and making our winter program a success. Look for them in the orange t-shirts at our upcoming events.
PTO News

PTO Minutes 11/5/2019
Meeting called to order at 6:05

In Attendance:
Holly Mann, Valerie Lara-Black, Katrina Hatch, Leticia Fick, Sarah Rodden, Melissa Hughes, Shawn Hughes, Kodi Clark, Allen Alexander, Tanya Brown, Leighana Gadecki, Brandee Kesler, Katherine Mosley, Mary Chase

Review Minutes from 10/1/2019:
Approved by Melissa and 2nd by Allen

Treasury Report:
Current Account Balance $22,765.29
Budget 1,200.00: Over budget by $1,200 approximately, t-shirts is the reason, but needs to be submitted for reimbursement. Val, Allen and Katrina will be working on submitting receipts and looking on how we can maximize the $4,500 available to us from the Banner foundation.

$13,639.99 net profit from the Bobcat Dash

Volunteer Needs:
~Volunteers are needed to help with Art assistance by Con Ball Ambassadors

~Snack Wagon November 8th. Allen and Sarah will be doing this shortly after school starts.

~Day of Play, November 26th

Teacher Requests:
None at this time

Principal Update:
Brainstorming session with teachers. Possibly start inviting specific grade level parents invited by teachers and accompanying them to the meeting to make it easier. Topics will be specific to the grade level needs and family requests. Possibly send out survey to fit the needs of the families. Possibly have a facebook live PTO meeting?

Continued
PTO News, continued...

Other Business:
Breakfast with your “Bobcat” an expansion of “grandparents breakfast”
Day of Play, November 26th
Ambassadors available to come assist
Explore our community partnership with events
Rotary having lunch with students or using our meeting space
Assistant principals happened today

Meeting Adjourned 6:51, Next Meeting December 3rd from 6:00-7:00pm

PTO Minutes 12/3/2019
Meeting called to order at 6:02 PM

In Attendance:
Holly Mann, Valerie Lara-Black, Katrina Hatch, Leticia Fick, Sarah Rodden, Kodi Clark, Adam Clark, Mary Chase, Janet Seter

Review Minutes from 11/5/2019 :
Approved by Katrina and 2nd by Mary Chase

Treasury Report:
Current Account Balance:
Allen is not here but he is working on the grant reimbursement.

Volunteer Needs:
~ Thursday Night Winter Program, Val will attempt to meet with Con Ball Ambassadors to discuss what they are able to assist with. Possibly moving equipment on and off stage.

Teacher Requests:
None at this time

Principal Update:
~Day of Play (2hrs) postponed because of the snow day. Rescheduled for December 6th
~Winter Program Clarification, Kids drop off 5:30 at TVHS, program starts at 5:45
~Pajama Day December 20th
~PIE (Parents IN Education) Night- We would like to get one scheduled
~SAC (School Accountability Committee) We would like to have 2 per year and it's too late now to get two scheduled, but would like to get one scheduled.
~Family Events Committee can meet to discuss scheduling events
~Survey for Hot Topics and future Bobcat Dash spending options (community, families and staff)
PTO News, continued...

Other Business:
~It was suggested to make colored signs to hang up at TVHS
~Holly will be checking into obtaining a MBES PTO email address
~DAC (District Accountability Committee)
~December 10th 5-7 PM at Winona Elementary- Disaggregated Data
~January 7th World Cafe 5-7 PM at High Plains Elementary social emotional learning and discipline data
~Katrina proposed a “Hot Topic” discussion to attract new attendees
~Janet Seter from ConBall (feeder school) asked to celebrate CBMS students. CBMS Students had the highest growth in testing for the district and she would love to have CBMS come cheer on all their hard work. ~Also CBMS will make a flyer (265) to send home for Friday the 6th with more details.
~Playground equipment is needed and is a possibility for spending some of this years funds. Other ideas is a mascot or sculptor of a bobcat.
~Need to redo by-laws for PTO and SAC over the summer.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:06PM,

January 7th Meeting will be the District DAC Meeting 5-7PM at High Plains,
Next PTO Meeting February 4th 6-7PM
Parking Lot - Pick up and drop off:

Please help us to keep our children safe by observing these reminders:

29th Street is a main thoroughfare and should not be used for drop-off or pick-up purposes at any time.

Both east and west parking lots on 29th St. will continue to be closed to private vehicles during drop-off (7:45-8:00) and pick-up (3:00-3:20) times.

The west lot will be accessed by buses and day-care vehicles ONLY at drop-off and pick up times. The main (west) MBES parking lot will be available for visitors and staff parking throughout the day and for evening events.

- Please access the building via the horseshoe/loop drive-through and parking lot between MBES and Conrad Ball.

- Drop students off and pick them up along the sidewalk on the loop – this keeps them from running in front of cars and other traffic.

- If you are going to be leaving your vehicle, please use one of the designated parking spots in the ConBall parking lot – do not leave unattended vehicles in the loop/horseshoe.

- Please watch out for staff members and other pedestrians in the crosswalk as they are moving through the parking lot, remember that pedestrians have the right of way. Staff members are on duty during drop-off and pick-up times, please help us by following their directions and modeling respectful behavior toward these volunteers.

I highly encourage you to consider walking, car-pooling or using the school bus if it is available to you – not only is this a great way to eliminate congestion in our parking areas, but it is also great for the environment!

How To Become a Volunteer
https://www.thompsonschools.org/
Page/2277
How to stay informed/involved throughout the school year

There are many studies which show that involved parents and families substantially increase the achievement levels of students.

Your involvement can include:

- Encouraging students to read and/or practice math activities each night,
- Providing your students with a distraction-free location in which to do their homework,
- Ensuring that your students get plenty of sleep and a healthy breakfast each day
- Volunteering in the classroom and at school activities,
- Reviewing the monthly MBES newsletter to stay abreast of current information pertinent to Mary Blair.
- Participating in the Parent Teacher Organization. **PTO meetings occur on the first Tuesday of each month from 6 to 7pm.** FREE child care is provided for school age students.

Please be sure to update your Infinite Campus accounts regularly. We communicate using email, text messages, voice calls and Friday Folders. If we do not have updated contact information for you, you might miss out on important communication!

Ways to Support Mary Blair

2. Select Sign-In, if you do not have a digital account, you will need to create one.
3. Select My Account from the drop down menu.
4. Click on Community Rewards under Account Summary
5. Under Find and Organization: Enter Mary Blair Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization or FV781
6. Click Enroll!

**Here’s How:**

**SUPPORT YOUR KIDS AND MARY Blair PTO**
**WHEN SHOPPING AT...**

**amazon smile**

You Shop. Amazon Gives.

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Mary Blair Elementary Parent Teacher Organization whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.

**Here’s How:**

1. Open [www.amazonSmile.com](http://www.amazonSmile.com) and sign in.
2. Go to Your Account & select Change Your Charity.
3. Choose Mary Blair Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization as your designated charity.
4. Whenever making purchases go to [www.amazonSmile.com](http://www.amazonSmile.com)