April 2019

Dear Lakeridge Students and Families,

Spring has sprung! Along with April showers and May flowers comes the fast-paced whirlwind of third trimester and the ever-approaching end of the school year. Before we barely catch our breath from winter, we'll be preparing for Summer Break and next year. So, let's take a mindful minute to be present and in the moment together...[One-minute pause for deep relaxation breaths!]...Okay, we're ready!

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Who's Principal Christensen?

It's me. I'm sure you may have already heard, but I got married over mid-winter break! I am in the process of changing my last name to Christensen, or, as many of the students say, Principal Christensen. It might be a little confusing for the next couple of months, but we'll start out next year with just Mrs. Christensen or Principal Christensen!

Thank you all so deeply for the many congratulations and well-wishes. I'm blessed and thrilled to share this event with my amazing Lakeridge community and especially with all of your super cool Lakeridge Lions!

Kindergarten Enrollment Information

We so look forward to this time of the year when we get to start meeting our future littlest Lakeridge Lions! In March and April, all staff here at Lakeridge (and every school!) really start ramping up planning for the next school year. We need your help in locating and enrolling our future Kindergarten Lions. Do you have a 2019-2020 Kindy at home? Do your neighbors? Do your child’s playmates at daycare know it’s time to register? The earlier, the better when it comes to Kindergarten enrollment, so give us a call and we’ll help you through the process!

Special Considerations for Student Placement form

Each year in May, MISD opens up a two-week window for parents from all four elementary schools to submit their input regarding their student’s class placement for the next school year. You will receive notification via email from the district that will contain a live link when the form is available and open. This year’s window for submissions will be May 1-15.

These parent input forms including the directions for use (explained on the form) and the deadline for submission are very important indeed, but certainly not required and often not necessary. To explain further how I could be saying their so important but often not necessary, I’d like to share briefly how class placement is done here at Lakeridge.
The class placement process is quite lengthy and in-depth for us. We spend most of May and the first bit of June working on the new lists. The teachers discuss every (yes, every!) student individually and deeply consider all the student dynamics of the new class for the next year. We consider academic strengths and challenges, social-emotional and behavioral needs, past histories and experiences, special needs, extenuating circumstances, and any other information we can gather. We include ALL staff who work with kids including, but not limited to, our specialist teachers, school counselor, school psychologist, support staff, Learning Support staff, playground supervisors, special education staff, administration and previous/past year’s teachers in our work to make the best classes possible for the upcoming school year. Finally, parent input from the Special Considerations forms enters the process and we eventually “close the books” on the last student day of the current year. Those “books” then aren’t opened for any reason until mid-August when only administration makes any moves and generally moves are only made to enroll new students over the summer. It’s an extremely intensive process and sometimes it’s akin to trying to predict the future, but we all believe it is worth every minute. Creating balanced classes is in everyone's best interest and we’re happy to invest in a great school year for all!

CURRENT 4th GRADE PARENTS ONLY: Enrollment for 5th Grade Accelerated Math
Each year, MISD sends out a letter to the parents of all fourth grade students to select either Accelerated or Traditional math for the following school year. Similar to last year, you will receive a letter (electronic) from MISD on June 1st with information and a live link to a form to make your selection for your child. The window for making your selection is June 1-15, 2019.

Smarter Balanced State Testing Information
Our 3rd, 4th and 5th graders have begun their annual state testing called the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA/SBAC) for English Language Arts (ELA) and Math. Our 5th graders also take a state test called the Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS) in April as well. To learn more about the state assessments, please visit our MISD Assessment Home Page or please visit the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction’s (OSPI) Assessment/Testing homepage.

State Assessments for 2018-2019 SY:
• 3rd, 4th, 5th SBA ELA – March 25-26
• 3rd, 4th, 5th SBA Math – April 29-30
• 5th WCAS Science – April 25

As the seasons change...
Just a couple reminders as we move into sunny, warm weather with longer days. Please remember that it is for your child’s safety and wellness that we ask for your support and partnership with both of these reminders. Together we make Lakeridge a pretty special and safe place for kids to spend their very important early years!

• Arrival/Dismissal: On nicer days, kids tend to arrive much earlier and stay much later on our school grounds. Please remind your children that our playground is closed 8:45am-9:15am and then after school 3:45-4:00pm (Wednesdays 2:05-2:15pm). We do not provide supervision for before and after school use of grounds. During these times, we also ask that no children, even with parent supervision, are using the playground area including the upper blacktop areas and field. Thank you for your cooperation as we strive to keep all students safe!

• Dress Code: Also as the weather warms up, we occasionally encounter problems with dress code. Our Parent/Student Handbook states: “Dress for the school day should reflect good choices. We ask that students dress for safety, comfort, weather conditions, and the job. If clothing is substantially distracting to the student himself/herself or to others, it is inappropriate. Clothing that promotes or contains references to alcohol, drugs, or tobacco use, or poses a serious threat to school safety through pictures, messages, innuendo, or slogans—is prohibited. Hats are only to be worn outside of school buildings. Please help your child with these choices for their own well-being. Please label all items of clothing with your child’s first and last name.”

PTA Events
Information about upcoming events like our SCIENCE FAIR and K-KIDS “Lion's Pride for Paradise” can be found on our PTA website at https://lakeridgepta.org/.
While you’re there, make sure to sign up for the Lion’s ROAR mailing list to keep up with the monthly (and sometimes weekly) happenings from our world-class, awesome PTA!
LION PRIDE Updates

CHARACTER TRAIT OF THE MONTH
Those students who are selected by their teachers as our best examples of the character trait of the month, are invited to a LION’S DEN LUNCH with the principal to recognize their contributions to our positive school culture at Lakeridge.

- March’s trait was HONESTY
- April’s trait is EMPATHY
- May’s trait is PERSERVERANCE

SCHOOLWIDE PBIS

EMPATHY!
Our Character Trait of the Month for April is EMPATHY. Did you know that our Student Council produces a video each month that is shown in every classroom for our Character Traits of the Month? Did you know that we do “Lunchtime Learning” in the cafeteria a couple times a month and one of those is usually dedicated to our Character Trait of the Month? We do!

So, for this PBIS update this month, I want to share a couple of links to some resources for talking about empathy at home and the powerpoint presentation that will be share mid-month in the cafeteria (includes some great videos)! When you dig in a little to teaching and encouraging empathy, I think you’ll find that it’s often cited as one of the most important character traits for our society to embrace.

“April is...EMPATHY!” Powerpoint presentation for “Lunchtime Learning”
“Kindness Quotes that Teach Kids to Care” Quotes and discussion starters for talking at home
“Videos for Kids: Empathy” This blog post also connects you to TEACHING TOLERANCE & START EMPATHY sites that are also really excellent sites for information on teaching empathy.

CIVILITY & KINDNESS
In October 2018, our MISD School Board adopted our “Mutual Respect & Civility” Policy 4020. It aligns so nicely with what we’re teaching about Empathy this month that I thought I’d share this with you too. Too often, district policies are only shared or considered under difficult circumstances, but I think this policy has some wonderful connections to EMPATHY and our core values. Values like remembering to assume positive intent, respect and value diverse opinions, and give consideration to others are how we “put ourselves in someone else’s shoes” or “see through someone else’s eyes” like the Powerpoint above teaches our children. Give it a read if you have a minute: Mutual Respect and Civility 4020BP

EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
Every day, Lakeridge strives to be an inclusive school where all students, staff, parents and community members feel included, safe, welcomed and accepted. We celebrate diversity and believe it is our differences that make us better, stronger, more interesting and especially more connected.

We also believe that every student is capable and competent and it is our job to work diligently and vigilantly to support every student to unlock and empower his or her greatest potential. This is a challenge, but one that inspires us every day!

NEW! Student Support Plans: This year we have built and continue to add to and refine our schoolwide Student Support System. More specifically, our Student Support Teams are now rolling out Student Support Plans for struggling students. When students are identified by teachers, parents or any other source as needing additional supports, the classroom teacher submits a request for support which is then reviewed by our Initial Referral Team (IRT). This team includes Dawn Winters, our school psychologist, as our Special Education lead, Amanda Higgins as our Student Support Lead, Sally Loeser as our 504 Coordinator, and myself, Heidi Christensen as schoolwide lead. This IRT team begins collecting relevant data and schedules next steps. Generally, the first next step is to identify a Student Support Team with specifically selected members based on each child’s individual profile. Next, this team confers with the classroom teacher and develops a Student Support Plan that includes specific and targeted interventions and supports that are tailored to the unique needs of the individual child. This plan is then shared with parents and revisited at least annually, but very often more frequently. More information about our emerging, cohesive Student Support System will be forthcoming for the 2019-2020 school year.

SAFETY MATTERS
- SUPERVISION MATTERS! Please see above the information regarding our playground before and after school. Unsupervised students on the playground is not only a supervision concern, but also a safety concern. There may not
be anybody available to assist your child should she or he get injured during non-school hours. Please feel free to use our school grounds when the school is closed, but also please always have an adult near to keep kids safe. Thanks!

- **Drivers Beware!** Just a heads up that as the weather improves and days get longer, more children from LR and IMS will be biking, walking, scooting, etc. out on the sidewalks, crosswalks and roads. Please drive slowly around schools and keep an extra eye out for kids. We’ll do the same here at LR!

**GREEN MATTERS! Green Team Update**
- **Green Team is CHANGING the WORLD beginning right here at home!** Check out this group of grown-ups and students out making a difference on the Island! Great work Green Team!
  - “Student Petition causes two Mercer Island businesses to ditch Styrofoam”

- **Gardening with Kids: How It Affects Your Child’s Brain, Body and Soul** I grew up digging in the dirt and gardening with my mom and grandmother! I’m a big supporter of our GARDEN CLUB here at LR and thought this was a great read on the social-emotional and physical benefits of gardening with your children.

**Upcoming Dates:**
- 4/8-12 Mon-Fri: SPRING BREAK
- 4/15 Monday: School Resumes
- 4/18 Thursday: Student Council to WE Day
- 4/22-23 Mon-Tues: Third Grade to Camp Colman
- 4/25 Thursday: 5th Grade WCAS Science State Assessment
- 4/29 Monday: 3rd, 4th, 5th SBA Math State Assessment (4/30 Tuesday – if needed)
- 4/30 Tuesday: MI Schools Foundation Breakfast of Champions Fundraiser Breakfast, 7-8:30am, MIHS
- 5/1 Wednesday: Lion’s Den Lunch for April “Empathy”
- 5/6-9 Mon – Thurs: Book Fair, Lakeridge Library

**Go Lakeridge Lions!**

**Warm Regards,**

Heidi Jenkins-Christensen, Principal
Lakeridge Elementary