



MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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JANET WALLING - SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Mountainside Parents/Guardians and Staff:

December 2, 2021

I hope that you had a nice Thanksgiving and enjoyed time spent with family and friends. This year, more than ever, I found myself reflecting on the importance of those who help us during the most difficult of times and giving thanks for their continued support. I would like to thank each of you for being a part of that support system alongside me. We have accomplished so much, and come SO incredibly far over this past year as we worked through very challenging circumstances. Last year, on this date, our District was fully remote due to COVID cases and concerns. Today, we are successfully open for full time instruction and are excited to welcome back indoor activities such as middle school basketball, winter concerts, and our annual holiday shop at Beechwood. While each of these, and other future events, may need to look a bit different due to health protocols and/or spacing limitations, the fact that we are able to offer these opportunities back to our students is wonderful! We are also pleased to have the ability to increase access to many of these events through the use of live streaming. It is our expectation that the reintroduction of these events in a safe manner will allow for the continued expansion of opportunities for our students as each successful implementation leads us another step closer to the true "normalcy" that we are all craving.

I would like to share some additional upcoming events and information from the District:

- **Emergency Call System Test** – The District will conduct a test of its School Messenger Emergency Alert System on **Tuesday, December 7th at 6:00 pm**. At this time, a test message will be sent out via email, phone, and text to all identified numbers in our system. **It is very important that your information is up to date within the Genesis Parent Portal in order for you to receive timely notices of any emergency closings (yes, winter is coming!) or other important updates.**
 - If your information has changed since the beginning of the year please update it in Genesis by Monday, December 6th.
 - If you need assistance accessing the Parent Portal or do not receive a message on Tuesday evening please contact our support@mountainsideschools.org
- **December 6-10** – Support the PTO [GreenDrop Recycle for Charity Program](#)
- **Wednesday, December 8th** – Deadline to send in items for the Salvation Army Angel Tree Program – **Thank you for helping to make the holidays special for someone less fortunate!**
- **Friday, December 10th** – Beechwood Holiday Shop
- **Wednesday, December 15th** – Westfield Regional Health Department Vaccine Clinic – Deerfield Media Center
 - For eligible 5-11 year olds
 - More information about this voluntary opportunity for families will be sent out prior to the event
- **Thursday, December 16th** - Middle School Band and Chorus Concert
- **Tuesday, December 21st** – Board of Education meeting – 7:30 pm – Deerfield Media Center
- **December 23rd – January 2nd** – School Closed for Winter Break

Educator of the Year Winners: I am pleased that such a large number of staff members received recognition from parents and colleagues for this year's program. The selection committee met and considered all of the submitted nominations. Please join me in congratulating the following wonderful staff members who will receive recognition this year!

- **Beechwood School:**
 - Teacher of the Year: Stephanie DeBaun
 - Educational Services Professional of the Year: Dawn Bladzinski
 - Support Staff of the Year: Lisa Arroyo
- **Deerfield School:**
 - Teacher of the Year: Nina Woo
 - Educational Services Professional of the Year: Sharon Bradley
 - Support Staff of the Year: Julie Goerlich

Happy Hanukkah to those who celebrate and I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season!

Regards,

Janet Walling