



MOUNTAINSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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JANET WALLING - SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

November 12, 2021

Mountainside Parents/Guardians and Staff,

Good afternoon and I hope that everyone is well. I would like to take a moment to share a number of updates regarding activities taking place in and around the District:

- This past Monday, the PTO held their Parent Education Night. The topic, *Supporting Students with Anxiety*, was presented by Dr. Suzi Millar from Rutgers Behavioral Health. Dr. Millar helped parents gain an understanding of the types of anxiety and how anxiety presents in children and adolescents. She spoke about how to recognize behavioral, social and emotional responses to anxiety, as well as how parents can support or respond to their children. If you were unable to attend the presentation, please see her presentation here for some useful information and ideas: [Supporting Students with Anxiety](#)
- Monday, November 15th is the deadline to submit nominations for the **Governor's Educator of the Year Program**.
 - Do you know a classroom teacher, educational services professional, or support staff member who is dedicated, inspiring, and making a difference? If so, please take the time to nominate this person for special recognition. You may submit multiple nominations for any or all of the categories below:
 - [Educator and Educator Services Professionals](#) - [Eligibility Criteria](#)
 - [Support Staff](#) - paraprofessionals, secretaries, and custodians
 - [Nomination Form](#)
- Vaccination Opportunities: A number of parents have reached out to request information for childhood vaccination locations. We have received information regarding 2 upcoming local COVID vaccination opportunities that are being provided through the Union County and Westfield Regional Boards of Health, and will keep you updated with any additional local opportunities. Please click on these links for more information if you are interested:
 - [Saturday, November 13th - Roselle Park](#)
 - [Friday, November 19th - Scotch Plains](#)
- Our [COVID Dashboard](#) continues to be updated regularly in order to keep everyone informed of any current cases. After a month of zero cases, this week did bring a small increase in positive cases in the district with 2 confirmed cases at Deerfield School. As is our protocol, contact tracing occurred for any positive instances, and anyone who was considered a close contact was informed by our school nurses. Please continue to remain cognizant of the signs of COVID-19, and keep unvaccinated children home if anyone in your household exhibits symptoms or is awaiting the results of a COVID test.
- Upcoming Dates to keep in mind:
 - Tuesday, November 16th – Board of Education meeting – 7:30 pm. At Deerfield School
 - Thursday, November 18th – MEA Family Reading Night via Zoom
 - Wednesday, November 24th – Early Dismissal for Thanksgiving Break

In addition to these items above, the District has been very busy over the last few weeks as students and staff have settled into a nice routine with our full day schedules. The weather has been amazingly cooperative and students have enjoyed many opportunities to learn, exercise, and eat outdoors. Our teachers also had the opportunity to meet with many parents and guardians for parent-teacher conferences. This was a good opportunity to discuss student progress and needs, and to address any questions as a cohesive team. Please keep the conversations going throughout the year so that we can continue to work together to support your child's growth. I would like to thank Mrs. Jenks and the staff at Deerfield school for a wonderful Veterans Day presentation that was held to honor our local veterans yesterday. The program was very meaningful and was highlighted by the reading of essays by the grade level winners of the Patriots Pen Essay Contest, sponsored by our local VFW Memorial Post 10136. Congratulations to all of our students who placed in this contest, and thank you to our veterans for your service!

On behalf of the entire Mountainside staff I would like to wish you a nice weekend, and upcoming Thanksgiving with family and friends.

Janet Walling