

RHEEMARKS: January 16 - Late Edition

Dear Rheem Team Families,

I hope you are getting a chance to spend some extra time with your family on this extended holiday weekend honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King's name is synonymous with serving others, and I hope you can share that message with your loved ones.

This past week was a rather busy one at Rheem, with increased COVID-19 cases leading to contact tracing and quarantine guidance being sent to dozens of families. As we move forward with managing the pandemic in schools, there are new protocols put forth by the California Department of Public Health that provides more clarity and guidance on what it will look like moving forward. I know it can be unsettling to see a spike in cases in our community, but please rest assured we are doing everything we can to make each day better than the last and do all that we can to keep students, staff, and families safe.

Please dive into the rest of this week's Rheemarks.

This Week at Rheem:

Monday, January 17:

- NO SCHOOL: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Tuesday, January 18:

- Virtual Spirit Assembly kicking off read-a-thon
- Lunchtime Dance Club hosted by Ms. Seli (during recess)

Wednesday, January 19:

- PTA Association meeting via Zoom (7:00-8:00 PM [Zoom link](#))
- Lunchtime Garden Club hosted by Ms. Inzeo (during recess)

Thursday, January 20:

- TK/K Parent Information Night (6:00-7:00 PM [via Zoom](#))

Friday, January 21:

- Regularly scheduled Friday

COVID-19 Home Tests

This past Friday, students brought home a second round of home COVID tests for families to administer. To try and blunt the surge of recent cases in our community, we ask that you please test your child Monday evening to detect a positive COVID-19 exposure. If your student tests positive, please share your results with Mrs. Fitzinger (lfitzinger@moraga.k12.ca.us) and myself (bsullivan@moraga.k12.ca.us), keep them home from school, and await guidance from Becky Maher (district nurse) on next steps. If your child tests negative but is exhibiting any cold or flu like symptoms, please be sure to keep them home. A negative test result does not mean they do not have a transmissible infection that can get others sick.

Thank you for your continued cooperation. By working together with expanded testing, we hope to reduce the number of students, staff, and families exposed to the virus.

UPDATE: COVID-19 Quarantine and Testing Protocols

Superintendent Parks sent an update to MSD families on Saturday morning. Messaging included information on:

- *Testing: In recent guidance, the use of home tests have been expanded to allow home testing in school settings. The shift from the "gold standard" PCR test to more use of rapid antigen home testing is significant because it allows us to get information more quickly and broaden accessibility for families and staff.*
- *Contact tracing: Currently, we are individually contact tracing for each student who is positive by using interviews and seating charts. As we adapt to a new phase of COVID, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommendations are that we notify more broadly and make testing more accessible for those who have symptoms or would like testing.*
- *Quarantine: The new guidance will mean that families will be notified of an exposure in a class and given options for testing between Day 3 and Day 5. Students with negative tests will be permitted to remain in school, regardless of*

vaccination status, and continue to participate in after-school activities without restriction. We will be moving into a focus on communication and testing accessibility and away from the more individualized contact tracing that we have been doing. This will create more opportunities for all students and staff to be tested.

Please click [HERE](#) for Dr. Parks' entire communication, including updated numbers from the [MSD Dashboard](#) and [California Department of Public Health's \(CDPH\) guidance to TK-12 Schools](#).

School News and Highlights

Read-a-thon Begins this week: This Tuesday, we will be kicking off the read-a-thon with a virtual spirit assembly for students. The read-a-thon will go from January 18 through February 15, and a flier with info regarding this year's event was sent home last Friday. Please stay tuned, as teachers will be sharing updates and more information in the coming days and weeks.

A Roadmap to Kindergarten and Transitional Kindergarten

Please join us this Thursday, January 20, at 6:00 PM on Zoom for an introductory presentation on kindergarten and transitional kindergarten. The agenda can be found [HERE](#) and Zoom info below:

- <https://zoom.us/j/99821938127?pwd=dWVpK2tqREF5WERUNjNPaEpFUVZJZz09>
- Meeting ID: 998 2193 8127
- Passcode: 536549

PTA Association Meeting this Wednesday

Please join us this Wednesday via Zoom to learn more about all the great things PTA is doing to support students this year and find out what plans they have in store for the remainder of the year.

Zoom link info below:

- <https://moraga-k12-ca-us.zoom.us/j/89421181169>

The Last Word...

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" In a day and age where being connected often describes one's internet access, it is essential for us to instill in our children the significance of serving others. Here are some ideas on how your student can help others?

- Donate to the local food bank
- Help an elderly neighbor
- Write a letter to a military serviceman or woman
- Donate lightly worn clothes for the homeless

These are just a few examples of what it looks like to serve others. We are forever indebted to Dr. King and his commitment to creating a more inclusive and harmonious nation. Let's all show our appreciation by helping the next generation of leaders learn the importance of service.

There's no place like Rheem,
Mr. Sullivan