

February 18, 2019

Dear Rheem Team Families,

I hope you all had an opportunity to enjoy the long weekend and spend some extra time together as a family.

The holiday weekend came just in time to help commemorate the end of this year's Read-a-thon, and what better way for our students and staff to celebrate than by taking part in Crazy Hair Day. The Rheem Team really showed their school spirit with their unique and colorful hairstyles.

I am very proud of our students' efforts over this 4-week focus on reading, and I look forward to sharing the total hours read and grand prize winners at the March 4th Spirit Assembly. Thank you to all the parent volunteers who helped make this year's Read-a-thon a success, and a special thanks goes to co-chairs Karen Jaworski (Alexandra's mom), and Zheni Nikolova (Lillian and Erik's mom), for organizing this year's event.

This Week at Rheem:

Monday, February 18th:

- NO SCHOOL: President's Day

Tuesday, February 19th:

- School Board members visit Rheem
- 3rd grade takes part in SUBS (Speak Up Be Safe)

Wednesday, February 20th:

- Regularly scheduled Wednesday

Thursday, February 21st:

- Parent Ed: Parenting in the Age of Technology – from 6:30-8:0 in the JM Library (RSVP [HERE](#))

Friday, February 22nd:

- Regularly scheduled Friday

School News and Highlights

- What do you get when you mix Cupid with children who are absolutely bonkers about reading??? A Crazy Hair Valentine's. That's right, last Thursday saw the perfect storm where Valentine's Day coincided with Crazy Hair Day. Student participation in the Read-a-Thon earned them the reward of coming to school with crazy hair. Add that to Valentine's parties in each room and you have one Lovely/Crazy day.
- Rheem's School Site Improvement Plan was approved by the Moraga School Board last week at the February 12 meeting. This plan is developed and monitored by our School Site Council, and it features specific goals and action items in the areas of Math, English/Language Arts, and School Climate. This year's School Site Plan can be downloaded from the "Quick Links" section of our website. Future issues of RHEEMARKS will provide updates on stated goals.
- Last Monday Rheem 3rd-5th graders welcomed JM music students for an amazing concert in the Frank. Mr. Noel had his charges on point and in tune as the orchestra, band and choir performed some classic and contemporary hits. It never ceases to amaze me how well these 6th, 7th and 8th graders perform. Kudos to all the musicians for sharing their talents and to our Roadrunners for filling the Frank with "good vibrations."

Student and Traffic Safety:

Each day over 400 Rheem students get to and from school, and to ensure it is done successfully it takes families following the safety procedures we have in place.

First, be sure to follow all traffic laws, which include Laird Drive's 25 mph speed limit (or less), and never driving through a crosswalk while pedestrians are using it.

Secondly, remember that Rheem's **parking lots** are reserved for staff during school hours. ***Parking lots should not be used for the drop-off or pick up of students.***

Thirdly, it is essential for children and parents to stay on the sidewalk and within the crosswalk when walking to and from school. ***Please do not walk across the bus circle or through the parking lots.***

Last but not least, remember the number one rule when it comes to driving...**patience**. No matter how much of a hurry you may be in, by practicing patience you ensure the safety of all Rheem students and families.

Did you Know?

Excused vs. Unexcused Absences

Did you know that ALL absences are noted as “excused” or “unexcused” for auditing purposes? According to MSD board policy, absences are considered “excused” for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Family emergencies
- Justifiable personal reasons (such as funeral attendance)
- Religious holidays

Absences are considered “unexcused” if they do not meet one of the above-mentioned criteria. For example, missing school for vacations or “extra holidays” are unexcused. By definition of California Education Code, “a student who has an unexcused absence of more than 30 minutes on three different days, or more, is considered truant.”

Thank you for your diligence in avoiding extended trips when school is in session.

Read-a-thon Update

As Submitted by co-chairs Karen Jaworksi and Zheni Nikolova

Hello Rheem team!

We are sad to say the 2019 Rheem Read-a-thon has come to a close. Thank you for all your support of this program. Please submit your readers’ hours at: <https://goo.gl/forms/ZqnhAXLGuh9AcB412>. If you have been using a paper tally sheet, please turn in your sheet to the front office. With Pajama Day on the line, it’s important that we receive all logged hours by this **Friday, March 1**.

Once again, we'd like to thank Allegro Copy and Print for printing the Read-a-thon bookmarks, Bel and Bunna's Books for donating the top prizes, and Jen Blau for her wonderful design work.

Any questions? Please contact the Read-a-thon chairs: Karen Jaworski (karen@kjaworski.com) & Zheni Nikolova (zheninikolova@gmail.com)

Science Fair Update

As Submitted by Doris Chen/co-chairperson

Applications for 2018 Science Fair closed on February 15th. If you missed the deadline but still would like to participate, please contact Science Fair Committee at rheemsf@gmail.com as soon as possible. We can still review your project and include you in the program.

Students who submitted their application, thank you for being on time. The committee is currently reviewing your wonderful project ideas and will get back to you by February 23rd, along with information on next steps. If you do not receive a review of your application by February 25th, please contact the Science Fair Committee at rheemsf@gmail.com.

If your project is approved by the Science Fair Committee, you can go ahead, start your project and work on your draft report. The draft report does not require the results of the experiment but we would like to see the question, hypothesis, background information about the topic of your research (what you learned about the topic and some of the terminology applicable to the field of your experiment), materials and experiment design (what you plan to do). The due date for the draft report is March 4th. The report will have to be submitted electronically to the following address: rheemsf@gmail.com.

We are excited to review all of the projects this year!

Rheem Science Fair Committee

School Climate Survey Results

Over the past several weeks, I have included results from the 2018-19 Climate Survey that was sent out in November, 2018. 168 Rheem families responded as follows:

97% respondents agreed with the statement "My child enjoys going to school."

Actual breakdown: 53% strongly agree; 44% agree; 3% disagree; 0% strongly disagree and 0% didn't know.

Parent Education Opportunities - *Parenting in the Age of Technology*

Be sure to attend this Thursday's important presentation by Dr. Erica Pelavin discussing the impact of: social media; digital reputation: how to manage damage and help teens learn from mistakes; and the latest research around emotional and psychological responses to social media, it's impact on the brain and sleep. Dr. Pelavin's presentation goes from 6:30-8:00 at the JM Library. Be sure to RSVP by clicking [HERE](#).

The Last Word...

My wife recently sent me a [podcast of Dr. Lisa Damour](#), renowned psychologist and New York Times Best Selling author of *Untangled: Guiding Teenage Girls Through the Seven Transitions into Adulthood*. The podcast centered around healthy ways to deal with the amount of stress and anxiety girls feel...(I wonder if my wife's trying to tell me something)

Dr. Damour talked about how stress and anxiety are actually normal and healthy. Stress can be seen as a gift, and by dealing with it we allow ourselves to build durability over time. She also mentions that when people deal with stress and anxiety they expand their capacity for both. Dr. Damour mentions there is one kind of stress that is unhealthy, and that is chronic stress. In general, stress is only healthy when it comes with an opportunity for rest and recovery. She gives a great analogy of how weightlifting is like managing stress. If you lift weights every day, all day and don't give your body a chance to rest you won't get stronger but instead will only end up injuring yourself. Similarly, if you don't take time (i.e. on the weekend, or during the day) to remove yourself from a stressful environment, you are setting yourself up for undue chronic stress.

Dr. Damour also mentions that school is stressful and it is a place where students go to "change and grow." She reiterates that this is not a bad thing as long as they are given an opportunity to recover. Dealing with stress in school builds durability and flexibility, two things vital to a happier and healthier life. Dr. Damour says we need to reframe how we talk about stress, and to help a child deal with stress it's important we acknowledge what is

causing them stress and let them know that it's normal to feel that way about certain things. (i.e. new math concepts that are more challenging, friendships that are changing, etc.)

Dr. Damour goes more into how girls, on average, work harder than boys, however, they can be less efficient. She provides strategies on how to help them be more efficient as well as how to communicate in a healthier and more productive way. Her closing thought in the podcast is, "Stress is normal and healthy, anxiety is normal and healthy. We can manage them even when they get to pathological levels. This is not something people need to be so frightened of."

If you have about twenty minutes, I recommend you take a listen for yourself by clicking [HERE](#).

There is no place like Rheem,
Mr. Sullivan