

April 26, 2020

Dear Rheem Team Families,

Spring is in the air...although 80 degree weather feels more like summer to me. This week marks the last several days of April and the welcoming of May and if you're counting, we have five weeks left of distance learning. I'm sure you can all relate to the challenge of keeping time during SIP (shelter in place). At my house, weekends have become extensions of weekdays and a Tuesday is often no different than Thursday with the circumstances and my Zoom background narrowly changing. This is tough, but I'm going to practice what I preach and recognize as many silver linings as possible. There will be good, and there will be lessons to take from this. Tonight, I am grateful to have my entire, formerly overscheduled, family home at dinner time. This is a gift and something we didn't experience during the week until SIP. May you all be so fortunate.

Now for the rest of Sunday's Rheemarks...at least I think it's Sunday.

This Week in the Community:

Monday, April 27th:

- [Distance Learning Monday Lessons and Activities](#)
- One District, One Book begins (*Wishtree*)
- Free breakfast and lunch available for children ages 18 and younger for pick at Campolindo HS from 10:30-12:30 (**Monday-Friday**)

Tuesday, April 28th:

- [Tuesday through Friday Distance Learning Lessons](#)

Wednesday, April 29th:

- Kindness Club: Join in via FlipGrid (password KindnessClub)

Thursday, April 30th:

- Rheem Team Song video (see info below)

Friday, May 1st:

- Spirit Friday: Crazy Hair Day
 - Join in via FlipGrid (password SpiritFridays)

One District, One Book Begins this week

This week we begin our [One District, One Book program](#). Starting tomorrow the entire district will be reading the same book on the same [schedule](#). You can choose to have a

family read aloud, listen to a Moraga School District staff member read the chapters for that day, or both! After listening/reading the chapters for the day we invite you to respond to questions on the Wishtree [Flipgrid](#) (password = Wishtree). Staff read alouds, the reading schedule, and daily questions can be found at the Moraga School District Distance Learning website [HERE](#).

The Rheem Team Song Celebrating our Teachers

Teacher appreciation is coming soon and it would be great to put together a music video of Rheem students/families singing our Rheem Team song. If your family would like to be in the video please do the following:

1. Record your student singing the Rheem Team song (USE the following link to sing along). It is helpful if they sing along with headphones.
2. When you are recording please record landscape (SIDEWAYS).
3. If you have an iPhone, please email or text your song to kimberlyanderson@mac.com or #408-660-5599
4. If you have another device please send it on google drive and please grant twof11@mac.com access.
5. Please send your video by Thursday, April 30th

As soon as we gather all the videos on Thursday we will begin production. The video will be shared with teachers to show them how much we love and miss them.

Thinking About Next Year

As May approaches, parents and teachers begin to think about class placements for next year. I'd like to take this opportunity to outline the process we use at Rheem to ensure that the best interests of all students are considered.

First, I can assure you that this process will be completed very carefully. Current Rheem teachers and I will be involved in a team effort to create balanced, heterogeneous classes at every grade level. This process begins with grade-level placement meetings in which teachers divide their classes into as many groups as there are projected classes at the next grade level for the next year. Each new class is balanced in terms of boys and girls, special needs students, academic abilities, peer relationships, and social behavior. Clearly, many factors are considered through this process.

The teachers and I place students very carefully, and no parent input is expected or required. However, parents who feel they need to give input to this process may do so by

writing a letter that addresses their child's special needs. In such a letter, parents should include their perspective of how their child learns best and any other information that relates to increasing their child's potential for academic success. This information will be considered in the complicated process of making up classes for next year.

Requesting a particular teacher for your child is not appropriate. Too often, these requests are based upon suggestions and talk within the community about particular teachers. I suggest that you ignore this talk. The entire teaching staff at Rheem School is composed of dedicated and qualified professionals, and one child's experience (good or bad) in a given classroom may not be predictive of another child's experience.

Furthermore, changes in teaching assignments and/or reorganization of existing classes can be made right up to the opening of school depending on enrollment, so having only a teacher's name does not tell us what is important to know about your child. If you choose to write to me, tell me about your child's needs and learning style and how you expect an educational program to best serve those needs. Parent emails must be received by Monday, May 4th, as our placement meetings will begin shortly thereafter.

The Rheem staff is committed to working in the best interests of all our students. Thank you in advance for your understanding and support of our placement procedure; it is a critical factor in this effort.

The Last Word...

Last week I made mention of several tips from Stanford's Dr. Denise Pope's Challenge Success program, and also of Growth Mindset and its place at Rheem. Through our study of "Growth vs. Fixed" mindsets, as well as our own experiences in teaching and learning with children, we have come to firmly believe that ALL students can succeed. However, we understand that success does not necessarily come easily or quickly. We know that learning is a process that involves risks, mistakes, and even failures. Please click [HERE](#) to watch a short video (just 1 ½ minutes) that highlights the main ideas of this philosophy.

Along with growth mindset comes the power of "yet" and the positivity that is connected to the notion that all things are possible. When we open our minds to learning and push ourselves to take risks and grow from our mistakes, challenges become an opportunity rather than a barrier. If shelter in place and our distance learning has taught us anything it is that flexibility is the cornerstone of learning to do things a different way.

Kudos to all of your hard work and for embracing growth mindset in overcoming these most challenging times and pushing ourselves to be more flexible than ever.

There is no place like Rheem,

Mr. Sullivan