

## COOK COUGARS

April 20, 2020



## NEWSLETTER

### **Message from the Administration:**

During COVID-19 we are spending many hours at home being safe and not participating in our typical activities and routine. During the last few weeks, it has been especially hard to ensure your children are getting some daily exercise and getting to bed at a regular hour. Setting aside a consistent time to complete the online learning activities that the teachers have been assigning each day will help to make the days have more structure, and therefore create more routine in your children's day. Maintaining routines and structures will help children to self-regulate and lessen anxiety that may be occurring due to all the unforeseen changes that have occurred over the past few weeks.

We are happy to announce that the school district will be implementing a video conference tool to help maintain connection with your child's teacher during this time of learning at home. The name of this tool is Zoom. There will be a separate e-mail coming out following this newsletter that will explain to you how this tool will work. It is important that you read this carefully and translate it if necessary. Your teacher will be contacting you with more information regarding Zoom this week. We hope this tool will help your child connect with his/her teacher more easily during this time of learning at home.

Please check our school website for weekly birthday announcements, newsletters and tweets!



### **Technology/E-portfolios:**

This week we have signed out many iPads to families that require them. Please make sure that you take good care of the technology that has been loaned to you. Please ensure that cases and chargers are taken care of as well and not misplaced. Parents, we remind you to check your email regularly as teachers are reaching out to students and families to check in each week.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue to work on improving the quality and speed of the portal. Teachers have been working very hard to ensure they are sending engaging activities for your child to work on each week. Please try and complete at least the numeracy and literacy activities that are assigned each week, as the teachers are required to continue to collect student samples and give descriptive feedback to your child even when he/she is learning at home.



### **What is SEL?**

SEL is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (CASEL.org).

### **This week's SEL focus is *Self - Awareness...***

As parents, you are the first teachers of SEL for your children. Therefore, to help your children develop *self-awareness*, it is important to talk about feelings every day, both your feelings and your children's feelings. Being *self-aware* is the ability of your children to know and understand themselves and how they fit into their family, community and world.

## How do you develop Self-Awareness in yourself and in your child?

- The best thing you can do is to be honest about how you're feeling. When we have honest conversations about our own struggles or goals we're trying to achieve, it normalizes our challenges as something that we can manage. As parents, we model this by identifying our emotions and the things that make us feel that particular emotion.

To model this, it sounds like - *"I'm really feeling frustrated today because I haven't been able to see my colleagues or go to the office."* Next step is to give your children tools to manage that emotion - *"I'm really feeling frustrated, so I need to take a few deep breaths to help me calm down."*

- Building emotional vocabulary helps build children's emotional intelligence. We can better identify our emotions when we have an extensive list of words to name them. Rather than simply feeling "bad", when your child can pinpoint their specific feeling, such as "irritable" or "frustrated", they have better insight to know what caused it, and what they can do about it.

## Construction Update:

This week you will notice that there are many sections of the school that are now closed off by fencing as we are continuing with the work on the second parking lot. Our main entrance is now Door #4. This is the door at the end of the hallway by the Kindergarten classrooms. If you need to come to the school for any reason in the next few weeks, this will be the entrance to the school. You will need to call the school and make an appointment to enter the school as this door will remain locked to the public.



## Cook School Garden:

The garden beds at Cook have continued to be maintained by the Food Security Society which is an organization in Richmond. They work in schools to support and build a culture and confidence around gardening and sustainable food awareness through lessons, school gardens and aeroponic growing towers. They have been working at Cook for the past two years with a few of our classes and have volunteered to continue to look after our garden beds while you are all at home with your families. They are planting, weeding and soon harvesting many delicious vegetables that Cook families will be able to benefit from.



**Please respect and take care of our garden beds!**

## Ideas to help connect and have fun with your child...

**WRITE A LETTER:** Use this opportunity to connect with grandparents by teaching your kids to write a conventional letter, address an envelope properly, and stamp and mail the letter.



**TAKE A VIRTUAL MUSEUM TOUR:** Visit The Metropolitan Museum of Art - The Met 360° Project Site includes activities for you and your kids to explore together.

