

Marauder Memo - February 14, 2021

Dear Parents & Community -

Happy Valentine's and President's Days Weekend. We are excited that beginning Tuesday (or perhaps Wednesday, depending on the anticipated snow) we will return to full-time in-person learning. Our students have missed the daily interaction with faculty, staff, and their classmates over the last few months, and are near-unanimously happy we are returning to "regular" school. Tuesday will be a "Black Day" and follow the original [calendar](#) from the beginning of the year. Please also recognize that Wednesdays will now again be PLC/early release days. While there will be adjustments for all, this decision is in the best interests of our students and their learning. I am eager to see them on a daily basis this week. We would not be able to return if we did not have the low numbers of Covid cases in our school system. That success would not be possible without your help and support of our efforts to mitigate infections at school. Your sons and daughters, and our staff and faculty, thank you.

Highlights for our students from last week included celebrating our Custodians as our "Attitude of Gratitude" honorees (next week will be our Front Office Staff), hearing from more classmates in the morning announcements' Black History Month readings, and learning our post-Presidents Day lunch plan, which will have two classes per grade per day eat in the cafeteria (socially-distanced and masked, of course).

Here are some of this week's news items/updates/reminders:

MVMS Spelling Bee - The 2021 Spelling Bee will be held Wednesday, February 17th at 9:00am in the Main Gym. Each student who qualified for the competition is allowed two guests, who will be required to wear a mask, to attend.

Yearbook - Yearbook sales are underway! You can purchase your yearbook online [here](#) our school code is: **54076M**. Sales will continue until March 8th. \$20 softcover or \$25 hardcover.

21/22 Scheduling - Current 6th and 7th grade students' course request forms are due *February 22nd*. Scheduling forms and presentations can be found [here](#). 8th grade students will have their scheduling presentations for MVHS on March 2nd. More information on that will be coming from the high school. Discussions with elementary school leaders for 5th grade transition to MVMS has begun, and scheduling information will be coming in April.

Dress Code and Masks - Please continue to review with your students our [Dress Code](#) and our commitment to hold students accountable to it. I noticed a clear improvement regarding both Dress Code and Masks last week. Thank you for your support of that effort. While many are experiencing "mask fatigue", staying diligent to this will be especially important as we return to the more conventional school calendar. I am confident our students, staff, and faculty will manage the transition well and with focus on protocol. Speaking of which...

Health and Safety Protocols - MVCSC has done an EXEMPLARY job of mitigating infection by adhering to protocols well. Our students and their learning are the greatest beneficiaries of

our practices, and the health and safety of each member of our MVMS community are paramount in our collective efforts. Thank you again for your continual attention to the Covid safeguards, including:

- If your child has COVID-19 like symptoms, please keep your student home from school and consider keeping siblings home too.
- If your child tests positive for COVID-19, please inform your school's health clinic immediately. If you learn that your child has tested positive outside of school hours, please immediately contact the school principal or the corporation nurse at tracy.furnas@mvcsc.k12.in.us.
- If anyone in your household is being tested for COVID-19, please keep ALL students at home from school until results are received.
- When your child stays home, or your virtual student is unable to do schoolwork, please call the school's attendance office.
- If there is any doubt whether a student should attend school, please keep everyone home and call our health clinic for guidance.
- [Indiana State COVID-19 Dashboard](#)

For reference, please see the [Covid-19 Screening Checklist](#) and the MVCSC Health & Safety Plan on our www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/COVID webpage.

National Kindness Week- Kindness week is next week, *February 22-26*. Throughout that week we will be furthering our culture of kindness and encouraging students to complete random acts of kindness at school. We will celebrate this special week with the following spirit days:

Monday (2/22): Tie Dye Day
Tuesday (2/23): Hat day/Crazy Hair Day
Wednesday (2/24): PJ Day
Thursday (2/25): Positive Colors Day
 -8th grade: Neon Pink
 -7th grade: Neon Orange
 -6th grade: Neon Yellow
Friday (2/26): Marauder Spirit Day

MV Reads: News from the Library



"You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child." Dr. Seuss

As stated in previous newsletters, reading aloud is important because it can help parents to navigate tough topics, such as serious stuff like bullying, racism, sexism or disaster preparedness. Unfortunately, if

lectured, kids may very well zone out. But if you read them stories about complex characters, both real or fictional, who must make difficult decisions based on life challenges, you're exploring the issue together, and that can lead to meaningful conversations. You can ask questions like: "Do you think the boy made the right choice?" "Do you think that girl was really her friend?" When you talk about a book together, it's not a lecture, it's more like a coach looking at a film with his players, going over the plays to find out what went right and what went wrong (Treasure). If you missed it, here is the link: [Don't Stop Reading to Your Kids Once They Learn How to Read](#).

Virtual Learners' Support - Mrs. Merica, our new Virtual Support Teacher, is a terrific resource for students struggling to maximize their online learning. If your student could benefit from tips to help with virtual learning, please contact her at jackie.merica@mvcsc.k12.in.us. Relatedly, the Google Meet times for full time virtual students to have collective learning opportunities with peers are:

6th Grade: Mondays

Integrity: 10:15-10:45

Firebirds: 11:00-11:30

Central Stars: 11:45-12:15

Odyssey: 1:00-1:30

7th grade: Wednesdays

Spirit: 11:45-12:15

Champions: 12:25-12:55

Victory: 1:45-2:15

8th grade: Fridays

Eagles: 10:30-11:00

All Stars: 11:15-11:45

Pride: 2:30-3:00

Short Term E-Learning - Students who have been asked by school Health Officials to be quarantined for a certain number of days need to still be completing their classroom assignments. Short term e-learning students should check their email, Google Classroom, and Canvas daily (at minimum). Teachers will utilize these three platforms to communicate student work. It would also be helpful to have your student reach out to their teachers via email to verify assignments and remain as fully engaged in the learning process as possible.

MVMS Kitchen Table - The MVMS Kitchen Table (aka Homework Help Club) is on Monday afternoons for any student trying to recover from absences, get extra help with challenging concepts, or find assistance preparing for upcoming tests. Students report to Mr. Crouch's classroom immediately after school and work through 4:30pm. They can be picked up then at the Main Entrance to MVMS.

Counseling Corner - Students or parents struggling with Pandemic-related challenges are encouraged to utilize The [Parent Guide to Resilience](#) from whytry.org. Remember also, you can follow our counselors for other advice and tips on Instagram [@mvms_counselors](#).

Tech Support and help needed - Mr. Meyer, our lead Technology Assistant, has noticed a recent spike in Chromebook damage, especially keys removed from keyboards. Please help us monitor that and guide your students to take good care of their technology. Thank you. Also, Please remember that MVCSC partners with Ninestar Connect to provide 24-7 technology

support to students and parents/guardians assisting their children. Please use the following contact information for help:

Technology Support Phone Number: 317-482-4112

Email: techsupport@mvcsc.k12.in.us

NineStar Connect will assist with the technology issue, and if needed, pass the request to the appropriate Mt. Vernon technology assistant to resolve the problem during school hours. Additional information can be found on the [1:1 Technology Program webpage](#).

Attendance - If your student will be absent, please notify us via with one of these methods:

1. Call 317-485-3160 which is available 24/7.
2. Email Kayleigh.carrier@mvcsc.k12.in.us .

Once students are at school, they should not be contacting a parent for pickup during the school day. This type of communication needs to proceed from the MVMS School Nurse or Office Staff directly to the Parent. Thank you.

Principal Search Process - Dr. Parker has begun having screening conversations with candidates with an eye to Semi-finalist interviews March 3. I will keep you updated through this weekly memo, as able.

Social Media and Platforms - You can follow MVMS via:

Twitter: [@MtVernon_MS](#)

Twitter for MVMS Sports: [@MVMS_Sports](#)

Instagram: [@Mt.Vernon_MS](#)

Facebook: [MtVernonMiddleSchool](#)

Skyward - Click [HERE](#)

MVMS News - Click [HERE](#)

MVMS Counselor Webpage - Click [HERE](#) *full of many resources for Students & Parents

MVCSC 20-21 School Calendar - Click [HERE](#)

20-21 MVMS Modified Black & Gold Day Schedule Click [HERE](#)

20-21 MVMS Black & Gold Calendar (beginning 2/16/2021) Click [HERE](#)

Employment Opportunities at MVMS - We have job openings for a Long-term (Feb. 16 -May 19) 6th Grade Mathematics Substitute Teacher and a Custodian. If interested in the Math position, email me at mike.raters@mvcsc.k12.in.us; if interested in the Custodian opportunity, please email Assistant Principal Jeff Brandes at jeff.brandes@mvcsc.k12.in.us .

Substitute Teachers - MVCSC continues to build its pool of Substitute teachers. With our return to the conventional schedule, we anticipate a need for more subs. Those who are interested and qualify can choose to serve in their building of choice (hint, hint, MVMS is a great and fun place to work!) and earn approximately \$85/day. For more information, click here: www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/employment/6 or schedule a meeting with Kelly Services at rebrand.ly/substitute.

MVMS PTO - Don't forget to have your families sign up for our VIP Club to receive additional discounts and incentives throughout the year! It's easy and they are provided with a 10% off discount immediately after signing up! To sign up:

- 1) Go to <https://1stplacespiritwear.com>
- 2) Scroll to the bottom and enter an email address in the "Join the VIP Club" sign up box
- 3) Check your inbox for the savings!!

Athletics - Here is the schedule of events for next week:

Tuesday, Feb. 16

6th Grade Girls Basketball vs. Hamilton Heights "A" & "B" - Main Gym
Swimming and Diving vs. Westfield 6pm

Wednesday, Feb. 17

7th Grade Girls Basketball vs. Fall Creek - "A" game only - Fieldhouse
8th Grade Girls Basketball vs. Fall Creek - "A" & "B" - Main Gym

Thursday, Feb. 18

6th Grade Girls Basketball @ East Elementary
7th Grade Girls Basketball vs. New Castle "A" game only - Main Gym
8th Grade Girls Basketball vs. New Castle "A" game only - Main Gym 6:30pm
Swimming and Diving vs. Pendleton
Wrestling @ Stoneybrook

** All Start Times at 5:30pm, unless otherwise noted*

Winter Sports Event Attendance Policy - Due to the current pandemic, we are limiting the number of guests at MVMS sporting events this winter season. Each winter athlete may have up to 3 guests per sporting event, using the three (3) vouchers he/she has received for the season. A voucher must be shown at the gate in order to purchase ticket admittance into each home event in which the athlete participates. Tickets are \$4 each for adults and children (kindergarten and up). A child under the age of kindergarten will be allowed for free. Please note that only one (1) child per family will be allowed into an MVMS Sporting Event. The vouchers are transferable amongst the athlete's family members for the various sporting events this season. Please note that tickets will NOT be sold to those without a voucher.

During MVMS Sporting Events, guests are expected to . . .

- Wear masks or other PPE at all times while inside the MVMS school building.
- Maintain six (6) feet or more of social distancing with anyone outside of the household unit.

- Be seated in the bleachers in the specifically pre-marked areas (look for the seats marked with a blue X).

Football Conditioning - Weightlifting for all 6th-8th Grade football players not participating in a winter sport has had a change of schedule. Due to our early release of students each Wednesday, Conditioning will now take place each Tuesday and Thursday after school until 5:15pm. Students will meet in the cafe after school and walk to the high school with Coaches Harnish and Duerksen. Pick up will take place at the North entrance of the high school's main gym. Please send any questions or concerns to eric.harnish@mvsc.k12.in.us or brandon.duerksen@mvsc.k12.in.us .

Athletics Physicals and forms - Any student wishing to participate in athletics must have on file with the Athletic Office all required forms and an IHSAA Sports Physical dated on or after April 1, 2019. Please click [HERE](#) to access all required documents which are located under the MORE tab. For any questions regarding MVMS Athletics, please contact Athletic Director Dave Merica at Dave.Merica@mvsc.k12.in.us.

Academic Requirements for Athletics Eligibility - Mt. Vernon Middle School has established the following policy for academic eligibility:

1. Academic eligibility will be checked at the end of each academic quarter.
2. A student who receives two or more failing grades on their quarterly report card will be ineligible from any athletic competition for the entire next quarter. The athlete will become eligible at the end of the next academic quarter if there are not two or more failing grades on their quarterly report card. The MVMS Athletic Department reserves the right, at any time, to conduct grade checks on student athletes to determine the academic eligibility for any athletic competitions.

MVMS Drop Off & Pick Up Procedures - Please use this link to learn/verify our morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up procedures: <https://www.mvsc.k12.in.us/2/Content2/640>

Upcoming Dates and Events -

2/15/21 - Presidents Day - NO SCHOOL

2/16/21 - Return to Everyday In-person Learning

2/17/21 - Spelling Bee - 9am in the main gym.

2/17/21 - Early Release Wednesday Schedule Resumes
Click [HERE](#) to view dismissal procedures

3/5/21 - 6th Grade to see "The Royal Falconer" in the main gym.

3/15 - 3/26/21 - Spring Break

Thank you again for your support of our educational efforts and your students' learning. Best wishes for an enjoyable, safe, and rewarding week ahead -

Mike Raters

Michael P. Raters

Interim Principal

Mt. Vernon Middle School

317-485-3160