

12.15.23

Happy High 5 Friday Ruskin Families,

Happy High 5 Friday and Happy Holidays!!! There are so many awesome winter celebrations happening during this time of year. Last week I shared a little bit about Hanukkah. This week, let's learn about Kwanzaa. According to si.edu, "Kwanzaa is a time of learning, family and celebration. During the week of Kwanzaa, families and communities come together to share a feast, to honor the ancestors, affirm the bonds between them, and to celebrate African and African American culture." Kwanzaa consists of 7 days and there is a different principle honored each day. It starts on December 26th and ends on January 1st. Learn more by looking at this short [video](#) that explains this cultural celebration. **Harambee!!** (Swahili word meaning "all pull together") Do you have any cultural traditions or celebrations that happen around this time of year?



Last night our amazing music teachers, Phoebe Lin and Joey Medeiros led our 4th and 5th grade students in their winter music concert. I don't know how they do it, but they always put on a magical show. The kids worked really hard to prepare and as always and I heard it was a packed house. Unfortunately, due to a family emergency I was unable to attend last night but I did get to hear them in their practice performance Thursday morning. Thank you for making this a success as always.



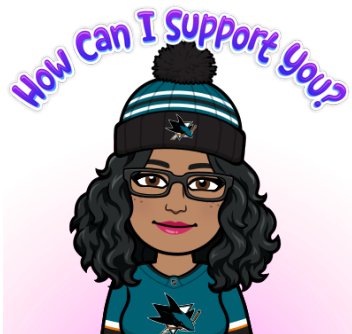
Lastly, parents, kindly do not snap photos of other people's children without their parent's permission. We had a parent taking photos after school of other students. It freaked the child out and other adults that were present. It may have been an innocent thing but it can be alarming to the children. Thank you for your cooperation.



How May We Support You Today?

Parent Survey

Thank you to the parents who have completed this short survey regarding your experience with our front office and staff. We are striving to always make sure everyone feels welcomed when they come inside. **If you haven't yet completed the survey, please take the time to do so.** It is a very short but relevant survey. **You can use the QR code below to access.** We really appreciate your feedback, suggestions and support. What we really want to know is, **“How may we support you today?”**



In today's memo we will be covering the following main topics:

- Front office Survey
- Kiwanis Kids Club
- PTA News
- Socio Emotional Learning
- College Monday
- Science Lab

Kiwanis Kids Club

K-Kids is the largest service organization for elementary school students, with more than 36,000 members worldwide. The first K-Kids was chartered in 2000. Today, there are more than 1,200 clubs worldwide.

K-Kids is a student-led community service organization that operates under school regulations and draws its members from the student body. Community-based K-Kids clubs also can be established at churches, libraries, YMCAs, lodges or similar facilities. A Kiwanis club, composed of like-minded, service-oriented people from the community, serves as the club's sponsor. (Kiwanskids.org)

Ruskin has their own Kiwanis Kids Club, led by their advisors Mrs. Choi and Ms. Burns. This holiday season, as one of their service projects, the kids provided gift cards to some well deserving families. What a thoughtful way to bring some holiday cheer to people who could really use it. Great job kids!



Kiwanis Kids Club

PTA News

Thank you for putting the Penguin Patch event together for our kiddos. How much fun the kids had shopping for their friends and families! The following is an update from PTA regarding the Spell A Thon:

- Spell-a-thon events will be scheduled and prizes distributed to students by February. Tentatively, but that is the goal
- Total amount raised: **almost \$19,000**
- Top 3 fundraising students who will enjoy a special lunch with Principal Blackshire:
 - **Jaden S (Kawasaki's class)**
 - **Maya G (Kawasaki's class)**
- This next student will not only have lunch with Principal Blackshire but is also the top fundraising student and winner of the "Principal for the Day" prize: **Layla G (Coan's class)**
- Winner of the class prize for the class with the most number of students who participated in fundraising: **Mrs. Burns' class**
 - The class prize will include new books and games for the classroom and a small prize for each student.
- Top fundraising class wins a class party. Instead of just one class party winner, we decided to award class parties to the top three classes who raised the most money:
 - 3rd place: **Mrs. Coan's class (Kinder)**
 - 2nd place: **Mrs. Burns' class (3rd grade)**
 - **1st place: Mrs. Kawasaki's class (4th grade)**
- Thank you to everyone for participating in the Spell-a-thon and supporting our school!

A huge thank you to PTA for ALL of their hard work and efforts. Wow!!!

PTA Membership

(Totem Website \$10+\$1fee)



SEL Corner (Social Emotional Learning)



Last week we talked about the importance of Acceptance and Diversity. Let's further that discussion. Talking openly and positively about differences can help children better understand themselves and those around them. Embracing diversity and inclusion empowers kids to engage their world with curiosity, confidence and kindness. Diversity and inclusion helps children learn to empathize with people who are different from them. Diversity and inclusion make all kids better learners, allowing them to understand various subjects from multiple points of view.

The best way for kids to learn about diversity and inclusion is to see it modeled by trusted adults. Parents can take active steps to make sure their child is immersed in communities and opportunities that embrace and celebrate differences.

- Acknowledge differences
- Ask open ended questions and listen without judgment
- Take time when you need it to answer difficult questions
- Speak up when bias happens
- Read diverse books and watch diverse media
- Discuss current events at an age appropriate level
- Take action together. Get resources from sources like [Doing Good Together](#). (sourced from [Childrensmercy.org](#)).



College Monday

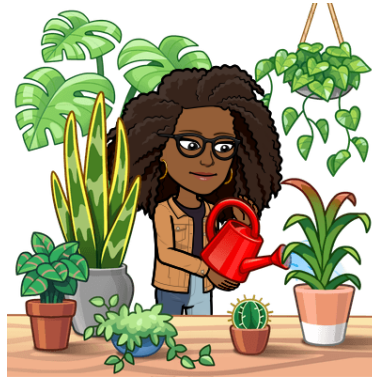
This week's featured college is the University of Michigan located in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on the east coast. It is one of the most popular colleges in the world. Here are some quick facts about the school:



- Founded in 1817
- Offers over 280 degrees in its undergraduate and graduate programs
- The college is divided into 4 main campuses: North, Central, Medical, and South campuses.
- It is the largest university in Michigan with approximately 52,000 students
- They are known academically for their Law School, Business School, College of Engineering and Medical School
- They are a NCAA Division 1 school in athletics
- Their mascot are the Wolverines



Science Lab



Last Friday, the 4th grade students explored erosion and deposition using stream tables. This week, the 3rd grade students made a working model of a leg to see how muscles and tendons help a leg and foot move. The 2nd grade students looked at different animals and how they use their body parts to survive.





REMINDERS

Lost and Found



Our Lost and Found cart is overflowing! Our Leadership students have been fast at work collecting and organizing lost items. If you have lost a jacket, sweatshirt, hoodie, or other item of clothing, please come check the Lost and Found cart located in the courtyard in front of the office. It's getting colder, so come and claim your nice, cozy clothing!

Upcoming Calendar Events:

12/19: Ms. Burn's 3rd grade class play, 8:30 TK-2, 1:30 3-5

12/21: Spirit Day - PJ Day

12/21: Holiday Sing A Long 9:30-10:00 (Grades 1,2,3) 10:20 (Grades TK,K,4,5)

12/22: 1/5: Winter Break (Wool!)

1/8/24: Return to School

Walk N Roll Newsletters

[Walk N Roll Newsletter English](#)

[Walk N Roll Newsletter Vietnamese](#)

[Walk N Roll Newsletter Spanish](#)

Here are the links to report traffic violations around the school or request enhanced traffic safety around the school (parking enforcement, request crosswalk updates, etc).

- [Parking Compliance](#)
- [Traffic Enforcement Request:](#)



Parents, please remember, NOT to park in the horseshoe. It is made for cars to move in and out of quickly. As always, if you would like to volunteer to help out with traffic safety, please contact the front office at 408-923-1950 or email me at Lblackshire@busd.net.

For the ensured safety of everyone, please remember the following:

- Please do not park in the bus zone
- Please use the crosswalk near the staff parking lot
- Pull **ALL** the way forward in the horseshoe



- Please do not park in the STAFF parking lot
- Thank you for not parking in front of or in the neighbor's driveway
- Please do not double park OR park in the horseshoe
- Try to come early or walk or bike to school if possible
- Staff supervision of students begins at 7:50
- Please leave the premises once the bell rings so we may lock down the school
- Please do not let your children out in the middle of the street or the parking lot

Attendance Matters



Please keep your child home if they are ill and communicate with the front office. We can be reached at 408-923-1950 or you can contact the School Clerk, Ms. Kimberly, at Kyee@busd.net. I will be addressing chronic absenteeism and truancy throughout this school year. Let's work together to ensure our students get the full benefit of attending school each day.

[Vietnamese Truancy Video](#)

[Espanol Truancy Video](#)

- Once you receive 3 unexcused absences or a combination of a "late" tardy (31 minutes or more late) and unexcused absences (3 total), you will receive a truancy notice.
- An additional truancy will require a meeting with the Principal, Social Worker

- Continued truancy may result in a meeting with the district attendance team
Here is a [link](#) with examples of excused vs unexcused absences [based on Ed Code EC Section 48260](#). We appreciate your cooperation and understanding. Please be sure to call in your absences or email our attendance clerk, Ms. Kimberly Yee, at kyee@busd.net.



Independent Study Process

Do you need to take a few days off in the middle of the school year? Need to visit a sick family member or go on a family getaway? Did you know that if your child has overall good attendance, you may be eligible to take what's called an Independent Study, which would excuse their absences for a 5-9 day period? It is an **official contract** between the Principal, Teacher, Parent and Student, stating that the parent is acting as the “teacher” for the duration of the contract and will ensure that all work is completed to get credit for the absences. To apply for an Independent Study, here are the steps:

- Apply in the office at least **two weeks in advance**
- The attendance clerk will check the form
- The Principal then approves or denies the request
- Once approved, the teacher then has 2 weeks to get all of the classwork together
- The work is due upon the end date of the contract (if work is not turned in that day, the contract is null and void and the absences will then be unexcused)
- Only ONE Independent Study contract is allowed per year

After School Care

Are you in need of after school care? We have two different child care organizations that service our students. They are Sunshine School and Right at School. They are individually owned and operated. Their information is below:

Sunshine School

www.mysunshineschool.com

408-839-8366

Right At School (Room E1)

www.Rightatschool.com

855-287-2466



COVID Updates

Although COVID guidelines have lessened, we will continue to follow the public health guidance required by the [state](#) and [local](#) public health departments. These are the current recommendations and subject to change:

- **When symptomatic, please stay home.** Please reference our "[Reminder from the School Nurse](#)" on how to return your student post illness to school and if COVID-19 testing is required.
- **Testing** – Home antigen testing will be the primary strategy for COVID mitigation at school. We have at home tests available in the front office if needed or please visit <https://bit.ly/BUSDC19TestingResources> for more resources. Please use this link <https://bit.ly/BUSDOTC> to upload test results. Although some

of the test kits may have dates of expiration, here is a Link:

<https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/coronavirus-covid-19-and-medical-devices/home-ot-c-covid-19-diagnostic-tests> that shows most expiration dates have been extended. It is at the bottom of the article. Find your test and click the “extended expiration date” link.

- *Ventilation* – Maintain high quality air ventilation systems for reducing virus aerosols.
- *Hand Hygiene* – Continue to reinforce the importance of frequent hand washing.
- *COVID-19 Reporting* – Please visit <https://bit.ly/BUSDStudentEvent> to report your student’s event (positive case)
- *Vaccination* – COVID-19 vaccinations are recommended for all those eligible. Please visit Santa Clara County Public Health’s [website](#) to find a location near you.

Student Nutrition Services

School Nutrition Services is hiring Food service substitutes to help out in the kitchen. If you are interested, please log onto edjoin.org and look under **Berryessa Union School District**. School meals will continue to be FREE for ALL students thanks to California’s Universal Meals program. Each student may receive 1 free breakfast and 1 free lunch each school day. Meals include fruit, vegetables, and milk. Milk taken separately from a meal costs \$0.50 (covered by Universal Meals program if taken with a school meal).

Elementary School

 [Elementary Breakfast December 2023](#)

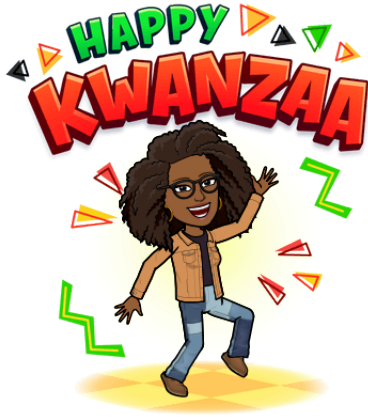
 [Elementary Lunch Menu December 2023](#)

- Families are strongly encouraged to apply for Free and Reduced price meals in order to increase funding for school programs and possibly qualify for other food benefits and discounts, e.g., afterschool programs, utilities and internet.
- Please submit your application ASAP in order for it to be counted toward

school funding.

- For more info and to access the Free and Reduced Lunch forms, access the [link](#)
- The application may also be downloaded from the [SNS Meal Applications webpage](#) which also has the lunch menus

Have an amazing weekend!!!



Sincerely,

LaKeisha Blackshire
Principal

Office Staff

Office Hours 7:30-3:30 **Office Phone** 408-923-1950

Principal: LaKeisha Blackshire LBlackshire@busd.net

School Secretary: Melani Montez MMontez@busd.net

School Clerk: Kimberly Yee KYee@busd.net