

Dear Parents,

*One of the many goals of our staff at Julian Curtiss is to keep parents informed about what their children are learning at school, how their children are progressing, and how parents can help at home. Below you will find an explanation of the various ways our teachers communicate with parents. You should be receiving and reviewing these documents periodically.*

The district literacy department has created letters for each reading and writing unit to provide parents with an overview of the skills that your child is learning in school. The letters give a description of the main skills of the units as well as some ideas on how parents can engage in the work of the unit at home with your child. Example questions to ask as well as ideas of books to read are provided. **You should expect to receive a letter at the beginning of each new reading and writing unit.**

One of the communication goals of the School Improvement Plan this year is to provide parents of children in grades 1-5 with more information around individual student progress in math. **Beginning in January or at the end of your child's present math unit you will be receiving a math letter aligned to the completed math unit.** The letters will list the priority goals of the math unit and teachers will note skills that might need additional reinforcement based on the end of unit assessments. These letters will also include a list of resources you can access at home.

Classroom teachers send **SMORE Newsletters** home monthly. These newsletters include basic information about what the grade level is working on in reading, writing, and math as well as celebrations, pictures and reminders. Essentialists (Library Learning Commons, Art, Music and PE) send out similar newsletters each marking period.

If you have not been receiving these letters please contact your child's teacher.

Administration and staff also provide **presentations** during the year to help parents understand what their children are learning. This year we have held information sessions on:

Reading Workshop – November 30, 2017

Writing Workshop -December 6, 2017

### **Coming Up Soon:**

Math Workshop                    January 31<sup>st</sup> @ 6pm

Digital Citizenship    February 7 @ 8:15am

Please join us to learn more about these topics.

All of this communication from the school should help parents talk to their child about school and what they are working on. At one of our workshops above we offered the following lists of questions that parents could ask their children. These questions should help lead to a meaningful discussion between parent and child. We hope they will improve on the usual routine of the parent asking, "What did you do at school today?" followed by the child's response "Nothing." Try this at home!

### **What can I ask my child about their own**

#### **Personalized Learning?**

- When were you your happiest today?
- What was the best thing that happened at school today? What was the most challenging?
- How did you help someone today?
- Tell me three ways you used a pencil today?
- Tell me three ways you used your device today?
- What is your strategy for a great day tomorrow? (Be Here, Be Safe, Be Honest, Care for Self and others, Let Go and Move On)

If you have the time these articles are worth the read!

Below is an article written by children's author Matt de la Pena who is the Newbery Medal-winning author of *Last Stop on Market Street* and most recently *Love*.

These articles were shared with me by two staff members and send a powerful message about children's literature, emotions, and how we speak to our children. The second article was written in response to the first.

<http://time.com/5093669/why-we-shouldnt-shield-children-from-darkness/>

<http://time.com/5099463/kate-dicamillo-kids-books-sad/>

Enjoy your weekend.

Sincerely,

Trish McGuire