



Goosehill Primary School

Weekly Notes-September 18, 2015



Dear Parents,

At Goosehill Primary School, we are committed to the education of the “whole child.” We know it is just as important to help children learn to manage their emotions and build positive relationships as it is to teach them to read and write. Recent research findings have added to a growing body of evidence which suggests that if we want children to lead fulfilling and productive lives, we have to help them develop social and emotional strengths like self-regulation, self-awareness and social awareness — strengths that are necessary for them to fully benefit from their education and succeed in many other areas of life.

Our school district adopted a social-emotional literacy (SEL) curriculum based on the work of Dr. Mark Brackett of Yale University. The program is called “**The Ruler Approach.**” Ruler is an acronym for the skills we teach children about managing emotions. We teach them to: Recognize, Understand, Label, Express, and Regulate their emotions so that they are able to manage stress, interact respectfully, solve problems, and learn at high levels.

The first component of our SEL program is a **charter**. A charter is similar to a set of guidelines, or rules, but its focus is on fostering a sense of community. **Classroom Charters** are being developed in all classrooms and a **School Charter** has been developed with the input of all of the students. During grade level assemblies, the students responded to the following questions: “*How do we want to feel in school? What should we do to make sure we all feel that way?*” and “*What can we do if someone breaks our charter?*” Their answers to these important questions helped develop a document that will serve as an anchor in our discussions about appropriate behavior, making helpful choices, and treating others with kindness. During our first grade assembly, Daniel, from Mrs. Katz’s class, offered a “Golden Rule” for Goosehill: “*Be nice to EVERYONE in the WHOLE school!*” A poster of our new “golden rule” is now prominently displayed in our hallway.

The most important idea we share with the children is that our job is to teach them to be the very best people they can be. They may make mistakes along the way, but we will support and guide them so that they don’t make the same mistake twice. Also, we teach them that it is the job of adults to ensure that all children are safe, comfortable, and happy at school, but children have a voice and can stand up for themselves and for each other.

We appreciate being able to work in partnership with parents to ensure that the school experience for all of our students is the very best it can be. Please don’t hesitate to call your child’s teacher or me if you have a concern to share. Your insights will help us address potential problems quickly and efficiently.

Warm regards,

Lynn Herschlein



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