



Berenda Elementary

February 2021

## Principal's Message

Hi Broncos! I hope this message finds you and your family healthy and doing well. I know we are all tired of being confined. Hopefully we will see our community situation improving soon so that we can get our students back to school. But, until then, let's talk about how we can make the best of this terrible situation and keep our young Broncos learning.

Think back on your own life. **How did you get better at something?** I'm guessing you had to practice. Not hours and hours on one day, but a little bit every day. And that is the same way your children are going to get better at reading and math. **Practice! Practice! and more Practice!**

**For reading:** The best way to become a good reader is to read. Read every day! The more you read the better reader you will be. We start by practicing with our letter names and sounds. Then our sight words and skills. And use all that we have learned to read books.

**In Kinder** - Practice your letter names, sounds, and sight words.

**1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>** - Practice your sight words and spend 20 min a day on Lexia.

**Lexia** is a specially designed program that finds out what each individual students need to know and then helps them work on those specific skills. Looking at the data, we can see that the students doing 20 min a day are showing positive growth. Practice does help!

**All grade levels** - Read every day. Read every day. Read every day. You have to do this!

**For math:** We have two programs that we are using that work with students at the level they are. **Our K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade** students get to play with Jiji on the **STMath** program. It is a fun way to practice their skills and deepen their conceptual understanding of math.

**Our 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade** students take the NWEA assessment and that data is used to determine the skills that they will practice in the **MAPs Accelerator** program. (Khan Academy.)

If you haven't seen these programs...take some time to sit with your child and let them show you. It is important for them to see you excited about what they are doing and for them to know you want and expect them to spend 20 min a day on each of these activities.

I would also like for each of you to have your child show you their Google Classroom. Have them show you their assignments list. Congratulate them if they don't have any 'missing' assignments, and if they do have 'missing' assignments, make a plan for how to get those assignments completed.

Together - We can do this!

Mr. Christiansen

Be Safe and Give Grace!

## What's coming...

We have our Packet Pickup Day scheduled for February 3<sup>rd</sup>. We will be distributing from 10-11:30 in a drive through format and again at 5:00-5:45 out of room 5.

We are going to be NWEA testing our 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade students in math and English. **You children may tell you that it is a 'different' kind of test...and they are right.** So, I want to explain what they mean.

The NWEA test is 'adaptive'. If your child gets a question right, the next question is harder. If they get a question wrong, the next question is easier. By doing this, the questions get easier and harder in difficulty until the program determines a specific level for each student.

With this method of testing, we let students know that they will get 1/2 the question right and 1/2 the questions wrong. It is different than a spelling test. In a spelling test, you want to get them all right. And, if you study, you can get them all right. With the NWEA test, you **CAN NOT** get all the answers correct. You will always get **HALF** of them wrong...and that is OK.

## Student Health & Wellness (and Parents too)

We have talked about how important it is to keep an eye on our children and how they are doing educationally and emotionally. But, it is important to be taking care of ourselves too...educationally and emotionally. Here are some links to some classes that can help you learn how to help your children learn, some classes that can teach you some different skills, and some very helpful parenting classes.

[Link](#) to [Parent Engagement Online Classes Spring 2021](#)

Parent engagement during student online learning is important. Similar to traditional face-to-face learning, parents play a vital role in student academic success. The best predictor of student success is the extent to which parents encourage learning at home and involve themselves in their children's education. When parents are engaged in their children's academic journey, students have the home support and knowledge they need to finish their assignments and develop a lifelong love of learning. Parents can register for online classes now. Please refer to the 2021 online class schedule for a list of classes, specific days, and times. **To register, call the MUSD Call Center at 416-5879.**

Here is a [link](#) to some online [Online Parenting Classes](#). The contact information is located at the bottom of the flyer. They are offering classes for different age groups at different times. Parenting classes can be great for a family. My wife and I participated in a parenting class when our children were young and it really helped us as a family. I highly recommend them.