



Marcum Matters

2452 El Centro Blvd., East Nicolaus, CA 95659

www.marcum-illinois.org

Main School Line (530) 656-2407

School Cell (530) 933-0746

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Board of Trustees

Jeff Moore	Board President
Jill Bramhill	Board Clerk
Alan Menigoz	Board Member
Keith Turner	Board Member
Josh Wanner	Board Member

December 2022

Upcoming Events

December 2

Polar Express Pajama Party 6:00pm

December 6

Parents' Club Meeting 6:00pm

December 7

Digital Citizenship South County Parent Information Night 6:30pm

December 10

Saturday School 8:30am-12:30pm

December 12

Board Meeting 7:00pm

December 14

GATE 3:30pm

December 15

Dinner/Desserts 5:00pm
Winter Program 6:00pm

December 16

Minimum Day- **No DEN**
Dismissal Times:
TK-2nd 12:20
3rd-5th 12:25
6th-8th 12:30

December 19-January 2nd

Winter Break- No School



Polar Express Pajama Party

Marcum Parents' Club is hosting another family movie night this time featuring a Polar Express Pajama Party! You won't want to miss this fun event which will include the Polar Express movie, a craft, hot cocoa, and a cookie! There will also be a little surprise in store for everyone who believes in the magic of the holiday season. There will be tickets available at the door, but Parents' Club would appreciate it if families would purchase tickets in advance so they can ensure that they have enough materials for the event. <https://the-polar-express-tickets-dec-2.cheddarup.com> Please see the enclosed flyer for more information.

Winter Program

Marcum's Annual Winter Program will take place at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 15th. This year, each class will perform a song to entertain the audience. In addition to the performances, Marcum's Parents' Club will be holding their raffle which will include general raffle prizes and the classroom raffle baskets. Each class will also be contributing a classroom project to be auctioned off. Some of our 8th graders will be offering a dinner starting at 5:00 p.m. in order to raise funds to pay for their Washington D.C. trip. They will also be selling popcorn and hot cocoa. The 6th grade class will be selling desserts throughout the evening to raise funds for their Shady Creek trip. We hope that you will all be able to join us for a wonderful program!

Seat Pre-Sale for Winter Program

Parents' Club will be selling seats in advance for the first four rows at Winter Program. If you would like to purchase seats to guarantee a good spot, you may come in to the office and select your seat. We will be selling these tickets for \$10 a seat in the first row, \$8 a seat in the second row, \$6 a seat in the third row, and \$4 a seat in the fourth row. The remaining rows will all be open seating. You may purchase seats in the office Monday-Friday 8:00-4:30. Seat presales are first come, first serve and must be paid for in person with cash or check. We cannot hold seats without payment.

Raffle Donations

During the Winter Program, we will be raffling off Classroom Raffle Baskets. We hope you'll be able to send in something that supports your child's class theme. Please send these items to the classroom by December 13th. Themes are listed on the attached flyer. Parents' Club is also accepting donations for the General Raffle that will take place during Winter Program. If you or your family would like to donate something to the general raffle, Parents' Club would greatly appreciate it. The generosity of our community is what makes this fundraiser a success for our students! If you have any donations for the General Raffle, please send them to the office by December 13th.

Student Council Holiday Activities

Our Student Council is working on a variety of holiday activities and fundraisers. Please be on the lookout for more information related to these fun items very soon!

Sock Drive

Our GATE students are heading up a community service project that benefits a local senior citizen community. The students will be visiting the community later this month and participating in a few fun activities with the seniors there. They would also like to be able to donate a variety of grippy socks to the home. Please help them provide a generous donation by sending in a pair (or more) of grippy socks! Please send the sock donations in by December 12th.

Holiday Basket Donations for Families in Need

Marcum Parents' Club will be creating baskets with essentials for a nice holiday meal and some staple items for several of our Marcum families in need. We need donations of items to include in the basket. To sign up and donate items, please check the sign up at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0845abac29a0f85-2022> . In addition to the items listed there, Parents' Club will also be contributing a frozen turkey and/or ham, fresh rolls, and a loaf of bread for each basket. Please send all donations to the office by December 12th. Baskets will be distributed by December 16th. If your family would like to receive one of these holiday meal baskets, or if you know of a family that would benefit from one of these baskets, please let Shasta know. You may call 530-656- 2407, text the school phone at 530-933-0746, or complete this online form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1SysQmdElqi66qVdT_PTxsZ_qdjZ3dfj0eMSFzyA7YaM/edit

MIUSD Governing Board

After providing an incredible 17 years of service to the Marcum-Illinois Union School District, Mr. Alan Menigoz is leaving the MIUSD Governing Board. The District would like to thank Alan for his invaluable contributions to the District over these many years. We are incredibly grateful for his leadership and service on the Board. Upon his exit, Emily Daddow has been elected to fill the vacant Board seat starting in December. We welcome Mrs. Daddow to the MIUSD Governing Board!

2021-2022 State Testing Results

Marcum is proud to celebrate that last year's 3rd through 8th grade Wildcats who took the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) tests collectively outperformed all of our local and state comparisons in both English Language Arts and Mathematics! This is a great reflection of all the hard work put in by our students, teachers, and families to help students continue to grow despite any setbacks faced. As a school, we will continue our efforts to provide opportunities that benefit our students and address individualized needs so that all Wildcats can reach their fullest potential.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 101 WILDCATS WHO MET THEIR READING GOAL FOR THE 1ST TRIMESTER!

NOEL B
HUNTER D
BRISTOL F
GIULIA G
JOHNATHAN G
OLIVIA G
GRANT H
DANNY H
CECILIA L
ISAAC V
CARSYN A
OWEN F
VICTORIA G
HANK G
KAYCEE S
PENELOPE S
BRICK W
LUKE X
JASON Y
CASEY H
MAVIS S
JOLENE R
ELLA T
MATEO X
LATIGO H
WILLIAM A
MADISON B

JULIAN B
DYLAN D
SAWYER F
EZRA F
KALEN J
ITZLAEL'EZEKIEL M
RYANNE M
OLIVIA M
LAUREN M
EVA P
ALISON R
ANTHONY S
JAXON S
AUDREY S
LYLA S
RYAN X
SANTHIAGO Z
MILES H
NOAH L
ALYSSA S
AUBREY T
AUTUMN T
GABRIEL V
QUINCY H
LINCOLN M
SUTTON M
SAMUEL M

JACKSON R
RUBY B
DARIAN W
SHELBY W
SARAH B
SYDNEY C
LUCY H
PHILLIP H
MAKENZIE M
HENRY M
ALYSSA T
JULIE X
COLDEN W
WILLIAM B
BROOKE C
KIMBER K
BRADLEY W
ELLIE G
NOAH Y
CABELA G
KINGSTON M
REAGAN M
JAMESON M
MOLLY S
AVERY B
LONDON C
CANON H

EMILY M
YULISSA N
AUBREY Y
KATIE B
EMMA B
COLE B
GWEN C
AIDEN C
ASHLYN E
WILLOW F
JAZMIN G
KENDALL K
MILAGROS L
ALINA M
ANTHONY M
ISSAC N
RICKY R
ELLA R
ZACH T
SHELBY W



TRIMESTER 1 HONOR ROLL

ALL A's

BROOKE C
ELLIE G
KIMBER K
KINGSTON M
JAMESON M
LONDON C
EMILY M
MOLLY S
YULISSA N
KATIE S
ALINA M
ELLA R



3.0 ACHIEVEMENT

WILLIAM B
CAGE L
REBECA L
TRISTAN M
EMMA S
BRADLEY W
COLDEN W
AVERY B
CANON H
REAGAN M
AVELINA M
TREY M
JENNA M
LILY S
AUBREY Y
KATIE B

EMMA B
GWENDYLYN C
AIDEN C
ASHLYN E
JAZMIN G
KENDALL K
ANTHONY M
ISSAC N
MICHELLE R
NAIDELYN R
RICKY R
KAYESON S
CAIDEN T
ZACHARY T
SHELBY W

THE POLAR EXPRESS

PAJAMA PARTY

All Aboard!

Marcum Parents' Club invites you to join us for a magical event! Ticket includes admission to The Polar Express movie, a craft, hot cocoa and a cookie plus we have a little surprise in store for everyone who believes in the magic of the holiday season.

Friday, December 2nd at 6pm, doors open at 5:30.

Wear your pajamas and bring a pillow and sleeping bag to keep you cozy during the movie.

To ensure we have enough supplies, purchase your tickets by Nov 29th using the QR code below. A limited number of tickets will be available at the door.

TICKETS \$2



Food and other concessions will be available for purchase at the event.



Enrichment Saturdays

Has your child missed a day of school this year? If so, have them come join us for one of our Enrichment Saturdays and turn their absence into a day of attendance! The classes will be from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and school breakfast and lunch will be available. The purpose of these Saturdays is for those students who have missed a day to make it up, turning their absence into a day of attendance (this applies to both excused & unexcused absences). Having your child attend these days helps the school gain the ADA money that was lost on a day your child was absent. Students with absences will have priority to attend Saturday School Sessions. Saturday School will only make up an absence that has already occurred; you cannot bank the Saturday School Session to be applied to a future absence.

**On Saturday, December 10th,
Mrs. Lucas and Ms. Shasta will be
holding a "Reindeer Games" themed
Enrichment Saturday School!**

If you would like to sign your child(ren) up, please complete the online form here <https://forms.gle/92zndsDyXMt1icFL7> OR fill in the following and return it to the school office no later than December 8th. To ensure that we have enough supplies and meals for the students attending, only those that have signed up in advance may attend.

~TK-8th Grade Students Only~

*No more than 30 students per session. Students will be signed up in the order their forms are received in the office.

*Priority will be given to students who have absences.

My child(ren) will be attending the Saturday School Session on December 10th, from 8:30am-12:30pm:

Name: _____	Breakfast: Yes No	Lunch: Yes No
Name: _____	Breakfast: Yes No	Lunch: Yes No
Name: _____	Breakfast: Yes No	Lunch: Yes No
Name: _____	Breakfast: Yes No	Lunch: Yes No
Parent Signature: _____	Date: ____/____/____	

Senior Sock Drive!!!

The Marcum GATE program is hosting a sock drive for the benefit of the seniors at Emerald Oaks Senior Community in Yuba City

Donations may be brought to the school office

November 28th - December 12th

The collected socks will be donated on behalf of all Marcum-Illinois Wildcats

The socks may be all sizes, cute, fuzzy, etc but should have grip on the bottom





CLASSROOM THEME RAFFLE BASKETS

PRESCHOOL- MYSTERY ICE CHEST
TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN- HOT DRINKS
KINDERGARTEN- FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT
1ST GRADE- NEW YEAR'S PARTY PACKAGE
2ND GRADE- ALL AROUND BAKER
3RD GRADE- GIFT CARDS GALORE
4TH GRADE- FAMILY GAME NIGHT
5TH GRADE- PET-A-PALOOZA
6TH GRADE- SPORTS
7TH GRADE- SPA
8TH GRADE- LOTTERY TICKET TREE

EACH CLASS SELECTS A THEME AND COLLECTS ITEMS RELATED TO THAT THEME TO MAKE A BASKET THAT WILL BE RAFFLED OFF AT WINTER PROGRAM. OUR CLASSROOM THEME BASKETS ARE ALWAYS A HUGE SUCCESS THANKS TO YOUR GENEROSITY. PLEASE SEND ITEMS RELATED TO YOUR CHILD'S CLASS THEME TO SCHOOL BY DECEMBER 13TH!

Marcum-Illinois Union School District's

Winter Program

December 15, 2022

5:00 PM

Dinner Fundraiser (Benefits 8th Grade Washington
D.C. Trip Participants) & Dessert Fundraiser (Benefits
6th Grade Shady Creek Trip)

6:00 PM

Program Begins

*Parents' Club will be hosting a raffle. Classroom
theme baskets will be raffled off and there will be a general
raffle with a lot of amazing prizes! Each class will also be
auctioning off a special class project!
Each class will be performing a song!*



*Pleasant Grove Parents Club
Invites you to our Annual*

Harvest Dinner

Saturday December 3, 2022

Bazaar: 4 - 8 pm ~ Dinner 4:30 - 7:00 pm ~ Raffle 7:00 pm

BBQ Tri-tip Dinner

Adults \$20~ Children \$10

Menu: Tri-tip, Rice, Gravy, Beans, Salad, Roll,

Lemonade & Coffee

Soda and Bottle water \$1.00

Raffle Prizes ~ Grand prize is a \$1000 Visa Gift Card!

Raffle tickets \$1.00 each

Raffle donations: Contact Heather Tolentino (916) 532 - 8066

Vendors/Crafters

For information text Amber Cortez (916) 878 - 6239

Silent and Live Auctions

Classroom Theme Baskets, Silent Auction Items, & More

**Dinner will be held at Pleasant Grove School
3075 Howsley Rd. Pleasant Grove, CA 95668**

BROWNS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S

PANCAKE
Breakfast
WITH
Santa



DECEMBER 10 • 9AM-11:30AM

BREAKFAST WILL BE SERVED UNTIL 10:30
WITH SANTA PICTURES TO FOLLOW.

Photos with Santa available
Adults \$10. Kids \$8. 2 & under Free.

PRICE INCLUDES BREAKFAST, CRAFTS, AND A DIGITAL PHOTO WITH SANTA



Tickets can be purchased in
advance by visiting
[https://my.cheddarup.com/c/
breakfast-with-santa-61482](https://my.cheddarup.com/c/breakfast-with-santa-61482)
Tickets will be available
for purchase at the door,
cash or check only.



PLUS! A VERY SPECIAL SURPRISE WILL BE THERE!



December Breakfast Menu

2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 Pancake on a Stick Fruit Milk	2 Breakfast Sandwich Fruit Milk
5 Chef's Choice Fruit Milk	6 Strawberry Mini Bagels Fruit Milk	7 Blueberry Crumb Cake Fruit Milk	8 Pizza Bagel Fruit Milk	9 Cinnamon Roll Fruit Milk
12 French Toast Fruit Milk	13 English Muffin Fruit Milk	14 Bagel Fruit Milk	15 Pancake on a Stick Fruit Milk	16 Breakfast Sandwich Fruit Milk
19 No School Winter Break	20 No School Winter Break	21 No School Winter Break	22 No School Winter Break	23 No School Winter Break
26 No School Winter Break	27 No School Winter Break	28 No School Winter Break	29 No School Winter Break	30 No School Winter Break

This institution is an equal opportunity employer

*Menu is subject to change

At Marcum-Illinois UESD under California's Universal Meals Program, all students in Preschool through 8th grade, regardless of their parents' income, are eligible for free breakfast and lunch.



December Lunch Menu

2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
 Harvest of the Month  Mandarins			1 Chicken Nuggets Mashed Potatoes Artisan Roll Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk	2 PIZZA! Salad Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk 
5 Corn Dog Baked Beans Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk	6 Cheeseburger Tater Tots Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk	7 Taco Pocket Spanish Rice Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk Treat	8 Chicken Nuggets Mashed Potatoes Artisan Roll Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk	9 PIZZA! Salad Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk 
12 Lasagna Garlic Knot Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk	13 Crunchy Tacos Refried Beans Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk	14 Teriyaki Dippers Fried Rice Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk	15 Chicken Nuggets Mashed Potatoes Artisan Roll Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk	16 PIZZA! Salad Choice of Fruit and Veggies Choice of Milk Treat 
19 No School Winter Break 	20 No School Winter Break	21 No School Winter Break	22 No School Winter Break 	23 No School Winter Break
26 No School Winter Break	27 No School Winter Break	28 No School Winter Break	29 No School Winter Break	30 No School Winter Break 

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December Snack Menu

2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 Applesauce Cheez-Its	2 Chef's Choice
5 Chef's Choice	6 Apple Slices Wowbutter	7 Cheese Stick Fruit Cup	8 Graham Crackers Juice	9 Cereal Milk
12 Cereal Bar Milk	13 Sunflower Seeds Banana	14 Bean and Cheese Burrito Juice	15 Applesauce Cheez-Its	16 Minimum Day No Den
19 No School Winter Break	20 No School Winter Break	21 No School Winter Break	22 No School Winter Break	23 No School Winter Break
26 No School Winter Break	27 No School Winter Break	28 No School Winter Break	29 No School Winter Break	30 No School Winter Break

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Harvest of the Month



Network for a Healthy California

The Harvest of the Month featured produce is **mandarins**



Health and Learning Success Go Hand-in-Hand

Did you know a single serving of fruits or vegetables usually costs less than 25 cents? These small costs have big health benefits. Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables and being active every day are healthy habits that can help your child do better in school, feel good, stay healthy, and grow strong. *Harvest of the Month* provides ideas to help your family eat more fruits and vegetables and be more active every day.

Produce Tips

- Look for plump mandarins that feel heavy for size and have stems still attached.
- Look for mandarins with glossy, deep orange skins. (Some patches of green near the stem are okay to eat.)
- Keep on the counter and use within a few days. Or, store in the refrigerator for up to one week.
- **Helpful Hint:** Mandarins that have a deep orange-red color are called *tangerines*. Other types of mandarins include satsumas, clementines, and tangelos.

Healthy Serving Ideas

- Serve breakfast with a glass of 100% fruit juice.
- Provide healthy after-school snacks like fresh or canned mandarin slices (packed in 100% fruit juice).
- Dip tangerine segments into lowfat flavored yogurt.
- Add mandarins to green salads.
- Squeeze juice of citrus fruits over chicken and fish to make tender and juicy. Or, use juice to make reduced fat salad dressings.

For more ideas, visit:
www.kidsnutrition.org

ORANGE FREEZE

Makes 4 servings.
1¼ cups per serving.
Prep time: 5 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 cup 100% orange juice
- 10 ice cubes
- 1 cup 1% lowfat or nonfat milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups drained, canned mandarin oranges

1. Place all ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend for about 30 seconds or until smooth.
3. Pour into four glasses and serve.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories 91, Carbohydrate 18 g, Dietary Fiber 1 g, Protein 2 g, Total Fat 1 g, Saturated Fat 0 g, Trans Fat 0 g, Cholesterol 3 mg, Sodium 33 mg

Adapted from: *Kids...Get Cookin'!*,
Network for a Healthy California, 2009.

Let's Get Physical!

Help your child be active and prepare for spring fitness testing with these tips:

- Set a weekly goal for each family member. (Example: Walk 10,000 steps and do stretches every day.)
- Post goals in a highly visible area, such as on the refrigerator.
- Encourage each other to meet goals and set new ones.
- Decide on a "reward" for meeting goals. (Example: family outing or hike).

For more ideas, visit:
www.activeca.org

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: ½ cup tangerine, sections (98g)	
Calories 52	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 2mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 13g	4%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Sugars 10g	
Protein 1g	
Vitamin A 13%	Calcium 4%
Vitamin C 43%	Iron 1%

How Much Do I Need?

- One medium mandarin orange is about a ½ cup of fruit sections.
- A ½ cup of mandarins is an excellent source of vitamin C and a good source of vitamin A.
- Vitamin C helps the body heal cuts and wounds and helps lower the risk of infection. Vitamin C is found only in plant foods.
- Our bodies do not make or store vitamin C so try to eat foods with vitamin C every day.

The amount of fruits and vegetables that is right for you depends on your age, gender, and physical activity level. Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables can help you stay healthy. Fruits and vegetables come in a variety of forms – fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and 100% juice – and all forms count toward your daily amounts. Find out how much each person in your family needs. Make plans to help your family reach the goal amount.

Recommended Daily Amount of Fruits and Vegetables*

	Kids, Ages 5-12	Teens and Adults, Ages 13 and up
Males	2½ - 5 cups per day	4½ - 6½ cups per day
Females	2½ - 5 cups per day	3½ - 5 cups per day

*If you are active, eat the higher number of cups per day. Visit www.mypyramid.gov to learn more.

Elementary School Parents[®] make the difference!

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Marcum-Illinois



Regular exercise boosts your child's health and academics

Physical fitness provides many benefits for children. Studies show that regular physical activity is linked to higher self-confidence and attentiveness in school. It also lowers the chance of health problems such as type 2 diabetes.

To increase your child's activity level:

- **Plan family outings.** Pick activities your family enjoys and create some new healthy traditions. You might bundle up and go for a short walk after dinner or head to a park every Sunday afternoon.
- **Make suggestions.** When your child has a friend over, suggest they play games that involve movement, such as tag, soccer and jumping rope. Indoors, try games such as Simon Says and Red Light, Green Light.

- **Add movement to screen time.** Have your child take breaks that involve activity when watching TV or playing video games. For example, see how many sit-ups your child can do during commercial breaks.
- **Be creative.** During chore time, play music or race to finish a job. While doing errands, park a few blocks away from a store and walk. Or, make a quick stop at a playground on the way home.
- **Set an example.** Children are more likely to be active when they see family members staying fit. Let your child see you stretching, biking, walking with a friend, etc.

Source: A. McPherson and others, "Physical activity, cognition and academic performance: An analysis of mediating and confounding relationships in primary school children," *BMC Public Health*, BioMed Central.

Strengthen your child's online research skills



Help your child develop important research skills by demonstrating how to find interesting

information online. Here are two games the whole family can play:

- **Scavenger hunt.** Make a list of 10 questions for which there is only one correct answer. For example: *What's the temperature in Buenos Aires right now? Who was the last Olympic Gold Medal winner in women's figure skating?* Then start a timer and see how quickly your child can find the answers (without asking Siri). Encourage the use of a variety of search terms to make the search more effective. Give the same list of questions to another family member and see who gets the best time!
- **Panning for gold.** Choose a famous person or event from history. Give everyone in the family 15 minutes to search online for interesting facts about that person or event. Share what each of you has learned. Vote for whose "nugget" of information turned out to be gold.

Promote skills that will prepare your child for middle school



Long before students enter middle school, teachers start preparing them for its challenges.

You can do the same thing at home by encouraging your child to:

- **Manage time.** Demonstrate how to use short periods of time in productive ways. Your child could study flash cards on the way to basketball practice, or review math problems on the bus.
- **Get organized.** Make sure your child is using a planner to keep track of school assignments. Suggest ways to organize school papers and recommend cleaning out school bags and study spaces once a week.

- **Take notes.** Encourage your child to practice this skill while reading at home. Ask your student to identify and write down key words and information, then summarize the essential points.
- **Plan ahead.** Show your child how to make a study schedule and stick to it. Explain that several short study sessions are more effective than cramming.

“The best preparation for good work tomorrow is to do good work today.”

—Elbert Hubbard

Downtime is vital for your child’s health and academic success



Some parents schedule every minute of their children’s time in an effort to prepare them for success in later life.

But studies suggest that kids benefit from enjoying unscheduled free time.

When days are packed with lessons, sports and other structured activities, children can become overwhelmed and stressed out. As a result, they don’t do as well in school and are more likely to get sick.

To determine if your child’s schedule is balanced, ask yourself:

- **Does my child** have time to play with friends? Practices that are planned and run by adults don’t count. Kids need time to relax and just “hang out” with other children.
- **When does my child** complete assignments? Working on them

while traveling between activities isn’t effective. Schoolwork takes concentration, and that takes time.

- **Why is my child** in these activities? Sometimes, parents are the ones who want their child to take a class or participate in a sport.
- **Does my child** get enough sleep? Children between the ages of six and 12 need nine to 12 hours of sleep each day to function well. School is your child’s most important job. If too many activities are getting in the way, ask your student to make a choice: “Which two activities do you enjoy the most?” For safety, middle school students should still be supervised, but increasing unstructured free time will increase your child’s happiness and health.

Source: C. Hennig, “The Lost Art of Play: How Overscheduling Makes Children Anxious,” CBC News.

Are you building a bridge between home and school?



Studies consistently show that when families and schools form a strong team, students are more likely to succeed. They

learn more and do better in school.

School has been underway for a couple of months, so it’s a good time to think about the relationship you are building with the school. Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

___ **1. Have you met** with your child’s teacher at least once this year?

___ **2. Do you talk** with your child about school each day and review the information the school sends home?

___ **3. Do you monitor** schoolwork? If your child struggles with an assignment, do you ask the teacher how you can help at home?

___ **4. Do you make sure** your child gets to school on time each day?

___ **5. Have you reviewed** the school handbook together? Do you expect your child to follow all school rules?

How well are you doing?

If most of your answers were *yes*, you are building a strong school-family team. For each *no* answer, try that idea from the quiz.

Elementary School
Parents
make the difference!

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to Help Their Children.

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Bring geography to life with fun and educational activities



Learning about geography can make the entire world more relevant to your child. To strengthen interest in geography,

have your child:

- **Draw a map** of how to get from your house to school, the grocery store or a friend's house. Then follow the map together.
 - **Walk outside** and identify *north*, *south*, *east* and *west*, as well as *northeast*, *northwest*, *southeast* and *southwest*. Challenge your child to describe where things in your town are located. "My school is *northeast* of my house." "The library is *south* of the fire station."
 - **Go through your house** and talk about where various items came from. Look for labels to see where things were made. A calculator may have come from Taiwan.
- A box of cereal may have a Battle Creek, Michigan or Chicago, Illinois address. Locate them on a map.
- **Look for street patterns.** In some towns, streets run north and south, while avenues run east and west. Or, street names may be alphabetical. Help your child recognize the patterns.
 - **Start a collection** of objects from countries around the world. Stamps, postcards and coins are all easy items to collect, categorize and store.
 - **Learn more about** where your ancestors came from. Find these places on a map. If possible, help your child learn about the places ancestors lived before coming to this country. Where do your relatives live now? Again, check the map.

Routine family dinners can improve outcomes for children



What does your child really want for dinner?

You. Families have varying schedules and you may wonder whether

gathering for a family meal is worth the effort involved. In fact, research suggests that family meals can make a real difference.

Studies have found that kids who eat dinner with their families four or more nights a week are less likely to try cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana. They also perform better in school.

Here's how to make family meals work for you:

- **Include your child** in mealtime conversations. Ask a few specific questions, such as, "What's one interesting thing that happened at school?"

interesting thing that happened at school?"

- **Keep it pleasant.** Don't use mealtime as an opportunity to argue or interrogate your child.
- **Laugh.** Humor makes dinnertime fun for everyone.
- **Be flexible.** If evening meals are hard to schedule, share breakfast with your child. You'll have the same chance to connect.
- **Go low-tech.** Turn off the TV and digital devices. Keep phones and tablets away from the table.
- **Don't worry** if you can't eat together every night. Try to have dinner together a few times each week.

Source: "Benefits of Family Dinners," The Family Dinner Project.

Q: My fourth-grader earns average grades, but I know they could be higher. Several of my friends pay their children for earning good grades. Is this something I should consider doing with my child?

Questions & Answers

A: Parents want their children to do their best in school—and they are constantly looking for effective ways to motivate their kids to achieve. But there are some serious drawbacks to offering money for grades.

Paying for grades:

- **Doesn't allow children** to enjoy the satisfaction of learning. Kids don't need bribes to *want* to learn. They are natural learners. As they master new skills or memorize new facts, they gain self-esteem and self-confidence. However, when you pay your child for grades, you actually run the risk of *decreasing* your child's interest in learning.
- **Doesn't recognize effort.** Students should focus on doing their best. The goal is to keep trying and enjoy learning. If your child is trying but still struggling with the material, talk to the teacher.
- **Decreases intrinsic motivation.** Students who get paid for doing some things may expect to get paid for doing everything. Pretty soon, your child will expect a reward for every task you assign—from mowing the grass to taking out the trash to feeding the dog.

So what can you do to get your child's grades up? Help your student focus on learning and celebrate newly acquired skills. Praise your child for putting in the effort!

It Matters: Discipline

Take five steps to address clownish misbehavior



It's wonderful to have a good sense of humor. But it's no laughing matter when a student constantly disrupts

class with jokes and rude body sounds.

If your child is clowning around in school, take these steps:

- 1. Look for what's behind the behavior.** Sometimes children need attention or want to impress their classmates. Often, they try to use humor to cover up academic shortcomings.
- 2. Work with the teacher.** Together, try to identify when the problem behavior started and what might have triggered it. Acting up after recess, for example, may mean that your child needs help settling down. The teacher might help by assigning a high-profile task like handing out worksheets.
- 3. Talk about it.** Your child might not understand when it's OK to be silly and when it's not. Explain that there's a time when being funny and "clever" is actually being disrespectful.
- 4. Establish clear guidelines.** With the teacher's help, explain to your child what type of behavior you both expect.
- 5. Set consequences** that you and the teacher will enforce if your child breaks the rules.

By following these five steps, you and the teacher should be able to get your child's behavior back on track!

Source: K. Levine, *What To Do ... When Your Child Has Trouble at School*, Reader's Digest Books.

Positive discipline is linked to better behavior at home & school

A recent review of discipline research reaffirms that physical punishment is ineffective—and actually increases behavior problems. Effective discipline should be focused on teaching correct behavior, rather than punishment. And it's most effective when it's delivered in a positive, calm and loving way.

When disciplining, consider your:

- **Words.** Tell your child exactly what you expect. For example, "It's time to work on your assignment" is better than, "Aren't you supposed to be doing your assignment?"
- **Tone of voice.** It's important not to sound too stern or too unsure. Try to find a happy medium, a tone that says, "I'm confident you will do as I say."
- **Body language.** If possible, face your child and make eye contact. Avoid intimidating gestures such



as shaking a finger or putting your hands on your hips.

- **Facial expression.** A calm look will encourage your child to cooperate. You don't need to look angry or upset.

Source: A. Heilmann, PhD and others, "Physical punishment and child outcomes: A narrative review of prospective studies," *The Lancet*, Elsevier.

Improve your child's behavior with teacher-tested strategies



Can't get your child to focus on assignments? Pay attention? Respond to requests? Why not get help from those who get not just one child—but 20 or more children—to do what's expected?

Here's what teachers suggest:

- **Explain what you want your child to do.** Focus on the tasks you want to be routine—like putting items that go to school by the front door.
- **Post a schedule.** Your child will know what to do and when to do it—and will feel more independent.
- **Avoid abrupt transitions.** Let your child know how many minutes are left before it's time to switch gears and do something else.
- **Add excitement to ordinary tasks.** Challenge your child to clean up a mess in rhythm to music.
- **Use silent signals.** A gentle touch on the shoulder should get your child's attention. Flick the lights off and on to give a five-minute warning before bedtime.
- **Assign meaningful tasks.** Expect your child to contribute by doing chores that benefit the family.

Daily Learning Planner

*Ideas families can use to help children
do well in school*

Marcum-Illinois



THE
PARENT
INSTITUTE®

December 2022

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

- 1. Make a 31-link paper chain with your child. Tear off a link each day to count down the days until January 1.
- 2. Set aside time today to work on a project with your child. Choose something your student could give as a gift.
- 3. Make a meal together. Explain why you do some steps before others.
- 4. Have your child blow bubbles in freezing weather. How does the cold affect them? Look for ice forming on the bubbles.
- 5. Pick a word from the dictionary and draw a picture of it. See if your child can guess the word. Then let your child pick a word.
- 6. Make paper snowflakes with your child. Decorate your windows.
- 7. Have your child use a news source (in print or online) to check weather around the world. Where is it coldest?
- 8. Look for a community service project your family can do together.
- 9. Have your child teach you about something the class is learning. It's a great way to reinforce learning.
- 10. Talk to your child about holiday traditions in other cultures. Find a book about holidays to read together.
- 11. Give your child a flashlight to use to read in bed tonight.
- 12. Pick a word and challenge your child to put its letters in alphabetical order.
- 13. Find pictures of people in various situations. Ask your child to write captions.
- 14. Have your child compare the prices of two sizes of the same product at the grocery store. Which is the better buy?
- 15. Take a walk with your child and look at trees. Which trees are evergreen? Which ones are *deciduous* (lose their leaves in winter)?
- 16. Talk to your child about the importance of thanking people for gifts and kindnesses.
- 17. Set aside some time this month to do something seasonal together that you enjoyed when you were a child.
- 18. Watch the news on TV with your child. Choose one story and compare it with a print news article about the same event.
- 19. Review spelling or vocabulary words with your child tonight.
- 20. Have your child predict the results of flipping a coin 10 times. Then try it. Was your child's prediction close?
- 21. Talk with your child about the link between rights and responsibilities.
- 22. Have your child listen to different types of music and describe the feelings each one inspires.
- 23. Have your child make a list of things to do when there's nothing to do.
- 24. Read a story to your child and use a different voice for each character.
- 25. Hum a popular song and see if your child can guess its name.
- 26. With your child, estimate how many bowls of cereal you can pour from one box. Keep track until the box is empty.
- 27. Look for a show or video about history and historical figures. Watch with your child.
- 28. Challenge your child to do a secret good deed for a friend or neighbor.
- 29. Make a puzzle with your child. Glue a picture onto cardboard. Cut it into puzzle-piece shapes.
- 30. Have your child write directions for making a sandwich, then follow them exactly. How does it turn out?
- 31. Help your child create a time line of 2022.