

March 4, 2011

Dear Families:

Is it spring yet? I would love to see some warm weather come our way. It has been a wild winter with all the snow and ice we have experienced this year. As you can guess, we will be making up our snow days at the end of the school year. When I get the final decision on the exact make-up dates, I will let you know.

As we enter March, I want to highlight some important dates for your planning.

- March 10: PTA general membership meeting in the library, 7 p.m.
- March 11: Moms and Muffins breakfast in the gym, 7 a.m.
- March 18: No school (teacher professional development day)
- March 28 to April 1: Spring Break

I see and talk to parents every day about their kids, and often I ask how their child is doing in school. Parents often respond that their kids never talk about school, or that kids give them the same pat answer when asked, "How are things at school?" "Fine," and nothing more, is often the response.

Does getting your kids to offer information about school seem more difficult than pulling teeth? Do you ever feel like a lawyer cross-examining your child in an attempt to find out what's really happening at school? Here are a few suggestions I read in a Parenting Network article that I thought were very helpful.

- Don't play 20 questions. Ask a few questions each day and rotate them. No one likes being asked the same question every day. And no one likes being asked 20 questions on any one day. It feels like prying and gives the child one more reason to clam up. Scale back the number of questions you ask.
- Do ask questions that require more than a one-word response. "Did you have a good day today?" and "How did it go today?" require one-word answers. If you ask that kind of question, you do not encourage a lengthy response. The child can answer "Yes" and "Fine." Instead, ask a question that requires some thought. "Tell me about the most interesting thing that happened to you today," and "What surprised you about school today?" will usually generate more lengthy responses.

If you are experiencing the same old response from your kids, try these suggestions and see if they open up.

I hope you all have a great Spring Break.

Tim Stonich

Principal