



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER
November 2, 2018

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, November 8th
Parent Council in Library
6:30

Topic: After School
Enrichment and Tutoring

Monday, November 12th
Veterans Day
No School

November 19th-23rd
Thanksgiving Break
No School

December 24th-January 4th
Winter Break
No School

Monday, January 7th
Classes Resume

Thursday, January 17th
Family Education Night in
Library
Topic: Navigating Social
Media
6:30

Monday, January 21st
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Holiday
No School

Thursday, February 7th
Parent Council in Library
Topic: Local Control and
Accountability Plan
6:30

February 18th-22nd
Mid-winter Break
No School

A Message from Ms. Seekins

Dear Willow Creek families,

In preparation for the election next week, our team has included a few tips from Common Sense Media to help students make sense of the messages they are hearing this political season. A huge thanks to our literacy specialist, Maya Creedman, for suggesting this!

As a public school, we cannot advocate on behalf of any campaign, but we are happy to offer information and to support students both in thinking critically about the issues and in expressing their political opinions respectfully.

We hope that these resources are helpful to your family. Please feel free to reach out to me or to Maya Creedman if you have questions. We can be reached at 415-331-7530, ext. 213 (Tara) or ext. 224 (Maya).

Take care and enjoy your weekend!

Best,

Tara

Attendance Report

Average Daily Attendance this week: 96%
Funds lost this week due to absences: \$4,100
Total funds lost this year due to absences (est.): \$29,987

Please remember that you can request an Independent Study for your child for any planned absence of 3 or more days. Please visit Ms. Aleshia in the front office to complete an Independent Study form at least 7 days before the absence is scheduled to begin.

News and Reminders

Chef Guillaume and his team would like to remind families to make sure their school meals program accounts are up-to-date. Our Conscious Kitchen program is off to a great start this year, and we need to make sure that we're collecting all of the payments due in order to keep it sustainable. Families can pay their accounts online by visiting mymealtime.com. Please contact Erin Baker with any questions about your account or about setting up online payments: ebaker@willowcreekacademy.org.

17 Tips to Steer Kids of All Ages Through the Political Season

Excerpt from Common Sense Media. "Help your kids tune out the noise and tune in to age-appropriate resources for political news." By Regan McMahon (9/17/2018)

Elementary School Kids

Decode ads. When a political ad comes on TV or is striped across or down the side of a computer screen, talk to your kid about the claims the ad is making and how music and visuals are used to persuade viewers. Talk about why there are so many negative ads -- and why they work.

Watch out for campaign-inspired bullying. Kids exposed to candidates' mudslinging and name-calling on TV, on radio, and in video clips online may parrot this talk and engage in bullying behavior at school or home. Explain that politicians do this to gain an advantage over their opponent or change the conversation. Explain that name-calling and bullying isn't appropriate at home, at school, or on the playground. Teach kids how to respectfully disagree.

Seek out kid-friendly news. Turn to news sources designed for kids, such as HTE Kids News, Time for Kids, and Scholastic Kids Press Corps. These news websites break down the events of the day in age-appropriate terms, while avoiding stuff you probably won't want them exposed to.

Read kid-friendly books about American politics. Check out *Bad Kitty for President*, which does a great job of explaining the U.S. political system. See how hard women fought for voting rights in *Around America to Win the Vote: Two Suffragists, a Kitten, and 10,000 Miles*. And find out what the founding fathers were really like in *The Founding Fathers: Those Horse-Ridin', Fiddle-Playin', Book-Readin', Gun-Totin' Gentlemen Who Started America*.

Keep the bombast at bay. Kids may not understand concepts such as groping, gun control, abortion, troops, and immigration, but they can certainly feel the emotion behind the rhetoric. Try to change the station and mute the TV when you can. Kids will pick up on your reactions -- and they sometimes feel at fault for causing them -- so if a candidate makes you mad, explain that the man or woman on TV made you feel that way and why.

Middle School Kids

Talk about political advertising. How is a political ad like a regular commercial for a product? Is it selling a candidate just like another sells cereal? Who paid for the ad you're watching? Can political ads actually influence the outcome of an election? Watch political movies to see how fictional political strategies mirror real-life ones.

Share political cartoons. Mocking the candidates is a long-cherished tradition Americans can enjoy in the name of free speech. Poking fun of politicians takes some bite out of their often harsh statements, shows kids that challenging bold claims is part of our political process, and offers a sense of relief when the campaign rhetoric heats up.

Tackle the tough topics. With campaign rhetoric getting nastier, you may have to explain to your kids certain terms and situations you never thought you'd have to when they're this age. Explain how candidates may bring up some things as a distraction or to get attention. Steer the conversation back to the important issues in the election. Ask your kids to identify two specific positions for each candidate to keep them focused on the real issues.

Ask how elections really work. Draw a link between your kids' experience of student body elections or mock presidential elections at school and those on the state and national levels. Are elections just a popularity contest, or does someone win because he or she has the best ideas?

De-fang hate speech and fear-mongering. When candidates unleash extreme, zealous statements, they can stir up scary emotions (worry, confusion, fear, anxiety) in tweens. Explain that candidates intentionally try to appeal to people's emotions to gain an advantage over their rivals and that some candidates will resort to insulting, bullying, and even lying. Tell your kids that much of what the candidates say simply isn't true. See if you can get your kids to pick out the kinds of statements that are attention-getting vs. meaningful comments about what policies the candidates would institute if elected.

PULL UP ON THE SPOT

Pre Party at Proof Lab — — — — Saturday, 11/03

12 – 2 PM

Screenprinting & Drinks

244 Shoreline Hwy, Mill Valley, CA

Skate Jam at Marin City Skatepark

2 – 5 PM

Contest + Cash Prizes

Corner of Drake & Donahue, Marin City, CA



SKATEBOARDING



THE BERRICS





TAMALPAIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Local Funding for Outstanding High Schools

We have exceptional schools here in Tamalpais Union High School District, with outstanding academic programs and highly qualified teachers. Graduation rates are over 95% and our comprehensive high schools are ranked among the best in the country.

Rising Student Enrollment

Student enrollment in our high schools has grown dramatically over the past few years and is expected to continue to increase. In fact, in the past seven years alone, student enrollment has increased by almost 30%. At the same time, however, revenue supporting our schools has not kept pace. While most schools are funded on a per student basis, we are a community-funded district, which means that we do not receive additional funding as more students attend our schools. The number of students we serve is far outpacing the dollars we receive to serve those students. We can't rely on the State to provide the funding our schools need to provide a quality education.



Strong Fiscal Management

Due to the District's fiscal management over the years, the District has been able to rely on reserve funds, using over \$7 million in reserves this year. These funds will eventually run out, however, and our schools will be forced to make deep cuts if a local solution to stabilize the budget is not found.

Potential Cuts to Teachers and Programs

The District has already made approximately \$2 million in cuts for the 2018-19 school year and will need to make an additional \$6 million in cuts the following year. Cuts of this magnitude would have a direct impact on the classroom and would be the equivalent of laying off over 41 teachers, increasing class sizes and cutting academic and enrichment programs. Unless additional funding is secured, our ability to attract and retain the highest quality teachers could be threatened.

Local Measure

To protect the quality of education and prevent cuts to our schools, the Tamalpais Union High School District Board of Trustees voted to place Measure J on the November 6, 2018 ballot. The measure would cost \$149 per parcel per year and generate \$5.1 million in annual funding to protect our outstanding schools. Measure J would:

- Protect high-quality science, technology, engineering, math, reading and writing programs
- Attract and retain high-quality teachers, counselors and staff
- Maintain small class sizes
- Support music and art programs
- Provide career, college preparation and counseling programs
- Maintain school libraries

Ensuring Fiscal Accountability

Measure J includes fiscal accountability provisions to ensure all funds are spent as promised to directly support quality local high schools.

- All money raised by the measure would be controlled locally, would go to our local schools and could not be taken away by the State
- None of the money raised by the measure could ever be used for administrators' salaries or benefits
- The measure requires independent citizen oversight and annual audits to ensure all funds are spent as promised

For more information, please visit www.tamdistrict.org or call the Superintendent at (415) 945-1020

PARENT COUNCIL MEETING

THURSDAY, Nov 8th 6:30PM

Willow Creek Library



**Come find out what's new at
WCA's AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM**

**Meet our new After-School Program Director
Jasmin Hall**

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**Hear from our new
After-School Academic Enrichment Team
Emily Darawish & Kristine Duran**

Childcare always provided by After-School Staff