

NIS March Family Update March 9, 2018

Dear NIS Families,

Less than a month ago tragedy struck Stoneman Douglas High School and the entire Parkland, Florida community. This incident and others like it make us hold our children more closely and ponder how we can enact change to stop the unthinkable. Each time there is a horrific incident, school personnel revisit current strategies to keep students and staff safe every day, and wonder, what else can we do? As we have read all of the news articles along with other school districts' responses about creating change, we have come to recognize that our commitment to educating the whole child and creating a kind and responsive school community is the most preventive measure we can take beyond our diligence with safety and security measures.

We will continue to ensure social skill development, character development, and self-regulation development as important components of our overall work. We will continue to be a Responsive School focused on building intellectually and physically safe learning environments. We will continue to promote acts of kindness across our school's settings. We will continue to identify and support students who struggle whether it is socially, academically, emotionally or physically to ensure their continued growth and progress. And, we will continue to value and promote our partnership with you, recognizing how essential you are to your child's ongoing growth. It is through all these efforts we believe we will grow confident, responsible, reflective, and empathetic individuals ready for the challenges of adolescence and capable of creating positive change in this world.

Respectfully,

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1. Nurse Notes - Nancy Small, BSN R.N. 508-228-7290 x4107; Fax 508-228-1249
Welcome back from Winter Break! I hope you are all healthy and well rested.

Postural Screening Reminder for Grade 5:

Postural screening is a state mandated screening to check for scoliosis, a curvature of the spine. This is done yearly in grades 5, 7, and 9. The 5th graders will be shown a video explaining this condition and the screening.

Each screening will be done privately by me in my exam room. If I have a copy of your child's current physical exam form (since September 2017) and the physician has specifically written that postural screening was done at that exam, then your child will be excused from the school screening. A notice will be going home shortly and screenings will be completed by the end of March. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via phone (x4107) or email, smalln@nps.k12.ma.us.

2. March Madness Reading Challenge: On Monday of this week an email communication was sent home explaining our NIS March Madness Reading Challenge. We are asking all students and staff to read for at least 20 minutes outside of the school day every day in March. We are very optimistic that we will reach our goal of 150,000 minutes read and earn something very special as a result! Please ask your child to fill out the number of minutes read on their green NIS March Madness calendar log. Don't forget to have your child turn these in each Monday!

3. School Communication Survey: Our NIS School Council has put together a brief survey for you to fill out regarding your experience with communication between home and NIS. We would greatly appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to complete this survey by March 14th. Here is the link: <https://goo.gl/forms/vAFtyoriXhC9wqT13>
Thank you for sharing your current experience and suggestions with us!

4. Guidance Class Update: Our students are learning and growing across all domains! Here are some of the topics covered with our third, fourth and fifth graders during their time with our guidance counselors during Term 2:

Grade 3 - School Counselor: Mrs. Hood - Term 2: Grade 3 continued to explore the Zones! We have spent a lot of time talking about the Green, Yellow and the Red Zones, including what feelings are typical of these zones and the tools that you can use to help you get into the Green Zone, where we learn best. The Blue Zone will be our next and final zone to be explored. Grade 3 students have really enjoyed learning about the Zones! Ask your 3rd grader to tell you what the Zones mean and some of the tools they have learned to help if their energy is too high or they're having uncomfortable feelings that are interfering with their learning. They are becoming quite the experts!

Along with the Zones, we will be talking about some other topics that may affect our school success. Before vacation, to celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Week, students had the opportunity to partake in some wonderful whole school activities, such as writing what they are grateful for on a Kindness Tree and showing appreciation to others by writing and sharing notes. In our SEL classes, 3rd graders explored what the word "diversity" means and how important it is to accept one another. We will continue discussing this important topic by taking time to talk about bullying in depth. We will be reading some well loved books about this difficult topic, and

spend time discussing the definition of bullying, strategies for dealing with bullying, and ways that we can all create a school environment where everyone feels safe and accepted.

Grades 4 & 5 - School Counselor: Mrs. Rosenberg -January: the focus in fifth grade was on executive function skills which include organization and planning, decision making, shifting from one activity to the next, listening to instructions and retaining information, emotional regulation, and task initiation. These were described in more detail in my January Fifth grade newsletter. Fourth Grade continued to talk about empathy and perspective taking. In February, both Fourth and Fifth grade lessons focused on kindness and gratitude. Students in Fifth Grade also learned about the impact of gossip and rumors and practiced using assertive communication to handle conflicts with peers. Please refer back to my February newsletter for more detailed information. During March, we will be learning about understanding differences, communication skills, and effective problem solving strategies. Stay tuned gr. 4 & 5 families for my upcoming March newsletter!

5. FONPS Update:

Dear Parents,

We hope the winter break gave you a chance to rest and enjoy some time off, either here on Nantucket or elsewhere. When we feel renewed this is often a great time to establish personal and professional goals as we head into our busy season on the island. The 'have to's' tend to determine how we spend our time, but for many of us there is at least a little wiggle room for change and new opportunities.

Have you considered making more of a commitment to your student's social and educational needs at school? When it comes to our kids, we all have our homework helper hat on at times and many of us are watching on the sidelines at athletic games, but The Friends affords another layer of involvement in our school community. Our board provides an opportunity for parents, teachers and community members to work cooperatively on fundraising initiatives. We also discuss how funds are used within our schools. Is there something you feel is needed within our schools that is lacking or do you know of an opportunity for a great author, speaker or group that might be willing to come out to Nantucket? Many of us do. We love it when parents help make a connection possible. Or, as an alternative, do you have time to serve as a parent representative for one of the four schools within our district? Representatives attend Principal Coffees and Friends monthly board meetings and generally keep a pulse on what is happening at your chosen school. Are you good at hosting events? We have five fundraising events per year and we are actively looking at ways to improve these events, and recruit more help.

Our students look up to us as role models so when we show a commitment to their school, they feel encouraged to do better and get more involved themselves. Please consider attending our next board meeting on Wednesday, March 14 at 6pm in Room 104B at NHS. We'd love to hear from you, or just have you observe a meeting in session.

Did you know that the Friends of Nantucket Public Schools is responsible for funding a number of needs within the Nantucket Intermediate School through our Staff Initiated Funding program? Some examples of SIF requests that have been granted at NIS this year include:

- Recess Equipment for all Students Used Daily
- Supplies for the new Kiln in the Art Department

The Friends of Nantucket Public Schools meets the second Wednesday of every month at 6pm in room 104B at NHS. All meetings are open to the public. Please visit our website at www.fonps.org to learn more about what we do and how you may get involved.

Warm Regards,
The Friends

6. MCAS Calendar: MCAS ELA testing begins in April followed by Math testing in May. Please make sure your children are in school on their testing days. Here is the calendar:
In order by Grade Level

Grade	Date	Subject
3	April 4, 5	ELA
3	May 2, 3	Mathematics
4	April 11, 12	ELA
4	May 8, 10	Mathematics
5	April 10, 11	ELA
5	May 16, 17	Mathematics
5	May 22, 23	Science

6. Important Parent and Family Dates & Engagement Opportunities

- Thursday, March 8th** - Superintendent’s Coffee @ 8:00 AM “Safety & Security”
- Thursday, March 15th** - NHS, CPS, NIS, & NES joint School Council @ 4:00 PM
- Friday, March 16th** - Last day to submit Lip Sync group forms - get them in early!
- Thursday - Saturday, March 15th, 16th, & 17th** - NHS Musical @ 7:00 PM
- Friday, March 16th** - NIS Principal’s Coffee @ 8:00 AM
- Tuesday, March 20th** - School Committee @ 6:00 PM
- Wednesday, March 21st** - SNAC meeting @ 6:00 PM
- Friday, March 23rd** - Report Cards available in ASPEN
- Tuesday, April 3rd** - School Committee @ 6:00 PM
- Wednesday & Thursday, April 4th & 5th** - Grade 3 ELA MCAS

Many thanks to all who participated in our 5th Grade Citrus Sale fundraiser!!!!