



The Polaris Guide



Polaris Expeditionary Learning School
October 2018

K-12 **K-5** **6-12**

10/3*

Secondary PAC Mtg.
3393 Orchard Dr. LaPorte, CO
6:30 – 8:30PM

10/8*

Secondary Robotics
Club Meeting
Rm 147 @ 3:15PM

10/12*

Secondary Dance
6:00 – 8:00 MS
6:00 – 9:00 HS

10/16 & 10/17*

Elem. Student Led Conf.

10/17 & 10/18*

Secondary Student Led Conf.

10/18

No School for Elementary
Teacher Work Day

End of 1st Quarter

10/19

No School K-12
Teacher Conf. Comp. Day

10/22*

Elem/ PTO Meeting
Avogadro's Number
6:30PM

10/26*

Elementary PTO Fun Night &
Chili Cook Off
5:30 – 8:00PM

10/26*

Picture Re-Takes

10/31*

K-5 Halloween Costume Parade
12:30 – 12:45PM

* More information within

Dear Polaris Community,

We currently have six full weeks of school under our belt, October is here, kids are feeling settled...so now it's time to come together as a community. There are two big Polaris events that will provide opportunities for our K-12 families to get together in a relaxed, non-academic atmosphere that also raises money for the school at the same time.

At the elementary level the PTO has been working hard behind the scenes to prepare for our annual **Fun Night** event that will take place here at Polaris on the evening of **October 26th**. During this event our families get together to enjoy food, conversation and the expressions of joy on many of our students' faces while they engage in the games being offered. Last year we added a chili cook-off to this event and that spurred even more conversation while simultaneously boosting our revenue stream. There is still time to offer your time and energy to this event if you have an interest in volunteering in any fashion. Please look within this newsletter to find out how you can participate.

At the secondary level the Parent Action Crew has been working hard, with the help of many secondary students, to get ready for their new Haunted House fundraiser in LaPorte, CO. This year's **Lost Souls Lair** experience will directly benefit the secondary Parent Action Crew, which in turn, will directly benefit Polaris secondary students. There have been many days of preparation, and many more to come, as we get the lair set up for the evenings of **Oct. 19th, 20th, 26th and 27th**. And like the elementary Fun Night, there is still time to offer your time and energy to this event if you have an interest in volunteering in any fashion. Please take a look at the Lost Souls Lair Update document that was attached to the newsletter email to find out how you can participate.

We would not be able to pull off these events, nor would we be able to raise these funds, if it weren't for the generosity of our parent community, and for that I am thankful.

Sincerely,
Joe Gawronski

SECTION 1: K-12 News/Info

K-8 Fun Night October 26

This year's Fun Night includes, but is not limited to:

- The return of the popular chili dinner and cook-off
- **All-new** bake-off for kid chefs. Help your kids perfect their cookie, brownie and bar recipes, and they could win cool prizes
- A limited silent auction with classroom baskets and staff activities (e.g., lunch with Joe)
- Mad scientist laboratory
- A rockin' dance party
- A jammin' karaoke room
- Face painting
- Wig walk
- Game room

We hope everyone can make it!

All-activity wristbands cost \$10 (families on free and reduced lunch plans can get free wristbands from the office). **New this year:** Dinner and desert are free!

Keep an eye on your email for more information about volunteer opportunities and cook/bake-off registration!

Email Fun Night leader Celeste Warf at celestewarf@gmail.com with any questions.

Immunization Requirements

Colorado law requires students who attend a public, private or parochial kindergarten - 12th grade school to be vaccinated against many of the diseases vaccines can prevent.

[Parent Letter from the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment](#)

*Letter available in additional languages [here](#).

Students registering for the first time in a PSD school are required to present [proof of immunization or a signed State of Colorado Exemption Certificate](#) or [medical exemption form](#), or **parent statement** for personal or religious exemptions. Families with returning

students must keep their child's immunizations current. Full details on immunization requirements are available [from the state of Colorado](#).

Immunization requirements are strictly enforced for all students. Students who don't meet requirements will be denied attendance according to Colorado Revised Statutes 25-4-902. To obtain immunizations free or at a low cost, call the Family Health Line at 303-692-2229 or 1-800-688-7777. You may also contact your healthcare provider, the Larimer County Health Department at 970-498-6700, or [visit their website](#).

Immunization Requirements to enter school (K-12):

- Hepatitis B
- Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTaP)*
- Inactivated poliovirus (IPV)*
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)*
- Varicella (chicken pox)*
- Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap)**

*Students 4 through 6 years of age are required to have their final doses of DTaP, IPV, MMR and Varicella prior to kindergarten entry.

**Students are required to have Tdap prior to entry into 6th grade. One dose of Tdap is required for 6th through 12th grades.

K-12 Picture Retake Day Oct. 26

Life Touch will be in the building again to take school photos on Fri, 10/26. **Students must return their originals photos to have retakes done.**

Polaris Facebook

If you have an interest to keep up with the many exciting things going on during any given day/week here at Polaris we'd encourage you to "like" us on [Facebook](#).

Feel free to "share" with friends once you're there and perusing through all the engaging photos.

Halloween Costumes

We at Polaris allow students to dress up for Halloween but we do ask that we keep the costumes school appropriate. Please uphold the following if your child chooses to dress up on Oct. 31st.

- No masks that hide faces (elementary students CAN wear masks during the elementary parade)
- No weapons or replicas of weapons
- No costumes that could be considered racist, sexist or promoting violence

Conferences are Coming!

On October 16th and 17th, elementary families will be asked to participate in their student's three-way conferences.

On October 17th and 18th, secondary families will be asked to participate in their student's Student Led Conferences.

If you are new to Polaris, you will undoubtedly notice a difference in our teacher-parent conference format. Our structures are meant to assist students as they attempt to fulfill the Expeditionary Learning Design Principle of "The Responsibility for Learning."

This structure is not exclusive to EL schools; it's a newly identified "best practice" that's catching on across the country. Here's more information about student led conferences:

<http://www.edutopia.org/practice/student-led-conferences-empowerment-and-ownership>

Robotics is Back with Great Contraptions

Robotics Club to start with High School / Middle School: October 8th at 3:15pm in room 147

This year join us for "Great Contraptions," where we will create a space that has no competition element. It will be a club that builds on imagination and creativity. The plan will be initiated from the High School and Middle students and then reaped by the Elementary; a

new "cycle" of growth that builds on itself and leaves a legacy of learning.

Please come to our informational meeting on October 8th at 3:15pm in room 147. An explanation of the plan will be made, and we will talk about how the club will operate (meeting times). Thank you, and we hope to see you there.

Michael Espinoza

Parent Education Speaker Series

Ever wonder what is going on in a teenage brain? Need ideas of how you can take care of yourself? Ever wonder what play therapy is and how it can help your child? Do you have concerns about your child's substance use? These questions will be answered at the Parent Education Speaker Series, hosted by CAYAC (Child, Adolescent, and Young Adult Connections).

Please see the attachment within the newsletter email for more details.

Free Vision & Hearing Screenings

Project Smile and Kidsight are offering free dental and vision screenings on October 18th from 8:30-12:00 at Centennial High School. If you don't have dental or vision coverage and want to take advantage of this opportunity, please reach out to Katie Meunier (970-488-8312, kmeunier@psdschools.org) for more information and applications.

Teen Talks Series Presents:

Marijuana and the Adolescent Brain

Dr. Conner will talk about the effects of marijuana use on the developing adolescent brain, current trends in our local community and how to talk to you adolescent about marijuana use.

When: 10/24/18, 6:00-8:00

Where: Rocky Mountain High School, Media Center

CSU Reaching Out with Support to Manage Teen Stress

Are you a teen with stress or anxiety? Do you want to learn stress reduction strategies? CSU is inviting teenagers 12-18 years old to participate in a group aimed at lessening stress and anxiety.

You could earn up to \$135 for participating! See attachment for more details.

Accessing ParentVue and the Connection to the PSD Code of Conduct

Earlier this fall, you should have received an email from Poudre School District with information regarding the transition to electronic signatures to review and acknowledge the Student Rights and Code of Conduct, which is a compilation of rules, policies, and regulations regarding student behavior. In years past, this acknowledgement has been in paper form. Starting this year, parents/guardians and secondary students were asked to acknowledge that they have reviewed the Students Rights and Code of Conduct when logging into the [ParentVUE/StudentVUE portals](#) for the first time.

ParentVUE and StudentVUE are the information portals used by PSD that provide access to school and student information, including but not limited to, assignments, grades, attendance, and teacher contact details. For additional information regarding ParentVUE, [please visit the PSD website.](#)

If you (or your secondary student) are unable to access ParentVUE/StudentVUE or are having issues with your account, please contact your school. Paper acknowledgement forms are also available at your school for use, if needed.

Note for parents of secondary students:

Students are encouraged to log into the StudentVUE portal prior to Parent/Teacher Conferences to review grades. This will assist teachers in accurately facilitating discussion regarding your secondary students' current progress for the school year. Please contact your school for assistance with ParentVUE and StudentVUE.

Larimer County's Parent's Manufacturing, Design and Engineering Night!

The Larimer County Economic & Workforce Development with the NoCo Manufacturing Partnership, Poudre, Thompson, & Weld RE-4 School Districts, and Front Range & Aims Community Colleges bring to you the Parents Manufacturing, Design & Engineering Night!

on **Thursday, November 15th from 5:00 - 7:00PM** at Woodward Inc. 1041 Woodward Way, Fort Collins.

The event is free and geared towards parents and students to learn more about the future careers in manufacturing. The event will kick off with a tour of Woodward Inc. Lincoln Campus and end with an open house with leading local manufacturers, educators, and the Larimer County Economic & Workforce Development. Light refreshments will be provided. This is a great way to experience the manufacturing industry in our area and not an open house for job seekers.

Students may attend with their parents and must be **10+** with closed toe shoes to tour the shop. The last tour begins at 6:30 p.m. and space is limited.

PSD Student Connections Survey

In response to a community value of ensuring students feel connected to their school community, the Board of Education integrated this important outcome into the district's goals. Connections are the result of feeling understood, cared about, supported, and valued. Feeling connected to others helps us to be motivated toward a positive future and make the most of our educational experiences. PSD wants to ensure that we are doing everything we can to connect with students and help students to connect with one another, their interests, and their future plans. One step we are taking to ensure we meet this important outcome is to provide students with an opportunity to tell us about their feelings of connectedness and their related school experiences.

We will be providing a Student Connections Survey for all students in grades 4 through 12. **The survey is voluntary.** Each school has the flexibility to schedule the survey between October 22nd and November 2nd, so actual dates can vary slightly across schools. It takes students approximately 15 to 30 minutes to complete this survey.

We are delivering this online survey during the school day using PSD student email accounts. Responses may be combined with other information that the district has gathered to support students. Collecting data in this way will allow PSD to identify important patterns and use the information to improve our service to all

students. Individual students' responses will not be singled out in any reports. Although, if a student were to indicate that somebody is in danger, district staff are obligated to respond.

Attendance Calls

If your child is absent, please call the attendance line at 488-8261. In doing so, we can keep our live lines open for any emergency calls we may need to field at any given moment.

With regards to attendance we have included in this month's newsletter an attachment reminding families of the guidelines PSD uses to determine if they should keep their child home on any given day.

Box Tops!

Greetings, K-12 Penguins! Laurie will be sending in our first submission on November 1. That's also a sneaky expiration date for some of the brands. So, gather up all the Box Tops you can find and send them to school with your student by Tuesday, October 30. Thanks, and have a great October!"

Raise funds for Polaris the easy way!

King Soopers Grocery Cards This is another easy, no fuss fundraiser for the school! If you shop at King Soopers, please consider purchasing a Polaris grocery card from the front office. Each card costs \$5 and is also loaded with \$5. You can reload your card at any KS register. The card can be used to pay for all items in the store (except gift cards) as well as at all KS gas stations. Every time our school has \$5,000 or more, we get 5% back!

Morning Fresh Milk Caps Thanks for your continuing support with this super easy fundraiser! All milk caps can be turned in any time - just send them in with your kids and they'll know where to drop them off. For every 1,000 caps the school earns \$50.

Code of Conduct 101: Bullying

Throughout this school year we'd like to provide some background information regarding certain Code of Conduct topics. Providing this information ahead of time may assist in providing clarity for any future concerns that could arise. This time around we'd like to provide some clarity around the topic of [bullying](#)

[as it pertains to the Code of Conduct](#). Although this policy is quite lengthy, much too lengthy to be included in the newsletter, we thought we'd point out some highlights from this policy.

First, we 'd like to clarify what exactly qualifies as bullying. Within Policy JICDE it states:

"Bullying" means any written or oral expression, or physical or electronic act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to coerce, intimidate or cause any physical, mental or emotional harm to any student. This includes but is not limited to such expression, act or gesture directed toward a student on the basis of that student's race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, disability or academic performance. As used in this policy and as defined by Colorado statute, "sexual orientation" means an individual's orientation toward heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality or transgender status, or another individual's perception thereof.

In response to allegations of bullying it is the school's responsibility to:

- Promptly forward the report(s) and/or other information to the principal or principal's designee for appropriate action.
- All District employees and authorized volunteers who witness student bullying in any such circumstance shall immediately take appropriate action to stop the bullying, as prescribed by the District and the school principal, and shall promptly report the bullying to the principal or principal's designee for appropriate action.
- Each principal or principal's designee shall ensure that all reports and other information involving student bullying in any such circumstance are promptly and thoroughly investigated, and that appropriate action is taken. If the victim of bullying is a student with a disability who has an Individualized Education Program under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (an "IEP") or a Plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (a "Section 504 Plan"), the investigation shall include a determination of whether the student's receipt of a free appropriate public education ("FAPE") under the IEP or Section 504 Plan may have been affected by the bullying.

- *All principals shall promote a positive climate and culture in their schools that includes educating students and staff about bullying prevention and appropriate responses to bullying.*

Of course, staff members are not always present to witness this type of behavior, and it may not always come to our attention, thus we need the help of students to ensure a safe learning environment. Therefore, it is important for students and families to remember some key aspects to this policy, they are as follows:

- *All students who believe they have been victims of bullying in any such circumstance shall immediately report it to an administrator, counselor or teacher at their school.*
- *All students who witness student bullying in any such circumstance shall immediately report it to an administrator, counselor or teacher at their school.*

By working together, we can offer the safest learning environment possible. For more insights into this topic feel free to peruse the Connections Links within the body of the October Newsletter email that accompanied this document.

SECTION 2: Elementary News/Info

Upcoming PTO Meetings

The next PTO meeting is at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 22, at Avogadro's Number.

SECTION 3: Secondary News/Info

Parent Action Crew (PAC) News

PAC Meeting 10/3/18 at the Lost Souls Lair site, 3393 Orchard Drive, LaPorte 6:30 - 8:30 pm

We really need PAC help for this event, especially with concessions and logistics coordination of actors and costumes. We also need to talk about planning our Holiday Bazaar and food for Student-Led Conferences coming soon! We would love to see as many new and

Come help us put the finishing touches on Fun Night and help us plan a great new winter gala. Email steveagraham@gmail.com with PTO questions or concerns.

Winter Weather Recess Policy

We have recently updated our "Weather Policy" for Polaris elementary students. Please review the details below:

- Outdoor recess occurs when the "feels-like" temperature is 10 degrees or above according to the Weather Channel app for Fort Collins
- Indoor recess occurs when the "feels-like" temperature is below 10 degrees, or during inclement weather such as heavy rain or lightning.

Please support your students and our policy by ensuring that they are properly prepared for the weather each day. Unless the circumstances are extreme, we will require all students to go outside for outdoor recess regardless of their level of preparation.

Running Club

Running club is up and running, with new runners and new charms. Come join us on the south field after school on Fridays to run or walk and kick off your weekend. Parent supervision is required, and parent participation is encouraged. Siblings and friends are also welcome to run. Email steveagraham@gmail.com with running club questions.

past PAC members as possible. We will have something yummy to eat and drink!

👻 We are still in need of some volunteers at Lost Souls Lair Haunted House! I have provided a Google Doc link below to sign up for concessions donations and volunteer positions needing filled.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fM9WM4mFzw3zTBjELpyZWDyxxadXDbXkpnJ1zyieTY8/edit?usp=sharing>

Middle School Math Counts Club

This year's middle school Math Counts Club will hold their next meeting on Tuesday, October 2nd from 3:30 – 4:30 in Stephanie Flynn's room. For the rest of the Math Counts Club duration they will continue to meet every Tuesday of the month EXCLUDING the first Tuesday of each month. This opportunity is open to all students in grades 6 – 8.



Polaris' First Secondary Dance of the 2018 – 19

Come join the fun at the first school dance of the year! October 12th from 6:00-8:00 for middle school and 6:00-9:00 for high school. All the proceeds will go to the students who will be traveling to New York City in May. Entrance fee is \$5 and additional tickets to buy food and drink will be sold for \$1 each! We hope to see you there!