



The Guide

Polaris Expeditionary Learning School February 2019

Tues 2/5

100th Day of School!

Tues 2/5*

**Alternate Schedule for
Students in 6-12**

Begin Day: 8:00

Released: 3:00

- All Intensive Forms Due
- Adventure Payments Due
- All Medications Due

Tues 2/5

Secondary PAC Meeting
Purple Cup Café'
7:00PM

Mon 2/11

Elementary PTO Mtg.
6:30PM
Avogadro's Number

Mon 2/11 - Fri 2/15

Secondary Intensive Week
Please pay attention to the
packet information provided!

Mon 2/18

K-12 Collaboration Day
No School for K-12 Students

2/21*

Book Fair Kick Off Event
5:00 – 7:00PM Gym

2/22*

DANCE

Middle School 5:30 – 8:00
High School 5:30 – 8:30

2/22 - 3/1*

Book Fair open before and
after school

Tues 2/26

K-12 SAC / SBMT
Quarter #3 Mtg 3:30 – 5:00

Dear Polaris Community,

I am happy to report that there is reason to believe that the educational “pendulum” is swinging, and I am confident it’s moving in the direction that is beneficial to our students, our communities, and our collective future.

During your child’s educational experience, they have been exposed to the notion that they, along with everyone else, would be best prepared for the future if they ALL attended college. And of course, studies would show that having a college education can give one a “leg up” when it comes to creating a secure and fulfilling future. What legislation such as No Child Left Behind, as well as the competitive grants within the Race to the Top program, fail to consider is the students themselves.

If our legislators had an opportunity to connect with kids within a school setting on a regular basis, they would soon find that their interests and aspirations are as wide and varied as the school population itself. Some students may want to go into the honorable trades through an apprenticeship program, others may want to embark on a musical career soon after high school, others may have begun an entrepreneurial business while in high school, and a few may have found a line of work that they have found rewarding and lucrative during high school and they’d like to stick with it to see where it takes them.

As a former house framer, I know that there are many hard-working individuals within that industry that are contributing to the health and vitality of their local economies while engaging in a trade that requires team work, critical thinking skills, problem-solving and a lot of math. Very few of my teammates on my framing crew had a college education (I did have my BA, but my Psychology major wasn’t paying the bills), yet I’d consider many of them successful despite the lack of a degree, as it should be.

So why is this shifting pendulum beneficial for us, our community, our future? Let me count the ways (but please know this is an abbreviated list for sure):

- Current and future students will be encouraged to consider a wider range of post-secondary options
- We can begin broadening the definition of what “success” can be
- We can shore up the honorable trades, as many within the industry are at the retiring age
- We can’t outsource our plumbing issue to China
- We can help students avoid college debt if they are unsure about the direction they wish to go

And finally, why do I think the pendulum is swinging? Look no further than all the apprenticeship opportunities offered to our students within this month’s Polaris Guide email. Our colleagues with PSD’s work-based learning and CTE team have been working hard to provide these opportunities for a wide range of students, so get your name out there and take advantage of the opportunity!

I hope you are as optimistic as I am with this recent shift in the educational focus.

Sincerely,
Joe Gawronski

SECTION 1: K-12 News/Info

Lockdown Drill Coming Soon

Within the next week of school we will be practicing a Lockdown Drill. We do this in an effort to increase our safety by preparing for what may be considered the “unthinkable.” We are putting this on your radar so that you can support us from home by discussing the topic of school safety with your children, especially those in elementary school.

Here are a few things to remember about safety drills such as this:

What’s the difference between a LockDOWN and a LockOUT?

- Lockdown: threat is close too or inside the building—students stay inside the classroom and follow lockdown procedures OR consider self-evacuation options.
- Lockout: threat is outside the building but not close to the building. Students get inside the building, exterior doors are locked, and school proceeds “as usual.”

Who can initiate a Lockdown/out?

- Student, by reporting to a staff member
- Staff, by reporting it to the front office or calling 911
- Outside agency like the FCPD by calling the front office

What are the options for safety during a Lockdown?

- Lock, light, get out of sight
- Move away from the noise/threat
- Stay behind a locked door
- Hide in closets, bathrooms, under desks, etc.
- Evacuate: this option would be led by the teacher in charge of the students at that time

What do students do if they are not in a classroom with a teacher?

- Locks, Lights, out of sight
- If you don’t know where the threat is, and you are behind a locked door, this may be your safest option.
- If the door isn’t locked, close the door and hide. Find the best possible hiding place (closet, behind a desk, cabinet).

- You may try to evacuate if the treat is not in the immediate vicinity

What should students and staff do if there is a fire alarm during a Lockdown/out?

- Remain in the room you are currently in unless smoke is actually filling the room. If smoke is filling the room then exiting an exterior door will be your best option.
- If exiting the school at any time during a lockdown it’s best to do so with arms raised to indicate to others that you are attempting to get away from any harm/threat.

What is the student’s role during a Lockdown?

- Move to a safe area of a classroom
- BE QUIET: turn cell phones to silent!

When do we know that a Lockdown has concluded?

- When the police or administrators comes and unlocks doors. Lockdowns cannot be concluded with an announcement.

You may notice there have been some changes to Lockdown procedures, these changes have come as an outcome of what has been learned over the years with various incidents across the country. In essence, there are more options for the professionals in the school to choose from other than simply hiding.

Please know that when we do our drill within the next week we will be identifying the safest places to hide within classroom, we will not be practicing aforementioned evacuation options.

Scholastic Book Fair is Coming!

The dinosaur-themed *Dino-Mite Book Fair* is coming to the Flex Room at Polaris Feb. 22 to March 1, with opportunities to shop for books before and after school.

Join us for a kickoff event from 5 to 7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 21, Gym; with storytellers, book signings by local authors, dinosaur-themed crafts, homemade treats and more. To help with the book fair or during the opening night event, click here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080e45a8ae2fa6fd0-scholastic>

Box Tops Submission: March 1

Hello, Polaris Elementary and Secondary families. Our next official Box Tops submission is due on March 1. Please turn in your Box Tops by Monday, 2/25.

Then keep on collecting for a quick June submission and all through the summer.

March 9th Polari-Palooza!

Our whole-school K-12 celebration is coming to Wolverine Farm, 316 Willow St., from 7 to 10 p.m. Saturday, March 9. Each ticket for this fabulous night out for the Polaris **adult** community will include:

- delicious dinner from Austin Tacos
- one free New Belgium beer per ticket, in addition to an open bar
- music by Dave Jensen and Riley Ann
- a photo booth by Mere Reflections
- large silent auction, including weekend getaways, student art, hotel stays, meals, gift certificates and much more!

Tickets are on sale now for only \$25 each at <https://www.schoolpay.com/link/PolarisPaloozaTicket>

The ticket price jumps to \$30 each on March 1, so get them soon while they are still available.

Student Recognition!

GEMS (Girls in Engineering, Math and Science) and Integrated Mechanical would like to give a huge shout out and THANK YOU to two OUTSTANDING female Polaris students – Brooke Giffin and Liv Pepin. Brooke and Liv are members of the GEMS program. GEMS is a program for girls K-8 at the Larimer County Boys and Girls Club, GEMS offer girls an opportunity to learn and gain confidence in STEM academics and careers through hands-on activities and experiments.

Brooke is the Program Manager for GEMS – a huge feat for a busy high school senior! On top of her studies, she manages 5 female volunteers, including 4 juniors from the Poudre High School IB program. Brooke coordinates volunteer participation at classes, gathers all supplies/snacks needed for classes, coordinates presenters, creates curriculum and teaches various topics including Botany and Chemistry of Color.

Liv Pepin recently joined GEMS as a volunteer, and we appreciate her stepping in to inspire an even

younger generation of females in STEM activities! With Liv's aspirations of becoming an engineer, we know she will grow as an integral participant of the GEMS program. As if this isn't enough, both Liv and Brooke are attending AAUW (American Association of University Women) Colorado Public Policy Day: "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion: Engaging Members for Action" on February 2nd. Brooke and Liv are committed to civic responsibility through learning more about the public policy process, which will be a necessity in their future, because these two young ladies are going to affect change in the years to come, as they already are with their volunteer work!

We also give credit to Polaris ELS for fostering the phenomenal 'can-do' attitudes present in Brooke and Liv. These talented young women are examples of project-based learning in action! Kudos and thank you to Polaris staff! For more information about AAUW, GEMS, or volunteering opportunities with GEMS, please contact Brooke Giffin or Liv Pepin, or you can e-mail Leslie Patterson at leslie-p@int-mech.com.



More Student Recognitions

Congratulations to the 4 high school students who won awards at the state-wide Scholastic Arts Competition. All four awards were in the photography category. Winners will be honored at a reception in Denver on March 9. The winners are:

Peter Leavitt: Portrait of Luna, 12th grade, Class: Fashion Photography Intensive

Luna Miller: Portrait of Jackie, 11th grade, Class: Fashion Photography Intensive

Otis Adams: Hairless, 10th grade, Class: Portrait Photography

Grace Wilson: Tiny Dancer. 9th grade, Class: Intro to Digital Photography

Middle School Math Counts Club News

The competition date for Stephanie Flynn's Math Counts club has finally been announced. The competition will be held at Colorado State University on Saturday, February 16. Students need to be at CSU at 8:00 AM. Competition goes until 2:15 PM.

If you're in elementary come and see what this future opportunity for may entail, if you're a secondary student stop by to show your support!



SECTION 3: Secondary News/Info

Parent Action Crew (PAC) Info.

Next PAC Meeting - Tuesday February 5th from 7-8 pm at The Purple Cup Cafe, 1119 W Drake Rd, Ste C-30. Please come a few minutes early and grab a warm drink and show your gratitude to the Purple Cup for their support of PAC and Polaris!

PAC News

Last year at this time we held our largest fundraiser of the year, the first annual "For the Love Of Penguins" direct donation fundraiser. We challenged our community to raise money for microscopes for the secondary science classrooms, other teacher and classroom needs, and of course PAC's ultimate responsibility, support for intensives and adventures.

Because of the generosity of our community, For the Love Of Penguins (FTLOP) was very successful and along with the two microscopes, PAC has been able to provide secondary classes with several magazine subscriptions this year, a couple sets of books, and algebra tiles, just to name a few. PAC continues, as always, to support each secondary student who is in need of our help with up to a \$200 donation toward an adventure or intensive once per school year. We are looking forward to bringing FTLOP back again this year with a new challenge. In the next few weeks I will be discussing with secondary staff any urgent classroom needs and making those a focus of our challenge this year. At this time we are delaying FTLOP until a bit later (after Spring Break). We want everyone to be able to support the adult-only Polari-

Palooza coming up on March 9, 2019 at the Wolverine Farm!

The PTO and PAC are working really hard to put on an amazing event to benefit our school, please put it on your calendar...Polari-palooza March 9th.

An Additional PAC Note

Often times I get asked how a parent can help our school. Many times I hear that they don't have time to come to meetings, or don't really want to join PAC or PTO but really want to help. While PAC and PTO do have short meetings once a month, these meetings are attended by very few people. We mostly call on our community to help us put on things like Lost Souls Lair and Polari-Palooza. So, getting to the point... I will tell you THE way that you can really help us and in turn help out our wonderful school, attend events. It is as simple as that. Come on out for a night out when we put on these events! This is what makes us a community and this is how we support the extras. Watch for news about all the fun ways that you will be able to help in the very near future!

Very truly yours,
Robin Meeker Gaston
Polaris PAC President
robinmeekergaston@gmail.com

Medication Drop-Off Date Reminder for Feb. Intensives

All completed Medication Authorization & Release Forms and Medications must be turned into the Health Office by Parents or Guardians no later than the morning of, Tuesday, Feb. 5th, 2019.

Medication forms are needed for students who will be participating in overnight (Adventure Trips), or medications needed during the day, during school hours (Intensive Trips).

Please contact Jeannie in the school Health Office with questions, 488-8268, or stop in to pick up medication forms. These forms can also be downloaded from the PSD website. Follow the link below to download medication forms. Remember, a separate form with your student's physician and parent/guardian signatures must accompany each medication.

Standard Medication Form:

<https://www.psdschools.org/webfm/12160>

Self-Carry Medication Form For Asthma-Allergy Medications:

<https://www.psdschools.org/webfm/12162>

Self-Carry General (HS Students ONLY)

<https://www.psdschools.org/webfm/12162>

Health Care Action Plan – Allergies

<https://www.psdschools.org/webfm/10606>

Health Care Action Plan – Asthma

<https://www.psdschools.org/webfm/7234>

Secondary Dance 2/22

There will be a dance held on February 22nd with the theme of Valentines. This dance will be for both middle and high school students. The dance will start at 5:30 pm, and end at 8:00 pm for middle school and 8:30 pm for high school. This dance is being held to fundraise for activities regarding Polaris Games in May. Admission will be \$5.00 a person, plus \$1 tickets for concessions, such as; pizza, soda, chips, and candy. Hope to see you all there!

- The Polaris Games Committee