



# The Guide

## Polaris Expeditionary Learning School

### March 2019

Dear Polaris Community,

**K-12**      **K-5**      **6-12**

**3/4**

Elementary Teacher Work Day  
No School for K-5 Students

**3/6\***

High School 2018-19 Course  
Preview  
During Crew / Gym

**3/9\***

Polari-Palooza  
Wolverine Farm Publick House  
7:00 – 10:00PM

**3/11\***

Elementary PTO Meeting  
Avogadro's Number  
6:30 PM

**3/12\***

Secondary PAC Meeting  
Purple Cup Café'  
7:00PM

**3/13\***

YAM Art Show Reception  
Carnegie Creative Center  
200 Matthews St.  
5:00 – 7:00PM

**3/18 – 3/22**

SPRING BREAK / No School  
End of 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 3/15

**3/27\***

Start of the 2018 State  
Assessment Season  
Schedule in Email Attachment

**3/28\***

PSD's Super Art Showcase  
JSSC  
6:45 – 7:45PM  
See attachment for details

March has arrived in our beautiful state of Colorado! There is noticeably more daylight, the chill is giving way to warmth, and we will once again be entering the educational assessment season soon.

I will be sending out a PSA assessment video to the community like I did last year, it should be ready by Spring Break, but in the interim I'd like to provide some similar messaging here within the March Newsletter.

Although I don't want to diminish the impacts that testing anxiety can have on a student by any means, for as we all know, our feelings can't be argued with. And at the same time, I would ask that you not give this assessment too much power over your well-being. Some students experience a raised level of anxiety due to some of the myths that are out there regarding the testing, at this time I'd like to put some of those myths to rest.

- Some students are under the impression that their overall performance can have an impact on the school's funding. There is no link between testing and a schools funding.
- Some students believe this test determines their future, that it is an "achievement" measure. Although we use the information to better support a child academically, this is not an "achievement measure." It is simply a measure of one's ability in Math, Language Arts and Social Studies. That's all it is, nothing more. It won't measure your work ethic, creativity, soft skills, etc., many of which help determine one's level of "achievement" in the future. And these additional traits are often measured through other means, like our portfolios and Presentations of Learning.

There are more myths out there perhaps, but these two seem to be the ones that weigh the heaviest on one's minds when it comes to assessments. When students take these myths to heart it seems that they increase their anxiety and therefore give the test more "power" than what it deserves.

So, let's put these myths to rest and simply encourage our children to do their best, and in doing so we can:

- Get accurate information so that we can support them the best we can.
- Help them understand that when we encounter tasks that may seem unpleasant it doesn't mean it has to ruin our mood.
- Continue showing others in the community that teaching and learning through the Expeditionary Learning model allows us to make steady academic gains while teaching to more than just a test, but to the whole child.

I will be sure to expand on this topic through the upcoming PSA, but the conversations about the state assessments may come up prior to it's release, so please feel free to consider these points should a conversation about assessments come up within your household.

Respectfully,  
Joe Gawronski

## SECTION 1: K-12 News/Info

### March 9<sup>th</sup> 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 \$30 each at <https://www.schoolpay.com/link/PolarisPoloozaTicket>

### House Band Auditions for 4th-12th Graders

It's time for Polaris housebands!

#### March 7<sup>th</sup>: 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Auditions 3:18 - 5:00pm in the music room

- Practices occur on Thursdays, 3:18-5:00pm in the music room from March 14<sup>th</sup>-May 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Students can sign up for an audition time on the music bulletin board and can audition as a group or individual. Individuals: please prepare to play the song, "When I Come Around" by Green Day, and a song of your choice to perform.
- Contact [jasminef@psdschools.org](mailto:jasminef@psdschools.org) for questions.

#### March 11<sup>th</sup>: 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Auditions 3:18 - 4:30pm in the music room

- Practices occur on Mondays, 3:18-4:30pm in the music room from March 25<sup>th</sup> thru May 6<sup>th</sup>.
- Information will be sent home soon to interested students, contact [tnoel@psdschools.org](mailto:tnoel@psdschools.org) or [jasminef@psdschools.org](mailto:jasminef@psdschools.org) for questions.

### Volunteers Needed Elem Field Day / Fun Run

Elementary Field Day and Fun Run are coming up on May 24. We are starting to look for event sponsors and will be seeking volunteers. If you have any suggestions, please email PTO

president Steve Graham at [steveagraham@gmail.com](mailto:steveagraham@gmail.com)

Please know that although this is an elementary event, that will support our elementary program, we are encouraging all K-12 parents to volunteer if they have the time to do so.

### Volunteers Needed Plant a Corn Maze!

In preparation for Halloween Season 2019, the Lost Souls Lair is looking for persons interested helping to build a corn maze. We need help with the very fun task of designing the corn maze, building a fence to keep corn-loving critters out of the maze, as well as tilling the land and planting the corn seed. If you are interested and can lend a hand this spring, please contact Tom or Leslie at [lost-souls-lair@int-mech.com](mailto:lost-souls-lair@int-mech.com)

## SECTION 2: Elementary News/Info

### Polaris Elementary PTO Meeting

Please join us for the next PTO meeting at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 11, at Avogadro's Number.

### A Book Fair "Thank You!"

Thank you to everyone who helped with or shopped at the Scholastic Book Fair. It closes on March 1, so we don't have final numbers yet, but we appreciate all your purchases and your help.

### Wizard of OZ News

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| March 13               | Ticket and T-shirt Sales Due   |
| April 13               | First Dress Rehearsal 4/5 only, 9:00-12:00pm   |
| April 23-25            | Dress Rehearsals, visitors welcome, 10:00-11:25am  |
| April 26 <sup>th</sup> | Performance Day, Polaris gym<br>1:30pm Day Performance, open seating<br>5:45pm 4/5 arrives at school<br>6:15pm K-3 arrives in costume<br>6:30pm Evening Performance, tickets only<br>8:00pm Strike |

[Detailed OZ schedule here](#)

## OZ Tix and T-Shirt Orders

Due to limited seating, the evening performance will require a ticket to enter. Each Polaris K-5 family will receive two comp tickets and may buy up to 2 more tickets for \$10.00 each. Additional tickets may be requested and added to a wait-list. Besides the two comp tickets, additional tickets are offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Tickets will be sent home Friday folders and you will be notified by email when the tickets are sent home.

We will also be selling The Wizard of Oz Polaris t-shirts. These will have all the 4th & 5th graders names on the back.

Use the form that was attached to the newsletter email to place your orders for tickets and t-shirts to place your order.

## OZ Volunteer Needs

We can use help a variety of ways: sewing costumes, painting sets, putting together monkey wings, helping with hair and makeup, ushers for evening show, supervising cookie & flower sales, strike (tear down).

[Please click here to complete The Wizard of Oz Volunteer Form.](#)

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## SECTION 3: Secondary News/Info

### Parent Action Crew (PAC)

The next PAC meeting will be Tuesday, March 12 from 7-8 PM at the Purple Cup Cafe. Please come a few minutes early and grab a hot drink to show your appreciation for their support of PAC and Polaris.

### Congratulations to Ryan Grindel!

A high school student at Polaris wrote a beautiful nomination on behalf of Ryan after hearing about the Crystal Apple Award that was being promoted by 93.9 WAY-FM. Reps from 93.9 and Learning Rx stopped by on Tuesday of this week to honor Ryan publicly, in front of his class.

As they read the nomination that was submitted it caused several eyes to spring a leak. Feel free to check out the nomination letter attached in the newsletter email.



## High School Registration is Coming!

On Wednesday, March 6th, all current 8th through 11th graders will be registering for courses for the 2019-2020 school year. During crew, students will have the opportunity to participate in a "Course Preview" session with all of the high school teaching and counseling staff. Teachers will have tables set up throughout the gym and will be encouraging students to approach them with questions about the courses they are offering next year. This will give students a chance to get personal feedback from teachers on whether or not they are ready to take specific courses.

We have attached the Curriculum Guide and Grade Level Course Selection sheets with this newsletter email and I encourage you to talk with your student about plans for the 2019 – 2020 school year. Students are welcome to print the forms at home and bring with them to school on the 6th, or they may pick up a new form on registration day.

## Sound Engineer Club with Dee Tyler, for 6th-12th graders

Learn about sound engineering with local musician and sound engineer, Dee Tyler! Students will learn how to manage and run the Polaris sound equipment for live shows

and studio recording and it may lead to opportunities out in the community. The club occurs on Wednesdays from 1:30-3:00pm in the music room and begins March 6th and ends May 8th.

Selection process: you will be notified by email by Monday, March 4th, if you are selected.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)

For questions, email Jasmine Faulkner, music teacher and club sponsor,  
[jasminef@psdschools.org](mailto:jasminef@psdschools.org)

## **Girls in Construction HOYA Foundation**

The HOYA Foundation started Transportation and Construction Girl because we saw a need. Currently, only 8% of the construction work force is women. That means there are huge opportunities for young women. We also have more women construction business owners than ever before. We saw a need to help these women reach back to change the lives of the women coming behind them.

For more information about what the HOYA foundation has to offer feel free to visit their webpage... <https://constructiongirl.org>