

# The Guide

## Polaris Expeditionary Learning School April 2019



Dear Polaris Community,

We currently find ourselves one week into fourth quarter and only eight and half weeks to go until summer break. As you may notice from looking at the Important Dates, the number of activities, ceremonies and presentations will increase immensely from here until the end of the school year. In some respects, we are winding the school year down while things are simultaneously ramping up. With the flurry of activity between now and May 30<sup>th</sup> we hope you can find the time to review some of the information within this month's newsletter to stay abreast of all that is going on.

It goes without saying that our small community would not be able to tackle all these events without the help and support from our parent volunteers. Of course, we have already received support from parents this year with Fieldwork, fundraisers, celebrations and Adventure Trips. We will continue to ask for support in the weeks to come with Presentations of Learning, Field Day, and additional Fieldwork and Intensive outings. We hope that as many of our parent volunteers will join us on the morning of April 19<sup>th</sup> as we extend our thanks through our annual Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast. Please [RSVP through this link](#) so we can estimate how much food and coffee we'll need to provide.

Sincerely,

Joe Gawronski

### **K-12**    **K-5**    **6-12**

- 4/2** K-12 SAC / SBMT  
Quarter 4 Mtg 3:30 – 5:00
- 4/5** Last day for HS to drop a class with a “W”  
MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE 5:30 – 7:30
- 4/8\*** Elementary PTO Meeting  
Avogadro's Number  
April 8<sup>th</sup> 6:30PM
- 4/9\*** PSAT / SAT for Grades 9 -11  
**NO SCHOOL for students in Grades 6, 7, 8, or 12**
- 4/11\*** Concurrent Enrollment Meeting P  
Parents of current 8 – 11<sup>th</sup> graders  
6:00 in Library
- 4/10 & 4/11\*** Grade 6-12 Student Led Conferences
- 4/12** NO SCHOOL K-12  
Conference Exchange Day
- 4/16\*** Middle School Orientation 5:30 – 6:30PM
- 4/19\*** Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast  
7:30 – 8:30 AM Library
- 4/19\*** Elementary Class Pictures
- 4/20\*** **HS Prom** 7:00 – 11:00 PM  
Wolverine Farm Publick House
- 4/22 – 4/26**  
For the Love of Penguins - Secondary Fundraising Drive  
More info to come in the near future
- 4/26\*** Wizard of Oz  
6:30PM – Polaris Gym
- 4/30\*** Start of Secondary POLs  
See details located in “secondary section”

## **SECTION 1: K-12 News/Info**

### **Middle School Orientation April 16th**

Students who will be new to Polaris' Middle School program, including our current 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at Polaris, are encouraged to attend our annual Middle School Orientation on April 16<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 – 6:30PM in the gym.

Parents will be asked to verify their enrollment information and students will have an opportunity to ask as many clarifying questions about Polaris' Middle School program in the time that we have together.

Although some of our new middle schoolers are simply making their way further down the halls within our facility, they may still have many burning questions, which if answered, could lead to a healthy start to next school year.

### **Fort Collins Masonic Public Schools Recognition Night**

Each year our local Masonic Lodge honors students throughout the PSD community. They ask every elementary school to identify a 5<sup>th</sup> grader for the honor, followed by one 8<sup>th</sup> grader from middle schools, and finally two 12<sup>th</sup> graders from the local high schools. Students can be selected due to their academic performance, citizenship, character and/or their leadership. This year we are proud to announce the following winners from Polaris:

5<sup>th</sup> Grade: Maya Scott-Donagan  
8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Hanna Rose  
12<sup>th</sup> Grade: Brooke Giffin and Jo Bouckaert

If you happen to run into any of these students feel free to congratulate them for this honor, it's certainly well deserved. Additionally, look for pics from the evening on Facebook shortly after April 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Volunteers Needed: Help Us 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)

### **Spring Robotics "Great LEGO Contraptions"**

Starting April 5<sup>th</sup> through April 26<sup>th</sup> we will be having our spring robotics club meetings. All grades and schools welcome (please invite siblings and friends too). Parents please come join in the building fun, the help would be appreciated. We will meet in room 147 from 3:30-4:30 pm every Monday in April to make "Great LEGO Contraptions"!

Michael Espinoza



## **SECTION 2: Elementary News/Info**

### **Thanks-apalooza**

Huge thanks to everyone that helped with Polari-Palooza including Autumn Hockett and the organizing crew, and all the great parents who donated sponsorships and silent auction prizes. And thanks to everyone that came out and made it a roaring success. We'll have to move to bigger digs next year. Let us know if you have any feedback or suggestions about the event by emailing PTO president Steve Graham at [steveagraham@gmail.com](mailto:steveagraham@gmail.com).

### **Elementary Class Picture Day**

On April 19<sup>th</sup> Lifetouch will be here to take class pictures of our elementary Crews. Parents can order three types of pictures; Classroom Groups, Spring Individuals, and/or Panoramic Group. **Please know that Individual Pictures must be prepaid.**

We will provide order information in Friday Folders once we get the details from Life Touch.

### **Polaris Elementary PTO Meeting**

The next PTO meeting is at 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 8, at Avogadro's Number, 605 S. Mason St. It was great to see some new faces last month, and it's never too late to join us and make some exciting plans for next year. Join us there or email [steveagraham@gmail.com](mailto:steveagraham@gmail.com) with any questions or ideas.

### **K-5 Running and Walking Club**

Everyone is welcome to enjoy the spring weather and run or walk with the running club after school on the back field at 3:15 p.m. every Friday. Or just hang out on the playground to socialize and cheer on our runners. Our apologies if you have been missing running club. Weather has kept us from taking to the

field, but we're hoping to get back into our stride (pun intended). Big thanks to Julie Siddens for her continued commitment as our staff sponsor.

### Field Day is Coming!

The Polaris elementary field day and fun run is coming Friday, May 25. We are currently seeking t-shirt sponsors. If you know a company that would like to support our school and get some great advertising on fun run shirts, email [steveagraham@gmail.com](mailto:steveagraham@gmail.com).

### Teacher Appreciation Week

May 6 to 10 is teacher appreciation week. The PTO will host a potluck breakfast and lunch events for the Polaris staff, so perfect those recipes and let your kids know if they want to make a card or get a gift for their teachers.

### Garden News

Spring has sprung and with it comes the planting of our spring garden. I'm so excited that this time of year is here again! Many classes have planted (or will be planting) a spring salad garden with the intention of enjoying it before the year ends. We will also be planting our summer garden before we say good-bye. Our hopes are to return to a thriving garden in August. This is where you come in. I am looking for volunteers to water and care for the garden during the summer months. If your family will be in the Fort for any of the summer and you are willing to care for our garden, please watch for a **SIGN- UP- GUNIUS** invite via email. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you, and happy growing!  
Julie  
[jsiddens@psdschools.org](mailto:jsiddens@psdschools.org)

### Wizard of OZ News

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

### 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.](#)

## SECTION 3: Secondary News/Info

### Student-Led Conferences are Coming!

On April 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 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>

### Prom is April 20th

Hello Polaris community! Prom is on Saturday, April 20<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 – 11:00. Prom will be held at the Wolverine Farm Publick House. All students in grades 9-12 are welcome to attend.

Tickets will be sold in the front office for \$15 a single and \$25 a couple. Tickets will also be available at the door on the evening of the 20th.

If you plan on bringing a guest that is NOT a Polaris student, please fill out the Visitor Pass that's been attached to the Newsletter email.

### Earn College Credit While You're in High School Through Concurrent Enrollment!

We will be offering a concurrent enrollment informational meeting for parents on Thursday, April

11th at 6:00 PM. Please consider attending to learn more about the exciting concurrent enrollment opportunities in PSD including; Career Pathways programs, ASCENT, and High School and Campus Select programs. Even if your student is not ready to take college classes yet, this is good information to have for the future!

Thanks,

Cynthia Erickson

## **Secondary Presentations of Learning Are Just Around the Corner!**

Our 12<sup>th</sup> grade students will begin our school's presentations this year when they begin their POLs on April 30<sup>th</sup> and continue through May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

10<sup>th</sup> grade students will take a crack at their POLs on Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, the 8<sup>th</sup> graders will wrap up this year's POL season on Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>.

During POLs students are asked to reflect on their learning by highlighting pieces of evidence that speak to significance, growth, quality and complexity. Some of the goals we hope to accomplish by reinforcing these POLs practices may include, but not be limited to:

- Build student investment in high-quality work
- Support oral presentation skills
- Assess the skills and knowledge of students
- Provide families and community members an understanding of the standards, learning targets, and work habits of the school
- Give the students an opportunity to synthesize and reflect on their learning
- To ask students to demonstrate and reflect upon their level of preparedness for their next level of schooling

It's often stated that "what gets measured gets managed." At Polaris we strive to see each of your children as unique individuals, and our POLs help paint this broader picture that represents your child beyond what the state of Colorado measures. Your child is more than a math and literacy score, and we want to support them as they celebrate who they are and how they contribute as citizens. We hope you can support the POL process in a similar fashion.

## **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>