



Orchard Elementary  
Ridgewood Public Schools

Mary K. Ferreri, Principal  
201-670-2730  
[mkferreri@ridgewood.k12.nj.us](mailto:mkferreri@ridgewood.k12.nj.us)

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Good Afternoon Orchard School Families!

As another month comes to a close, we are celebrating a great start to our year so far! This month, we held two of our biggest events, our Fun Day Festival and Jingle Bell Jog. Many thanks to the HSA Parents and to Mr. Stahl for their help in coordinating these special moments for us! Please remember to send in your food donations or monetary contributions for grocery gift cards. We look forward to another outstanding contribution to Social Services Association.

I am proud to share with you that our school raised a significant amount of money for the Table to Table Bag a Lunch Fundraiser. We have 299 students at Orchard school, and we raised over \$1500 dollars! That is enough to provide over 15,000 meals for our community. We are so proud of our Orchard School families for their support of Bag a Lunch!

Next week, we will host a parent discussion night as a follow up to our presentation on the book, Unselfie. Mark your calendars: 10/30/18 at 7:00 PM, at GWMS. Visit the [RPS website](#) to register (not required, but recommended). I hope to see many of you there!

Please read below for highlights of Orchard events and happenings. Happy Halloween!

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### Visiting our School

Thank you all for your patience, understanding, and cooperation as we instituted our new visitor management system. Many of you have had your photos taken and are “in the system”, so your next visits should not require much time in the office at all. We appreciate your help!

Here are some reminders regarding our new procedures:

- All lunches that are dropped off during the morning will be left outside in the labeled cooler. The cooler is checked prior to the lunch periods and lunches are brought down to the cafetorium. ***Please note: while we will follow through with the cooler all year, we do not recommend this practice. Instead, we encourage***

*you to work out a system at home that allows your child to bring their lunch to school with them at the start of the school day.*

- We will no longer allow delivery of forgotten items to the school. This includes, but is not limited to, the following: water bottles, homework, instruments, sneakers, jackets, snack, sports equipment for practices, and other items.
- Teachers will still leave homework for children who are out due to illness and parents have requested. Parents or guardians will be allowed in to retrieve the school work and/or drop off work if the absence is ongoing.
- Any medical necessity will be allowed, at any time.

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### **Raising UnSelfies: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in Our All-About-Me, Plugged-In, Trophy-Driven World**

On October 2, Dr. Michele Borba presented on "Raising UnSelfies: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in Our All-About-Me, Plugged-In, Trophy-Driven World" at 7 PM at GWMS. Here are some take-aways from her presentation!

Empathy is a super power. Kids need empathy to survive and thrive, and research shows that our kids are extremely lacking in this area. Dr. Borba shared: "Our college kids are the most connected, but the loneliest." Empathy is the ability to feel WITH another person. It's not to be confused with sympathy - feeling *for* another person.

Dr. Borba identified the [9 Essential Empathy Habits](#), and the good news is that we can easily teach into these habits. From Emotional Literacy to Altruistic Leadership, Dr. Borba advises parents to reflect on what habit their child needs most, pick one or two strategies, and follow up repeatedly (it takes 21 days of repeated practice to become a habit).

Dr. Borba also reinforced that parents are the strongest role models for our children. We teach our children through our actions and questions. We must reflect on what messages we are sending our children.

Here are some strategies to consider...

To cultivate and coach Emotional Literacy:

- Eye contact. For little ones, say, "Look at the color of the talker's eyes."
- Get down on your child's level when speaking.

- Sit *with* your child as he/she watches a movie or reads a book and ask questions: “How do you think the boy is feeling right now?”

To cultivate and coach Moral Identity:

- What is the first thing we say to our kids in the afternoon? “What did you get on your test?” vs. “What did you do that was kind today?”
- Create a family mantra - Talk about what your family represents and values - “We are the (giving, kind, helpful, loving) family.”

To cultivate Perspective Taking:

- Ask as much as possible: “How would you/he/she/they feel?”; “What do you/he/she/they need to feel better?”
- Reading offers so many opportunities for kids to practice these skills. Reading aloud to your children is a must.

To cultivate Self-Regulation:

- Stop rescuing kids - stress is part of life!
- Stress management is doable. *Show* kids how to manage stress.
  - Help kids identify stress. (e.g. I notice you are clenching your fists...You seem upset.)
  - Deep, slow breaths.
  - Positive affirmation (e.g. I can do this.)
  - Chunk the fear. (e.g. get through one step at a time.)

To cultivate Moral Courage:

- Help kids find the good in the world. Focus on the positive news, not the doom and gloom so often in the headlines. Celebrate the good.

To cultivate Altruistic Leadership:

- Model service and giving back - kids donating toys to those in need, and coming along to deliver these toys.

On Tuesday, October 30, we will host a book discussion with district administrators and parents as a follow up to her presentation. I hope you make time to attend these informative and thought-provoking events - you will walk away with something to think about or try! For more information, please visit the [RPS website](#) to view the information for the Well-Being series.

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As with every monthly update, we need reminders about our procedures and policies here at Orchard. Please read below on a few items of note:

- The November calendar contains various changes to our school schedule. Please be aware that school is closed Thursday, November 8 and Friday, November 9 for the NJEA Convention. We have a minimum day on Wednesday, November 21. All students will be dismissed at 12:45 PM. Additionally, school is closed Thursday, November 22 and Friday, November 23 for Thanksgiving recess.
- Drop Off/Pick Up: We are doing a much better job with our pick up at 3 PM! Thank you, thank you! Just a few reminders...
  - Please remember to pull all the way up if using the drop off lane in the morning. Also, please wait in that line and do not pull out of the line once your child has exited.
  - At pick up time, please do not double park and please remember that we do not have a pick up and go area - the red fire zone is just that! Please do not pull up into the red zone for pickup.
- Please review [e-News](#) for the latest information, including Halloween lunch dismissal.
- Link and follow our Google Calendar for HSA events! [Go to this link](#) and click on the +Google Calendar in the right bottom corner.
- Lunch Ordering: Just some reminders for ordering lunch through [Village Fresh](#). All orders are placed online. Orders must be in **by 8:00 AM**, otherwise, they will not be delivered on that day. Get your orders in! Thank you!

Please review the list of dates below for upcoming events at our school. Happy Halloween!

Warmly,



Mrs. Ferreri

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### Upcoming events:

*10/30: Raising Unselfies Book Discussion, 7 PM, GWMS*

*10/31: Halloween Parade, 2:00 PM*

*11/5-15: Jingle Bell Jog Food Drive*

*11/8-9: No School, NJEA Convention*

*11/15: Spirit Day, CTBN CBA; HSA Meeting*

*11/21: Kindergarten Feast, 11:30 AM; Early Dismissal, 12:45*

*11/22-23: Thanksgiving Recess*

*11/27-28: Book Fair*