



Orchard Elementary
Ridgewood Public Schools

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Good Morning Orchard School Families,

Welcome to April! Take a moment to stop and congratulate your child. They have just worked through what often feels like the most challenging month of the school year. I'm sure this is not surprising to you as you've watched them learn many new concepts and increase their abilities. We are so proud of their hard work!

Please read below to learn more about many other exciting events in and around Orchard School.

School Budget Vote - 2019-2020 School Year

Are you aware that this year our community will be voting on our school budget for the 2019-2020 school year? This important vote will take place on Tuesday, April 16th. If you know that you will be away during that vacation week, please stop by the main office for a [Vote By Mail Application](#).

The Board of Education hosted multiple school budget presentations throughout the month of March. You can view the March BOE meetings on the website. Please be sure to inform yourself on this important vote!

Timothy Shoemaker Vaping Presentation

On Monday, March 18th, Federated HSA sponsored a presentation on the dangers of vaping. [Timothy Shoemaker](#), a nationally recognized speaker and consultant, spoke to parents on the vaping epidemic. Here are my top ten takeaways from the night - it was eye opening, a bit frightening and fascinating.

10. Vaping is a term used to describe the use of e-cigarettes or vaporizers. Vaping is the act of

inhaling aerosol and exhaling it as vapor. Vape pods, pens, mods, or Juuls are all used to inhale flavored nicotine.

9. Various juices that are sold are marketed in a wide variety of flavors, including those that appeal to kids, like chewing gum, marshmallow, cotton candy. They can also claim to “energize” or “relax” you (aka, uppers and downers). The synthetic nature of this content makes it possible for manufacturers to modify one small ingredient should they get caught selling something that mimics an illicit drug.

8. What’s in a juice that can be vaped? Nicotine, high potency THC (the drug in marijuana), synthetic drugs, any drug imaginable can be found.

7. It is an epidemic. In 2004, e-cigarettes first enter the scene. In 2009, less than 1% of high schoolers used an e-cigarette type product, with virtually no use by middle schoolers. Between 2009-15, the use of e-cigarettes or vape material grew 900%, and it has since doubled.

6. Drug overdoses are now the **leading cause of death** for Americans under the age of 50.

5. 74% of people who develop a drug abuse problem use a substance before age 18. 97% of diagnoses are correlated to use before age 25.

4. “Stash clothing” is all the rage - vaping backpacks, hoodies, inhalers that look like prescription asthma inhalers. Shoes with hidden spots for vape pods, fake wallets, credit cards - you name it! There is a serious market for clothing and apparel that conceals.

3. The FDA has postponed stricter enforcement or regulation on e-juices until 2022. What is known as of now?

- The contents typically include propylene glycol (antifreeze), formaldehyde, cadmium, arsenic. Oh, and of course, nicotine. Which even our students think is so disgusting when we learn about cigarette use.
- Vape mist seemingly evaporates. Or does it? Phones, car windows, all have “vape fog”. There are products sold to clean that off! So what does the weight of that vapor do to your lungs?

2. Drug test detections are measured in nanograms per milliliter (ng/ml). Here are some statistics regarding the level of THC:

DOE level:	20 ng/ml
Federal level:	50 ng/ml
Potent “joint”:	180-200 ng/ml
Hospital visits for e-juice overdoses:	8,000 -16,000 ng/ml

1. So what's a parent to do? Ultimately, just like any other aspect of your child's life, parents are urged to stay informed and keep open communication with their children. Know the tools available to monitor your kids. Tim [shared resources that evening that we also have here in the main office](#). They are available on his website as well. When your children know that you will be checking up on them and that you know what to look for, they truly appreciate the ability to use you as an excuse!

As Tim said that night, parenting is not about "gotcha" moments of catching your kids. It is catching your kids because they stumble because they fall. When they were little, we did this physically. They still need us to catch them, though they walk strong and tall. Catch them so you can help them back up again.

Choose to Be Nice - Family "No Homework" Nights!

Each month at Orchard School, we celebrate our Choose to Be Nice theme at a Community Building Assembly. This month, our theme is kindness, and we are reading Nerdy Birdy. We will share out on this topic at our April 25th CBA.

Our "Choose to Be Nice Family Night" will be held on **Monday, April 22nd**. That night, our teachers will not assign any homework. Instead, we are encouraging families to get together and enjoy some quality time with one another. This month, we are assigning the night on a Monday. This is also the Monday following our Spring Break. What better way to encourage family time than a few days off from school? Consider ways your family can spend some special time together, even if it is a staycation for your family.

Stay tuned for more "Choose to Be Nice No Homework Nights" in the future!

Wellbeing Speaker Series: Michael Thompson - April 8 - Two Programs!

Our next Wellbeing Speaker Series presentation will be held on Monday, April 8th. His first presentation, [The Nature of Raising Boys](#), is a ticketed event at 11 AM at the Education Center. You may register online at the [RPS website](#). On Monday evening, Dr. Thompson will present [Best Friends, Worst Enemies](#). We hope that you will make time for this interesting and informative night!

Media Usage & Families: An Orchard Conversation

Our first Orchard evening on this topic was held on February 13th. We had a nice turnout of parents, and I appreciated hearing from more of you who weren't able to attend that evening!

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 30th, at 7:30 PM. At that meeting, we will review how we can set some parameters for media consumption and technology usage during the summer months. Additionally, we will work to create a draft of our "Orchard School Media Agreement". This agreement will be created in a similar manner to a [Family Media Agreement](#). Currently, each year, our students in grades 2-5 sign an acceptable use policy. This policy essentially has students promise to physically take care of their chromebooks and to responsibly use them for only the purpose their teacher has intended. We'd like to take a step further next year and have students consider the etiquette aspect as well. Are our students thinking first? Communicating openly? Keeping a healthy balance?

Those of you who can attend on April 30th, please plan for a working meeting where we can draft this document together. We will put this out to our school community in our May update for consideration and feedback from everyone!

Mark your calendars for **Tuesday, April 30th at 7:30 PM, at Orchard School**. I look forward to seeing you then!

As with every monthly update, we need reminders about our procedures and policies here at Orchard. Please take note of the following:

- Yearbook Photos: All families are encouraged to upload photos for our 2018-19 school yearbook. The yearbook is a K-5 project, so all families are encouraged to participate! You can use [this link directly](#) or find the link on our [Orchard website](#).
- 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.

Warmly,



Mrs. Ferreri

Upcoming events:

4/3: Delicious Apple Banquet, 6:30 PM

4/6: Drama Performance, 7:00 PM

4/12: No School, Staff Development Day

4/15-4/19: No School, Spring Recess

4/16: Ridgewood School Budget Vote

4/25: Spirit Day; CBA; HSA Meeting; Ben & Jerry's Scoop Night for Cambodia Club

4/30: Orchard Parent Media Use Discussion, 7:30 PM, Orchard Library