

News from Burr

Principal's Newsletter

April / May 2014



Dear Burr Community,

We are headed into the final month of the school year, and, as always, it is a busy and exciting time. In the past few weeks, we began preparations to say hello to our incoming kindergarten students and goodbye to our current class of fifth graders.

At the April Principal's coffee, we welcomed Sally Bonina, the Principal of Tomlinson Middle School, and sixth grade guidance counselor Morgan Rhodes. It was a terrific opportunity for parents to ask questions and learn more about Tomlinson. At the end of the presentation, both Principal Bonina and I offered parents some suggestions on how to ease the transition to sixth grade. Suggestions included:

- Maintaining consistent routines during homework time.
- Knowing your child's friends (as well as their parents.)
- Reading out loud to your child (Yes, middle school students love to be read to.)
- Asking questions that encourage your child to discuss their day (Ex. What was one thing you learned today? What was the highlight of your day?)
- Listening to your child and resisting the urge to judge what they say.

Burr also recently held an orientation session where we welcomed our incoming kindergarten class and their parents. Students had the opportunity to meet kindergarten teachers and participate in a variety of fun activities that helped us get to know them both academically and socially. Parents participated in an informational session in the LMC that gave them an overview of the kindergarten curriculum as well as a day in the life of a kindergarten student. Some final departing thoughts for parents included:

- Kindergarten is a balance between academic and social development.
- The kindergarten curriculum emphasizes both core foundational and higher level thinking skills.
- Burr school meets kindergarten students where they are. The question is not whether a student is ready for kindergarten. The question is – what will Burr do to be ready for them?





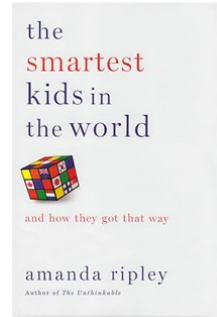
I am looking forward to our upcoming discussion of the text *The Smartest Kids in the World: And How They Got That Way* by Amanda Ripley. We have one book session scheduled during the school day – May 21 between 9:30-11:00 in the LMC. We also have a night session for working parents scheduled on May 28 between 7:00-8:30 in the LMC. Below are some links to articles about schools in Finland, South Korea, and Poland that could help give context to ideas presented in the book.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/03/finnish-education-chief-we-created-a-school-system-based-on-equality/284427/>

<http://www.nea.org/home/40991.htm>

<http://abcnews.go.com/Business/story?id=6293334>

<http://www.pearsonfoundation.org/oecd/poland.html>



Warmly,

Jason

Upcoming Important Dates:

May 22 - Spring Concert (7:00PM) and Art Show (5:30-7:00)

May 26—Monday, Memorial Day

June 4—Family Picnic (Rain date—June 11)

June 13—Playdate for Incoming Kindergarten Students at Burr’s Playground—4:00

June 16 -Fifth Grade Stepping Up Ceremony - 1:30

June 17—Early Dismissal - 1:40

June 18—Last Day for Students—Early Dismissal—1:40