***ROGER LUDLOWE MIDDLE SCHOOL***

**689 Unquowa Road**

**Fairfield, CT 06824-5010**

**Phone (203) 255-8345 – Fax (203) 255-8214**

Megan Tiley, Principal Steve DeAngelo, Dean of Students

Ian Banner, Assistant Principal Karin Shaughnessy, Assistant Principal

**PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE**

December 5, 2014

Greetings RLMS Parents/Guardians:

I am hoping that you had a restful Thanksgiving holiday with friends and family. As you read this newsletter edition, you will understand why I feel so thankful to be part of the RLMS community! RLMS is working to give back both locally and globally. I wanted to highlight a few important events coming up this month.

**RLMS HEIFER FUNDRAISER AND CAN DRIVE**

RLMS has just finished collecting “change to promote CHANGE”. Students in 7th and 8th grade were asked to donate change to their homeroom collection container to support the Heifer organization. For additional information on the Heifer Organization go to:

[**http://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/animals-nutrition/index.html**](http://www.heifer.org/gift-catalog/animals-nutrition/index.html)

Students and teachers have also been collecting can goods for our annual can drive. As many of you know, food pantries get depleted during the Thanksgiving holiday. Our hope is for our can drive to make a positive contribution to a local pantry. Thank you to all that have sent in canned goods!

**ARE YOU A TOP DOG?**

The RLMS School Climate Committee is initiating the “Top Dog” program this month. Every day RLMS students do wonderful things that make their school and community a better place. “Top Dog” Nominations are a way to share and celebrate some of these great deeds. The “Top Dog” positive school climate initiative involves entire school community, led by the Student Assistance Team (SAT) and the RLMS Student Leadership club. Our goal is recognize and celebrate positive behaviors and actions that help bolster students’ social-emotional security and sense of well-being. This year, we have extended into a “Top Dog” outreach program. This is an extension of the “Top Dog” initiative that offers a forum for **RLMS parents** and the larger **community** to let us know about the good deeds RLMS students are doing outside of school.

RLMS Top Dogs qualities may include the following:

• Act responsively and exhibit good citizenship

• Show great respect for others

• Behave in a kind and compassionate manner

• Go “above and beyond” in the school or community setting

Students, parents and community members will be able to nominate students that they feel qualify as “Top Dogs”. Nomination forms and boxes will be located in the main office and cafeteria. Every month starting in December, the RLMS School Climate Committee will review the nominations and select “Top Dogs”. Students chosen as “Top Dogs” will be recognized by Ms. Tiley and Mr. DeAngelo. His/her picture will be showcased in the café & main foyer, and he/she will be invited to attend a special end of year Top Dog event.

**IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES:**

**Monday, December 8th – 6th grade winter concert**

**Tuesday, December 9th – 7th grade winter concert**

**Wednesday, December 10th – 8th grade winter concert**

**Thursday, December 11th – PTSA sponsored workshop - Demos “R” Us.** Presenters will show 6th and 7th grades that science can be amazing to see but even more fun to understand!

**SAVE THE DATE – March 27th & 28th – RLMS Musical Production – “The Sound of Music”.**

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding upcoming events at Roger Ludlowe Middle School. GO BULLDOGS!!

Warm regards~

 

Megan Tiley

Principal

Roger Ludlowe Middle School

**ATTENDANCE/ABSENCES/TARDIES/EXTENDED ABSENCES**

**LATE TO SCHOOL (Tardy)**

School begins at 8:10 a.m. Students should make every effort to arrive on time as part of developing a sense of responsibility. If your child is tardy to school, please do the following:

1. Report to the main office as soon as you arrive at school.

2. Parents should call the attendance line to report student as tardy.

Students who are late to school are listed as “tardy unexcused” unless they are at a medical appointment. A student who arrives to school late due to a doctor or dentist’s appointment must bring in a note from the doctor or dentist in order to be excused.

Parents should try to avoid making medical appointments during school hours whenever possible.

**ATTENDANCE / ABSENCE**

We believe that regular school attendance is essential for the success as a student. If it is necessary for your child to be absent from school, please call us at 255-8403 as soon as you know your child will be absent. This number may be called any time of the day or night -- except between 8:45 a.m. and 9:15 a.m., when the voicemail is being transcribed. If we do not hear from you when your child is absent, we will call home to verify the absence. It is the policy of Roger Ludlowe Middle School to call home and/or a parent’s place of employment to verify a student’s absence from school for our students’ health and safety.

It is your child’s responsibility to see that they get any make-up work from their teachers.

When your child is absent from school, it is mandatory for parents (guardians) to write a note on the date of return, even for those who have been called in on the day of the absence, stating the following:

• Your name

• Date(s) of your absence

• Reason for absence

• Parent’s signature

This note should be given to the main office on the first day back to school. This note is required by the State of Connecticut and is kept on file.

**The Connecticut State Board of Education has adopted new definitions of excused and unexcused student absences:**

*Under CSBOE policy, a student is “in attendance” if present at his/her assigned school or an activity sponsored by the school, for at least half of the regular school day. A student who does not meet the definition of “in attendance” is absent. Under the newly adopted definition of an excused absence, student absences one through nine in a given school are excused under the following circumstances: 1) the student’s parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate written documentation within ten school days of the student’s return to school. Such documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absenteeism and include either a signed note from a student’s parent or guardian explaining the nature of and reason for the absence and the length of the absence, 2) a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with a parent/guardian about the absence or 3) a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional.*

*For a student’s tenth absence and all absences over ten in a given school year, an absence will be excused for the following reasons: for illness (only with documentation from a licensed medical professional for each day of absence), for observance of a religious holiday, death in the student’s family or other emergency beyond the control of the student’s family, mandated court appearances (with written documentation), extraordinary educational opportunities (pre-approved by school administration in accordance with CSBOE guidance), and in the event of lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends.*

*Should a child accumulate four unexcused absences in one month or a total of ten unexcused absences in a given school year, RLMS is required to report this child as truant under the current Families with Service Needs statute.*

*A student is considered to be in attendance if present at school, or at an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day (minimum of 3.5 hrs.). A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or an expulsion is considered absent.*

**ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL MORE THAN 5 DAYS**

If you have a more serious illness than normal, please call the school nurse, and explain the problem. If necessary, we can gather together books and assignments so that your child can keep up with work. Please call the main office at 255-8345.

**ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

If you are absent from school (or arrive after 11:30 a.m.) on the day of a dance or other after-school activity, please remember that you cannot attend those activities.

**VACATION POLICY**

The administration and faculty of the Fairfield Public Schools would like to emphasize the importance of regular school attendance for each pupil. We recognize that there are times when illness, a family emergency, or a religious observance makes it necessary for a pupil to be absent.

However, in recent years, we feel that there has been a growing tendency for parents to remove children from school for reasons other than those cited above. In particular, we are concerned about the number of families who take their children out of school for planned family vacation during school time.

Each of the 183 days during the year when school is in session is critical for learning. Families receive a calendar of those dates to plan family trips at times other than important school days. Please be advised that vacation days fall under the state approved attendance policy stated above.

If you must take a family vacation during school time, the following will be the responsibility of both the parents and the student:

1. Parents should complete the **“Notification of Extended Absence” form** and request that it be distributed to the student’s teacher(s) at least one week before you will be away requesting schoolwork to be covered during that period. To the extent that the teacher can provide work that the student can do with little or no assistance, it will be provided.

2. During the vacation, parents should set aside regular study time and, when possible, assist their child with his/her work.

3. Upon the student’s return to school, all work that the teacher assigns must be made up and handed in within two weeks of the return to school. It must be stressed here that the “participation” part of the work missed cannot be made up and may lower the grade.