

Cougar Tales

...news from Crandall School

March 22, 2020

Welcome to the Crandall newsletter! Please click on each item in the Table of Contents to take you directly to that section. We hope you will read it all but if you need to save time just CTRL-click on the sections that are interesting to you at that moment.

Contents

Principal's Message.....	2
What Should Families Be Doing Regarding School?	3
Health Update on Coronavirus	7
Crandall Learns!	7
Connect with Your Child's Teachers	7
PRIDE Newsletter	8
Spirit Week! March 23-27.....	9
Scavenger Hunts	10
Possible Token System to Help Kids Stay Productive (and help around the house!)	11
Family Supports.....	11
STRESS.....	11
Breakfast and Lunch.....	12
Family Resources	12
Contact Us!.....	13

Principal's Message

Dear Crandall Family,

This is a unique and challenging time for all of us. While the challenges are great and real, it has also been a time to celebrate the humanity of our community and our nation. Small and big acts of kindness and compassion abound...it is these "gifts" that give me hope. I know that, together, we will get through this challenge.

We are working hard as a school district to figure out the best ways to support our families and our kids. We cannot replicate school, nor can you. (Please see the article below that describes what is realistic.) What we can do is try to keep your kids connected to learning and to each other. If you have not yet connected to your child's teachers, please reach out now! We can, hopefully, help you create a rhythm in your home that helps our kids (and our adults) reduce stress and maintain a sense of normalcy in these strange times.

Below is information that I hope will help you. Please contact me at rsills@enfieldschools.org if you need more information or have suggestions on how this weekly newsletter can better serve you and our community.

I am proud to work in Enfield with each of you. I miss you and our kids. Please be safe and be well!

LOVETHY NEIGHBOR

SHOW YOUR LOVE BY:

- OFFERING TO DELIVER GROCERIES TO THOSE AT HIGH RISK (PORCH DROPOFF)
- IDENTIFY NEIGHBORS WHO MAY NEED ASSISTANCE GETTING MEDICATIONS REFILLED
- SHARE LOCAL RESOURCES WITH THOSE WITHOUT ACCESS TO INTERNET
- CALL YOUR NEIGHBORS TO CHAT AND PROVIDE COMPANIONSHIP TO THOSE WHO MAY BE ALONE
- IF YOU MUST GO OUT - WASH YOUR HANDS, USE HAND SANITIZER, WIPE DOWN SURFACES, ETC.
- IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, SIMPLY STAY HOME.

What Should Families Be Doing Regarding School?

(GREAT article copied from CNN.com) School closures due to the COVID-19 outbreak mean millions of parents and guardians who have grown accustomed to sending their children to traditional schools are now faced with the task of educating them at home.

The coronavirus has turned caregivers around the world into homeschoolers.

This transition is daunting. It's unfamiliar. And it's also critically important to ameliorate the disruptions the virus has caused in education for the year.

CNN spoke with several parents, teachers and homeschooling experts about how to make the most of homeschooling for your family.

Recognize homeschool is not school

The most important caveat about temporary homeschooling is that it simply isn't school. Kids accustomed to the school environment won't be as focused. Lessons won't be as professional as the ones they're used to getting. And since local governments are encouraging everyone to minimize interactions with others, socialization will be tough.



How to survive coronavirus lockdown as a parent, especially for moms carrying the burden

Kimberly Fox, staff developer for [The Reading and Writing Project](#) at Columbia University in New York, said it's important for parents to suspend disbelief and doubt and lean into the new format.

"We don't have to be school," said Fox, who lives in Brooklyn. "Under these circumstances, we're not going to entirely replace all of the structures that happen at school. But we can do a couple of things to make kids feel more secure and to make us feel like we're making the most of this time."

Let kids be a part of the decision-making

Many schools and school districts have set up online learning platforms or sent kids home with packets of schoolwork to complete. These assignments are non-negotiable. Beyond these requirements, however, parents can give their children a say in what else they'll learn.

Jamie Heston, a board member of the [Homeschool Association of California](#), said the best way to do this is to have your kids make a list of things they'd like to do and learn. From there, she said, you can whittle down the options as a family.

"There are lots of ways you can have fun and have it be educational, [and] not just be sitting at a table with a book open," said Heston, who lives in Hayward, California.

Possibilities include math and chemistry through baking; botany through gardening; basic carpentry; or learning about space through a mobile app.

Make a schedule

Once you and your children have identified the subjects they will study, make a schedule and display it prominently so everyone in the family knows what's coming and when it's over. Most kids work off a schedule in their classrooms, so recreating something similar at home can ease the transition to a different learning environment for the foreseeable future.

At the same time, said Jen Reyneri, who has homeschooled two sons (ages 16 and 12), each family should embrace the opportunity to create a rhythm of life that works for them. "Include chores, family dinners or breakfasts, and family projects in your new family routines," said Reyneri, [who runs a blog](#) and co-owns an Italian restaurant in Hobe Sound, Florida. "Because this is such a unique situation, it's also OK to let everyone sleep in a bit later."

Other options for a schedule might include basics such as math, writing, reading and music (to name a few). Some families might also set aside time for educational games accessed by computer or mobile device.

For parents who are planning to cultivate a more project-based learning environment — rebuilding a car engine, for instance — put that on the schedule, too.

Acknowledge that kids have different needs

Schools — particularly public schools — are equipped to teach a variety of children with different learning abilities and different needs. For children with special needs, districts are required by state law to devise individualized education plans (IEPs) to help kids succeed. While parents are an important part of developing these plans, they are generally not the ones who administer them. But in a homeschool environment, parents must run the show.

This can get particularly complicated in families with multiple children. Monica Smith, who lives in Healdsburg, California, has twin 7-year-old boys and said one was recently diagnosed with ADHD. Smith said her district just completed an IEP for this child, and she admitted she is anxious about how she'll be able to manage his special needs while also being there for her neurotypical child.

"Without the help of [school] resources, I'm nervous about how to best meet his needs and keep him engaged," she said of her special-needs child. "I also need to be conscious of what his twin brother needs, and make sure he doesn't feel 'ignored' just because he has the ability to work independently."

One way to address this conundrum is to remember that different kids have different needs, whether at home or at school.

"Nobody knows your kids better than you do," said J. Allen Weston, executive director of the National Home School Association in Denver. "It's OK to take the time to give [each of them] what they need."

Build in recess (see links to physical activities in [District Family Resources](#))

All traditional school programs incorporate some sort of recess or outdoor time, and a homeschool schedule should be no different.

Dr. Jessie Voigts, a homeschooler and founder of [Wandering Educators](#), a global community of educators sharing travel experiences, said it doesn't matter if this time is structured or unstructured, so long as the kids get outside.

"A walk in the woods is not only healthy for your body and spirit, but your mind, too," said Voigts, who has a PhD in international education and is based in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

"What new plants are growing? What bugs can you find under decaying logs? Count the tree rings in a downed tree. Reroute a waterway in a little creek. See how the sun moves through the sky. There are so many ways to learn."

Downtime is your friend

Downtime, or time for kids to work on projects quietly and independently, is just as important as active time outside. Voigts noted that kids need time to "disconnect" every day — from each other, from parents, from technology and from the outside world.

Other experts agree. [Hannah Gauri Ma](#), a homeschooler and blogger currently living in St. Albans, in the United Kingdom, said this space allows for independent exploration but also can help reduce friction.

"Kids will react differently to a parent as 'teacher,' and they will push back in ways they don't at school," said Ma. "Allow for the fact that kids will be holding a lot of tension around all these sudden and often stressful changes to their routines and lives."

Get crafty

Art is an important part of education, and homeschooling also provides parents with an opportunity to get creative with crafts.

Amanda Kingloff, founder of [Projectkid.com](#), a website with tips for crafting, suggested getting creative with materials for different art projects every week. In particular, Kingloff advised reusing washers, buttons, fabric swatches and ribbons, as well as used jars, plastic bottles and cardboard tubes from toilet paper rolls to form the basis for recycled art.

"You probably have these things around the house anyway," said Kingloff, who lives in Brooklyn. "Many of these materials allow kids to create three-dimensionally without the challenge of sculpting something or making something out of clay."

Kingloff noted it's important that parents don't stress about the mess these projects create, since that only detracts from the fun.

"Put down an oil cloth and let it get messy," she added. "Nobody worries about the mess at school."

<https://www.smartschoolhouse.com/diy-crafts/ideas-for-kids>

Accept your limits

Children aren't the only ones relegated to working from home in the immediate future. Many parents with office jobs have been asked to do the same. This means that hundreds of thousands of mothers and fathers likely will be forced to balance homeschooling with their day-to-day responsibilities at work. It means a whole lot of parents will be forced to juggle like court jesters and circus clowns.

Andrew Matranga, a college professor and father of three in Longmont, Colorado, said he thinks it's "ridiculous" to be expected to shoulder the dual burdens of educating his children and the responsibilities of his job, so he's just going to do what he can.

"We just need to try to do our best, whether we're teachers, parents or working professionals," he said. "There's no map for this journey that we're on."

Matt Villano is a freelance writer and editor based in Northern California. He's also the father of three daughters, ages 10, 8 and 4 (which means he'll be homeschooling just like everyone else). Learn more about him at whalehead.com.

“

It's Okay

- * To not know how to homeschool your own child
 - * To not know how to work from home
 - * To give kids more screen time than usual
- * To make a colorful daily schedule or just wing it
- * To not magically feel motivated to work out at home or take on a new hobby
 - * To not feel okay

This is not normal for any of us.
Please be kind to yourself.

Health Update on Coronavirus

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

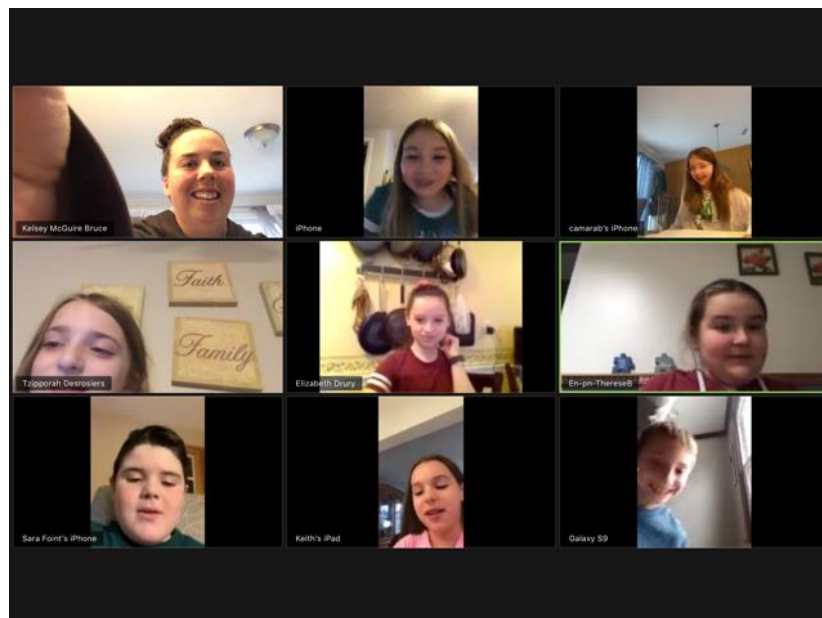


Crandall Learns!

Connect with Your Child's Teachers

All of our teachers are available to help support you and your kids. They are primarily using a combination of classroom apps (Remind, Class Dojo, etc..) and Microsoft Teams to connect with your kids. If you have not been able to connect please email your child's teacher(s) – See the "Contact Us" list at this newsletter.

Screenshot of Room 14 Team Meeting on Microsoft Teams



P.R.I.D.E AT HOME

CRANDALL COUGARS



March 2020 By Lauren Hughes

Helping Structure Your Day

Hello families, this is Lauren Hughes the PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) Coach at Prudence Crandall. I am sure some of you have been having some difficulty keeping your kids busy and maintaining a routine during this social distancing. I would like to provide some quick tips to help ease some of the stress while you embark on this new distance learning journey.

Most importantly, in order to create consistency and structure, providing a schedule for the day will be beneficial. This schedule can be as informal (a simple list of the order of activities) or in depth (a list with times for each activity) as you would like; whatever works best for your family. Sticking to normal wake up and bed times is also important to create a sense of consistency with a typical school day. When scheduling, try to chunk the assignments into smaller parts with breaks throughout. For example, complete half of the math assignment then do a brain or mindfulness break (see break section below). Having a designated place to complete their work (kitchen table, desk, side table, etc.) and the expectation that when it is work time they should stay seated at their work space until the task is completed will help them get into the mindset that it is work time.

Contact Info

If you are having behavioral difficulties at home and would like some additional help email me at LHUGHES@ENFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG

Consistent Expectations

Providing your child with clear and consistent expectations throughout the day is so important to providing a predictable environment for them. During both academic tasks and unstructured times voice your expectations whenever possible and follow through with consequences if those expectations are not followed. For example, "During work time, the expectation is that you sit at your desk quietly until your math is completed and if you have a question raise your hand. You will not be able to earn your iPad break if you don't follow these directions" or "For your iPad break time, you have 10 minutes and I am setting a timer, once the timer goes off you need to get off or you will not be able to use the iPad again today."

Positive Reinforcement

Your child might be struggling with wanting to complete the distance learning packets at home because this is out of the norm for them and they have never had to do this much schoolwork at home without their usual teacher. It can be frustrating for both parties to get the tasks done; adults try your best to remain calm to be the models of how to manage frustrations. To help encourage your child to continue working through the tasks provide positive reinforcement throughout and frequently. For example, "great job sitting quietly at your work space and getting right to work" or "wow that was a tough one, I am so proud of your determination to work through it." You can also incentivize them completing their work by providing a preferred activity contingent on them completing the academic task. For example, "first complete 2 pages of your reading then you can go outside for 10 minutes" or "once you have completed your math facts you can play on the iPad for 10 minutes." Some children may need more frequent incentives than others, use your discretion of how frequently you provide the preferred activities based on your child's work output.

Break Options

Sensory exercises: push ups, wall sits, toe touches, arm circles, jumping jacks, run in place, crab walk

Brain Break/Mindfulness

Websites: GoNoodle, Cosmic Kids Yoga, UNICEF Kid Power, Headspace, Blissful Kids

Enfield Schools Virtual Spirit Days!

Mon: Pajama Day

Tues:

**Take a pic with your
favorite stuffed
animal or real pet and
post it!**

Wed:

**♥'s for healthcare -
make ♥'s out of
paper, tape them to
your front window!**

Thur:

Crazy sock day

Fri:

**Chalk your walk -
Write positive
messages on your
sidewalk, post your
pics!**



Indoor Scavenger Hunt

COLLECT ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN A BAG OR BASKET. CHECK THE BOXES AS YOU FIND EACH ONE.

- A TOY WITH WHEELS
- A BOOK WITH THE FIRST LETTER OF YOUR NAME IN THE TITLE
- A PAIR OF MATCHING SOCKS
- 4 THINGS THAT ARE GREEN
- SOMETHING VERY SOFT
- A TOY SMALLER THAN YOUR HAND
- SOMETHING ROUND
- A BOOK WITH NUMBERS IN IT
- 5 LEGOS THAT ARE ALL DIFFERENT
- A PHOTO OF SOMEONE YOU LOVE
- AN ITEM YOU CAN SEE YOURSELF IN
- AN ITEM THAT MAKES YOU FEEL COZY
- A TOY THAT HAS 3 DIFFERENT COLORS
- A MOVIE THAT HAS "S" IN THE TITLE
- YOUR SNUGGLIEST STUFFED ANIMAL

Ready for snack? Make sure everything gets put back where it belongs!

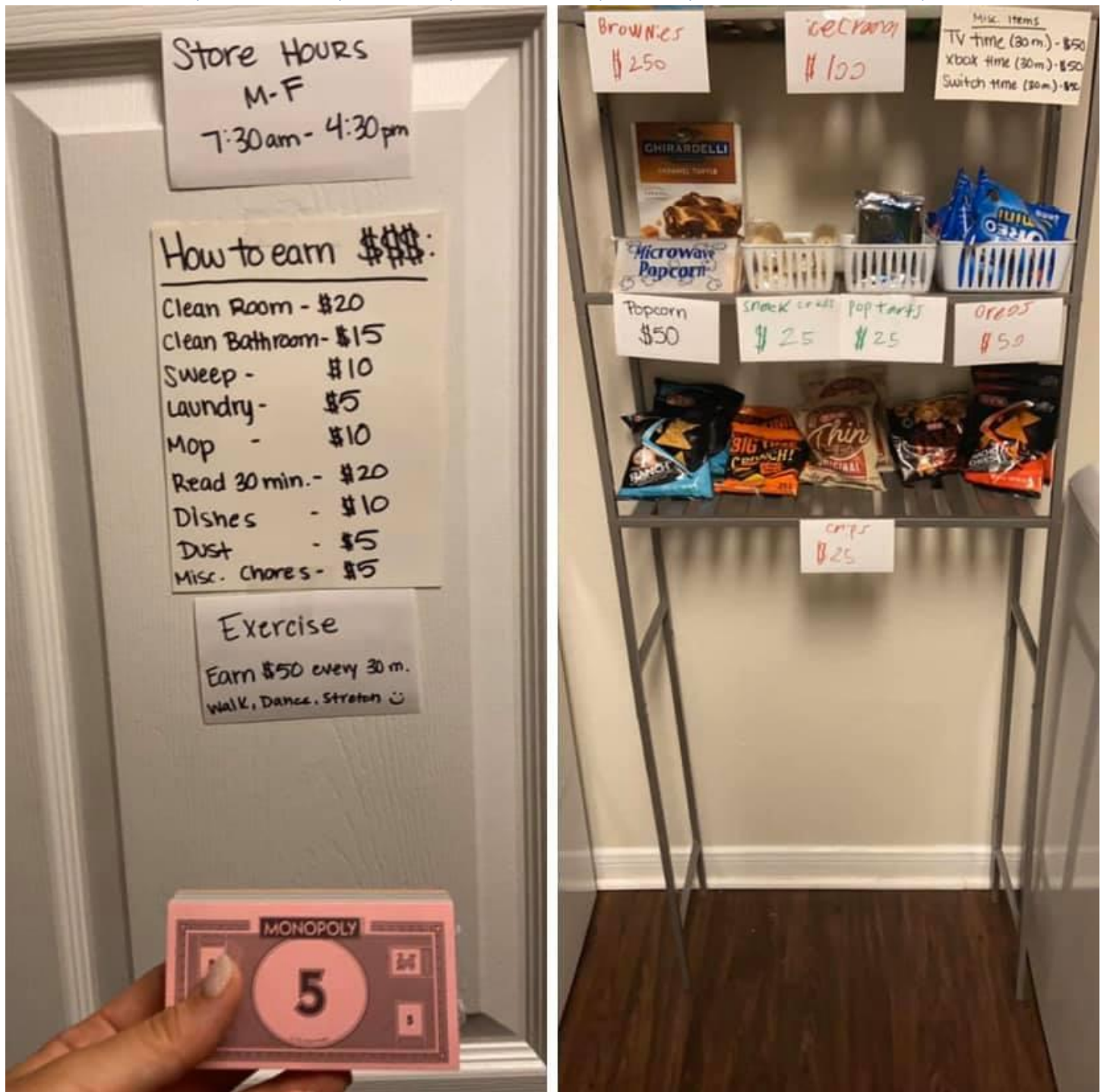
Outdoor Scavenger Hunt

COLLECT ALL OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN A BAG OR BASKET. CHECK THE BOXES AS YOU FIND EACH ONE.

- 5 LEAVES THAT LOOK DIFFERENT
- A STICK THAT IS LONGER THAN YOUR HAND
- A ROCK WITH SPOTS ON IT
- A FLOWER
- A FLAT ROCK
- 10 BLADES OF GRASS
- SOMETHING YOU LOVE TO PLAY WITH
- A PIECE OF TRASH YOU CAN RECYCLE
- SOMETHING THAT IS BROWN
- SOMETHING THAT IS HEAVY
- SOMETHING THAT IS VERY LIGHT
- SOMETHING THAT NEEDS SUN TO LIVE
- AN ITEM SMALLER THAN YOUR THUMB
- SOMETHING THAT STARTS WITH "M"
- SOMETHING THAT SMELLS GOOD

Ready for snack? Make sure everything gets put back where it belongs!

Possible Token System to Help Kids Stay Productive (and help around the house!)



Family Supports

STRESS

This situation creates excessive stress for you and your family.

- We recognize that the current public health emergency is resulting in an increase of stress on families.
- If you or your child are experiencing an immediate safety concern call 911.
- If you or your child are experiencing a behavioral mental health crisis call 211.

- If you would like to access support services, please contact the following:
- For children over 8 years of age, please call Youth and Family Services at 860-253-6380.
- For children under 8 years of age, please call the Family Resource Center 860-253-5214.
- If you would like to contact your child's counselor or social worker, please do so via their school email address.

Breakfast and Lunch

Beginning Monday March 23rd, we will move from serving pick-up meals from five days a week to two days a week. We will be serving on Mondays and Wednesdays at the same locations, (JFK and Enfield High School) between 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Items distributed will include enough food for students for that day, as well as food for students until the next distribution date. For example, on Monday students will receive breakfast and lunch for Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday students will receive breakfast and lunch for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Family Resources

- [Mystery Science – free science mini-lessons and activities](#)
- Craft projects for kids with simple supplies <https://www.smartschoolhouse.com/diy-crafts/ideas-for-kids>
- Audible.com Many free books read aloud that you and your kids can listen to....free as long as schools are closed.
- [District Resources Document](#) – Link to a folder that contains a continually updated list of resources for our families. Please bookmark it and check back often!

**BE PREPARED,
BUT AVOID
PANIC SHOPPING**

PANIC SHOPPING (VERB):

**LIKE SHOPPING ON AN EMPTY STOMACH, BUT
WITH MORE FEAR AND LESS TOILET PAPER**

Contact Us!

TEACHERS

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Amburn, Nicole
Arroyo, Demi
Barrett, James
Boulette, Rachel
Capodicasa, Stacey
Chamberlain, Kim
Champion, Megan
Clark, Melissa
Comette, Selena
Cummings, Kelly
Dennis, Amy
Furey, Michael
Hughes, Christine
Janczak, Sue
Kelly, Meagan
Kudlac, Kate
Marsh, Joanie
McGuire-Bruce,
Kelsey
McManus, Karyn
Meers, Jill
Nuzzo, Julie
O'Connor, Melanie
Perlitz, Jen
Pierce, Caroline
Reale Chrissy
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GRADE

Computers
3
special education
STEAM
3
4
PE
5
Music
3
special education
special education
4
4
Reading
5
3
Literacy Coach
4
5
Media Specialist
5
5
ECP
Art
Math Coach
Principal
3
5
Math Teacher
4
3
4
5
3

ROOM

Computer Lab
5
9
Steam Room
3
12
Gym
20
Music Room
7
19
19
10
15
Reading Lab
17
8
9
14
22
Media Center
23
21
1
Art Room
Library
Office
2
18
Lego Lab
16
4
13
24
6