

ACADEMY OF EARLY LEARNING

PRINCIPAL NOTES

Happy November!

Wow... Hard to believe that just like that November is here. This is one of my favorite months. A time to celebrate all that we are thankful for in our lives. During these challenging times, it is important to take time to teach children about kindness, thankfulness and appreciation. At AEL, children will be learning about being thankful and being kind.

In these most difficult times, I see dedicated and tireless people going above and beyond to make sure great things continue to happen in our school. They do make a difference. They are my heroes.

Thank you to our families who continue to work with your children and our educators during this difficult remote time. We couldn't do this without your support.

I wish you and your families a happy, healthy and relaxing Thanksgiving holiday. Back to school on November 30th.

Sincerely,

Nancy Putnam, Principal



Butterbraid and Pie Pick-up!

If you participated in the butterbraid and pie fundraiser, please plan to retrieve your orders on Thursday, November 12th at AEL under the Tent. Details regarding a specific pick up time will be sent out as soon as we receive those details.



DATES TO REMEMBER

November 3—No School, In-service Day
November 11—No School, Veterans Day
November 25—27—No School, Thanksgiving Break



ABSENT STUDENT REMINDER

If your preschooler is going to be absent from school, please let your classroom teacher know at your earliest convenience.



SUPPLY BAG PICKUP

Any supply bags that are not picked up during your student's scheduled supply bag pickup time will be brought to the front office. If you are unable to make it to the school for the scheduled pickup time, please contact your teacher or the front office to arrange an alternate pick up time.

1 Place Terrace
Greenfield, MA 01301
413-772-1390 (Office)
413-772-1337 (Fax)
www.gpsk12.org

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PROMOTE SUCCESS WITH VIRTUAL LEARNING



Virtual learning has its own rewards and challenges. It gives families the opportunity to be actively involved in their child's schooling and provides an opportunity to observe teachers in action. We want virtual learning to be fun and stress free. Here are some suggestions for ways to support your child during remote learning:

- Be excited about virtual learning!
- Give multiple reminders ahead of time that a learning block is approaching. It can be hard for all of us to shift from one activity to another. Providing a neutral activity (one that your child doesn't dislike or love) can make for a smoother transition.
- Use a timer to help your child know that an activity is ending.
- Allow for additional time for your child to respond virtually.
- We want children to be comfortable engaging with online learning. Let your child come up with their own answer. Learning is as much about the process as it is with the end result.
- Try to have consistent bedtime and wake up times. This helps with alertness and reduces stress. If your child has a late bedtime, try to move it up by no more than 30 minutes every 5 days or so. It takes time for all of us to shift our internal clocks!

Feel free to reach out to our school social worker, Nancy Garlock, if you'd like more help with this.

Nancy can be reached at: nangarl@gpsk12.org

Or by phone at 413-772-1390 x12

GPS FOOD SERVICES

Information regarding GPS food services can be found on the Greenfield Public Schools website under "departments". Every



Monday, Wednesday and Friday there are pick up sites listed serving families from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. On Monday, families may pick up their Grab and Go meals that will have breakfast and lunch for that day and will include Tuesday's breakfast and lunch. Wednesday's Grab and Go meal will include a breakfast and lunch for Thursday, and Friday's Grab and Go meals will include Saturday and Sunday's breakfast and lunch.



A NOTE FROM THE NURSE

Holidays are right around the corner, and we are all wondering if it is safe to gather with our loved ones during this time. The answer is going to be a little different for everyone, and it can change from day to day as we monitor the rising number of cases across our state. If you plan to travel to another state or you are receiving out-of-state guests, please check <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-travel-order> to determine whether you or they will be required to quarantine.

Some things that will lower the risk of family gatherings are:

- keep your gatherings small and local
- ask all attendees to quarantine to the greatest extent possible for the 2 weeks beforehand
- instituting mask-wearing, physical distancing, and hand hygiene at your gathering.

As we move into the colder months, it is going to be harder to visit our loved ones outdoors, so please consider virtual visits, opening windows, or shortening visit times to decrease the risk of spreading COVID-19. Also, contact your doctor to get tested for COVID-19 before visiting an elderly or vulnerable loved one. As always, masks and handwashing are your best strategies to keep each other safe! For more information, see the following links:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays.html>

<https://www.delish.com/food-news/a34032598/is-it-safe-to-host-thanksgiving-coronavirus/>

What's the Rush?

We've all done this, we all do this. Habits are hard to change.

Imagine: You and your young child encounter another grownup you know. The grownup looks at the child with a smile and asks him, "How are you?" "What are you up to today?" Your child looks at the ground, then up at you, and you quickly answer "We're on our way to meet a friend."

What happened? The other grownup directly asked the child a question and the child didn't get a chance to answer for himself. No big deal, right? Actually, children benefit tremendously when they have more time to process questions before answering. Some adults do, too.

As adults we often experience this rushed world. We have become accustomed to immediate responses, instant gratification. At the coffee shop, we expect our order lickity split. At work, or even socially, some people jump in immediately with ideas or suggestions. Others may have equally valuable ideas but may not articulate them as quickly. We all process information in our own individual way. It's important to honor a variety of personalities with varying degrees of willingness to speak up in a group.

The Value of Giving Children Time to Respond

Let's go back to the child. The value in giving the child 5-7 extra seconds to form their own response is immensely more powerful to that child's individual development than saving 5 seconds and answering for them.

Why is wait time for a child important? What's the big deal?

- Having the support from a valued adult helps a child feel more comfortable thinking for himself and speaking up.
- We are modeling that we value other people's ideas and thoughts.
- Thinking and speaking on one's own terms builds self-esteem and confidence. This. Is. Huge.
- Practicing wait time for children to respond is a valuable form of respect.
- Waiting helps the child who needs more time to process and form a response.

If children are always spoken for, they may begin to believe they are unable to speak for themselves. They may believe their thoughts are not valuable.

Research shows that when a teacher asks a question, the average wait time is one second or less. But when teachers purposely wait a minimum of five or more seconds after a question, children give higher quality and more substantive answers, their self-confidence increases, and they interact with one another to advance discussion. What's more, children reluctant to raise their hands begin to participate.

Tips on Giving Children Time to Think and Speak

So what can we adults do to intentionally give a child time to respond?

- Take a breath. "Life isn't a race." (As learned from my preschool students.)
- Believe in your mind and heart that the child can think and speak independently.
- Show on your face that you believe the child can express himself independently.
- Say nothing and allow the child 5-7 seconds to think and respond.
- Look at the child. This will help the other adult also look at the child and wait for the child's answer.

For a child who is particularly reserved, it might help to gently prompt or coach, after giving him ample wait time. What if the child's response isn't true or isn't right?

- Ask them more questions! This can be an opportunity to gauge their level of understanding or reality.
- Is it hurting anyone? If not, it's probably fine if they answer incorrectly.
- Ask yourself, what's more important in the situation, being accurate or being kind? We have our whole lives to work on accuracy; we don't have to race there, but kindness can go an incredible distance. (You can even transmit kindness by accepting a child's response regardless of its accuracy!)

Are they using their imagination? Childhood is for fun, for learning through play, and it's a time to make mistakes and figure out reasons. Now back to habits... It is tricky to hold back from answering for the child if you are constantly doing it. Perhaps it's a cultural norm, perhaps it's a pet peeve. If we can begin by being aware that we're not giving children wait time, that's a step!

Sure, there will be times that you ARE in a hurry and can't wait a few extra seconds for a child to respond independently. That's okay, forgive yourself. Barely anything about caring for children is realistic with ALWAYS or NEVER.

Here's a challenge: try it out, ask a child a question and wait much longer than feels comfortable, maybe 7 seconds. What do you notice?

I'd love to hear your thoughts and observations!

Article found at: <https://acorndreams.com/wait-a-few-more-seconds/>

Posted May 8, 2017 by Lisa Plotkin