

Valerius Eagle News - April 2016

Dates to Remember in April

- 4/4 Flying Eagles Running Club begins
- 4/11 Gift Card Orders due to the Office
- 4/13 Late Start (Valerius begins at 10am)
- 4/26 Literacy Night 5-7pm
- 4/27 Late Start (Valerius begins at 10am)

Online Calendar

1. Click the web address

https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=urbandaleschools.com_3k6635dg1lv13b74his743b6n8%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/Chicago

2. Once the calendar pops up, go to the bottom right of the screen and you'll see +Google Calendar. Click on the + sign.
3. The calendar will pop up and a message will say, "Do you want to add this calendar?"
4. Click yes.

Message from Mrs. Mauro

Iowa Assessment Test Result Update: Iowa Assessment test results went home today (4/5/16) in your child's take home folder. Please contact me if you have questions! (maurom@urbandaleschools.com or 515-457-6500)

Literacy/Science Night Update: Please RSVP for our first annual Literacy/Science Night. Our evening will consist of four twenty-minute rotations where you will have an opportunity to engage in literacy and science fun along with your child. Rotations will begin at 5:00 and will be finished by 6:40. We will serve a FREE camping-style dinner in the gym from 6:40-7:30 (hotdogs, chips, fruit, cookie, and juice/water).

Click on the link <http://evite.me/6TVC3tHJtu> to let us know if you'll be able to make it. We hope to see you there!

What is PBIS?:

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a system that we have begun to learn about and utilize at Valerius to foster a safe and effective learning environment. This system helps to reduce instructional disruptions and promotes a positive school

environment. At Valerius, our PBIS focus is on respect, responsibility, and safety. PBIS is a research-based program that has been proven to improve academic success, reduce problem behaviors, and contribute to overall school safety.

This year, staff members have begun learning about PBIS structures to help them engage all learners during instruction and provide positive, timely feedback. A couple of the fun ways we are providing students positive feedback is through S.O.A.R. (which stands for Student of Ambition Referral) recognition. Students are recognized for being respectful, responsible, and safe. Parents will be contacted when their student has received a S.O.A.R. to share in the celebration. Students will be recognized during announcements, have a positive office visit, and get to take their S.O.A.R. document home to show off. Second, we have begun recognizing Students of the Week. Students of the week are selected for demonstrating respectful, responsible, and safe choices consistently throughout the week. They will be recognized each Friday, get their pictures taken, get a personalized certificate, and wear the traveling trophy for the week. Overall, we feel that designing a positive school-wide system for student success ensures that we are providing appropriate supports that meet the needs of each individual student.

We have also initiated a team focused on hope, well-being, and engagement of our students. The Eagle Leaders committee is comprised of teacher representatives, counselor, associates, parents, and administrator that meet to develop strategies that meet the unique needs of Valerius students. Our goal for the upcoming school year will focus on strengthening our school-wide PBIS system. We have an excellent staff at Valerius and we will continue to act on the shared belief that together, we can make a difference in the academic performance and social emotional well being of all our students.

As parents, you are important members of our team. If you have questions regarding PBIS, please feel free to contact us at school at any time. Please email me at maurom@urbandaleschools.com if you are interested in being a parent member of our team.

News from the Health Office

It is cold and flu season, so please remind your students about good hand washing. Washing hands is the best way to prevent the spread of illness! If your child is ill with a fever (temp above 101° F), vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours, they will need to stay home from school. Students may return to school once they are symptom free for at least 24 hours. Also, please keep in mind that the weather is very unpredictable this time of year. Make sure to dress the your student in layers and bring a coat. Morning recesses can still be very cold!

Counselor's Corner

In the last Counselor's Corner, I gave parents and guardians a few suggestions about ways to praise their children. According to Mary Cay Ricci, author of Mindsets in the Classroom research suggests that parents should think twice about praising their kids for being "smart" or "talented," because this may foster a "fixed mindset". Instead, if we encourage our kids' efforts and acknowledge their persistence and hard work, then we will support their development of a "growth mindset". Children with a growth mindset believe that with effort and persistence they can learn and achieve more in school. A growth mindset will better equip students to persevere and pick themselves up when things do not go their way. Parents, take a minute to examine your own belief systems. Do you have a growth mindset? Do you believe that with effort, persistence, and motivation your children can achieve their goals?

Dr. Carol Dweck, an educational researcher states,

"Parents should not shield their children from challenges, mistakes, and struggles. Instead, parents should teach children to love challenges. They can say things like "This is hard. What fun!" or "This is too easy. It's no fun." They should teach their children to

embrace mistakes by saying things like, “Oooh, here’s an interesting mistake. What should we do next?” And they should teach children to love effort: “That was a fantastic struggle. You really stuck to it and made great progress!” or “This will take a lot of effort--boy, will it be fun!”

Some parents need to work at having a growth mindset. It takes time and practice, but it is well worth it when you see the difference that it makes in your children! Stay tuned next month for more ideas about ways to foster a growth mindset in your family!

PTO Corner

And the survey says...

Remember the show Family Feud??? Thanks to all who filled out our survey during fall conferences. We have tabulated the data and this is what you said.

1. Most parents understand what the PTO does and agree that the amount of events/fundraising efforts is acceptable. ($\frac{1}{4}$ of parents want more low cost events and $\frac{3}{4}$ think we should continue on a similar path.)
2. Events parents most like...Fun Night, Bingo Night, Read-A-Thon, Book Fair and classroom parties.
3. Parents participate the least in...gift card rewards program, HyVee Shop and Share and Market Fresh Grille Nights.

4. Parents are still curious about...staff appreciation and the skating parties.
5. Volunteerism: parents are in two camps...those who volunteer at a satisfactory level and those who want to volunteer, but have too many scheduling conflicts.
6. Communication: Keep the weekly emails coming! But send home paper flyers too.

Now we know where you stand and we will work in the next year to address any shortcomings. But as the saying goes...many hands make light work! And it's time now to fill our coordinator and officer roles for the next school year. There are lots of areas where YOU can make an impact! It's easy to be involved!

1. Afraid of the time commitment? Does attending another "meeting" make your stomach churn? We are looking into conducting PTO Officer e-meetings using one of the many resources available to us so that our valuable time can be spent in the comforts of our homes without needing childcare or to entertain our children.

2. Not sure what will be expected of you? We have all the tools you need to step in and make a difference! We can provide detailed position descriptions and past workflows for events to help guide your efforts. But we also welcome you to make your leadership time enjoyable by making it your own!

3. Positions needing to be filled for the 2016/17 school year (These will be voted in at the May 5 meeting so there's no better time than the present to let us know of your interest!)

(2) Co-Presidents *(split role/responsibility between 2 people)*

(1) Secretary *(with an electronic template so your job is done once you leave the meeting)*

(1) Co-Treasurer *(responsible for ledger)*

(2) Fun Night Chair(s)

(1) Running Club Co-Coordinator (there is some interest by other individuals in a shared role)

(1) Hy-Vee Liaison (for ordering items for BBQ, running club, and coordinating shop + share and market fresh grille nights which we felt we should keep since HyVee donates a lot to us for other events)

Proposed Meeting schedule:

PTO Officers Meetings (hold e-meetings?) August, October, February, April

PTO Full Board Meetings (at Valerius) September, November, January, April, May

Please contact us today (valeriuspto@gmail.com) and let us know of your interest so that new folks can be acclimated to their roles.

On Your Mark...Get Set...Go!

The Valerius Flying Eagles Running Club is set to take off again this spring! Beginning **Monday, April 4th**, students will have the opportunity to run or walk during their lunch recess. Their laps are counted by parent volunteers. At the end of each week, total miles are tallied and each time a student has reached a total of ten (10) miles, he/she will be recognized for this accomplishment. (10 laps=1 mile) This program is a great way to increase physical fitness, improve school performance, promote self-esteem, and set and meet goals with positive outcomes. Last fall, the Flying Eagles completed an AMAZING 2,334 miles – a superlative accomplishment! We look forward to seeing how far our Eagles soar this spring!

Box Tops/Labels

We are down to the last Box Top/Labels contest for the school year! Each class that turns in a combined total of 100 Box Tops and Campbell's Labels for Education BAR CODES will win a popcorn and movie party OR treat bags. If your class has already won a popcorn party this school year, your class will win the treat bags. This contest will end on **Friday, April 22**...keep on sending those box tops and labels in! The kids are enjoying

new footballs, basketballs, soccer balls, hula hoops, kick balls and jump ropes with the money we earned this year.

Book Fair Results

Thank you to all the Valerius families who helped support our Spring Book Fair! We raised over \$2,900 for our school's library, and 129 books were donated to our teachers! Between the Fall and the Spring fairs, we raised over \$5,300 for the library this year and 261 books were donated to our teachers!