



# Rockbrook Express



**Rockbrook Elementary School Newsletter**  
2514 South 108th St. Omaha, NE 68144 (402) 390-6475 Info Line: (402) 390-3399

January 2017  
www.westside66.org

## Mission

The mission of Rockbrook Elementary School, a diverse community of learners, is to foster learning by providing a quality educational experience within a secure and challenging environment.

## School Improvement Goal

At Rockbrook we will increase student engagement and achievement through Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports for social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs.

## News Briefs

### Don & Millie's Night

Wednesday, January 18

### Planet Sub Night

Tuesday, February 7

## Report Cards

Student report cards are going to be distributed by email this quarter. We are hopeful to have this completed by early next week.

## School Phone Numbers

Office/Attendance  
402-390-6475

Pre-School/Club 66  
402-390-8208

**Monday, January 16, is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - No School**

## Dear Families and Friends of Rockbrook,

With the close of our first week back in the new year and the new semester, I want to express a warm welcome back and share our thanks for your support as children re-adjusted to the routines of school. We were so happy to have them back, to hear their enthusiastic stories of time spent over the break, and to begin the exciting learning to take place in the second half of our year.

Our report cards originally scheduled to be distributed by email this Wednesday have been delayed due to a system error. We are hopeful to have this completed by early next week. We appreciate your patience as our district attempts this change and any feedback you may have on the process to ensure families are getting timely and accurate information about their child's progress.

We are looking forward to many exciting opportunities this semester including Battle of the Books, a Read-A-Thon, concerts, prom, and much more. Be sure to keep an eye on our Rockbrook Reminders, our weekly one-page updates of news for the week ahead. This can help keep your child and your family be in the know and ready to enjoy the second half of the school year.

Happy 2017!  
Sincerely,  
Mr. Higginbotham, Principal

## Morning Drop Off

With cold weather setting in finally we wanted to remind you of some time frames regarding morning drop off. For the safety of students we provide outside supervision of our drop off areas starting at 8:25. Students are allowed to enter the building at 8:30 and dismissed to class at 8:35. When temperatures are below zero with the windchill students will be brought in upon arrival.

**To ensure students are safe and adequately supervised we ask that students not arrive before 8:25.** If families are in need of before school supervision, please inquire with our before and after care program, Club 66 at (402) 390-8207.

## Music Program for Grades 4-5-6

Tuesday, January 24, the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades will perform a vocal music program at Westside Middle School at 7 p.m.



## Rockbrook Calendar

- Jan. 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - No School
- 16 Bd of Ed Mtg at ABC 6:30 p.m.
- 18 Don & Millie's Night
- 24 Music Program 4-5-6 at WMS 7 p.m.
- Feb. 6 Bd of Ed Mtg at ABC 6:30 p.m.
- 7 Planet Sub Night
- 7 Parent Advisory Comm. Mtg. 2 & 6 p.m.



- 7 Community Club Mtg 6:00 p.m.
- Feb. 10 Valentine Parties 2:35 p.m.
- 13-14 Parent/Teacher Conf.
- 15 Don & Millie's Night
- 16-17 Intersession - No School
- 20 President's Day - No School
- 20 Bd of Ed Mtg at ABC 6:30 p.m.



## Counselor's Corner

### Great Kindness Challenge

During the week of January 23-27, our school will recognize Bully Awareness by participating in the "Great Kindness Challenge."

The "Great Kindness Challenge" is one week dedicated to creating a culture of kindness at schools nationwide. Our school is proudly participating in this proactive, positive bullying prevention initiative as part of our Bully Awareness efforts this year.

All students will receive a Great Kindness Challenge checklist with 50 kind deeds. Please encourage your child to complete the checklist at school and show the world that KINDNESS MATTERS!

[greatkindnesschallenge.org](http://greatkindnesschallenge.org)

Meghan Martin and Mary Lottinville  
School Counselor

## Jump on the Wellness Wagon!

### This month's tip...Eat a Rainbow

Eating a variety of fruits and veggies every day is part of a healthy diet for both kids and adults.

Fruits and veggies are packed with vitamins and minerals, are low in calories, and high in fiber.

Here are some ways to eat more fruits and veggies: freeze grapes and banana slices on a skewer for a snack, top peanut butter toast with bananas, or add tomato and onion to scrambled eggs.



## Rockbrook Enrichment Clusters - Volunteers Needed

Rockbrook is excited to be putting together its second year of SchoolWide Enrichment Clusters. Enrichment Clusters are a chance for guided exploration of a topic of interest to students. We are looking for adults that would be willing to help with our clusters and share an area of interest and/or expertise. This could be for the full six weeks as a cluster group leader, or for just a session or two as a guest speaker. The classes will run from 2:35-3:15 on February 24, March 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31. Students will have a variety of classes to choose from. Once they choose their class, they will remain with the same group of students, and will study the same topic, for the entire six weeks. If leading a class or being a guest speaker is not of interest, we also welcome any help you can offer. Extra hands go a long way as our students explore topics more freely. We are currently looking for adults with interests in pets, magic, science experiments, cooking, and coding. If you would be interested and willing to help, please let Mr. Higginbotham know ([higginbotham.garret@westside66.net](mailto:higginbotham.garret@westside66.net))

## TAGG You're It!

Rockbrook is excited to be registered with Together a Greater Good (TAGG) as a fundraising opportunity for the school. TAGG is a free service in which you use your smartphone at local participating businesses to earn a percentage of the sale as a donation from the business back to the school. Along with this week's newsletter you'll find a list of participating businesses and a quick instructional sheet for how to set your phone up to support Rockbrook.

**Notice of Nondiscrimination** - Westside Community Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, age, marital, parental or pregnancy status, military/veteran status or any other category protected by law in its programs and activities or in admission or access to, or treatment in, hiring and employment. Retaliation is prohibited. The following persons coordinate our compliance and can assist with questions or filing a concern or report:

- For students, parents or others: Coordinator of Student Services/Title IX Coordinator – ABC Building, 909 So. 76th St. Omaha NE 68114 (402) 390-2100 or via e-mail: [titleixcoordinator@westside66.net](mailto:titleixcoordinator@westside66.net)

- For staff members or applicants: Ass't Superintendent for Human Resources/Lead Title IX Coordinator – ABC Building, 909 So. 76th St. Omaha, NE 68114 (402) 390-2100 or via e-mail: [titleixcoordinatorHR@westside66.net](mailto:titleixcoordinatorHR@westside66.net)

# PBIS - Positive Behavior Intervention Supports

Each month we have featured new information about our school and district implementation of PBIS, or Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports. At the core of the the PBIS philosophy is the first word in it, Positive. Research proves that the best way to shape behavior and to make a successful school culture is through positive reinforcement. In prior articles we told you about our Power Paws, Golden Paws, and celebrations of positive choices. This month we'd like to share a bit about some of the ways that adults at school are actively involved in promoting good behaviors.

Systematic Supervision is a process used by our teachers and assistants during recess, lunch, and less structured times. Whereas past practices might have encouraged teachers to stay posted in a certain spot and observe the playground, Systematic Supervision encourages staff to be moving throughout the space, interacting with kids, and developing the positive relationships that maintain a safe and pleasant school culture. Teachers work to recognize positive choices being made by students and reward them, while still keeping a close eye on any undesirable behaviors and interrupting them before they become a bigger problem.

In essence one form of Systematic Supervision used in many classrooms is what's known as a good behavior game. Good behavior games engage students in a fun activity used to target specific behaviors the teacher wishes to see more of, including quick, motivating reward opportunities. An example might be an activity like behavior basketball in which a teacher identifies a target skill then gives students token pieces of paper each time they see it. At the end of an instructional time, the teacher might then allow students to crumple the paper and shoot for a basket. Not only are students rewarded with a quick break, but they might also earn a bonus prize for making a shot into the wastebasket. Games like this keep students focused on positive choices and break up the monotony of reviewing rules and expectations.

Finally with the help of our older students, this year Rockbrook has implemented Morning Announcements. During this time students might be reminded and recognized for positive choices in our school. It's one more way that we are working hard to make positive interactions a frequent and present part of student's efforts at Rockbrook.

## Dancing Classrooms Begins

Rockbrook is excited to host its second year of the Dancing Classrooms program with our 5th grade students. Dancing Classrooms is a holistic approach to build confidence and teamwork, stretch creative skills, and support academic excellence, using the rich and varied vocabularies of social dance to increase cooperation, to improve concentration, and to explore areas of commonality, understanding and cultural awareness. Students develop skills of poise, confidence, teamwork, and working together in a partnership. We want to thank the Rockbrook Community Club, who along with a grant from the Westside Foundation, help to fund this beneficial program.



## Cold Weather Policy

There are always questions from parents about when our students go outside in the cold weather. Our policy is the same for recess, safety patrol, and parking lot patrol —when the wind chill is 0 degrees or below, we stay inside, otherwise we go out. So please dress warmly on these cold wintry days!

## Community Club

**Community Club meets once a month and we would love to have you join us on Tuesday, February 7, at 6:00 p.m.**

Rockbrook Community Club is made up of parents who come together to support our school. Being a part of Community Club provides a great opportunity for parents to be involved in their child's education, and to meet other parents and families.

**Parent Advisory Group** - Parents are a critical part of our team at Rockbrook, and your input on decisions that impact students and our community are important to us. The Rockbrook Parent Advisory Group meets monthly, in conjunction with the Rockbrook Community Club as well as a daytime meeting for those unable to attend at night. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, Feb. 7, at 2:00 pm and 6:00 pm. We hope you will be able to join us.

## **Student In-District Transfer Requests for the 2017-18 School Year**

If you are a District resident who would like your K-5 child(ren) to attend an elementary school other than the school that serves your attendance area for next school year, you must submit a completed In-District Transfer (IDT) Request form to the Office of Student Services for review.

State law allows school districts to give transfer priority to families living within the District prior to placing Open Enrollment students who reside outside the District. We must receive a Student In- District Transfer Request form no later than 4:00 p.m. on March 15, 2017, for your request to be considered prior to our placement of Open Enrollment students.

IDT forms are available at the ABC Building and on the District website. An IDT request form must be completed for any child starting kindergarten next year who has one or more siblings currently attending a school outside their home attendance area. Transfers are approved or denied based on available space and other resources. If you have questions about the in-district transfer process, please call 402-343-2603.

## **Kindergarten Enrollment for District Residents: January 5-February 15**

Do you live in the District and have a child who will be ready for Kindergarten this fall? Do you know of other West-side residents with children who will be ready to start school in August?

Kindergarten enrollment for 2017-18 begins January 10. Parents of eligible students should go to [westside66.org](http://westside66.org) to begin the enrollment process as early as possible.

Students entering kindergarten for 2017-18 must be five years old by July 31, 2017. Parents may opt to hold their children out of kindergarten for an additional year. However, Nebraska state law mandates that a child who reaches six years of age prior to January 1 of the then-current school year must be enrolled in school.

Those with questions can call the Westside Welcome Center at 402-343-2603.

## **Requirements for Early Admission to Kindergarten**

In accordance with Nebraska Statute 79-214, the Westside Community Schools allows for admission of children as early entrance kindergarteners through a locally designed testing program. Children of District residents who wish to be tested for early entrance must turn five between August 1 and October 15, 2017. For further information regarding early entrance to kindergarten, please call 402-390-2108.

## **Kindergarten Enrollment for Non-District Residents**

If you live outside the District and have a child eligible for kindergarten who has a sibling currently attending a West-side elementary school through the Open or Option Enrollment program, you must submit an Option Enrollment Application. Option Enrollment Applications must be received by Westside's Office of Student Services no later than 4:00 p.m. on March 15, 2017. The application form is available at the ABC Building (909 S. 76th Street) and at [westside66.org](http://westside66.org). Under Option Enrollment statutes, first priority for admission is given to siblings who seek to attend in the District where an older sibling is already enrolled, provided an Option Enrollment form is submitted by March 15 and provided that there is space available in a requested building and grade level.