



UPCOMING EVENTS >>>

November 24-25, 2016

No School – Thanksgiving Break

December 1, 2016

Barnes & Noble Fundraiser

December 5, 2016

Murray PTA Meeting

6:00pm – 7:30pm

December 8, 2016

Winter Holiday Concert

7:00pm

December 22, 2016 – January 2, 2017

No School – Winter Break

From the Principal

A Message of Thanks!

The first part of our school year has gone by quickly. We have completed our first quarter and are well into our second. As I reflect on the many things for which I am thankful, I want to take this opportunity to share just a few of them with you; I am first and foremost thankful for our students who come to school every day ready to learn – they give us all a daily reminder of why we are here. I am thankful for the support of the parents in creating partnerships for our students' success. I am thankful for our teachers, assistants, nurse, bus drivers, secretaries, coaches, nutrition services, custodians, counselors, social workers and administrators who really care about student achievement and have the best interests of our students at heart. I am also thankful for our volunteers who enthusiastically contribute so much to our school.

It is with gratitude that I am a part of a team where so many individuals are going above and beyond to make sure that great things happen in our school. Each of us makes a difference in own individual ways and I am proud to say our children benefit from those efforts.

Wolf Ridge Leadership Retreat

It is that time of year. 70+ learners, multiple parents, community members, school board chair and many teachers just returned from the 5-day environmental, leadership and cultural retreat to the Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center. I want to give special recognition to Tim Chase and Carrie Bittner. They put in endless hours organizing this event for the greatest of learning experience for all. The leadership development program is a long and honored tradition at Murray Middle School and the students represent the beautiful diversity of our great school. Through pre-planning, leading activities and participating in events at Wolf Ridge, our learners and staff come back prepared to impact Murray with renewed energy, greater leadership skills and a commitment to the community.

I want to extend special thanks to all the chaperones. Your time for our learners matters a great deal. By multiple community members committing to 5-days in support of this special field trip, our students are able to see the care and support of all stakeholders. This opportunity is not available without you. Thank you!

In partnership,

Stacy Theien-Collins



Stay up to date on good news and
upcoming events-

Stacy Theien-Collins@Murray_Middle

Staff Spotlight



Hello, my name is Jenna Dorschner. This is my first year with Murray Middle School, and I work as a Teaching Assistant in the Autism program. I look forward to watching each student in this program grow over the next few months.

I've lived in St. Paul my whole life, and graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in Family Social Science. I did the majority of my schooling on the St. Paul Campus; just a few blocks away from Murray. I hope to return to campus soon and work towards a Masters in Social Work. I have always enjoyed working with youth, and spend my summers working for the Summer Day Camp run by the University of Minnesota. It is so great to see some of my campers right here at Murray!

In my spare time, I train and perform as a contortionist for a local entertainment company. I spent most of my childhood training with Circus Juventas, and have been very fortunate to have the opportunity to keep performing professionally. I also enjoy reading, and playing board games with my family and close friends.

Watching our students walk into the classroom with smiles on their faces everyday reminds me of why I chose to work with youth, and gives me the energy necessary to give all that I can.

Murray Musical

Auditions Nov. 29th and 30th

This year's musical has been selected: Alice in Wonderland, Jr. Auditions will be at the end of the month; students may sign up for either Tuesday, November 29th or Wednesday, November 30th during all 3 lunches next week (Nov. 14th – Nov. 17th). In addition to the regular, scripted play, we will be adding some special "Murray touches," including possible skits and updated dance performances. We are teaming with SteppingStone again this year, and the artistic staff is looking forward to working with our talented artists!



Science Fair

An Invitation to be a Judge at the 2017 Murray Middle School Science Fair!

Project Judging – January 10, 2017
(5:40pm – 9:00pm)

We provide guidelines and training on being a judge from 5:40 to 5:55. We have a general welcome and judges pick the evaluations they want to do at 6:00. Since the event runs through the dinner hour, a light meal will be provided.

The judge reviews and discusses the displayed project with the student. Each project has 3 judges who independently view the project and evaluate it. You will evaluate approximately 10 projects.

If you can help us, please mark your calendar and reply by email to stefanie.folkema@spps.org or call 651-744-3922.

Thank you!

Staff Spotlight



Hello, my name is Olivia Smith and I am a Teacher's Aide at Murray. I started out at Murray 2 years ago as a tutor in the Pilot Tutoring Program but this will be my first full academic year as a TA. I am very excited to be a part of the Murray community and look forward to seeing our students grow as learners.

I am a former Wisconsin resident and still love watching the Packers play every weekend. In my time away from Murray, I enjoy reading, hiking, spending time with friends, and trying new foods. I moved from Minneapolis to St. Paul this summer and am having a great time exploring the city.

So far this school year has flown by and I can't wait to see what this year has in store for us!

Murray Happenings

What You Need To Know

Alice in Wonderland, Jr.

This year's musical has been selected. Auditions are November 29th and 30th right after school.

Auditions are open to all Murray students with a lot of opportunity for participation through main cast roles, chorus, crew, etc. Our production is led by teachers Erin Dooley and Alyssa DeMarco. We partner with SteppingStone Theatre for the artistic direction, voice coaching, choreography, etc. If you have any questions, please email Erin Dooley at erin.dooley@spps.org or call 651-293-8740.

School Dance

Murray's second school dance is scheduled for December 21, 2016. Our dances are part of our PBIS program and students earn the privilege of attendance through displaying our core expectations of respectful, responsible and safe. The cost of our dance is \$4.00 with \$1.00 going to Keystone Community Services or \$3.00 with the donation of a non-perishable food item.

7th and 8th Science Fair

Murray hosts MN's largest single day Science Fair. For information about the expectations, project timelines, retrieve relevant forms, see sample projects, etc. go to the following website:

<http://murray.spps.org/Page/7971>

History Day

Murray Middle School students participate in History Day. A timeline and expectations can be accessed by contacting your child's social studies teacher. To learn more about history day in Minnesota and nationally use the following websites:

<http://www.nhd.org> or
<http://education.mnhs.org/historyday/>

Winter Sports

Girls' Basketball and Co-ed Wrestling is underway. Our Murray website has been updated so forms and other information are available to families:

<http://spps.schoolwires.net/domain/1211>. For the most updated schedule information go to sports.spps.org or contact our Athletic Director, Mr. Hughes at david.hughes@spps.org

Activity Day

Murray has a mid-year all school celebration called activity day. Activity day takes place on January 26th. All students are invited to attend one of 5 field trips: Maplewood Community Center for swimming, basketball and other recreational activities, Grand Slam, Saints North Roller Skating, Green Acres snow tubing, or U of M Bowling. Permission forms will be sent home and available through our newsletter and online starting in December.

PTA Corner

Hello from the Murray PTA! Our next meeting is **Monday, December 5th at 6:00pm – 7:30pm in the Murray Library**. Light refreshments will be served. We hope to see you there!

The PTA's annual Barnes and Noble fundraiser is fast approaching.

This year it is Thursday, December 1st from 6:00-8:30 PM at Barnes and Noble Har Mar Mall and we need your help!

We are looking for volunteers who can donate 30 minutes of their time to stand near the entrance of the store and hand out vouchers to shoppers coming into Barnes and Noble. We cannot solicit customers; however when a customer asks what is happening in the store, we can tell them about our fundraiser.

Please use the link below to sign up for a volunteer spot.

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/4090A4EA9AB2BAAFC1-murray

For those that are new to the Barnes and Noble fundraiser it works in two ways. Murray teachers make a wish list of books. These books will be available for purchase the night of the book fair so parents have the opportunity to donate to a classroom. The other way it works is if Murray Middle School is mentioned at the checkout Barnes and Noble will donate a portion of the purchase back to the school.

Thank you!

Next Spirit Wear Order Deadline is December 1st!

New this year, we have an online Spirit Wear store due to the generosity of Athletic Outfitters in Shoreview. Visit www.athleticoutfittersmn.com and click "Web Stores" to find the Murray PTA Spirit Wear section.

The same order and delivery schedule will apply to online and paper orders as they print orders in bulk. Deliveries will be made to school by the dates listed.

There is a spot on the form to indicate parent pick up of Spirit Wear if you'd like to give as a surprise gift!

Order and Delivery Schedule 2016-2017

Order 10/4-12/1: Delivery by 12/20

Order 12/2-2/17: Delivery by 03/03

Order 2/18-4/21: Delivery by 05/05

Spirit Wear Paper Orders Available

If you don't have access to online ordering or a printer, please send your student to the office to get a paper order form. Thank you!

We had a great meeting on November 7th, meeting minutes are posted on the Murray Website.



**SAVE
THE DATE**

Murray Middle School PTA invites you to

Barnes & Noble Bookfair

Thursday Dec 1, 2016 6:00-8:30

Barnes & Noble at HarMar Mall

Music, games, student art! Hot beverages on a cold night!

Donate a book from the teacher wish list table!

- Varsity and Concert Bands
- Orchestra
- Rock Band
- NJHS wrapping your presents for a donation
- Board Game Club

Can't attend our bookfair at Barnes & Noble?

Visit **bn.com/bookfairs** to support online from **12/1/16 to 12/6/16**

by entering **Bookfair ID 11848819** at checkout.

A percentage of your Barnes & Noble purchases will benefit our school/organization.

READING

**IS
AWESOME.**

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