### Message from Principal McCarthy

**PBIS at Rio Vista**

Rio Vista is a PBIS (Positive Behavior & Intervention Supports) school! We are in our third year of implementation, and we still uphold the same 3 school expectations of “Be Responsible, Be Respectful and Be Safe”. We are streamlining all of our effective teaching practices with our school vision and motto, and creating a school system that is consistent and predictable for all of our students, teachers, and parents. When students know what is expected of them they are more likely to succeed.

Our PBIS system was developed with input from our teachers, staff, students, parents, and community members, by our PBIS lead team. As a team and staff, we have committed to using Mustang Points as the primary way to reinforce students for demonstrating or school expectations consistently. Mustang points can be given to any student by any staff member here at Rio Vista, through our PBIS Rewards program. Mustang points are saved and collected by students to then redeem them at the RV PBIS Store. There are different prize values and redemption days that students may participate in when they chose to redeem their tickets.

In addition to Mustang Points and prize/reward redemption, students also have the opportunity to earn Positive Office Referrals from any staff member, and the recognition of Mustang of the Month at or monthly assemblies.

Here at Rio Vista we also utilize a behavior intervention flow chart. It is a continuum of infractions and a set of school wide consequences, which we call “Phases”, that all teachers in every class, and in all subjects, will use. This system provides consistency with expectations and negative consequences across our campus.

We are pleased to see the academic achievement of our students continue to increase in addition to fostering our positive climate here at Rio Vista. Our commitment is to be a school where discipline issues are minimal, and student achievement is maximized! Thank you for your continued support of our school wide expectations.

Your partner in education,

Siobhan McCarthy

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### Upcoming Events in December:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Early Release</td>
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<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>8th grade Registration for West Point High School, 1:30pm</td>
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<tr>
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<td>PESD Governing Board Meeting, Virtual, at 6:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Early Release</td>
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<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>Early Release</td>
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<tr>
<td>16th</td>
<td>PESD Parent Lunch &amp; Learn, 11:00am-12:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>17th</td>
<td>Early Release</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Report Cards Go Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>20th-31st</td>
<td>Winter Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 3</td>
<td>School Resumes!</td>
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Happy Holidays from the Rio Vista Staff!
We at Rio Vista are excited that the holidays are upon us but we also know that the holidays can bring mixed emotions for our kids and families. This article is from the American Psychological Foundation’s website at http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/parents-holiday.aspx

“A 2008 holiday stress poll by the APA showed that more than eight out of 10 Americans anticipate stress during the holiday season. Money, in particular, can be a cause of stress, as parents feel demands to purchase gifts, decorations and other items tied to holiday celebrations. In the 2008 holiday stress poll, households with children were more likely to report anticipating stress during the holidays than those without, and one-third expected stress due to pressure to buy gifts or because of too many things to do. Additionally, APA’s 2011 Stress in America survey found that 75 percent of Americans report money as a significant source of stress.

Heightened stress during the holidays can lead to unhealthy stress management behaviors, such as overeating and drinking to excess. People tend to reduce their stress in ways they have learned over the course of time because they turn to what they know. You may take comfort in unhealthy stress management techniques just because they’re familiar, even though they’re not good for your health. But, there are other behaviors you can learn to further relieve stress and its effects that may be both healthier for you and longer lasting.

**APA offers these tips to help parents deal with holiday stress**

- **Set expectations** – Talk to your kids about expectations for gifts and holiday activities. Be open with them if money is an issue. Depending on a child’s age, parents can use this as an opportunity to teach their kids about the value of money and responsible spending. And be realistic. Take small concrete steps to deal with holiday tasks instead of overwhelming yourself with goals that are too far reaching for a busy time.
- **Keep things in perspective** – Try to consider stressful situations in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Avoid blowing events out of proportion and teach your kids how to keep things in perspective, including what type and the number of gifts they receive.
- **Make connections** – Good relationships with family and friends are important. So, view the holidays as a time to reconnect with people. Additionally, accepting help and support from those who care about you can help alleviate stress. Even volunteering at a local charity with your kids is a good way to connect with others, assist someone in need and teach your kids about the value of helping others.
- **Take care of yourself** – Pay attention to your own needs and feelings during the holiday season. Engage in activities that you and your family enjoy and find relaxing. Taking care of yourself helps keep your mind and body healthy and primed to deal with stressful situations. Consider cutting back television viewing for kids and instead, get the family out together for a winter walk. It promotes activity and takes kids away from sedentary time and possible influence from advertisements.

**How a psychologist can help**

If you continue to feel stress around the holidays, consult with a psychologist or other licensed mental health professional. He or she can help you identify problem areas and then develop an action plan for changing them. Psychologists are uniquely trained to understand the connection between the mind and body. They can offer strategies as to how to adjust your goals so that they are attainable, as well as help you change unhealthy behaviors and address emotional issues.”

Please also feel free to contact the school should you notice changes in your child’s behavior as the holidays approach. We would be happy to support them in working on skills to manage their stress.

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**Gifted Testing Announcement**

The Pendergast Elementary School District is committed to identifying and supporting gifted students as required by the State of Arizona ARS 15-779. We do this by ensuring that students are properly identified and supported in their area(s) of qualification. All Pendergast schools will be conducting assessments to determine eligibility for gifted services in the months of: September, January, and April-May. If you think your student will qualify for these services and you would like them to be tested this year, please contact your child’s teacher. If you are interested in reading about some traits that are frequently observed in gifted children, you may want to look at the National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC) web page.

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**Please be prepared to show your photo identification any time you come to Rio Vista. Whether it be to check out a student, visit a classroom or speak to a child, you must always show ID. Parents, please make sure you have updated your profile with those you wish to have contact with your kids here at school. Visitors NOT on the student’s update sheet will not be permitted to see students.**