

Blair G. Ewing

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Directory

ADMINISTRATOR

Dr. Thea Mitchell-Anderson
Assistant Principal at
Plum Orchard
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School Hours
8:30 am - 12:45 pm

MONDAY (A day)

TUESDAY (B day)

WEDNESDAY (A day)

THURSDAY (B day)

FRIDAY (make up day)



Technical Concerns
240 740-7023

TEACHER CONTACTS

Donovan Griffin-Blake (Science)
Office Hr Fri 8:30am - 12:30 pm
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Zvi Walter (English)
Office Hrs Fri 8:30 am- 12:30pm
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Dr. Berinna Chambers (Spanish)
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Hsiang Li (Social Studies)
Office Hrs Fri 8:30 am- 12:30 pm
Hsiang_Y_Li@mcpsmd.net

Seydou Romba (Math)
Office Hrs Fri 8:30am - 12:30pm
Seydou_Romba@mcpsmd.net

Diana Bisselle (Special Education)
Office Hrs Fri 8:30am -12:30pm
Diana_L_Bisselle@mcpsmd.net

To Do Daily

**Students must check
google email by
8:25am daily**

CLINICAL STAFF

Office Hours
Mon - Thur 12:45- 2:30 pm
Fri 12:45 - 2:30

TaNisha Wright, Counselor
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Karenina VanLennep, Social Worker
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Mental Health

Six Simple Practices that Support Mental Wellness!

Why is there a Mental Health section in the school newsletter?

Sometimes it might feel simpler to avoid dealing with difficult feelings, and just focus on the educational tasks at hand. Unfortunately or fortunately, humans are social/emotional beings who are physically affected both positively and negatively by their feelings, thoughts and emotions. In these challenging COVID-19 times, most people's feelings are a jumble and their emotions are all over the place. Below are six basic practices that will support mental wellness in these uncertain times.

1. **Acknowledge how you feel.** Feelings change from minute to minute. When we feel something and don't seek to manipulate the feeling, it offers self validation. Imagine you start to talk to someone and they throw their hand up in your face and turn their head away. How do you feel at that moment? Maybe you feel dismissed and unimportant. Our internal reaction is similar when we don't acknowledge our truth. A feeling is just a feeling, sit with it, acknowledge it and let it have some space.
2. **Be patient with yourself and everyone around you.** A lot can be said for compassion for self. We may not measure up to our mental ideal of what a good student, parent, clinician or educator is because Insert evidence. But we are "worthy." Our process -- the day to day steps we take to improve and grow are worthy. Speak your frustration with the process but don't give up on it.
3. **Allow yourself to struggle publicly.** When we don't know something or something is hard there is a tendency to avoid or hide it, which makes it hard to get the help and support we need to improve in that area. Practice trusting teachers and support staff with your "don't know and not sure" Repeat the mantra "Try, fail, learn, improve, to yourself when you encounter academic challenges.
4. **Show up.** While the other tips are more focused on internal processes, this one speaks to setting a goal and taking the concrete steps to achieve a goal. Create a routine, follow the routine, alter the routine when necessary to get the best possible outcomes. Allow the routine to have a balance between work and relaxation, Write that routine down to make it concrete.
5. **Monitor what you take in.** What you watch and who you speak to, have an effect on your mental health. Too much negativity will damage positive intentions. It's good to know what is going on in the world, but there comes a moment when more information doesn't really add to understanding or wellness. Along those same lines, spending good time with people we love and with whom we feel safe, whether in person or remotely encourages mental peace.
6. **Embrace the Unknown.** There is an element of unknown to life that is really kind of annoying to most people. Right now the unknown factor is beyond anything most of us have experienced in this lifetime. The challenge is to accept this reality and control the things that are within our control. Allow yourself to focus on doing the things (school work, moderate exercise etc) that you can, that will lead you toward your positive goals.

There are whole books written about how to maintain good mental health during difficult times; the simple six tips above are our humble effort to explain how one might go about it and why these practices are important.

Remember: This too shall pass.

Remote Learning Tips

Here are some basic tips for making the most out of the remote learning experience

- Designate a school work space that includes a standard spot for school equipment such as Chrome-books and mobile hot spots.
- Create a visual schedule that includes your routines. Routines should include standard wake and bedtimes, breaks for meals, and even designated times to regroup.
- Use incentives to earn simple rewards (Incentives and be offered by a parent or a gift to self, i.e. if I work for the next 15 mins I will watch that really interesting YouTube video I have been wanting to look at.)
- Post log-ins, important phone numbers in a central location where they can be easily accessed when needed.
- Parents and students should regularly engage check-ins about academic and emotional victories and concerns.
- When in need of support, schedule a meeting with school staff during office hrs.
- Limit recreational electronic use when trying to concentrate on assignments.



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Food

In need of Food Contact the social worker listed on the first page of this newsletter. Or visit one of the websites listed below

Manna Food — <http://www.mannafood.org/how-to-receive-food-from-manna/>

MCPS Meals Visit <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/coronavirus/#emergency-meals> for more information.

MCPS Coronavirus Webpage:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/coronavirus/>

MCPS Curriculum Contingency: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/contingency/>

Office of Family Support and Engagement: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/student-services/>

Crisis Support Information: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/student-services/mentalhealth/default.aspx?id=333014>