



ROSEVILLE AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Raider's Den

THE HEARTBEAT OF 623

News for February 17, 2017

Principal's Message - A Brief History of (What You Think Is) Presidents' Day

In case you did not know- Monday is not actually Presidents' Day. It is still known as Washington's Birthday, according to the federal government and section 6103(a) of title 5 of the U.S. Code.

Give George Washington the credit he's due, since this whole holiday thing started in 1796 when people began celebrating him during his final year as President. But even then, his Feb. 22 birthday wasn't a clear-cut date. Congress widely discussed the idea to rename the holiday Presidents' Day and honor Abraham Lincoln's Feb. 12 birthday as well. At that time, Lincoln's birthday was a holiday in a handful of states but not recognized as a federal holiday. While the holiday was moved off Washington's birthday, the name was never officially changed. When the new holiday rules took effect a few years later in 1971, the retail power of states such as Texas and California latched onto the Presidents' Day name. Businesses around the country started using that moniker to promote February sales, starting as early as Lincoln's birthday and again around Washington's birthday.

The use of Presidents' Day as the name continued to grow in popularity, gaining widespread acceptance by the 1980s. Then, in 1999, due to Presidents' Day having taken over as the accepted name, a pair of bills tried to force the official use of Washington's Birthday for the holiday (Ronald Reagan's birthday on Feb. 6 has added a fourth presidential birthday to the month of February). But there wasn't much support for that, in essence offering Presidents' Day a chance to celebrate not only Washington and Lincoln, but also all other presidents.

Newcomb, T. (2012, February 20). A Brief History of (What You Think Is) Presidents' Day. Retrieved February 17, 2017, from <http://newsfeed.time.com/2012/02/20/a-brief-history-of-what-you-think-is-presidents-day/>

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Restorative Practices

There are many ways that Restorative Practices can be used in schools. Circles is one of those ways.

Circles can be used to: 1) learn academic content, 2) build community, 3) improve a class atmosphere, or 4) repair relationships.

Regardless of the purpose, Circles have certain elements that encourage respect and build understanding. In the book

Circle Forward Carolyn Boyes-Watson and Kay Pranis describe these elements.



Opening Ceremony

“Circles use openings and closings to mark the Circle as a sacred space. From the time of the opening ceremony until the closing ceremony, participants learn that they can be present with themselves and one another in a way that is different from an ordinary meeting or a group. Clearly marking the beginning and end of the Circle is very important. The Circle invites participants to drop the ordinary masks and protections they may wear that create distance from their core self and the core self of others. Openings help participants center themselves, slow down, be more reflective, bring themselves into full presence in the space, recognize interconnectedness, release unrelated distractions, and be mindful of the values of the core self. Openings can be quite simple, using breathing techniques or silence or short inspirational readings. Sometimes it is useful to incorporate movement in the opening to release energy before expecting students to sit attentively in Circle. Openings are always chosen to fit the particular nature of the group and the Circle purpose. Once students are familiar with the Circle, they can create and lead openings.”

Next time watch for information on the Centerpiece.



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Brain Development in Young Adolescents

One of the ways that scientists have searched for the causes of mental illness is by studying the development of the brain from birth to adulthood. Powerful new technologies have enabled them to track the growth of the brain and to investigate the connections between brain function, development, and behavior.

The research has turned up some surprises, among them the discovery of striking changes taking place during the teen years. These findings have altered long-held assumptions about the timing of brain maturation. In key ways, the brain doesn't look like that of an adult until the early 20s.

An understanding of how the brain of an adolescent is changing may help explain a puzzling contradiction of adolescence: young people at this age are close to a lifelong peak of physical health, strength, and mental capacity, and yet, for some, this can be a hazardous age. Mortality rates jump between early and late adolescence. Rates of death by injury between ages 15 to 19 are about six times that of the rate between ages 10 and 14. Crime rates are highest among young males and rates of alcohol abuse are high relative to other ages. Even though most adolescents come through this transitional age well, it's important to understand the risk factors for behavior that can have serious consequences. Genes, childhood experience, and the environment in which a young person reaches adolescence all shape behavior. Adding to this complex picture, research is revealing how all these factors act in the context of a brain that is changing, with its own impact on behavior.

The more we learn, the better we may be able to understand the abilities and vulnerabilities of teens, and the significance of this stage for life-long mental health.

The fact that so much change is taking place beneath the surface may be something for parents to keep in mind during the ups and downs of adolescence.

Over the next few weeks, parents will read about the brain including gray matter and changes to the brain for this age group (middle school)

The Teen Brain: Still Under Construction. (2011, November). Retrieved February 14, 2017, from www.nimh.nih.gov



Date	Time	Event
February 20, 2017	All day	No School - President
February 27 , 2017	7:00 - 8:30	PTA Meeting
March 3, 2017	All Day	No School - Teacher Grading Day
March 6 -10	All Week	No School - Spring Break

For more information about Roseville Area Middle School and the Raider's Den, contact Dr. Brookins, Principal at tyrone.brookins@isd623.org or 651.482.5280.

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