Dear Prairie Parents,

We all know that consistent attendance in school creates better students. Prairie has a high average daily attendance rate. However, we still have an exceptionally large amount of students who arrive to school tardy or who are picked up early.

Arriving late or leaving early is problematic in many ways. Prairie Elementary School hours are 8:35 a.m. – 3:05 p.m. When your student arrives 5 minutes late, it takes approximately 2 minutes or more to walk to the office for a tardy slip. It takes then approximately 2 more minutes to transit to the classroom, then 1 minute or more of the teacher’s time when they enter the room. Not counting the time it takes the teacher to give instructions for the day (again), 10 minutes can pass before the student is ready to sit and learn. Did you know that if a student were to be 5 minutes later every day, they would miss the equivalent of 5 school days per year. Students should be in their desk and ready to learn by 8:35 a.m. each day.

When students leave early, many disruptions occur. First the phone-call into the classroom interrupts the lesson. The teacher then must scramble to make sure your child has any papers that need to be distributed and his or her coat and backpack must be found. All of this pulls attention away from the rest of the class and eats up precious minutes set aside for an end of the day review, final important messages or explanation of homework assignments. This scenario can play out more than once if a class has more than one student leave early, taking precious instructional time away from the entire classroom. Kids who leave early miss this valuable information. Often they come to school the next day without the necessary papers or assignments, leaving them feeling out of the loop, and again placing an unnecessary burden on the teacher to catch them up. Please be sure your student arrives on time (by 8:30 a.m.) if at all possible.

Please do not pick your child up prior to our 3:05 p.m. dismissal time. We want our students to have every possible advantage to be successful. We appreciate your assistance.

Happy Friday,

Debbie McLaren

From the Principal’s Office ...

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Happy Friday,

Debbie McLaren

No School
Monday, January 21
Martin Luther King Day

“Tornados of the Future” Basketball Clinic
Boys and Girls - 2nd - 6th Grade
at Yelm High School
Saturday, January 26th
10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Sponsored by the Yelm High School Girl’s and Boy’s basketball teams and it is FREE.

Flyers were distributed on Wednesday. To guarantee a clinic t-shirt, registration forms must be received by Tuesday, January 22nd. There will be a limited supply of shirts at the door on a first-come, first-serve basis. Cost is $10. Come learn how to play basketball the “Tornado Way” and have fun doing it.
Upcoming Events!

Monday, January 21
• No School. Martin Luther King Day!

Tuesday, January 22
• 3:05–4:30 p.m.—Prairie Choir practice.

Wednesday, January 23
• Late Start.

Thursday, January 24
• Popcorn today.

Friday, January 25
• 11:35 a.m.—Early release for teachers to work on second quarter report cards.

Saturday, January 26
• Choir at Japanese New Year Celebration in Olympia. *See article.

Prairie Birthday Policy ...

At Prairie, we recognize all our student birthdays by announcing their name over the intercom during the morning announcements, pinning an “It's My Birthday” ribbon on them and treating them to a birthday pencil, and a token for a hour of free gymnastics. Each teacher also has special rituals to recognize and celebrate students on their special day.

In the past, parents have brought in treats, goodies bags, balloons, flowers, stuffed animals, etc. We are no longer allowing this practice. Below are some reasons we made the change.

• To minimize disruptions to the instructional day.
• To minimize sugary or unhealthy treats and the impact they have on our student’s health and well being.
• To create an atmosphere of equity among our students.
• To reduce possible food allergens in the classrooms.
• Yelm Community School is a latex-free facility due to the number of students and staff members with latex allergies.

Please be assured staff members will continue to recognize birthdays in special ways. We appreciate your cooperation as we work together to create the best environment for our children. Thank you!

Celebrate the Japanese New Year!

The Olympia-Kato Sister City Association invites the public to attend its Japanese New Year Celebration, Oshogatsu. The event takes place Saturday, January 26 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at The Olympia Center in Downtown Olympia. For more information and schedule of events go to, www.celebratejapan.org The suggested donation is $2 per person or $5 for a family. Our own Yelm Prairie Choir will be performing at 12:05 and again at 1:00 p.m.

Bring Your Special Valentines ...

Prairie PTO's Family Valentine Dance

Friday, February 8th
5:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

Admission: $3 per person, or $15 Family Pass (Children 2 and under are FREE)

Pre-sale tickets begin Tuesday, January 22—February 6th until 3 p.m. Please send EXACT change in your student’s Home-to-School folder in an envelope clearly marked. Prizes will be given to those purchasing pre-sale tickets. This saves time getting in the door! Tickets and prizes will be sent home with students on Friday, February 8th. This is so tickets do not get lost. There are No refunds. Students must be accompanied by an adult—No drop offs!

There will be ...

$5 photos by Abe Clary Photography
“Prairie Pride” items for sale
Music by DJ Corey Henderson (Prairie Dad)

Order forms are being sent home with students today. Additional forms are in the office or online at www.ycs.wednet.edu—Prairie—PTO

Tickets will also be sold at the door.

If you have additional questions, please e-mail yelmprairiepto@gmail.com

Students of The Week

Kindergarten:
Kinders on a field trip today.

First Grade:
Raiden Hober, Hope Jeffers, Sophia Paigen, and Aileen Reyes.

Second Grade:
Constance Mostrom, Jordan Nohl, and Kathryn Pacheco.

Third Grade:
Trice Anderson, Wyatt Hollins, and Isaiah Thomas.

Fourth Grade:
Annabell Correia, Alicia Howard, and Adara Woodring.

Fifth Grade:
Alex Larsen and Elizabeth Whitaker.