

# M O L L A L L A

## R I V E R A C A D E M Y

Dear Families,

At a recent PCT meeting, we were discussing our goal of building a covered play space area. We recognized that raising the funds for such a large project may take a few years. Amy Wheeler, a nine year veteran parent reminded the group that raising funds for several of the play space projects often took more than a year.

During that discussion we also realized that many of our families may not be aware of the history of our play space and how students have been the drivers in determining what the space looks like and what equipment or play areas are added. To learn more about the importance of play at MRA and the history of our play spaces, please see Page 5 &6--PCT Updates.

Have a great week!  
Dr. Marrone

Our parking lot continues to be a busy place during drop off and pick up.

Please remember to drive slowly and carefully throughout our campus!

**it's okay to  
slow down**

### UPCOMING EVENTS

12/11-12/15	Bottle Bag Handout
12/15	Holiday Parties
12/18-1/5	NO SCHOOL-- Winter Break

Please Remember---Winter Break  
**Extended For Students**  
**Students return to  
school on January 8th  
2024**



# NO AFTER CARE 12/8/23

On December 8th, we will be holding our staff holiday celebration. To allow all staff to participate, we will not have after care on that date!



Please donate non-perishable food. Students bring food to classrooms

December 4th – 15th.

All food will be donated to the Molalla Service Center food bank.

**HELP US END HUNGER  
IN OUR COMMUNITY**

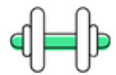


**SEL  
UPDATE**

**GRATITUDE  
11/13-12/15**

*Character  
Care*

**FAMILY**



**Take  
5**

**Take 5 minutes in the morning to share (and have everyone in the family share) 1 thing they are grateful for today.**


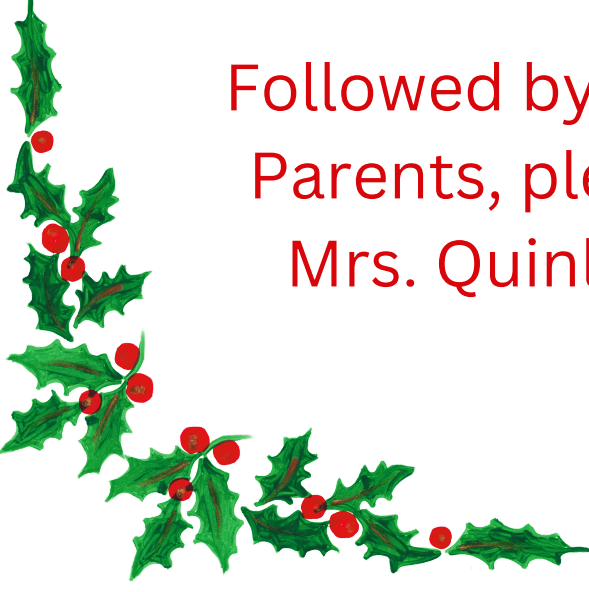
This allows everyone to start their days with a mind and heart filled with gratefulness. As Scarlett Lewis, Founder of the Choose Love Movement, says, *"It's hard to have a grateful thought and a negative thought at the same time!"*

## **What is SEL?**

**Ask your student to tell you about what they are learning in SEL. Have them share specific examples. For instance, have them explain what "unexpected gratitude" looks like.**



**MRA Holiday  
Performance  
12:30pm  
December 15th  
MRA Gym**



Followed by classroom holiday parties  
Parents, please join Dr. Marrone and  
Mrs. Quinlan in the Gym for treats.

# History of the MRA Play Space

Play Space exemplifies MRA's belief in and commitment to authentic Project Based Learning. The idea was formulated in 2014 after the school spent its initial years trying to raise money for a playground with limited vision. In reality, the playground, or play space, at MRA belongs to the students. Therefore, in a PBL school the students should be in charge of the project.

## Play, Learn, and Grow - Renovating the MRA Play Space

Essential Question:

- How can we improve our school playground environment?

Driving Question:

- How can we create a playground at MRA that fits our mission and our vision?

During the 2014-15 School year each level of student was assigned jobs to get the Play Space design started.

Trillium and Huckleberries were the Dreamers: How can we, as dreamers, imagine a playground that meets the needs of all students K-8? They spent the first two months of the year brainstorming and drawing ideas and visions.

Clarkia then took over the project as the Realists: How can Clarkia students use the ideas given to us by the Trillium and Huckleberry to design and map the layout of our playground? They narrowed down the possibilities and came up with several viable designs

Alders were given the Clarkia designs and became the Architects: How do we take our Play Space ideas and draw them to scale to fit our existing school grounds? They created models of all of the ideas for the Cedars to then share with the MRA Board.

Cedars were the Supervisors: How can we take the models given to us by the Alders to build a playground at MRA that fits our mission and our vision? The Cedars reported on the progress of the Play Space, presented ideas to the district board, learned about grant money, and discovered issues of permitting and blue prints.

Over the summer of 2015 the school used a portion of the money the students raised with our annual jogathon to build the top two projects, as voted by the kids: The pirate ship, a labyrinth, and the renovation of the soccer field with new nets.



Original dream for MRA Play Space

The PCT (formerly Boosters) played and continues to play an integral role in facilitating community focused fundraisers to support the ongoing improvements and additions to our play space.

As we begin to bring back robust project based learning, we once again asked our students what they envision for the play area. A covered play area has been on the list since 2014 and overwhelming came up again this year! Our students love being outside---they don't love being super wet and cold!

This year we had dedicated our Jog-a-Thon funds toward building a covered play area. Recognizing the magnitude of a project this size, we know that realistically it may take several years to make this dream a reality. We continue to apply for grant funding and corporate donations to offset some of the cost as well.

To honor the hard work of our students and the wonderful support of our parents and community, we do plan to move forward with other student driven request. Many of our students love to play wall ball and several years ago a small “wall” was built for that purpose. However, as interest has grown, we know that we need a bigger option. Therefore, we will hope to use a portion of our Jog-a-Thon funds and Bottle Drop funds to build a 12' foot wall to be installed on the Lily Pad. This will allow many more students to play in a safer environment.

Students have also dreamed about installing a permanent GaGa pit. We are reaching out to local Scout troops to determine if a potential Eagle Scout might take this on as a project. We are also soliciting donations for lumber and supplies.

We are excited to continue to expand our student designed play space; a space that supports and promotes our core value of continuously building community.



## **BOTTLE DROP FUNDRAISER**



**During the week of December 11th, MRA Leadership students will be handing out Bottle Drop bags during pick-up.**

**Please use these bags over the winter break to collect your returnable bottles and cans! You may drop off full bags the week of January 8th!**

**Funds will support MRA Play Space improvements.**

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