

February 2023

MONONGALIA COUNTY SCHOOLS DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION NEWSLETTER

“ADVOCATE FOR RIGHTS”



This month we celebrate advocacy and how it shaped the world we live in today

While there isn't an exact moment in history where one can pinpoint when advocacy began. A lot of people say advocacy can be traced back to the 18th century in England. Jon Wilkes gets a lot of credit for being critical of the Treat of Paris and the pro-abolition movement in England, which effectively ended Slavery in England.

Since that time advocacy has played an important role in our country. One can argue that we are where we are now in our country through the advocacy of others. Some of the important people and their advocacy throughout history are:

- Martin Luther King Jr. played a crucial role in the advocacy for civil rights.
- Cesar Chavez advocated for farm workers of all backgrounds and the poor working conditions they lived in and chemicals they were exposed to.

- Fred Korematsu advocated for his rights as an American after the government mandated anyone of Japanese descent be rounded into internment camps, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.
- Susan B. Anthony is best-known for her role in the women's suffrage movement during her time.
- Malala Yousafzai who defied the Taliban in Pakistan and demanded that girls be allowed to receive an education

These are just a few influential individuals throughout history and the advocacy that they have done. While we can say that we have come a long way as a nation/world one can also argue that as we continue to grow as a nation/world there is still advocacy that needs to be done.

It is important that we continue to teach our students about important events throughout history and how advocacy played a part in those events and will continue to play a role in how our country/world is shaped.

February Observations

- Black History Month
- Random acts of Kindness Week (3rd week)

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LOOK BACK AT LAST MONTH

GUARDIAN CORNER

The Guardian corner is optional reading for parents that are looking for additional resources or ideas at home. Monongalia county schools in only providing optional resources and respects everyone’s differences

Helping your child understand what advocacy is and how to do it appropriately is an important skill for children to know and understand.

Why is self-advocacy so important? It is important to be able to express what you need, so that you can receive it. As people it is hard to read anyone’s mind, so having the skill of self-advocacy is important so they can take it into adulthood.

Self-advocacy is the skill of expressing your mental, physical, or emotional needs, in order to actually get them met. Some people view it as the skill for asking for help.

There are three important parts of being able to advocate for yourself:

- 1. Understanding what your needs are
- 2. Recognizing what your needs are and how they can be met.
- 3. Communicating what you need (to a teacher, parent, or anyone else), taking steps to assert yourself if you’re not taken seriously.

Modeling Self Advocacy

Kids are perceptive and they internalize what we do. Kids can learn from parents by modeling the behavior. As you are modeling and advocating for things, explain to them what you are doing and why you are doing it.

In addition to just modeling let them in on the process. It is good to talk with them about how to go about advocating for themselves. Reassure them that it is okay to express what is wrong and where they are having trouble.

Teaching Self-Advocacy for Social Settings

Self-Advocacy can be taught in social settings too. Peer pressure is something that all kids deal with in today’s world. The pressure to fit in is something a majority of students deal with every day. No matter the age of your child, teaching them how to advocate for themselves in social situations now will give them the confidence to deal with things in adulthood.

They will have more confidence to reject mistreatment in toxic workplace and controlling relationships.

Here are way that you can help your kids self-advocate around peers:

- Role playing: When your child is dealing with a difficult situation you can help them by role playing the situation with them and going over different scenarios with them.
- Practice I messages: Teaching your kid I messages allows them to express how they feel in non-blaming ways. Having them say, “I feel sad when you ignore me” allows them to get their point across without blaming others.

Learning Self-Advocacy Takes Time

No matter if your child is in elementary or high school self-advocacy takes time to become comfortable with. It is something that as your child gets older they will hopefully become more comfortable with it.

Your child does not need to become famous like some of the advocates throughout history, but having the skill and being comfortable advocating for their rights is something that will help them becoming successful in their lives.

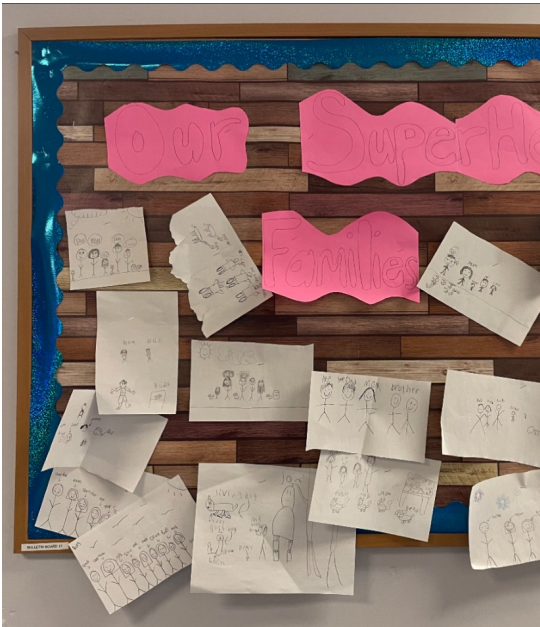
Preview to next month

March is
“You can be whatever you want to be”

During the month we will discuss that no matter your gender, race, ethnicity, age or abilities that you can be whatever you want to be. The goal will be to expose our students to different occupations and people that they can relate to in those fields.

Last Month at Suncrest Elementary

At Suncrest, we will always celebrate that families come in different shapes and sizes. We find ways to celebrate the family we have & what makes our family unique. No family is the same & we have these conversations. We invite families in to talk about their cultures. Second grade has families coming in to read aloud each week. This gives the families opportunities to share more & give our students new experiences.



Fourth Grade talked about their families being "superheroes" & drew a picture of what their family is made up of as superheroes. Students got to present & see how each family is different & what makes their family "super" or unique. No family is alike & we learn to respect everyone's differences.

Coming up this February

This month we are celebrating advocating for rights. We see when others are left out & include everyone. Students are learning to be assertive, but respectful when they have to handle a situation. We are also celebrating Black History Month.

When you walk into the front doors here at Suncrest, you will see a display of Katherine Johnson. She is a famous mathematician from West Virginia who worked for NASA & figured out the paths for a spacecraft to orbit Earth and land on the moon! It is important for our students to honor her.

Second grade is researching individuals who we celebrate for Black History month. Each student has one person to research and find information on what that person is known for. You can find these in the second grade hallway & read about each individual. We have researched Martin Luther King Jr., Billie Holiday, Maya Angelou, Louis Armstrong, Sarah Breedlove Walker, and so many more!

