March Calendar

7  Litterless Lunch and Walk to School Wednesday
9  Pizza Parlor Day
9  Third Grade Movie Night at 6:30 p.m.
12 Board of Education Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
13 PTO Meeting at 9:00 a.m.
16 Marking Period Ends
23 Report Cards Distributed
26 Board of Education Meeting at 7:30 p.m.
30 Theme Day

2012-2013 SCHOOL BUDGET DISCUSSIONS:

Milton Avenue: Tuesday, March 13, at 9:00 a.m.
Southern Boulevard: Tuesday, March 13, at 9:45 a.m.
Chatham High School: Wednesday, March 14, at 7:45 p.m.
Lafayette Avenue: Thursday, March 15, at 9:15 a.m.
Washington Avenue: Wednesday, April 11, at 9:00 a.m.
Chatham Middle School: Thursday, April 12, at 9:00 a.m.

PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE
Marion McCarthy
mmccarthy@chatham-nj.org

Today, March 2, marks the birthday of Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known to generations of young readers as Dr. Seuss. Milton celebrated the day with our annual Read Across America event. The day began with an assembly; the students sang a song about Dr. Seuss, and Mrs. Mills showed a slide show, Read Anything Good Lately? This slide show will be posted on Mrs. Mills’ web page so that you can enjoy it at home with your children. Additionally, there was a teacher swap throughout the day; teachers read a book to a class other than their own. Have your children tell you about the Seuss activities in the Media Center. The
day ended with staff and students reading a favorite book in their socks. The day brought staff
and students together to celebrate reading in exciting and creative ways.

Read Across America is about encouraging literacy and inspiring children to develop a
genuine love of reading, and parents and other adults can continue the commitment of this
observance by reading to – and with – children every day. The research is clear. Children who
are read to and who read for pleasure are more likely to become lifelong readers and meet with
success in school. Enjoy a good book with your family this weekend!

PTO PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
Kendra Latorre latorrek@yahoo.com

Our next PTO meeting is Tuesday, March 13, at 9:00 a.m. in the Media Center.
Interim Superintendent Dennis Fyffe and Assistant Superintendent Michael LaSusa will be our
guest speakers and will talk to us about the 2012-2013 proposed school budget. The annual
budget vote is scheduled for Tuesday, April 17.

Thank you to Mrs. Donnelly for arranging a Healthy Eating workshop for interested
parents this week.

Thank you also to Catriona Smith and Christine Baird for organizing our Mixed Bag
fundraiser.

Spring is approaching quickly around Milton, and there are many planned events and
happenings. Watch for upcoming information regarding Theme Day, Spring After-School
Enrichment, Ladies’ Night Out, and more in future editions of the Primary Preview.

Have a great weekend!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The school district budget vote is April 17, and Education Counts needs volunteers to help
spread the word about the school budget and vote. Education Counts is a group of community
members who have joined together to promote quality education in Chatham by supporting
public school funding. Milton Avenue School is in need of representation. If you (and a friend)
are interested in being the Milton liaison for Education Counts, please contact Kendra Latorre.
This is a great way to volunteer a small amount of your time for a great cause.

2012 – 2013 MAS PTO BOARD NOMINATIONS
Rosalinda Rubio-Williams rosalinda.rubiowilliams@gmail.com

It's time to consider volunteering for the 2012-2013 Milton Avenue School PTO Board.
In our efforts to protect the environment, nomination forms are now on-line. Please click on the
following link to take you to Community Pass https://register.communitypass.net/chathams,
select Chatham PTO – Milton Avenue School, and complete your form.

In addition, you should have received an electronic version of the PTO Board
descriptions via email.

I hope that you will consider becoming a member of the board. It is a great way to get
involved with your child's school, learn more about the school district in general, and to get to
know other parents and staff members.
FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE
Mary B. Donnelly, Health Educator
973-457-2510  mdonnelly@chatham-nj.org

Many thanks to all who attended the "What Are We Going To Eat" workshop at MAS on Thursday, March 1. Wendy Meyer Sterling gave an informative presentation and responded to many questions from the audience. I am so grateful to the Milton Avenue PTO and the Washington Avenue PTO for funding this event. It would not have happened without their generosity. Please check the MAS website for access to the handouts from the workshop.

PLANT SALE
Betty Castello  lou5@optonline.net

Milton’s annual plant sale will begin March 19 and run through March 30. This year we are using a different farm, and we are very excited about their beautiful plants and flowers. All orders will be taken online this year via Community Pass. Please watch for our upcoming email with more information! Anyone interested in volunteering to help on plant delivery day, May 1, please email Betty Castello.

THIRD GRADE SPIRIT COMMITTEE
Leslie Quinn  lesliebquinn@gmail.com
Sharon Neuner  neuner@optonline.net
Valerie Twentyman  valeriesreid@gmail.com
Beth Tunny  bac27jt@optonline.net

Please join us for Milton Avenue’s Third Grade Movie Night!
Friday, March 9, 6:30 - 8:15 p.m.

The movie will begin promptly at 6:40 p.m. in Milton Avenue’s own gym. We will be serving freshly-popped, movie-theater popcorn! Children should come with water bottles (we will have refills) and something to sit on – a mat or blanket.

The third graders voted and selected “Treasure Buddies” – a hilarious talking animal movie, rated G. Please check backpacks and send in the form that was sent home to confirm your child’s attendance at Movie Night—as well as your own if you can volunteer. Please contact the Third Grade Spirit Committee with any questions.

MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE OBSERVER
Lisa Kaplan Iuzzolino  lisaann818@gmail.com

The latest issue of MACC’s Helping Hand newsletter is attached to this week’s Primary Preview. This issue is particularly relevant to our elementary school kids, as it provides tips and information on: Helping Your Child Deal with Bullies, Physical Fitness for Kids, the Power of Pets, Composting Tips, and Helping Your Child Find Success in School.
PIZZA PARLOR DAY
Lauren Tapper   latjst@optonline.net
Kiristie Fernandez  kiristie@verizon.net
Valerie Twentyman  valeriesreid@gmail.com

Milton’s next pizza parlor day is Friday, March 9. Order forms will only be sent home with children who did not order pizza last month or who did not order pizza for the whole year. Please return the order form by Thursday, March 8. If you previously ordered pizza for the year, then we have your child(ren) in our count and there is no need to complete another form.

Please also note that payment for pizza must be through a payforit account or by check. Cash is no longer a payment option.

Volunteers are still needed to help serve lunch on March 9. Please come to the gym at 11:40 a.m. that day if you can help out.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
Catriona Smith  catrionajsmith@gmail.com
Christine Baird  cvbaird@gmail.com

Mixed Bags Fundraiser: Help us raise funds for Milton by ordering one, or some, of the beautiful reusable, durable bags and other items on sale during the month of March. Look for the Mixed Bag Designs catalog sent home this week in your eldest child’s back pack, and consider ordering an insulated lunch bag, shopping bag, grocery bag, wine bag or other great new spring items! Samples of some items are on display in the school office.

Safe Routes to School Competition: Encourage your child to enter our Safe Routes to School competition for a chance to win a goody bag of great stuff. See information and competition form attached (also sent home in each child’s backpack).

Walk to School / Litterless Lunch: Our next one will be Wednesday, March 7. Encourage your kids to walk to school, and please pack a litter-free lunch for them. Again this month, we will raffle 2 stainless steel bottles and reflective slap bracelets.

Rain Garden Workshop – Saturday, March 10: Learn more about the benefits of storing the water that flows from your roof and driveways in a water-quality-improving rain garden. In partnership with the Chatham Township Environmental Commission and the Chatham Borough Green Initiatives Committee, Hazel England of GSWA will conduct a rain garden workshop at the Great Swamp Watershed Association 568 Tempe Wicke Road, Morristown. It is free for GSWA members and $10 for non-members. To register, visit www.GreatSwamp.org or call 973-358-3500 x22.

EVENTS AROUND THE TOWN

The Chatham Community Band will be performing a Children's Concert on Sunday, March 18, at 4:00 p.m. with "Parachute Time" beginning at 3:45 p.m. at the Chatham Middle School. Attached is a poster that details the various events taking place during the concert.

www.chatham-nj.org/mas
Chatham High School Presents: The Drowsy Chaperone, March 1-3.
Come see CHS’ performance of the hilarious 2006 Tony Award-winning musical The Drowsy Chaperone. The show begins when a Broadway musical fan plays his 1928 album, “The Drowsy Chaperone,” and suddenly its wacky characters magically appear in his apartment. Its side-splitting humor and fizzy score will entertain all ages.
Performances are March 2 and 3 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets sold at the door are $10 for students and seniors, and $12 for adults.

Chatham Summer Music Program: Please note that there is a terrific summer music program for orchestra and band instruments for present third graders. The program meets for the first three weeks of the summer at the Lafayette band room and is staffed by the Chatham instrumental music teachers. Elementary students attend daily for one hour every morning.
This is a wonderful way to get a head start on next year’s Lafayette band and orchestra program. Contact Dr. Bassin at jbassin@chatham-nj.org for more information.

A-Day Camp's 2012 Summer Sign-Up Has Started: Come and join us as we embark on a new season with games, sports, crafts, and most of all FUN. We have 8-10 daily activities, crafts, inflatables, rock walls, GAMES 2U day with laser tag, hamster balls and a video truck, free t-shirts, parents’ day, balloon launches and the most water fun around. We have a nurse on staff and a top notch set of counselors.
Mr. Albanese is the Physical Education teacher at Washington Avenue School. Find out more at www.adaycamp.com or contact Mr. A. directly at 973-769-0566.

Library of the Chathams:

Great Books Gang – Great Kids come to the Library to listen to Great Books — every Monday in March from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. Our first book will be: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis. Please call to register: 973-635-0603.

Read Aloud To Therapy Dogs: Read aloud to a gentle dog from St. Hubert's. Wednesday, March 21, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. No registration required.

Legopalooza!: Build LEGO creations from our collection of thousands of Legos. Sunday, March 25, 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. No registration required.

Don't miss The Friends of the Library Book Sale: Saturday, March 10, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Bag Sales: Sunday, March 11, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and Monday, March 12, and Friday, March 13, from 9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Attachments:

Work-Family Summer Camp
Safe Routes to School
Subscription Busing
Chatham Community Band
Helping Hand

www.chatham-nj.org/mas
Summer Camp 2012
District of the Chathams

Camp Location:
Lafayette Avenue School
221 Lafayette Avenue
Chatham, New Jersey

- Daily & Weekly Registration Options
- Wks 1-7: 7am-6pm, 9am-4pm, & 7am-1pm Sessions
- Wk 8 & 9: Travel Camp 8:30am-5:30pm
- Field Trips & Optional Swimming
  (Not Applicable 7am-1pm)
- Early Bird Discount 10% when you register by April 1st!
- 10% Sibling Discount Available

Field Trips
Two field trips are taken each week for fun and exciting places. Some of our trips this year include:
Point Pleasant Beach & Aquarium, Rutgers Gardens,
The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia Zoo, and of course
Dorney Park, and many more! Our staff and camper
ratios may be as low as 1:15 on water trips, 1:20 on
all other trips. Campers are grouped by age or
height for some rides and have at least 2 staff per
group. Tuition includes all trips, admission fees, theme
activities, projects, in-camp specials and swimming
determined by what activities are available while attending.
Tuition does not include field trips or swimming for half
day campers (7am-1pm).

Daily Activities
Each week has a theme and every day is filled with a variety
of related activities. There are 2 field trips per week, AND each
week includes 3 days of optional swimming! Theme-based
activities include nature, arts &
crafts, food projects, coopera-
tive games, team sports, drama
and theatre, music and lots of
FUN!

Swimming
Campers have an option of
recreational swim on non-field
trip days. Certified lifeguards
and The Work-Family Connection staff members will be
present. Recreational swim is included in our tuition. Tuition
does not include field trips or swimming for half day campers
(7am-1pm).

Our Staff
Many of the staff at The Work-Family Connection are either
certified teachers, or college graduates with degrees in
education or a related field. Some individuals are in the process
of completing their degree or certification in education. We
are proud to say that we have employees with over 15 years of
service with The Work-Family Connection.

All employees must undergo fingerprinting
and criminal background checks,
physical exams, TB testing,
and reference checks.

Adult staff hold a current
certification in CPR and
First Aid.

Testimonials
"As a first timer in this camp I wouldn't change anything!"
Dan L.
"I thought the program (camp) was great! They
really made my son, entering Kindergarten, feel
very welcomed!"
Mary S.
"Professional staff enjoyed and got to know my
children. Hours worked well with my schedule.
Variety of activities during the day for the kids."
Connie V.
(see reverse)

www.workfamily.org

www.chatham-nj.org/mas
Help us make walking and biking to Milton safe for our children

As part of our Safe Routes to School grant application we are compiling a list of obstacles that prevent us from allowing our Milton students to walk / bike to school or that make their walking / biking commute dangerous.

Obstacles to safety include dangerous intersections, deep potholes, untended footpaths, damaged sidewalks, streets with speeding cars, overgrown hedges that block the view of oncoming traffic, etc.

In addition, we must identify and map all unpaved footpaths to the school that exist (we know about the one parallel to Weston Ave. and the path that links Garden Ave. neighborhood with Weston Ave.)

On the form below, please help your child to describe obstacles and to provide their exact location (add photos or GPS tracking information if possible). Also tell us about any unpaved paths, laneways or shortcuts to Milton that you know about.

Return the form in your child's pass back folder. All entries will be entered into a drawing for a pedometer and a goody bag with filled with other great stuff! Closing Date Friday, March 30th

Sincerely,
Christine Baird and Catriona Smith (Environmental Committee)

OBSTACLES

Name ___________________________ Class ___________________________

Obstacle 1 (type) ___________________________

Location __________________________________________

Obstacle 2 (type) ___________________________

Location __________________________________________

PATHS & SHORTCUTS TO MILFORD

Unpaved Path Location __________________________________________

Short Cut Location __________________________________________

*Teacher: Please put this form in the PTO mailbox

www.chatham-nj.org/mas
March 2, 2012

To: Parents/Students at Chatham High School, Viddle School, Lafayette, Southern, & Washington Schools

From: Jamie Thiel, Transportation Coordinator

RE: Transportation 2012-2013 School Year

The Board of Education offers parent-paid subscription transportation for pupils who do not qualify for mandated transportation, i.e., grades K-8 pupils who live two miles or less from school and high school pupils who live two and one half miles or less from school. Availability of seats is based on number of seats open on any random route that is not full.

We are in the process of developing our routes for next school year and need to know if you are interested in parent-paid transportation beginning in September. The fee per pupil for the 12-13 school year for transportation to and from school is $954 per child for round trip transportation. Appropriate bus stops will be determined by the Board of Education in conjunction with the bus company. We do everything we can to accommodate all pupils who desire subscription bussing. However, with enrollment increases each year, many routes are at or near capacity. As a result, the number of applications we receive often exceeds the number of seats available. If this is the case, we are forced to deny applications for pupils who live closest to their respective school.

Please note that subscription transportation has been offered only to those schools that have mandated transportation (High School, Middle School, Southern Boulevard, Lafayette School and Washington School (Green Village Area only).

If you are interested in having transportation provided on a fee basis, please complete the form below and return it to me at 68 Meyerville Rd., Chatham NJ 07928, by Monday, April 16, 2012.

I am interested in having transportation provided on a fee basis for the following pupils:

<table>
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<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>2012/2013 Grades</th>
<th>2012/2013 School</th>
<th>Approximate distance from home to school</th>
<th>All, Pat or Both Ways</th>
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Parent(s): ____________________________ Signature ____________________________ Telephone #:__________________________

Address: ____________________________ Borough or Township? ____________________________

Nearest intersection (or bus stop this past year): ____________________________

If your child was on a bus route this past school year, please indicate route #: ____________________________

Please return tear-off only - retain upper portion for reference. Thank you!

www.chatham-nj.org/mas
On Sunday, March 18, 2012, the Chatham Community Band, under the direction of Brian Conti, invites you to join us for a very special CHILDREN’S CONCERT.

Featuring a collection of songs to make you sing, dance, laugh, and play! A fun-filled time for children of all ages!

WHEN: March 18, 2012
Join Chatham Gymboree for Parachute Time at 3:45 PM. Concert begins at 4:00 pm.
WHERE?
Chatham Middle School Gymnasium
480 Main Street, Chatham, NJ 07928

Parents will enjoy browsing jewelry with Laura Bolson of Silpada Designs Jewelry.

Special guest performers Kathy Byers and Lydia Adams Davis will join the concert and be playing selections from their animal-themed new album, One Earth So Green and Round!
www.oneearthsogreenandround.com

Each child will receive a musical instrument.

Join us at our Bake Sale during the concert! All proceeds will be used to support this concert and future band events.

For more information on the band, please visit us at www.chathamcommunityband.org
Helping Your Child Deal with Bullies

Most children are bullied at some point in their lives. Most of us can remember one or two children at school who used to make fun of other children for their own amusement. When your child is being bullied, the most important thing you can do is be supportive.

**Listen, understand**
If your child comes home complaining about being bullied, listen and try to understand what is happening and why. Try not to blame your child for being too sensitive. Don’t immediately try to find out what he or she did to cause the bullying, even if you feel that may be part of the problem. Don’t minimize the problem by telling your child not to worry; that will only frustrate them even more. In short, accept what you are told, and empathize and console as needed.

**Ask for suggestions**
Once you have listened carefully to your child, you can begin to help. The first step is to ask what he or she thinks they should do. Often children have good ideas about what may help the situation. Unless your child suggests never going back to school, you should be able to find some merit in the suggestion. Exploring their ideas and alternatives might lead to a solution. Solutions such as ignoring the bully, coming back with a witty remark or telling an adult are all acceptable. Don’t, however, encourage your child to resort to physical violence.

**Promote confidence and self-esteem**
Helping your child gain self-esteem is the best way to counteract teasing. If your child feels confident, then the few words of an insecure child should not be enough to hurt. Remind your child how proud you are of them. Help your child take pride in accomplishments, and help find something that makes him or her feel special. Remind your child of how insecure the bully probably is and try to instill compassion and pity, rather than hatred and retribution.

**Be an advocate for your child**
If you feel that your child is being physically hurt or is in danger, you must be prepared to be an advocate for your child. This may mean going to school and speaking with the teacher or principal or speaking to the bully’s parents. Explain to your child that you will not tolerate this kind of treatment and feel you have to speak up for him or her. Try not to make your child feel as though he or she cannot handle the problem, rather that it is at a level where you feel you must intervene. If your child sees you as their advocate rather than rescuer, your involvement will be received much more easily.
Physical Activity and Fitness for Children

Is physical activity important for my child?

Increased physical activity is associated with an increased life expectancy and decreased risk of cardiovascular disease. Physical activity produces overall physical, psychological and social benefits.

How do I promote physical activity?

Increase physical activity by reducing sedentary time (watching television, playing computer video games, talking on the phone). Physical activity should be fun for children and adolescents. Parents should try to be role models for active lifestyles and provide children with opportunities for physical activity.

• Try family adventures like hiking, fishing or kayaking. Visit the zoo or check out outdoor tourist attractions in your area.
• Plan an active family vacation. Hike in the mountains, swim at the beach, or even take a walking tour of a city in your state.
• Give your children gifts (when appropriate) that encourage activity, like a swimsuit or pair of athletic shoes. Select toys that motivate kids to move, like a soccer ball or tennis racket.
• Benefit others while benefiting yourself. Volunteer as a family and help clean up a favorite park or rake a senior’s yard.

What if my child is overweight?

All children, even the less-coordinated ones, need to be physically active. Activity may be particularly helpful for the physical and psychological wellbeing of children with a weight problem. According to the American Heart Association, all children age two and older should participate in at least 30 minutes of enjoyable, moderate intensity activities every day. Children should also perform at least 30 minutes of vigorous physical activities at least 3–4 days each week to achieve and maintain a good level of heart and lung fitness. If your child or children don’t have a full 30 minute activity break each day, try to provide at least two 15 minute periods or three 10 minute periods in which they can engage in vigorous activities appropriate to their age, gender and stage of physical and emotional development.

The Power of Pets to Help

Having any kind of pet—dog, cat, fish, bird, turtle—can make us feel good. They give us something to care for, make us feel needed and help us through tough times. And while pets cannot replace medication, they can certainly have a positive impact on your health.

A 1980 study of people who had recent heart attacks found that those who owned pets were more likely to recover than those who didn’t. Since then, researchers have found that pets may help prevent depression in older adults, lower cholesterol, reduce stress, boost self-esteem and help people feel less isolated. University of Buffalo researchers have added to the list of the positive effects a pet can have on health, including: Lowers blood pressure; Brings you closer to your spouse; Helps you interact with others.

Does this mean you should go get a pet?

Only if you’re an animal lover. Most of the studies show that the health benefits only apply to those who love their pets. Owning a pet like a cat or a dog is work and takes a huge commitment. But if you’re ready to take the leap and become a pet owner, it’s likely that your pet will thank you with unconditional love, companionship—and better health.
Start Your Family’s Own Composting Pile

Over the past few years more homes, businesses, and communities are recycling. To reduce household waste, your family can compost lawn clippings and biodegradable waste. Decomposed materials are nature’s fertilizer. Compost organic material with a compost pile or a worm bin. Use composted material in your flowerbeds, trees, and lawn. It is relatively easy even if you’ve never done it before. Compostable materials include: plant-based kitchen scraps, eggshells, coffee grounds, animal manure, grass clippings, leaves, and plant trimmings. You can buy a compost or worm bin at garden stores or nurseries. By composting, you reduce half the volume of the material you send to a landfill.

TO BUILD YOUR OWN COMPOSTING PILE

- Locate a place in your yard, in the corner and away from the house and the neighbor’s
- Cut off the top and bottom of a garbage can and drill holes for ventilation along the sides
- Place garbage can in desired location and deposit all compostable materials (smaller material decomposes faster)
- Prevent odors - turn the material every few days to provide air, add water if center becomes dry

TO BUILD YOUR OWN WORM BIN

- Build/buy a container with tight-fitting lid and good air circulation
- Shred newspaper/cardboard, immerse in water
- Squeeze out water, pull apart so material is loose
- Line bottom of bin with bedding
- Mix with a couple handfuls of soil
- Add redworms
- Cut food waste into small pieces, bury in bedding

TO COLLECT YOUR COMPOST

- Place fresh bedding and bury food waste on one side for a month—harvest the other side when worms have migrated over
- Remove almost half of the worm bin and add the compost to your garden soil
- Refill bin with fresh bedding and food
- Dump contents of worm bin onto a plastic sheet in bright light or sun—brush away usable compost after worms have crawled away from the light
- For more information on composting and worm composting visit www.earth911.com

Quick Quiz for Parents: Teen Substance Abuse

1. What is the most commonly used drug in the U.S.?
   a. heroin
   b. cocaine
   c. alcohol
   d. marijuana

2. Name three drugs most commonly used by youths.

3. What drug is most associated with teenage deaths?

4. Which of the following contains the most alcohol?
   a. 12-ounce can of beer
   b. cocktail with 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits
   c. 12-ounce wine cooler
   d. all contain equal amounts of alcohol

5. Crack is a particularly dangerous drug because:
   a. it is cheap
   b. it is readily available
   c. it is highly addictive
   d. all of the above

6. Fumes from this can be inhaled to produce a high:
   a. spray paint
   b. model glue
   c. nail polish remover
   d. whipped cream canisters
   e. all of the above

7. True/False: People who have not used alcohol and other drugs before age 20 are less likely to develop a drinking problem or use illicit drugs.

Answers:
1. c. Alcohol—legal for adults and widely accepted in our culture.
2. Alcohol, tobacco, marijuana—the first drugs that youths encounter.
3. Alcohol is the drug most commonly associated with teen deaths.
4. d. All four contain approximately 1.5 ounces of alcohol.
5. d. Small quantities of crack can be bought for as little as $5, and it is thought to be one of the most addictive drugs.
6. e. Virtually anything that emits fumes or comes in aerosol form can be inhaled to obtain a high.
7. True. Early use of alcohol and other drugs—age 15 or under—is strongly associated with drug-related problems such as addiction.
Tips for Parents to Encourage Student Success All Year Long

These tips can help you encourage and support your child’s academic success.

1. **Create a safe space to communicate.** Let your child know you are available and willing to discuss any concerns and negative feelings right from the start of the school year. Continue to offer communication opportunities all year.

2. **Create an environment at home that models a love of learning.** It is important to model the behaviors we seek in our children. This creates trust and respect between parent and child, and sets the stage for developing effective and positive habits. Students who have parents who read are more likely to read. Parents who enjoy friendly debates create an environment more likely to foster a love of discussion and learning.

3. **Provide your child with all the tools he or she needs to stay organized throughout the year.** Before a semester gets too hectic, be sure to provide your child with all the organizational tools he or she might need. A day calendar or a chalkboard (hung in a convenient place in your home) on which your child can write all upcoming assignments, quizzes and school activities can help provide an organizational support system that serves to help him/her address and meet school responsibilities throughout the year.

4. **Provide academic support.** Students who have parents involved in their education are more likely to do well in school. Ask your child if there are ways you can help, and try to be as available and supportive to his or her needs as possible. If your schedule is too busy, find out if there are tutoring or after-school assistance programs available in your neighborhood that can provide one-on-one academic support.