

MONONGALIA COUNTY SCHOOLS DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION NEWSLETTER

December 2022

“CELEBRATIONS ALL OVER THE WORLD”



December is Celebrations all over the world

Monongalia County Schools is committed to providing a mutually respectful educational environment that is welcoming to all individuals from diverse backgrounds that promotes individual development, intellectual growth, and responsible citizenship

When people hear the word December it is often associated with the thought of Christmas. Christmas is a major holiday celebrated around the world, but people celebrate it very differently throughout the world with their own traditions.

Christmas isn't the only holiday celebrated. People celebrate Hanukkah, Kwanza, Simbang Gabi, Winter Solstice, etc. during the month of December.

A celebration isn't just a holiday. A celebration might include, a personal moment of pride or happiness, family gathering, party with friends, festival or large gathering, national holiday or feast, etc...

Studies show that cultural appreciation and awareness contribute to building a positive self-image. Developing a strong foundation of belonging and acceptance through cultural celebration and education helps children to create a diverse social network while transitioning into adulthood.

As a school system with many families from different backgrounds it is important for us to help our students learn that there are other traditions and celebrations than they are used to.

Understanding that people/families have different celebrations help our students learn to respect differences amongst each other. We may not all celebrate holidays the same way or have the same traditions, but we can all learn about others' traditions and respect them.

In Monongalia county schools we respect the traditions and celebrations that our students and families celebrate throughout the year.

December Observations

- National Human Rights Month
- Human Rights Day- Dec. 10th

For questions or more information please contact:

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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.

These are tips that you can do at home to help teach your school-age child about different holidays.

- Learn about the holidays yourself! It can be intimidating to explain a new concept to your child when you don’t feel confident in the explanation. Take some time and do some research on different holidays. Ask yourself these questions as you are done some background work:
 - Why is this holiday celebrated?
 - What is the historical origin of the holiday?
 - What are the religious values, commercial or economic interests?
- Don’t just focus on the holidays, but think broader and talk about family traditions. Some families may not celebrate a holiday specifically, but have a family tradition they could share.
- Explore different cultures year-round. Holidays are one part of exploring other cultures, but incorporate year-round opportunities to learn about and explore other cultures. Think about how your child's cultural awareness and sensitivity is increased by learning this new information.

West Virginia University has a lot of different opportunities throughout the year that help bring awareness and exposure to different cultures and traditions
- Read children’s books about different holidays. Check out your local library for activities and books available

- Try food from different cultures that is used to celebrate during the holidays. Not sure where to start? Check out a multicultural cookbook or look for recipes on the internet. Talk about why specific foods are important and part of a holiday tradition.
- Visit cultural centers or museums and explore different holiday celebrations as it relates to that specific culture.
- Visit with people that celebrate different holidays.

Exploring different holiday traditions does not take away from a child’s own celebration, but instead helps them make the connection of similarities between what they practice and what others practice. It helps them understand and appreciate other cultures and points of view and can enhance their appreciation for their own traditions.

Preview to next Month
January is “Families come in different shapes and sizes”

This month will focus on how families can be made up of different people and sizes and showing respect for one another because of those differences.

January Observations

- No Name-Calling Week
- Korean American Day-January 13th
- National Religious Freedom Day-January 16th

Please note that these are not all observations throughout the month. If any were missed that relates to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion it was not intentional

Look back at last month at Suncrest Middle

November 2, 2022 was the celebration of The Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos). This holiday celebrating life and death originated in Mexico but is celebrated all over Latin America. It is a day to remember family members and ancestors who are no longer with us and “invite” their memory back into our homes for the day. It just so happens this holiday coincides with the [Monarch butterfly migration](#) from Mexico to North America. In their celebration of Day of the Dead, students in Proffe Bush’s Spanish classes made monarch butterflies out of paper and put them up in the hallways.



World Kindness Week Nov. 7-13

To celebrate World Kindness Week, Suncrest Middle began each day with skits or encouraging words over the morning announcements to remind students kindness has benefits for all of us and creates a more positive way of living. In homerooms, students were instructed to single out a staff member or a fellow student from one of their classes, whom they did not talk to regularly, with a positive message on a Kindness Gram. Kindness Grams were delivered at the end of the week. Some students chose to thank a fellow student who helped them with an assignment. Some students thanked a fellow student for being fun to be around. Some students just recognized a fellow student for being nice. It was an incredibly positive activity for everyone and several of the students elected to send more than one message.



Preview to this month

December is National Human Rights Month. It is a time for Americans to come together to stand for all humans’ rights to equality, justice, and dignity. World Human Rights Day is December 10th. This marks the day the United Nations Assembly codified basic human rights. Attached are links to learn more about this important implementation.

[United Nations on Human Rights](#)

[Human Rights in the US](#)

Human Rights in Iran have been making headlines in the world recently. To find out more about what is happening there, follow this [link](#).



