



The Academy Newsletter

Qtr 1 2023-2024

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A message from Ms. Wells:

It has been another incredible beginning to the school year. We kicked off 2023-2024 by building positive connections with our students and families through rich conversations, clear procedures & universal expectations. By now you should have heard from one or more staff members by phone, email or post-card regarding your child's week one of success.

We look forward to talking with every family during next week's BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT. Feel free to stop in to visit us on Tuesday, September 5th, between 5:00 pm-6:30 pm. This evening is designed for teachers and support staff to introduce themselves to you and to share curricular information. It is always nice for you to see the inside of your child's classrooms so you have a better understanding of what a typical day may look like while your child is at school.

Please never hesitate to call Mrs. Ayo in our main office for any specific questions, needs or assistance. She will know how to connect you with the right staff member to streamline your information.

A message from Ms. Jackson:

Homeroom

A highlight of The Academy is our daily social emotional lessons during "Navigation Time". These lessons include self-reflection of students' behavior, attendance, and effort in school. Students set goals for the week on Mondays and learn strategies to meet their goals and grow as individuals throughout the week. Ideally, students apply the lessons to develop a healthy identity, manage emotions, and achieve personal excellence.

Assessments

We will administer fall MAP assessments August 31st - September 6th. The MAP assessment is administered 3 times during the school year to all 7th – 10th grade students as a local assessment to measure their learning growth throughout the school year. Attendance on these dates is important to get the best information from the MAP results. Thank you for your help encouraging students to attend on these dates and try their best on MAP.

A message from SSFL's:

SSFL Team by grade:

Mrs. Woodworth- 7th and 8th grade

Mr. Carroll- 9th and 10th grade

Mr. John- 11th-12th grade

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Missing a day of school here and there may not seem like much, but absences add up!

When a student misses **2** days a month..

They will miss **20 DAYS** a year.

They will miss **30 HOURS** of math over the school year.

They will miss **60 HOURS** of reading & writing over the school year.

They will miss over **1 YEAR** of school by graduation.

When a student misses **4** days a month..

They will miss **40 DAYS** a year.

They will miss **60 HOURS** of math over the school year.

They will miss **120 HOURS** of reading & writing over the school year.

They will miss over **2 YEARS** of school by graduation.

What is mental wellbeing, and why is it important during back to school time?

Mental wellbeing is a sense of emotional and cognitive wellness that is fueled by feelings of belonging, safety, and meaning in one's life (more info [here](#)). While it is always important, its importance becomes stronger during life changes, such as going back to school.

The back to school season usually causes stress because of the many unknowns related to it. Some common questions kids have include:

"What will the new school year be like?"

"Will the classes be hard?"

"Am I prepared?"

"What will my teacher(s) and classmates be like?"

"Will I fit in?"

And the questions that parents have are often similar, with the addition of,

"Will my kids be happy this school year?"

"Will they do well?"

"Did I do enough to prepare them?"

"Will they manage ok?"

Not knowing the answers to these questions can cause stress that takes a toll on mental wellbeing. However, there are also simple actions you can take to help manage this stress, as we outline in this guide.

Supporting Back to School Wellness

Prepare for Mixed Feelings from Students

Some may have:

- △ Lacked privacy or had distractions they're happy to be away from
- △ Been in unsafe conditions and school is a welcome change
- △ Thrived on their own and may be nervous about coming back
- △ Gotten attached to being close to family and may experience separation anxiety
- △ Felt free from bullying or trauma from racism

Bottom line? It's important to be responsive to individual needs of students.

Learn the Warning Signs of Something More Serious

It's likely most students will experience some anxiety and sadness, but not all will develop a serious mental health issue. Look out for students who are:

- △ Increasingly more socially withdrawn
- △ Missing multiple days of school
- △ Falling behind academically
- △ Expressing interest in harming themselves (get them immediate attention)

Normalize the Conversation

- △ **Model behavior:** Students will take cues from you, so don't be afraid to share your own experiences and emotions about coming back to school — and how you're coping with them
- △ **Ask students to share** if they feel comfortable; encourage them to share both worries and hopes
- △ **Discuss strategies for coping** and encourage school administrators to make resources visible and accessible
- △ **Connect with your local NAMI** to bring a NAMI Ending the Silence presentation to your classroom

Prioritize Your Mental Health, Too

Make sure you are taking care of yourself so you can take care of them by:

- △ Eating and sleeping well
- △ Getting in regular exercise in whatever way works for you
- △ Practicing relaxation methods like deep breathing and meditation

For additional resources, visit www.nami.org/youth.
To sign up for an on-demand education course about youth mental health, visit www.basics.nami.org.