



Mount Horeb Elementary Schools
Early Learning and Primary Centers
300 Spellman St./207 Academy St., Mount Horeb, WI 53572
Phone: 608-437-2400 (PC Ext. 5000/ELC Ext. 6000)



Thursday, November 19, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians of a Child on the 3rd Floor of the PC,

Here at the Primary Center, we work hard to be a supportive and inclusive community, and we are committed to supporting students, families, community members and staff from a wide range of races, ethnicities, genders, cultures, abilities, economic classes, and family structures. Our diversity allows us to expand our minds, learn from each other, and support one another in a variety of ways. Our unique histories and experiences are central to building a strong community.

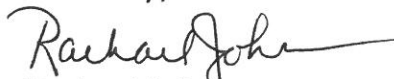
This year, in order to adequately support students and families, we are taking several steps to support gender-variant students and their families. People express their gender in a variety of ways. Gender-variant children include children whose identities, appearances, behaviors or interests challenge the expectations associated with their gender assigned at birth. For example, a child may have been born male but insists she is a girl. Or a child may identify as a girl but wants to wear her hair short and change her name to a "boy" name.


We have been working with the family of a student on your child's floor who identifies as a girl, but has male anatomy. We refer to this as having a girl brain and a boy body. Together we have come up with a plan to support this student in living as her authentic self.


We believe all students deserve respect and support regardless of their gender identity and expression, and the best way to foster that respect and support is through educating students about the issue of being transgender. This is why we plan to read and discuss with your child's class the book, I Am Jazz by Jessica Herthel and Jazz Jennings on Monday morning, November 23.

It is our primary responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all of our students. We are continually amazed by the compassion and acceptance our students show each other when they understand their differences. Please let us know if you have concerns about your child participating in this discussion; we respect the beliefs and convictions of all families.

Sincerely,


Rachael Johnson
Principal


Nicole Tepe
School Psychologist


Emily McKee
School Counselor

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind our school community of our anti-bullying policy #443.71. The Mount Horeb Area School District does not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying, abuse, or discrimination. We encourage parents to discuss this policy with their children. Please encourage your children to talk to you, their teacher, or school staff if they encounter name-calling or any other form of inappropriate behavior.