



THE MEHER SCHOOLS



# Wednesday Messages

December 4, 2019 • Parent Resource Center: [www.MeherSchoolsParents.org](http://www.MeherSchoolsParents.org)

## Enrolling Siblings In the White Pony for the 2020–21 School Year

If you have a child who will be turning two by September 1, 2020, and wish to enroll him or her in our preschool for the 2020–21 school year, please submit your application by **December 13**. We'll contact you in the spring to schedule an interview. We interview parents of prospective new preschoolers beginning in February, giving priority to siblings of current students. Applications are available in the Office, or you can e-mail our registrar, Daniela Alder ([daniela@meherschools.org](mailto:daniela@meherschools.org)), and she'll e-mail one to you.

## Holidays Without Hunger 12th Annual Food Bank Drive Next Week

One person in eight in Contra Costa and Solano counties turns to the food bank for emergency and supplemental food. The Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano provides food to 178,000 people every month, directly and through their relationships with partner organizations.

Every year since 2007 our school has held a food drive prior to the winter holidays to benefit the food bank. In some years our families have donated as much as a ton of food! This year's food drive will take place next week.

We'll be a setting collection box outside each classroom next Monday, December 9. Bring donations of nutritious, nonperishable food any day next week and leave them in any box. The food bank will pick up donations Friday morning.

Here are the types of food the food bank is requesting:

- **Protein:** Peanut butter, hearty soups, dried or canned beans, canned ready-to-eat meals, canned poultry, meat, and tuna
- **Fruits and vegetables:** Canned fruit in juice, 100 percent juice, canned vegetables, canned tomato products
- **Grains:** Brown and enriched rice, whole-wheat pasta, whole-grain cereal



*The food bank asks that donations not be in glass containers and not be past their expiration dates.*

Questions? Please contact our food drive coordinator, Sue Tacker. You can leave a message for her in the Office.

## Tips for Parents by Susie Kohl

### *Building Our “Gratefulness Muscles”*

**T**EACHING CHILDREN TO SAY THANK YOU isn't the same as helping them to actually feel gratitude, a capacity that is often highlighted in this season. The ability to experience thankfulness for things, little and big, is a learned behavior, not innate, and we are our child's primary teachers. If we want our children to feel appreciative, we have to live that ourselves.

That's challenging because our human circuitry sets us up to live in a state of feeling slightly deprived. We're wired to scan for excitement and acquisition, not appreciation. Our brains acclimating to all that's right in our lives can automatically cause us to take the good things for granted.

Teaching our children to feel grateful involves waking ourselves up to our good fortune, not just what we have, but who we have and the kindness and generosity and beauty that surrounds us.

Misfortunes big and small enliven our abilities to cherish the little things. Illness activates our awareness that we have had and can work toward having good health. A car accident illumines our consciousness that we are still safe.

Hard things can provide opportunities to notice all that we have to appreciate. It's easy to talk about saying thank you for a gift, but speaking about difficulties often allows us to notice and actually experience gratitude. “We're stuck in traffic but we're lucky that we have snacks and we can sing some songs together in the car.” “Grandma is sick, but her doctors and nurses are all so kind and helpful to her.”

Like an athletic skill, learning to notice little things and feel grateful is an ability that takes constant practice. Taking a time each day as a family to reflect on what we appreciate builds our “gratefulness muscles” and habits that program for happiness.

### **Piano Needed for School Music Program**

Our school piano gets a lot of use. We use it in chorus and play rehearsals and our monthly student music recitals. But our piano is old and in desperate need of being replaced.



We're looking for a good-quality upright. We hope one will be donated, but we would also consider one for sale at a reasonable price. Please contact our music director, Terry Johnson, at [terry@meher](mailto:terry@meher) schools.org if you have one to offer or know of one that's available.

### **Digital Cameras Sought for Point-of-View Aftercare Project**

Art teacher Lara Cannon is seeking donations of point-and-shoot cameras for an art project in elementary aftercare. The children will be using them to explore and share different points of view. If you have an old digital camera you'd be willing to donate, please bring it to the Office.

# *The Meher Schools Way*

## **The Classroom Environment**

*The moment they first step on campus, people notice that there's something different about our school. This is the first in a series of occasional articles exploring the things that make our school special.*

Creating and maintaining an environment that is appealing, engaging, pleasant, and harmonious sets the stage for the kind of education we hope to impart. We believe that children learn best in surroundings that are attractive, clean, uncluttered, and well cared for. The care we give to the classroom environment reflects our love and respect for the children. Children who are loved and respected in turn love and respect others.

We try to establish a standard of beautiful surroundings, one that is truly child centered. Light, cheerful colors in the classroom provide a backdrop for the children and for their work. Classrooms feel bright and airy. Most classrooms have plants and fresh-cut flowers. Closed cabinets rather than open shelves reduce the level of "visual noise" so students can focus their attention on their work. The effect created is immediately apparent—it is the children, the focus of our work here, that are most visible when you walk into a room.

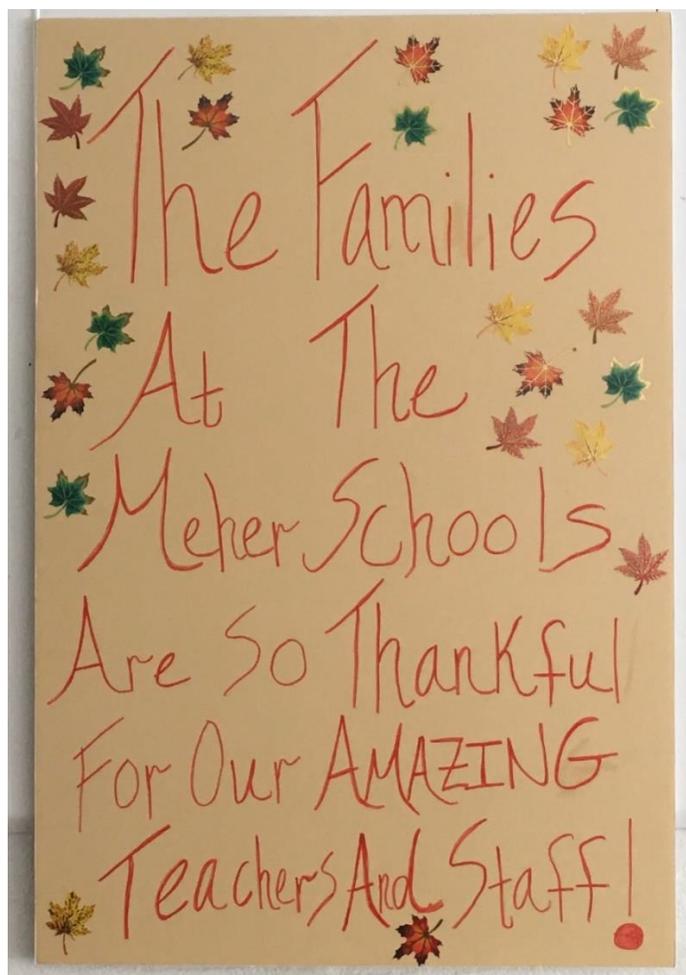
## **K–5 Winter Holiday Celebrations**

Every class observes the winter holidays in its own unique way. (Some have fall rather than holiday events.) As an aid to parents who want to schedule time off from work to join in the celebrations, here is the schedule of the holiday gatherings in the elementary school. Your child's teachers will provide details. Preschool teachers will let the parents of their students know about their parties.

When you come for your child's party, please allow extra time to park, especially if there are several taking place at the same time.

<b>Kindergarten, Room 7</b> <i>Held November 22</i>	<b>Kindergarten, Room 8</b> December 16, 11:30–1
<b>First grade</b> December 17, 11:30–12:30	<b>Second grade</b> December 20, 11:30–12:30
<b>Third grade</b> <i>Held yesterday</i>	<b>Fourth grade</b> December 19, 1:30–2:30
<b>Fifth grade</b> December 18, 11:15–12:45	





The Families  
At The  
Meher Schools  
Are So Thankful  
For Our AMAZING  
Teachers And Staff!



THANK  
you  
PARENTS  
With Love  
FROM ALL