

# MILLSTONE RIVER SCHOOL

TRIMESTER FAMILY NEWSLETTER  
SEPTEMBER 2023

---



**Gerard Dalton, Principal**  
**Heather Shanklin, Assistant Principal**  
**Jennifer Braverman, Assistant Principal**

## Purpose of the Newsletter

The Trimester Family Newsletter supports our effort to increase communication between school and home. We will share current topics, areas of concern, current research and ways to connect. **Please also watch for your weekly update emails each Friday for school and PTA information.**

We look forward to our continued collaboration with our Millstone River School Eagle Families.

## In This Issue

- **Millstone River School Parent Teacher Association - MRS PTA**
- **S.O.A.R. Program**
- **School of Excellence**
- **Meet the Principal Team Meetings**
- **Meet the Counselors Meetings**
- **What are we reading?**
- **Millstone Minutes Podcast**
- **Emergency Contact Information**
- **Conferences**
- **Electronic Devices and Social Media**
- **Upcoming Dates - School and PTA**

## Millstone River School PTA Officers 2023-24



President: Sesha Gundavarapu - [President@millstoneriverpta.org](mailto:President@millstoneriverpta.org)  
Executive VP: Roli Gupta - [executivevp@millstoneriverpta.org](mailto:executivevp@millstoneriverpta.org)  
Treasurer: Meenakshi Phophaliya - [treasurer@millstoneriverpta.org](mailto:treasurer@millstoneriverpta.org)  
Secretary: Jongsoo Yoo - [secretary@millstoneriverpta.org](mailto:secretary@millstoneriverpta.org)  
VP program: Apeksha Jatin Pabari - [programs@millstoneriverpta.org](mailto:programs@millstoneriverpta.org)  
VP Membership: Babitha Ashwin - [membership@millstoneriverpta.org](mailto:membership@millstoneriverpta.org)  
VP Fundraising: Loi Moliga - [fundraising@millstoneriverpta.org](mailto:fundraising@millstoneriverpta.org)

The **Millstone River School PTA** (Parent Teacher Association) is a volunteer, parent-run organization that supports the needs of our MRS families, staff and students. It takes many parent volunteers to plan and oversee the wide range of activities and events throughout the school year in our active community. Please consider joining the PTA, membership is available all year long!

[Link-Millstone River PTA](#)

## Student S.O.A.R Program - New 2023-24



It is our goal to provide each of our Eagle students with many opportunities to achieve their personal best. As members of a school community, we recognize the importance of attributes that contribute to personal success and the success of our environment. The new S.O.A.R. initiative will serve as a positive reminder for our Eagles to make good/effective choices, meet expectations, and do the right thing.

Staff will recognize students exhibiting SOAR attributes and those students will receive recognition by the Principal Team.

**Thank  
you  
MRS  
PTA!**



**TIME TO CELEBRATE!**

National PTA School of Excellence recognition program opens the lines of communication and critical thinking within school communities to make data-driven decisions that yield positive, long-term results. School of Excellence is committed to supporting and recognizing partnerships between local PTAs and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being for all students. (from National PTA SOE Program)

This is the second time Millstone River School has been recognized as National PTA School of Excellence. The recognition program is for two years. We have now been recognized for 2020-2022 and 2022-24. Thank you to the PTA volunteers who remain dedicated to supporting our school and programs. Please consider joining the MRS PTA.



## **Meet the Principals Sessions** **What are these sessions?**

The MRS PTA arranges meet the principal sessions on Zoom throughout the school year. These meetings are an opportunity to update parents on current topics in the school and to address parents' questions. Please watch for PTA correspondence and the weekly updates each Friday for more information.



## **Meet the Counselors Sessions** **What are these sessions?**

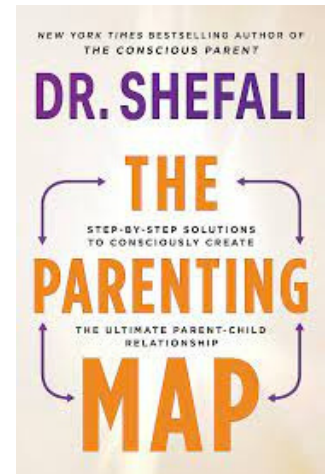


Similar to the Meet the Principals sessions, the MRS PTA arranges meet the counselors sessions on Zoom throughout the school year. These meetings provide information about the district's counseling program, current topics related to social and emotional learning and opportunities to learn how to support your child at home and for their school day. Please watch for PTA correspondence and the weekly updates each Friday for more information. Our school counselors: [Ms. Gura](#) 4th grade and 3rd grade classes Ozdonski, Smith, Lynch and Young, and [Ms. Valeriani](#) grade 5 and 3rd grade classes Birrer/DeSouza, Malakates, Monferrari and Toth.

# What are we reading?

Dr. Shefali Tsabary was featured on Good Morning America discussing her latest book, *The Parenting Map*. A summary of her book states:

"*The Parenting Map* (2023) by Dr. Shefali Tsabary offers a step-by-step guide to parenting healthy, happy, resilient, and grounded children by adopting a mindful parenting approach. In it, parents are encouraged to unlearn toxic parenting habits and replace them with moments of meaningful connection."



The book challenges many of the things we have all come to know as educators and parents. We considered it as a book club for parents, but feel we need to dig deeper before engaging on this journey.

[Link-Dr. Shefali on Good Morning America](#)

## Millstone Minutes Podcast

Beginning in June of 2021, we embarked on an effort to stay in touch with families about topics relevant to students, parenting and education in general. The time of the pandemic made it challenging to host in person meetings. The Millstone Minutes Podcast provides brief sessions to listen, connect and learn.

We encourage you to subscribe and listen to the podcast series.

[Link - Millstone Minutes Podcast](#)



### Genesis Student Information System



Maintaining correct and up-to-date information in the student information system, [Genesis](#), is critical. Please be certain that all contact information in your student's account is correct. **Current telephone numbers and email addresses** are necessary to receive information or for contact during an emergency. Whenever possible, please supply multiple points of contact and add **emergency contacts**.



# Parent/Teacher Conferences



Conferences are scheduled on the district calendar from **October 10th through October 13th**. Teachers arrange these schedules through **Genesis**, the student information system. It is advisable to become familiar with Genesis if you have not already done so. Teachers will communicate the process for scheduling closer to those dates. **Early dismissal occurs on these dates and students will be dismissed at 1:00 pm.**



## Cell Phones and Social Media



We recognize that some families have made the decision to provide their child with a cell phone. Please be advised that cell phone use is not permitted during the school day. Cell phones must remain in backpacks and turned off. Smart watches shall not be used for communication during the school day. Students calling home should only do so under the supervision of an adult. Any ill student must see the school nurse.



Social media sites such as, **Facebook**, **Instagram**, TikTok and others have their appropriate uses. We share a strong caution that students in grade 3-5 are not of the appropriate age to have a personal social media account. These services require everyone to be 13 years of age and older. Though some feel it is permissible with monitoring, the content on these sites is often not appropriate for children. Additionally, discussions on such sites often lead to negative social interactions that impact school and can equate to bullying.

Students will have access to electronic devices through school and Google accounts. Please be advised that these accounts are monitored and we are notified of any inappropriate use of language or search content. Students must follow our Acceptable Use Policy. We ask your cooperation in providing safe guidelines for use during unstructured times and monitoring. .

Age appropriateness, brain development and safety are critical in relation to access to devices and sites that expose children to many topics. At any time, please feel free to reach out to our counselors or principal team for guidance on these topics.

# Upcoming Dates

Below are some of the important dates for the first trimester. Be reminded that the district website has a "**CALENDARS**" section where you can find dates for the full year.

[Link - District Events Calendar](#)

[Link - District Academic Calendars](#)

September 5th - Strategies for a Successful School Year Webinar 7:00 pm (FAST Program)

September 7th - First Day of School - Full Day

September 12th - Meet the Principals PTA - 7:00 pm

September 20th - 3rd & 4th Grades Back to School Night

September 21st - 5th Grade Back to School Night

September 25th - Schools Closed

October 9th - PTA General Meeting - 7:00 pm

October 10th to 13th - Early Dismissal Conferences

October 16th to 20th - PTA Fall Book Fair

October 19th - Parenting Styles- What's working and what would I like to change? 6:00 pm (FAST program)

November 9th & 10th - Schools Closed

November 16th - Learning Styles - How does my child learn? (FAST program)

November 22nd - Early Dismissal

November 23rd and 24th - Schools Closed

December 22nd - Early Dismissal

December 23rd - January 1st - Winter Recess

More information will follow on the above listed events.

Early Dismissals are at 1:00 pm

*Please also watch for your weekly update emails each Friday for school and PTA information.*