**January 10, 2023**

**Dear MTSD Parents,**

MTSD is embarking on a grant-funded initiative to provide districtwide education on social and emotional wellbeing.

The social emotional wellbeing of our students is a district priority, especially since we have been navigating unprecedented and challenging times together these past few years. According to a study from Georgetown University, about 5.6 million children in the United States of America were diagnosed with anxiety in 2020 and less than 80% of those children received mental health services to help them cope. Students who struggle with anxiety often have academic and social challenges that make it difficult for them to stay on track with learning goals. We frequently deal with student anxiety and other similar challenges at each of our schools.

We have an opportunity through a performance grant to provide districtwide education to our students, staff, and parents about anxiety and how to deal with it. We have partnered with Kimberly Morrow and Elizabeth DuPont-Spencer (AnxietyTraining.com) and Brianna Morrow and Andy Pitrone (We Are Courageous Kids, LLC) to lead our training.

**STUDENT EDUCATION:** One developmentally appropriate lesson will be provided in a classroom setting for all students, beginning in February of 2023. Brianna Morrow will be providing in person trainings to students where they will learn about anxiety, how to manage big emotions, and how to face their fears by changing the way they talk to themselves and by doing challenges.

**PARENT EDUCATION:** Parents will have access to a one-hour online training video from Kimberly Morrow. Parents are invited to watch the video to learn about anxiety and how to help their anxious child. After watching the video, parents will be able to attend a live, virtual Q&A with Kimberly Morrow where she will review the concepts of facing fears and living well with anxiety. Parents can ask more specific questions about how to use these skills with their children.

**STAFF EDUCATION:** All MTSD staff will have access to a one-hour online training video from Kimberly Morrow. The focus of the video is to recognize the most common presentation of anxiety in the classroom, and how teachers can coach a student through anxiety related challenges. Following the training video, staff will have an opportunity for a virtual Q&A with Elizabeth DuPont-Spencer from Anxiety Training to learn how to use these skills with specific students. Staff will have an additional opportunity to attend an in-person session to further explore anxiety-related issues.

Parents are encouraged to watch the parent video training so that they can have a dialogue with their children following their lesson at school. The video and more information can be found on our website here: <https://www.mtsd.org/parents/anxiety-training-2023>

Parents wishing to have their child opt out of the in-school lesson can contact their school principal and an alternative activity will be provided the day of the school/classroom presentation.

Much more information will be coming soon!

**Sincerely,**

**Millcreek Township School District**

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