

# Coronado Compass

Mrs. Amanda Pierorazio, Principal  
Ms. Andrea Cosens, Instructional Dean  
Office 303-982-3737  
Attendance 303-982-3700



May 6, 2016

Dear Coronado Families,

The countdown has begun, and as of today we have 13 days of school remaining in the 16-17 year! As the school year comes to a close, you have likely started to look toward the summer to make plans for vacations, camps, and activities. Be sure to read through this newsletter and the one that will come out on May 27<sup>th</sup> for various summer opportunities that may be of interest to you and your family. Also in this month's newsletter, I will continue to describe the next of the five competencies that are part of Jeffco's 2020 Vision, **Communication**. We have previously visited Content Mastery and Civic & Global Engagement, and we will finish out this series in our final newsletter of the year as we visit Critical Thinking & Creativity and Personal Responsibility & Self-Direction.

Communication is a key component of success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Over the years communication has certainly transformed, but the underlining intention remains the same. It is the ability to connect with people and places that supports the imparting or exchanging of information and news. Today communication exists in a variety of modalities from verbal, face to face conversation to instant dissemination of opinions and ideas through Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram and other web-based formats. The challenge with these varying forms of communication is developing proficiency with each of them. Many students will engage in multiple methods of communicating in classrooms from PreK to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, but they will also encounter situations outside of the classroom that require them to choose how best to communicate. Our responsibility in educating children about communication then becomes providing them with exposure, experience and tools to make those decisions and learn to communicate effectively.

Jeffco's 2020 Vision identifies that an effective communicator is proficient with **situational awareness, clarity and purpose, collaboration and teamwork, conflict management, and interpersonal skills**. The following are my professional thoughts about each of these from the lens of an educator.

**Situational awareness** is the ability to assess with whom you are communicating, what you are attempting to communicate, when communication is appropriate, why it is necessary to communicate, and how to best communicate your response, question, idea, opinion or factual evidence. Situational awareness is not always easy to learn, but as we expose children to new situations each and every day they become more and more proficient in their understanding of the who, what, when, why and how of communication. **Clarity and purpose** are developed in tandem with situational awareness. As the situation is assessed and understood, the hope is that students will employ skills they have learned through research, presentation, disagreement and persuasion to communicate their ideas clearly and purposefully.

**Collaboration and teamwork** are emphasized in the 21<sup>st</sup> century classroom as many careers require a high degree of cooperation and close work with others. Students are frequently engaged in partner or group work for this very reason. Building a house, constructing a rocket, identifying an

illness, and managing a company require multiple individuals working together for a specific outcome. With this in mind, we design projects to prepare students for the type of collaborative work they will encounter throughout their education and future careers. We also expose them to working with a variety of individuals to further develop interpersonal skills.

**Conflict management** is a challenging communication skill to master requiring not only situational awareness but also self-reflection and the identification of a problem that needs resolving. Students engage in conflict from a very young age, and teaching them how to manage it effectively through honest discussion, listening, advocating and taking ownership is vital to successful communication that results in both personal and system-wide improvement. As we gain experience in the world our conflict management skills are continuously redefined and redesigned.

**Interpersonal skills** also begin to take shape from a very young age. As children observe interactions between adults, peers and others, they begin to engage in those same types of interactions developing their interpersonal skills and ability to relate to others. As a cycle of conflict, compromise and communication ensue these skills are cultivated and refined. In order for students to be successful, positive interpersonal skills must be modeled and practiced. So, remember...they're always watching.

Thank you for your support and communication this year! We have enjoyed partnering with you each and every day as together we develop these skills and others for the current and future success of our children!

Take care of each other,

*Amanda Pierorazio*  
Principal, Coronado Elementary

