



LITTLE SILVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Parents,

As you are all well aware, a devastating earthquake struck Haiti just ten days ago on January 12th. Many organizations are seeking support to assist the Haitian community.

In Little Silver, the Board of Education has dedicated a great deal of time creating a list of charities that they feel are appropriate for our community and children to support. They are passionate about having our children support organizations that address needs “close to home”, therefore, the groups on our existing charity list support many local organizations. Before adding to our list, the Board of Education diligently examined the ratings of the charities recommended by staff and students to assure that their efficiency is extremely high and their administrative expenses are extremely low ensuring that donations go directly to the cause. Charity Navigator has been an effective tool to guide their decision making.

While the Board promotes the support of local charities, they are cognizant of the magnitude of the disaster in Haiti, and support our district in assisting this global effort. One of the objectives in our five-year strategic plan is to *incorporate global perspectives and modern day issues in the curricula and beyond*. What better way to have our children understand global issues than to have them directly participate in a relief effort.

At this point in time, most relief organizations are seeking monetary donations. Since the district does not promote having students collect money door-to-door, we have decided to have our students participate in a read-a-thon. The specifics of the plan will follow next week. Essentially, students will maintain a reading log for a period of time to be determined (i.e. two weeks). They will ask family and friends to support them by pledging an amount of money based on the amount of time students read over that time period. Flat dollar amounts will likely be acceptable as well. Students will be responsible for reading and logging their time. We will look to the teachers to seek opportunities to incorporate other learning experiences that may include graphing donations or geography activities to name a few.

As noted above, the Board of Education is passionate about assuring that charities we support allocate the majority of their donations directly to the cause. While a final decision has not yet been made regarding which charity (or charities) our district will support in this endeavor, there are three that we are closely examining:

- **UNICEF** (The United Nations Children’s Fund) works to support children, their survival, development and protection.
- **Partners in Health** has been working on the ground in Haiti for over 20 years, partnering with poor communities to combat disease and poverty.
- The **American Red Cross** is seeking contributions for a variety of different funds including: the International Response Fund, the Haiti Relief and Development Fund, and the Disaster Relief Fund. Any of the aforementioned funds will provide relief to Haiti.

Please look for specific information to follow next week. I will make sure all information is posted on our website as well. Thank you in advance for your support in this global relief effort.

Sincerely,

Carolyn M. Kossack