CHISAGO LAKES
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Learning for All

Engage. Educate. Empower.

Dear Family Member,

During the next several days, your child will be learning about the ancient civilizations of Asia. Over the next several days, your child will learn more about life in early Asia, specifically ancient India. Your child will hear more about the Indus River Valley civilization as well as the civilization that began around the Ganges River. They will learn about some key features of civilizations, hear some folktales from early India, and will also learn about Hinduism and Buddhism, two religions that began in early India.

The Core Knowledge Language Arts program introduces students at various grade levels to the major world religions as part of their study of world history. The intent is to provide the vocabulary and context for understanding the many ways that world religions have influenced ideas and events in history. The program's inclusion of world religions within the teaching of world history is comprehensive and balanced over the course of the elementary grades, presenting historical knowledge from around the world from ancient times to the present. It is important to understand that the religions your child will hear about in this domain—Hinduism and Buddhism—are not being singled out or presented in any way that suggests the merits or correctness of specific religious beliefs.

The read-alouds focus on teaching students very basic similarities and differences among religions, and fostering an understanding and respect for those similarities and differences. The historical events and ideas leading to the development of each religion are presented in a balanced and respectful manner. If students have questions about the truth or "rightness" of any beliefs or religions, we will encourage them to discuss their questions with you at home, by saying, "People of different faiths believe different things to be true. These are questions you may want to talk about with your family and the adults at home."

Please contact one of us below if you have any questions or if you would like to see any of the read-alouds we are using.

Thank you,

Sarah Schmidt, Director of Teaching and Learning
Jason Riebe, Taylors Falls Principal
Sara Johnson, Lakeside Principal