MADISON
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Elementary Parents and Guardians,

Every first weekend of March since 2009, **Global Day of Unplugging** has hosted its Annual GDU—a worldwide 24-hour digital pause encouraging individuals, families, schools, and communities to step away from screens and reconnect in meaningful, face-to-face ways. What began as a small initiative has grown into a global movement, inspiring people of all ages to power down their devices and power up real-world connection. Whether participants unplug for one hour or the full 24 hours, the goal is the same: to create space for presence, reflection, creativity, and authentic human interaction.

In recognition of this important initiative—and in support of our students' social and emotional well-being—our elementary students, teachers, and staff will participate in a schoolwide unplugged hour on **Friday, March 6, 2026, from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM**. During this time, classrooms will turn off digital devices and engage in meaningful, interactive activities that promote collaboration, communication, and community building. Activities may include cooperative games, team-building challenges, creative arts, storytelling, mindfulness exercises, outdoor play, reading circles, and other hands-on experiences that encourage students to connect with one another in positive and engaging ways.

We know that technology plays an important and valuable role in learning and daily life. However, intentional breaks from screens help students strengthen interpersonal skills, improve focus, spark creativity, and build deeper relationships with their peers. This dedicated time to unplug supports our commitment to nurturing well-rounded learners who thrive both academically and socially.

We encourage families to consider participating at home as well. You might choose to designate device-free time during dinner, play a board game together, read as a family, take a walk, or simply enjoy conversation without digital distractions. Even small moments of unplugged time can have a lasting impact.

Families are also invited to host or join a gathering and add their participation to the Unplug Map through the Global Day of Unplugging website, becoming part of a worldwide movement that

demonstrates real connection is not only possible—it is happening everywhere, and no one is doing it alone.

Thank you for your partnership in supporting healthy habits and meaningful connection for our students. We look forward to a wonderful hour of unplugged engagement together.

Regards,

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