

Arlington Central School District
Noxon Road Elementary School
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Kelly Murray
Principal

Melissa Tirado
Assistant to the Principal

Dear Noxon Road Families,

As we navigate through day #2 of remote learning, during arguably one of the most difficult times in education for us all, we are reminded of true difficulty, true tragedy, true loss...as well as true character, true heroism and true sacrifice, today, the 19th anniversary of September 11th.

We all began our day the same way, logging onto Google Classrooms to view [Dr. Murray's Morning Announcements](#) showcasing the State Farm's commercial paying tribute to New York City, with 150 children singing "Empire State of Mind" to FDNY firefighters. This video was directed by Spike Lee in an effort to honor and show appreciation for the sacrifices made every day by firefighters and emergency responders, honoring these brave men and women as we collectively mark the 9/11 anniversary. The last time we showed this video we were together in our school, students packed into the gym while we hosted our Tribute to 9/11 with local first responders...local heroes...standing tall and proud among our students and staff. As we ended the program that day and students were standing up to leave the gym with their class, one of our students, a now 5th grader, said to me "Ms. Murray, this is why I love Noxon." When I asked him what he meant he said "I like how we come together and do things like this, things that teach us about life, but not from books or with paper and pencils."

Today, a teacher, the same teacher who shared that video with me last year, ended my day with an email saying "I don't know if I ever told you this but the firehouse in the video you played this morning was that of my cousin's husband. They lost 8 guys that day. He was there but somehow managed to survive." She went on to share a little about the loss her family experienced that day and then wrote "thank you for remembering and making sure the children appreciate that this day has a special meaning for all of us."

I'd like to end your day (and this letter) with the words I heard in a speech today, that resonated with me, and I hope do with you as well:

"Today is a day to remember that our strength as a nation comes from our fellow men and women. Not from some government, or some vote of a legislature. Our ability to weather any storm, be it a heinous act of terrorism or a global pandemic, is because of the work and sacrifice of individuals. Our freedom is built on the shoulders of these giants who give of themselves; asking little in return."

Let us please continue to work and sacrifice (together) no matter "the storm" so that we can create moments for our children as part of our Noxon Community, that they will always remember.

Warmly,

Dr. Murray

