



Gene Dillon Elementary School

3795 Division St. W, Bemidji, MN 56601

Bemidji Area Schools

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Ami Aalgaard
Principal

David Gooch
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Amy Merschman
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Michelle Canada
School Psychologist

Amy Riley
School Counselor

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are looking forward to a successful school year at Gene Dillon. Success in school is not just about academics but also in knowing how to get along with others. We will be using the *Second Step* program in your child's classroom to teach these critical skills.

The *Second Step* program teaches skills in the following areas:

- 1. Skills for Learning and Empathy** (taught September - November) Students gain skills to help themselves learn, how to focus their attention, listen carefully, and be assertive when asking for help with schoolwork. Students will focus on empathy to learn to identify and understand others' feelings, how to take another's perspective and how to show compassion.
- 2. Emotion Management** (taught November - January) Students learn specific skills for calming down when experiencing strong feelings, such as anxiety or anger.
- 3. Problem Solving** (taught January - April) Students learn a process for solving problems with others in a positive way.

Throughout the school year your child will be learning a lot and will need your help! **Home Links will be coming home with students on Wednesdays.** Home Links are simple, fun activities for you and your child to complete together. They are a great way for you to understand what your child is learning and for your child to show you what he or she knows.

For further at home practice a Counselor Challenge question will ask students to further engage and practice development of these skills. These challenges can be found on the *CARE Corner* tab on our Gene Dillon website. Winning responses will be selected monthly and announced on Eagle Eye News. Additionally the three core units will be a focus during the following PTO meetings. All presentations will follow the monthly PTO meeting (second Monday of the month at 6PM in the media center).

Monday, September 9: Question and Answers with Gene Dillon Staff

Monday, November 11: The Dangers and Monitoring of Social Media

Monday, January 13: Strengthening Family Communication

Monday, March 9: Transitioning to the Middle School (for fifth grade families)

If you or your child has any concerns or would like further assistance in the development of skills or in processing emotions please feel free to reach out for guidance or to request your child participate in additional group or individual work. We are looking forward to a successful year ahead!

The C.A.R.E. Crew,
Michelle Canada, ext 49407
School Psychologist

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School Counselor

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School Social Worker

