

**Dorothy McElhinney Middle School**35125 Briggs Road  
Murrieta, CA 92563

June 1, 2017

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Welcome to the Dorothy McElhinney Middle School SOUL program. SOUL stands for Students Of Unlimited Leadership. We believe your child not only has the ability to be successful and promote from McElhinney Middle School with the skills necessary to be successful in life, successful in high school and have the potential to be a leader in our community. SOUL will provide your child the opportunity to realize his or her potential in *all* areas. My main purpose for writing this letter to you on behalf of the entire SOUL team is to share with you one simple request: **I need you to be more involved than ever in your child's education if you want to give him/her the best possible chance of having a successful experience at McElhinney Middle School.**

How can you get involved? You can get involved by helping to plan potlucks and lunchtime barbeques and other "family" events. If you feel like you have something to share with our students, we would love to have you come in and be a guest speaker. Maybe you know some local businesses who would be able to sponsor SOUL student and family activities. If you have a question about how you can get involved in SOUL, please don't hesitate to contact me directly at the number listed below.

At a minimum, I respectfully ask that you do the following things to support your child's SOUL teachers. Every month you can expect your child to bring home a work sample along with a short letter explaining the project, how well he or she did on it, and why. The letter will also give you an update about your child's grades in other classes. If your child "doesn't know" what grade he/she is getting, assume that it's NOT a good one! Please have a conversation with your child about his or her work sample. Please do NOT ask the following questions: "Do you have any homework?" "When is your next test?" "What did you learn today?" These questions almost always get "Nothing" or "I don't know" or "I did it at school" answers. These questions are also un motivating to your child and will probably make further communication about school more difficult.

Instead, ask these questions: "What did you DO in class today?" or "What is going on in the book you are reading?" These questions focus more on your child's interest and welcome specific, honest answers. Please do not threaten your child by saying you'll take away cell phones or video games or "grounding them". These tactics almost never work over the long term and result in your child losing even more motivation over time. Once you've had this conversation with your child, please write a brief note on his/her letter indicating that it has been done. It may seem like a little thing, but having this monthly conversation SHOWS your child that you are serious about his/her success at McElhinney Middle School.

SOUL is a "family" on campus. I will do everything in my power to make your child's time at McElhinney Middle School interesting, fun, and worthwhile. If we can maintain even the slightest, once-a-month communication it will go a long way towards helping your child be successful at McElhinney Middle School. Working together, we can make a difference in your child's life that will positively affect your whole family.

Respectfully,

Ken Williams

SOUL Program Advisor

[www.thesoulcrew.com/](http://www.thesoulcrew.com/)

951-304-1885(bus.) / 951-888-0679 (text)