

For Mitchell Intermediate Families regarding the 2017 Solar Eclipse

As many of you are aware, on Monday, August 21 the United States will experience a total solar eclipse. This phenomenal stellar event is being called “The Great American Eclipse” because it is the first time since 1918 that a total solar eclipse has crossed our great nation from coast to coast. The last one in the U.S. was in 1979 but it only crossed a few western states that ended up shrouded by cloud cover. The August 21 eclipse’s line of totality (where the sun will be completely blocked by the moon) will begin on the Oregon coast and after about 90 minutes of transit depart into the Atlantic off the South Carolina Coast. While here in Texas we are not on the line of totality, we will, like every U.S. state, have the opportunity to at least witness a partial solar eclipse.

According to NASA, our community (assuming clear skies!) will experience a partial eclipse starting at 11:46 am and ending at 2:45pm. The moon’s coverage of our sun will peak with a maximum coverage of 67% at 1:16 pm. With only 67% coverage, the sun will actually still be quite bright. We do not want this possibly once-in-a-lifetime educational opportunity to go unnoticed by our Mitchell Mustangs! Our Mitchell Intermediate PTO has generously purchased NASA approved, solar eclipse viewing glasses for all our students and staff so that we can safely observe the eclipse together.

SAFETY IS OUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY. Planning is underway for teachers to educate all students about the harmful effects of staring at the sun. All students will have the opportunity to participate in valuable cross-curricular lessons about eclipses in class. Because of safety concerns, on August 21, **ONLY** students with signed permission slips (attached) will be allowed outside during the hours of the eclipse with their glasses. Students will be supervised by staff to view the eclipse safely and enjoyably. Some students will experience more or less of the moon’s coverage of the sun depending on their scheduled time to observe.

Please read the attached Solar Eclipse Safety Guidelines with your child. Then, sign and return the attached Permission Slip before August 21 if you will allow your child to participate in viewing the eclipse “live” at school.

2017 Solar Eclipse Permission Slip

After reviewing the Solar Eclipse Safety Guidelines below with my child, I give permission for my child, _____, in LC _____, to participate in the supervised viewing of the partial solar eclipse expected on August 21, 2017 using the eclipse glasses provided by Mitchell Intermediate PTO. My child will return this slip to their homeroom teacher by Friday, August 18 to be able to participate in viewing the solar eclipse. I know that my child will not be allowed outside if my child's teacher does not receive this signed form. Be aware, for safety purposes, we will not have regularly scheduled recess or Physical Education classes outside on this day.

Signed: _____ (parent/guardian)

Print name: _____

Date: _____

SOLAR VIEWING SAFETY GUIDELINES

Any eclipse, total or partial, is a wonderful opportunity to observe a rare natural phenomenon. But, looking at the Sun ANY TIME, ANY DAY is dangerous. The strong rays of the sun can harm your eyes and your ability to see. Normal sunglasses are not powerful enough to protect your eyes if you look directly at the sun. You might be tempted to look directly at the sun without eye protection when you know there is an exciting eclipse. THIS IS UNSAFE!

FOLLOW THE RULES BELOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN WE GO OUTSIDE TO VIEW THE ECLIPSE.

1. When you go outside, your teacher will walk to the "VIEWING SPOT".
2. Do NOT look at the sun when you walk there. You will not wear your glasses to go outside. They are so dark that you would not be able to see where to walk!
3. When you are *in the* "VIEWING SPOT" you will be given your Solar Eclipse Glasses.
4. You must stay in the viewing spot and not walk around or run with your glasses on.
5. You may look at the sun for no more than two minutes with the glasses. An adult will time you since you may be mesmerized!
6. Do NOT look at the sun unless you are wearing your Solar Eclipse Glasses.