



October 2015 Newsletter

Principal's Message

Greetings. I would be remiss if I did not thank our Booster Club; their corps of volunteers; and our Spooky Saturday chairpersons, Cara McKinley and Fiona Chilcott; for what for me was one of the more fun-filled festivals we have had in years. The amount of energy and time it takes to prepare, run, and clean up from our events is awe-inspiring; and while we recognize that these fundraisers are orchestrated to help raise money for all of the essentials that make our school the caliber that we expect for our students, our students not only reap the benefits of the money raised but have opportunities to build a community that lifts our spirits. I could not be more proud of everyone's efforts and contributions to our school. Our students have started to take initiative in the daily running of our school, and I have to believe that it is in part because of the examples set by our parent volunteers.

Our teachers and I continue to strengthen our practices and strategies in balanced literacy and Cognitively Guided Instruction. We have created study groups in which teams of teachers are refining their work on a chosen topic, the learning from which will be shared at a culminating professional development in February. We are also exploring the use of Junior Great Books (www.greatbooks.org/) to strengthen the work of inquiry in fiction and non-fiction in third through fifth grades. Two of our teachers were recently videotaped teaching lessons using these materials, and the videos will be used to highlight the power of this work. (When the videos are released, we will let you know.) We will also be sharing an article that is being published by the Cotsen Art of Teaching. We know that as teachers, learning is lifelong. We are working to instill that belief in our students.

Finally, November and December are short instructional months, but we have planned rich learning experiences throughout both months. Take time to enjoy your family during our Thanksgiving break the week of November 23rd and the winter break, which starts on December 21st. School will resume January 11, 2016. Please be mindful that our teachers cannot teach tardy and absent students, so we appreciate all of our families who work toward being at school on time (08:10 AM) as often as possible. Happy Halloween! *Principal Jenkins*

Attendance

Our goal is for 76% or more of our students to be in attendance 96% of the time. **An attendance rate of 96% is no more than 7 absences.** The table shows by grade the class with the best attendance and the percent of students with a current 96% attendance rate. Our school wide rate last year was 65.2%, which was approximately 11 percentage points below our goal. Let's ensure that we are only absent for excused reasons. The classes with the best attendance get an extra 10 minutes of recess, and fifth grade wins the extra PE class. Finally, Ms. Pippin's class wins a free Mad Science™ class for an attendance rate of 97.53%! Thanks.

Cumulative Attendance Data as of October 29, 2015

The class with the best attendance wins a free Mad Science class!		The grade with the best attendance wins an extra PE class with Coach David and Coach Brittany!	
Percentage in Attendance by Class		% of Students with 96% Attendance	
Pippin	97.53%	Kindergarten	77.4%
Phelps	95.55%	First Grade	79.1%
Rothschild	96.06%	Second Grade	79.5%
Bax	95.73%	Third Grade	77.6%
Flaxman	96.41%	Fourth Grade	79.2%
Payne	95.51%	Fifth Grade	85.3%

Readers and Writers Workshop Mini-Lessons

Each hour of workshop starts with a mini-lesson. The mini-lesson is a directed teaching lesson of no more than 10 minutes, the purpose of which is to impart a strategy that students can use in their reading or writing. A mini-lesson has four parts: connect, teach, active engagement, and then link. When teachers connect, they create a real life connection as a means for students to see the purpose of the strategy. Then they teach the strategy, for instance creating a mental movie when reading or showing rather than telling when writing. Next, students have an opportunity to practice the strategy quickly with their book or a piece of writing. Finally, they set the students off into their work with reading or writing by providing a link into how they might use the strategy in the future. During their independent reading or writing, teachers monitor and reinforce the strategies.

Positive Behavior Support

In order to provide a safe, welcoming environment for all of our students, we demonstrate the tenets of our school motto: **Be kind, Be respectful, Be responsible, Be safe** by doing the following:

We are **kind** when we:

- ❖ Encourage our classmates and friends to do their best
- ❖ Listen attentively with an open mind

We are **respectful** when we:

- ❖ Follow our school and classroom rules
- ❖ Solve our problems using our words and "I" messages

We are **responsible** when we:

- ❖ Follow directions the first time they are given
- ❖ Keep our campus clean and dispose of trash and recyclables appropriately
- ❖ Arrive to school on-time and ready to learn

We are **safe** when we:

- ❖ Stay aware of our surroundings and report unsafe situations (i.e., bullying, children playing inappropriately, broken equipment) to the nearest adult
- ❖ Walk at all times in the breezeways, open areas, and buildings

Important Dates

11/02/15 Coffee & Tea with the Principal	11/13/15 eChoices Application Deadline
11/02/15 STAR Nova Session 2 Begins	11/13/15 School Play: Mathilda
11/04/15 Booster Club Meeting	11/14/15 Ping Pong Fundraiser
11/06/15 Marking Period One Ends	11/18/15 Minimum Day
11/09/15 Emergency Drills	11/19/15 Minimum Day
11/11/15 No School	11/20/15 Minimum Day
11/12/15 Make-Up Picture Day	11/20/15 Prospective Family Tour
11/12/15 SSC / ELAC Meeting	11/23/15 Thanksgiving Break Begins