January 30, 2015

CALENDAR... Looking Ahead

Feb. 2  School Bd. Meeting 6 pm
Feb. 6  Early Release 1 pm
Feb. 12 4th Grade Music program
        6:30 pm
Feb. 13 Popcorn Day!
        5th Gr to TMS for “Real
        Game of Life” 8:50-10:10
Feb. 16 NO SCHOOL –
        President’s Day
Feb. 18 Parent group mtg. 6:30
Feb. 20 Accountability assembly
        8:40 am
        Early Release 1 pm
Feb. 25 a.m. Kinder field trip
        8:45-11:00
Feb. 27 Popcorn Day!
        p.m. Kinder field trip
        12:20-2:15
Mar. 2-6 Classified Apprec. Wk.
Mar. 3  Spring pictures
Mar. 6  Watch D.O.G. 9-11:30
        Early Release 1 pm

Notes from Administration

Congratulations! We have made it through half the school year. Our students just completed our winter testing for Math and Reading. We are very excited about the growth from the fall testing that all our students are making. We have a dedicated group of staff that has spent the last Friday working on planning and adjusting their lessons to keep school engaging and focused on continued growth for our students. We will be preparing for the state testing in the next couple of months – more information will be coming in late February with specifics.

OBOB – Oregon Battle of the Books!

We have started battles for Oregon Battle of the Books! We have 37 teams in grades 3 – 5 participating. Kids are reading books and doing a great job. If your child is on a team – please keep encouraging them to read the books. The school brackets are posted on our library windows, check them out!!!

TAG Testing Opportunity

Our district Talented and Gifted testing day is coming up. TAG testing is taking place (March 7th) and that acceleration testing will be taking place on March 7th & April 18th (it's a two step process). This is district wide testing and will only be offered on that day, except for extenuating circumstances (ex. death in the immediate family). Sports are not a reason to reschedule and they will need to make a choice whether to test this year or go to their sporting event. Please contact your child’s classroom teacher and they will work with our building TAG coordinator Jocelyn Mendelssohn.

TES Parent Group Meeting (note the date change)

Our newly revised TES parent group will be meeting Wednesday February 18th @ 6:00 pm. (This is a date change – the original meeting was scheduled for 2/10/15 but needed to be changed). Agenda items include reviewing the revised By-laws, budget and Family Fun Night.

From the Health Room:
Please be sure to check with your child’s teacher about treats for Valentine’s Day. Many classrooms have students who have dietary restrictions, and we need to take precautions with foods that will be shared among the whole class. Some foods will need to be checked in through the Health Room. Thank you for your understanding about this critical need.
Winter Cold & Flu season reminders

We have been doing daily reminders at morning meeting about coughing into our elbows and the importance of washing our hands. If your child is sick with a fever or extensive cold and cough, please have them stay home. Make sure they are fever free for 24 hours without medication prior to returning to school. Also, call the front office for attendance if they are going to be absent. For a student missing more than a couple of days, we can arrange for work to be ready for pick-up in the front office. Thank you in advance for keeping our school community healthy!

Warmly,
Brooke Wagner

Ravenous Readers

Congratulations to the following award winners, for November/December reading. PhD’s read over 1000 minutes outside of school, Master’s 650-999, Bachelor’s 350-649.


PhD December: Owen S., Madelyn C., Liam W., Kate P., Isabella W., Katalena D., Max S., Connor P., Erin M., Khalil Z., Paige G., Zander W., Cloe C., Tessa O., Brody T., Kaley T., Natalie P., Alanna J., Chelsea M., Reese W., Peyton R.

Master’s


Bachelor’s


Liko D., Addison N., James B., Peter G., Andrew J., Allison R., Rebecca P., Dane L.

Empathy Awards
Empathy means “Knowing and caring how others feel”. The following students received awards at our December assembly for their care for others – congratulations!!!


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From the Health Room:
To avoid spreading the flu:

Wash your hands and your child’s hands often, using soap and water. Alcohol-based cleaners also work well. And keep your hands and your child's hands away from your face and his or her face.

Keep your child home from school, day care and other public places until your child is feeling better and his or her fever has been gone for at least 24 hours. The fever needs to have gone away on it’s own without the help of medicine.

Ask people living with your child, especially those at high risk for complications from the flu, to talk to their doctors about preventing the flu. They may get antiviral medicine to keep from getting the flu from your child.

To prevent the flu in the future, have your child get the flu vaccine. Teach your child to cover his or her mouth when he or she coughs or sneezes.

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Maude Kerns Art Center winter schedule is open to students, with a variety of classes. Informational flyers are available at our office, or you can visit www.mkartcenter.org or phone 541-345-1571 for more information.

Kindergarten Search
Do you have or know a child who will be five years old by Sept. 1, 2015? If so, please contact the TES office or share this form with them. We don’t want to miss anyone at Registration... Thanks!

Child’s Name ___________________________
Birth date ___________ Phone ___________
Parent’s Name ____________________________
Address _____________________________

Please return this form to the TES office. We will host a new family/kinder orientation meeting March 16th, at 5:30.

It is the policy of Springfield Public Schools and its Board of Education that there will be no discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, color, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age or disability in any educational programs, activities or employment. Persons having questions about equal opportunity and/or nondiscrimination should contact the Director of Human Resources at 525 Mill Street, Springfield, OR 97477. Contact: Phone (541) 726-3203.

Happy Valentines
Greetings fellow Thurston Elementary School Cheetah parents, teachers, staff, and students. For my contribution to the newsletter this month, I will be touching upon the area of “mindfulness” and how it can help with stress.

First, a brief description providing background and definition of mindfulness may be helpful. Zgierska and his colleagues, in a 2009 article, defined mindfulness as "the intentional, accepting and non-judgemental focus of one's attention on the emotions, thoughts and sensations occurring in the present moment.” Mindfulness involves being aware of and attending to, moment-by-moment, our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, characterized mainly by "acceptance" - without judging whether they are right or wrong. Mindfulness focuses the human brain on what is being sensed at each moment, instead of on its normal rehashing/rehearsal on the past or on the future. Mindfulness has been an integral component of Buddhist principles for thousands of years. It is considered as a practice of awareness and presence rather than tied in with any religious or spiritual practices. Jon Kabat-Zinn is credited as bringing the practices of mindfulness into the mainstream and more specifically, into the world of clinical practices, hospitals, treatment programs, and work environments with great success.

For many of us, the world and our daily lives are very stressful. As a familiar example, how many of us can relate to ruminating the lists in our heads as parents, partners, and friends regarding what we got done, what we didn’t get done, what we need to get done, and how in the world are we going to get such-and-such done. This is stress that is associated with the past and the future, which takes the mind and body away from the present, or simply “being.” When caught in this mindset, the person’s mind can become so stressed it can also impact the body’s ability to relax. This also involves an automatic rush of stress-related chemicals that the brain directs to deal with the stressful situation, as well as increased heart rate and other physical body signs of stress. All in all, over extended periods of time, this can take its toll, both physically and mentally. The missing piece, to reiterate, is being able to remain in the present – simply being without doing, noticing without judging; quite simply, breathing and taking in information through one’s senses.

Here’s one activity that you and your family can do to practice mindfulness, particularly with the mild winter we are having. It is called a “mindfulness walk.” For this type of walk, instead of thinking about the walk for the goal of exercising and staying active, think about the walk to “experience and describe the experience.” Tell yourself and your family before the walk that you all will be doing a new type of walk in which each of you will be using your five senses (describe them if your young ones do not know what the five senses are – taste, touch, smell, sight, sound) to experience the walk. Encourage each family member to try not to think about past or future – such as work or homework that needs to get done, or the phone call to your friend yesterday that didn’t go so well. Then tell your family that following the walk, you will gather as a family to each describe the person’s own experience of the walk. Do not judge, simply listen. At the beginning of the walk, have each person including yourself take three slow cleansing breaths to help relax and clear the mind of stress. During the walk, try to remain as silent as possible so each person’s brain can simply take in the information through their senses rather than focusing on conversation. You might want to skip taste unless there are edible flowers or berries along the way of the walk, which I am not aware of as existing for this time of the year. After the walk, each person will describe what they smelled, what they saw with their eyes, and so on.

I hope you have fun with your mindfulness walk, and consider ways to bring mindfulness into your daily lives. Feel free to contact me at (541) 221-4468, craig-steinberg@comcast.net, and check out my website at craigsteinbergphd.com.

I hope this information has been helpful and informative. I look forward to providing another piece in the next newsletter.