

In The News

from the Director

It is almost summer. That means we have the opportunity to share a more relaxed time with our children, settle in for the summertime heat, and find some very good books to read. We always send book lists home for our children. The older students are required to read and respond to books that we think will enrich their minds.

I think it is important that parents, too, set aside time for reading that will give them something to think about. There are three important books by Harvard professor and school psychologist **Dr. Dan Kindlon** that deserve your time and attention.

The first is ***Too Much of a Good Thing***. We all want the best for our children. We attempt to provide them with the good life. We think it important to keep our children safe from any disappointment and experience a life free from hardship and pain. Dr. Kindlon's work depicts how in our well-meaning attempt to keep our children happy at all times, we over indulge them and, unwittingly, set them up for childhood and teenage depression. This is an important book. Dr. Kindlon says about children:

"...their happiness as adults is largely dependent on the tools we give them, tools that will allow them to develop emotional maturity-to be honest with themselves, to be empathetic, to take initiative, to delay gratification, to learn from failure and move on, to accept their flaws, and to face the consequences when they've done something wrong."

Alpha Girls discusses the research about the type of teenage girl growing up in America today. The research in this book contradicts the findings of Mary Pipher's ***Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls***.

Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys discusses the "physical and emotional well-being of teenage boys--and the unique risks and dangers they face during the most pivotal time of their lives."

I highly recommend that parents who want to raise healthy children, set aside time to consider the studies in these books.

I wish you a safe and healthy summer and look forward to seeing you on August 24 for our first day of school.

Morrie Sorin

Dates to Remember

May 25 (Monday)
Memorial Day
School Closed

May 28 (Thursday)
Shakespeare
"The Comedy of Errors"
Trinity Prep - 7:00pm
No After Care

May 29 (Friday)
Grade 8 Graduation
Last day of School
Dismissal - 11:30am

June 1-3 (Mon-Wed)
Teacher Post-Planning



KINDERGARTEN

The **Kindergarten** children took very seriously their unit on "Conservation." They made books about ways their families can reduce their use of paper, of water and electricity. After bringing home each book and reading it to their parents, the children reported that their families had made changes to help conserve our resources.

The **Kindergarten** children decided to check the usage of water in the school and became "Water Detectives." They made magnifying glasses and headbands with the words "Water Detective" on them. They took the responsibility for checking all the water sources in the school for leaks and drips. They learned that gallons of water are wasted each day from leaking sinks and faucets.

The children went to the main building to check the boy's rest room, the girl's restroom, the drinking fountain and the sink for possible leaks. They used their ears to listen for the noise of leaking toilets and their eyes to see drips. The next stop was the outdoor water fountains, and the rest of the classrooms. As they walked, they kept a record of each water source. Where ever a leak was detected, it was recorded on a checklist and a report was made to Morrie about areas on our campus that needed attention. The homework for the children that day was to be a "Water Detective" at home and to show their family where repairs may be needed.

For the school-wide Earth Day/Solar Day, and in keeping with our unit on time, the class has been working on a solar clock. We did research on the internet and asked Morrie to make a very large clock face for us. The children went outside on the hour, carefully placing the clock in the same spot, and held an angled gnomon in the center. We then wrote a number at the end of the shadow to reflect the time.

The children also worked on creating "Solar Art" for the event. They noticed that objects they had displayed in the science room had left their shapes on the paper as the paper around the display faded. To see if light caused the changes, the children experimented by cutting out two shapes and placing them on colored paper. One paper was placed outside in the

sun and the other was left in the classroom. At the end of the day, the comparison showed the paper out in the sun had faded, leaving a silhouette of the shape on top of it. The one in the classroom had not changed. The conclusion the children reached was that sunlight can take the color out of paper. Each student made shapes out of white paper to put on top of dark colored paper. The shapes were left in the sunlight and our "Solar Art" was created and displayed on Solar Day.

In math the **Kindergarten** is working in a book of subtraction problems they created. Each child made up a subtraction problem and a "work book." When a child's problem is next, he/she stands up and reads the problem, then everyone does the subtraction needed to solve it.

The children are working on a continuing year long unit on the Earth's habitats. At this time the children are learning about the desert and the plants and animals that live there. Each child will choose a desert animal to research and to study in depth.



FIRST GRADE



In Language Arts our students demonstrate reading for meaning as they search for one of the elements of fairy tales: good versus evil. In "The Sisters Grimm" the girls must take on the family responsibility of being fairy tale detectives. Their first case is a roller-coaster ride of an adventure to stop a giant from destroying their new hometown while trying to understand why their parents mysteriously disappeared.

In Social Studies we are learning that there are different ways to become "famous." One way has to do with how others view you. Some accomplishments that make you "famous" change peoples' lives for the better and still others, unfortunately, change peoples' lives for the worse. Who do we want to be? That will be the quest for this month and you will see the response in writing. This week in our research

we included Betsy Ross, Barack Obama, Neil Armstrong and Rosa Parks.

The last two skills in **1st Grade** Math will be our focus this month: measuring length, mass, capacity and temperature as well as fractions. As always we will progress at our own pace, speed and levels while we continue to practice our other skills, work on our math facts and continue to be challenged by problem solving activities.

This month new research about U.S. kids' health was reported and it's not good news. The foods they are eating will, later on, lead them to diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure. One out of every five 4-year olds are overweight or obese. The lack of exercise is another big factor. This month in Science we will learn about nutrition and how it affects every cell and organ of your body. We will begin by breaking our own bad habits. I encourage you to enter the MyPyramid.gov website to help you in making healthy food choices for your entire family. Our **First Graders** will be packing their lunches and filling out charts to record the food choices they are making. So, be ready to be challenged about the foods you are providing at home. This will be a great opportunity for the entire family to start making a change towards eating better and exercising more.

May is also the month we have our first standardized test-the S.A.T.'s. I will be sending more information as we get closer to the date.

SECOND GRADE



Second Grade is in the middle of our unit on Westward Expansion. Some of the topics that we will be covering include the Trail of Tears, the Louisiana Purchase, and the Oregon Trail. We will be comparing the Pioneers' reasons for traveling West with the Colonists' reasons for venturing to the New World. We will look at the sacrifices both groups had to make for a chance at a better life.

Second Grade has also been working on reading and writing their own version of *The Comedy of Errors* to read

to first grade. They have all chosen their parts and have used this as an opportunity to practice their fluency and expression.

As summer vacation approaches I want to remind everyone that they need to continue reviewing their math facts during the summer. This way everyone will be ready for the beginning of third grade.

Second Grade has been working on taking responsibility for their actions both with their friends and in their schoolwork. This is a good subject to talk to your child about at home. We have been trying to remember to make others feel better about themselves and not worse, and remembering that words can hurt. In our schoolwork we are remembering to do our best work and to do the work that is asked of us not what we think the assignment should be. This can be hard sometimes but I appreciate all the encouragement that they get from home!

THIRD GRADE

Science

It's time for our last big science project! **Third Graders** will have the choice of five topics to research and then must learn at least three interesting things about their topic. They will present the information to the class in the form of a lesson- they get to be the teachers! They can be as creative as they like in their presentation, but the information must be included. They can come up with an activity such as a game, or an art project such as a diorama or model. Or they might create a tv show! Anything except a poster! The presentations are due on May 21st.

Math

We are fast approaching the end of the school year and are currently preparing for the Stanford Achievement Test which will be administered the week of May 18 – 22. The tests will be given in the mornings only and will include many breaks. A good way to help your child do their best is to make certain they get a good night's sleep and a healthy breakfast. They need to come to school on time or risk missing parts of the exam. We begin at 8:00 sharp and any late-comers will have to stay in the office until we begin a new section. We try to keep the anxiety level to a minimum and assure the children that their performance on the S.A.T. does not determine their entry to the next grade level.

Social Studies

Third Graders will end the school year by continuing their study of Ancient Rome. The fall of Rome will be especially

important, as this leads into the beginning of the Middle Ages - the starting point of **4th Grade** Social Studies. Students will focus on the various factors that led to the fall of Rome including ineffective leadership, barbarian invasions, and an empire too large to run efficiently. Students will be able to apply concepts learned in earlier lessons including: communication is key in running an empire, breakdowns in organization lead to breakdowns in cultural advancement, the constant threat of war diminishes the importance of education.

Language Arts

In Language Arts, students will continue their grammar studies by learning more about verb tenses. After students finish "The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe", they will continue learning about the challenges of growing up by reading "The Whipping Boy." This novel also sets the stage for studying the Middle Ages in **4th Grade**. As they follow the adventures of Jemmy and Prince Brat, students will connect with the recurring themes of friendship, loyalty, and the search for identity.



FOURTH GRADE

Science

It's time for our last big science project! **Fourth Graders** will have their choice of topics to research and then must learn at least three interesting things about their topic. They will present the information to the class in the form of a lesson- they get to be the teachers! They can be as creative as they like in their presentation, but the information must be included. They can come up with an activity such as a game, or an art project such as a diorama or model. Or they might create a tv show! Anything except a poster! The presentations are due on May 21st.

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In order to prepare for the standardized test, **Fourth Graders** are solving word problems, reviewing the basic operations, fractions, rounding to the nearest ten, hundred, thousand, and ten thousand as well as reviewing their geometric shapes, perimeter, area, volume, etc. This also helps them prepare for the fifth grade level math skills (can you believe they're going to be in fifth grade?)

Social Studies

4th Graders will end the school year with the study of exploration of the New World. Their understanding of the Renaissance and the scientific advancements that made world wide exploration possible have set the stage for learning about the realities of New World Exploration. The focus will be on the Conquistadors from Spain and the New World tribes they conquered including the Aztec and Inca civilizations.

Language Arts

After finishing "Tuck Everlasting", students will end the year by reading Native tales of North and South America. These stories provide students with a unique perspective of the natural world. The wisdom of these stories can be especially appreciated after **4th Graders** learned about the advanced civilizations that were conquered in South and Central America. Students will continue their study of spelling by focusing on changes made to root words when endings such as "s", "ing", and "ed" are added.



Noticias en Español

Grades K-4 will continue expanding their use of new and previously learned vocabulary through conversation, games, songs and stories. In addition, their speaking ability will continue to be reinforced by the use of student-to-student dialogue. As part of the end-of-the-year curriculum, the students will also be reviewing all previously learned material.

5th Grade will continue working on the – ir present tense verbs through the use of orals, conversations and student-to-student dialogue. They will begin to work with the tener (to have) verbs by learning different expressions like “tener hambre” (to be hungry), as well.

6th Grade will continue to learn the grammatical aspect of ser (“to be”) and the possessive adjectives (mi, tu, su). Through oral and written exercises, the new and past material will be reviewed in order to enhance the use of the vocabulary.

7th Grade has been working hard to master a difficult area to learn in Spanish. Indirect object pronouns (mi, te, le) take a lot of practice to master and 7th grade has been working hard to do so. In addition, they have been working on understanding how to use adjectives as nouns through the use of oral and written exercises. New and past material will also be reviewed as part of the end-of-the-year curriculum.

8th Grade will be learning the vocabulary associated with how to make plans to give or attend a party. They will also be learning how to describe gift-giving and will learn the present-progressive (cantando, baliando). Before finishing the entire Paso a Paso 1 book, the 8th graders will also learn the negative constructions, like nunca and nada.



FIFTH GRADE

Language Arts

Grade 5 will focus on writing tasks that incorporate all the grammar and comprehension skills we have studied this year. Our final two books of the year will be individual choices taken from our school or home libraries.

Social Studies

In **Fifth Grade** we have continued our studies of the founding of Jamestown through our historical novel and glimpses at original sources to verify or dispute items found in the book. We also played a computer simulation of the founding to reinforce material discussed and read in class. We then studied some geography when reviewing Hudson's quest for the Northeast passage, and when tracing the circuitous route the Jamestown colonists followed. We also explored the bartering practices the colonists and natives engaged in through original source material and via some trading of our own!

SIXTH GRADE

Language Arts

Grade 6 students are becoming much more adept with main idea and grammar skills necessary to write a coherent articulate paper. We will continue this study through our final month of school. Please read the papers or pieces written in the student journals to see how much they have developed since the beginning of the year. Our final book is Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, the classic tale that introduces us to Huckleberry Finn, Injun Joe, Becky Thatcher, and that meddling Aunt Polly.

Both grades are involved as actors, singers, dancers, or mimes in Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* as citizens of Ephesus. While some students have speaking parts, others dance and sing and mime in order to create a hilarious adventure of mistaken identities and miscommunication.

Social Studies

We'll be finishing up our studies of native cultures with an Indigenous Culture Congress in which each student researches a culture and meets together to consider the needs, rights, and obligations of that culture as it encounters the modern world. We'll attempt to draft our own Indigenous Bill of Rights using the United Nations draft and the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights as models. We'll attempt to come up with some sort of consensus on issues like property rights, ownership of intellectual and artistic material, and cultural and political independence.

SEVENTH GRADE

Language Arts

The **7th Grade** is working on evaluative writing. They've learned that in Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought, evaluation is considered one of the highest levels of human thought. They've been trying to articulate the differences between high quality and low quality items by proposing the expected use of each item and then identifying the most relevant criteria for evaluation. Then they put the items to the test, determining which better exhibits the required criteria. Finally they must present their case convincingly to a skeptical audience. We'll be applying these skills to a final project in which they write a professional quality book or movie review.

Social Studies

Friday saw the completion of the **6-7th Grade** Geography Smackdown. How do you think you'd do in attempt to identify places like Togo, Albania, Suriname and Cambodia on a map of the world? After three grueling rounds, the **7th Grade** took the championship by identifying the Solomon Islands just two seconds ahead of their **6th Grade** competition. Our hard work this year learning the countries of the world paid off well for the **7th Grade**, who earn free homework passes for their efforts.



EIGHTH GRADE

Language Arts

We're beginning our study of the Holocaust by examining anti-semitism in Europe at the turn of the 20th Century. We've read *All Quiet on the Western Front* to gain a perspective on World War I and to see how it led directly to World War II. We'll also examine the pogroms in Russia and the long history of anti-semitism in Germany. Our aim is to understand how something as horrible as the Holocaust could have been perpetrated in a world linked by mass communication and still reeling from the horrors of the War to End All Wars.

Social Studies

Eighth Graders have been exploring how the Civil War changed the lives of all who lived through it. We examined original letters and documentary films about different aspects of the war, and several notable figures and commoners alike. We also studied the biographies of extraordinary women that flouted the conventions of their times, and then created our own characters and wrote each other letters in their voice, commenting on historical milestones such as the surrender of Ft. Sumpter or the Battle of Gettysburg.

MATHEMATICS

The Algebra I students took their final exam and have now completed the course earning them their first high school credit. Congratulations to Patricia, Alex, Nick, Maddi, Laura, Christina, Ana, Sean, Becky, Monica, Justin, and Catherine !!! All other students are reviewing and preparing for SAT's. All students should be congratulated for their excellent accomplishments this year.

COMPUTERS

In computer classes lower grades continue to explore online games that reinforce basic skills in problem solving, phonics, and arithmetic.

First through **Sixth Graders** continue practicing keyboarding skills for the first part of classes, at their respective levels of course, via online typing games and tests.

Second and **Third Graders** have completed researching "green homes" for their slide shows, while upper grades presented their reports on alternative energies. Middle school also grappled with spreadsheets, learning how to input simple formula.

SCIENCE

Solar Day was a wonderful success and everyone enjoyed relevant information and fun activities. Congratulations to everyone for their enthusiastic participation, especially the **3rd Grade** solar boat team, the **5th Grade** solar car team, and **4th Grade** solar chef, Marielle, for their 1st place wins. One solar cooking team and one solar car team will be representing New School at the Florida Solar Energy Center competitions on May 9th in Cocoa.

Grades 5-7 are reviewing the Periodic Table of Elements, and practicing the fun and delicious activity of balancing chemical equations. This is a multi-pronged unit that utilizes informational fact, conceptual design, mathematical concepts and operations, hands-on activities designed to solidify concepts, and applicable connections to real world issues. Students always look forward to this unit's challenging calculations and molecular concepts. It probably doesn't hurt that they get to eat the balanced equations when they are done!



MUSIC

From the Beatles to Johann Sebastian Bach. These days our music room is filled with the sounds of Bach. The **Third through Eighth Graders** are delving into the different musical periods of Western Music, especially the Baroque era. We are discovering how Baroque music is structured. The musical forms of the invention and the fugue are highlighted by us singing several different instrumental compositions of Bach, using the words "do", "da", "ba" "bum" and "dum". One of the hardest things to do in music is keep a steady beat and subdivide the beats. We are using our new drums to experience the different note durations and the lower grades love to play together.

Kindergarten is continuing to sing new songs, and we have discovered a bunch of silly songs with rhymes. We are even making up our own rhymes to go with the melody. We are discovering how to improvise and make up our own melodies while we scat.

First Graders are experiencing songs that are sung by kids in actual Broadway musicals!! "Castle on a Cloud" and Tomorrow are our favorites so far. We hope to learn songs from at least seven different musicals featuring children. We will end our year by watching one of them!

Second Grade is in another century. They are singing the songs that Laura Ingalls Wilder might have known. They are reading the book in their class and when Jessica mentioned Laura was singing, "Buffalo Gals". They all jumped up and told her they knew that song!! They are also learning about harmony and are identifying the tonic and dominant chords. We hope to be able to play the bass lines of a couple of our songs before school gets out. Ask them about the tonic and dominant chord!

COACH'S CORNER

Physical Education

It has been an active year with K-2 working on ball handling skills, physical movement, space awareness, outdoor games, jump roping, sportsmanship of course and some team play. Our 1st and 2nd graders are enjoying the old game of kickball with some modifications for safety and success. The 3rd -8th grade finished their President's Council Test last week, students who have successfully completed the test will receive their award at our awards ceremony May 21st. We also completed our badminton tournament, our 1st place winners will also be recognized at the awards ceremony.

Summer safety tips will start next week during PE, don't forget to ask your child for the tip of the day!

Athletics

We finished our Track Season with the largest New School Prep Track Team. Both the boys and girls team competed in the Championship match with the girls 4 X 100 bringing home a bronze medal!

Congratulations are in order for our New School Prep Knights Boy's and Girl's Tennis Champions. Both teams took 1st place in the Metro League Tennis Program, with the help of our coach Chad Newell and team mom Randi Frederick the team had success written all over it!! We are VERY PROUD of each and every player!

The Athletic program will have a two day girls volleyball clinic in May for any rising 5th – 8th grade girl interested in playing volleyball next year. Dates and times to be determined.

The annual Ice Cream Social Awards Ceremony for the NSP Knights athletes and 3rd – 8th grade will be held at the Marks St. Center on Thursday, May 21st from 1:15pm-2:45pm. Parents and volunteers are welcome.

