

# In The News

## from the Director

Welcome back to our 16<sup>th</sup> school year at New School Preparatory. We have an exciting year planned for our students and hope that you will enjoy the school year along with your children.

At the start of any school year, it is important to focus on the messages we want to deliver to our children as they grow. Barbara Colorosa reminds us that there are six critical life messages to give children:

- I believe in you.
- I trust you.
- I know you can handle this.
- You are listened to.
- You are cared for.
- You are very important to me.

There have been too many disturbing news articles this past year about bullying. Bullying takes many forms. We would like to think that our children would never participate in such a horrendous activity and pray that our children would never be on the receiving end of a bully attack. At New School we watch very carefully to ensure the physical and emotional safety of your child. However, the chance of your child being involved in bullying in any situation or environment, as a target, bystander, or perpetrator is very high.

Rosalind Wiseman, author of BULLY PULPIT, has some good advice worthy of consideration:

### 1. Skip the easy answers.

Don't tell a kid who's being targeted, "Walk away," "Be nice," "Ignore it." These phrases do not work because most of the time the tween or teen has to interact with the perpetrator again and again, at school, in the neighborhood, online or over the phone. What's more, telling a child to blow off a bully doesn't help her build the skills needed to competently face disrespectful people.

### 2. Acknowledge that your child could be at least partly in the wrong.

I know, I know. This is way hard. But believing your child couldn't be mean isn't unconditional love. It's denial. Before you decide you know who did what to whom, ask your child, "If the other person were right here telling me this story, what would he say?"

### 3. Don't let the bystander off the hook.

If you learn your child saw a cruel verbal or photo message and didn't report it to you or another trusted adult, explain—again!—the difference between snitching (telling because you want to get the person in trouble) and reporting (telling because you want to solve a problem). Underscore that your family believes in speaking out when someone is not being treated with dignity. Your tween or teen also needs to know that forwarding an abusive message or image may not be quite the same as creating it, but it's still so hurtful that it's a form of bullying.

### 4. Hold the line.

When the subject of monitoring and setting boundaries comes up, parents often say to me, "But I want to respect my teen's privacy, or else he'll stop talking to me." Drop this thinking.

*The reality is that anyone who uses social networking doesn't have privacy. He forfeits it the moment personal information goes online. Your intervention is not going to drive kids underground— they're already there.*

So in addition to spot-checking what they send and receive, clearly and repeatedly articulate your policy for tech, including a crystal-clear rule that it can't be used to attack others in any way for any reason. Spell out consequences for violations and enforce them without fail. And don't believe for a moment that because tweens and teens are more tech-savvy than most adults, you can't supervise. You can and should go into their digital worlds, *and be as hands-on there as you are in the rest of their lives.*

As we begin our new school year, let us ensure that we deliver good messages to our children every day and work hard to keep them safe.

**Morrie Sorin**

### Dates to Remember

**September 6 (Monday)**  
Labor Day - School Closed

**September 9-10 (Thu-Fri)**  
Teacher Workshop  
Non-Student Day

**September 23 (Thursday)**  
Open House  
7:00pm-8:30pm



## KINDERGARTEN

The **Kindergarten** has been busy solving riddles. Everyday the children give “clues” to things in the classroom for their friends to guess. The children have created a “Guess Who?” bulletin board. On one of two- discs, the children wrote clues about themselves; hair color, eye color, and a favorite activity. On the cover disc, each child made his/her face using yarn and buttons representing his/her eye and hair color. Together we read them to the class ending with “Who Am I?” The children had to listen to the clues and guess who the author was.

The children are using watermelons to learn math and science concepts. The math skills involve estimation and weighing and measuring. The children will estimate how many seeds are in the watermelon. They will weigh themselves and then estimate if the watermelon would weigh more or less than their weight.

An important skill in science is observation. Before cutting into the watermelon, the children observed it; looking closely to see all the colors on the outside. They were surprised that it was not solid green, but had some yellow and brown on it. The children observed and described the shape and size of the watermelon. They drew the watermelon and carefully colored it as it really appears. Eating the watermelon was an important part of the activity! The children thought up adjectives to describe the taste. The final activity was putting watermelon pieces that were left into a blender and then pouring it into cups to freeze into ice pops. This was an opportunity for them to hear and use the words “liquid” and “solid” as they observed the changes in the freezing (and melting) process. All of this is to the accompaniment of the children singing “Down By the Bay, Where The Watermelons Grow”!

The children are learning about families and will make a family tree using apples to represent the people in their families. They are working with graphing to see how many people are in each of their families, and verbalizing how they are alike and different. After discussing who grandparents are, the children will write letters to their grandparents and we will walk to the mailbox to mail them. The children will learn about the post office and how the letters will get to grandparents who live far away. We will use a map of the United States to find where each grandparent lives and will see who lives the farthest from Florida.

After learning about themselves and their families, the children will begin a unit on the human body. The children will make life-sized shapes of their bodies and will then learn about skin, muscles, joints and bones. As we learn a new bone in the body, the children will color it, cut it out and paste it onto their body shape. The children will learn the song “Dem Bones” to sing as they work!



## FIRST and SECOND GRADE



In Language Arts our first unit of study is "Fairytales." Beginning with the classics by the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen, our unit looks at different stories and the elements that make them a fairytale. The characters are simple - good or bad. Usually some type of magic is used to right the wrongs. In the end, the good are rewarded and the bad are punished. As we immerse in the world of literature our students are experiencing language in all its modes, oral, written and visual on a daily basis. They will be provided with high quality literature books for extensive personal reading and/or listening. There are opportunities to explore, develop and refine their reading, writing and oral language abilities.

In addition we will have an in depth look at the story of Cinderella and present the version of the story from several different countries. We will discover that different cultures share the same elements of the story. We hope to end the unit with a Fairy Tale Museum and a performance that supports the learning

that took place in this language rich environment. Details on that will be discussed as the time comes.

As we follow Cinderella into the Social Studies unit we are visiting countries all over the world in search of her slipper. We visit: China, Egypt, Africa, Turkey, Cambodia, Mexico and the United States. Basic geography is introduced as we brush up on our map reading skills. They are researching the country they picked and paying particular attention to the differences in the cultures. Students will gain an understanding of the diversities and similarities within the cultures and how this enriches our world.

In our problem solving approach to math, the students are developing a better understanding of our monetary system. With the activity we call "Pennies, Nickels and Dimes in the Bank" we are experiencing working with money while relying on number understanding, knowing the values of coins, as well as, counting by 5's and 10's to figure out the value of a stack of dimes and nickels. We have learned to organize our work with graphs and charts, we are making estimates and figuring out that an 'educated guess' is better than a number from 'the top of our heads' (it has to make sense!). As always, **all our activities are at the individual child's pace and level.**

In our "Science of Mummification Unit" we are understanding the scientific process by learning to communicate the findings of our first experiment of the year. By solving the problem of which desiccant to use our students are immediately using our 'hands on' approach to observe, make predictions and work with variables as they formulate and test their hypothesis.

THIRD and FOURTH GRADE



**Math**

The goal of **Grade 3-4** math in the first few weeks is to encourage children to see and think mathematically, to look for patterns, to turn ideas on their heads, to look for probabilities, to see math in nature, to look at numbers in new and different ways. When students can see number and mathematics as separate from worksheets, they will be able to see math everywhere.

Once again, we emphasize that the equal sign does NOT mean, “The answer is...” but rather the equal sign tells us that what is on one side of the equal sign is the “same as” what is written on the other:  $6+4=4+6$  or  $5+4=6+3$ . This basic understanding in the early grades has a direct impact on the student understanding algebra.

**Language Arts**

In Language Arts, **Third and Fourth Graders** are busy learning to recognize common and proper nouns, and are also sharpening comprehension skills. Students will begin reading Sarah Plain and Tall, a story involving the themes of abandonment, loss, and - most importantly - love.

Students are enjoying their study of proverbs very much and have started out with well known American proverbs. As the term goes on, they will encounter proverbs from other lands, and will be required to critically examine them to find their meaning.

**Social Studies**

**Third and Fourth Graders** are discovering Florida's rich history in Social Studies. Topics include native Floridians, explorers, and Florida history rich St. Augustine - the nation's oldest continuously occupied European-established city and port in the United States.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St.\\_Augustine,\\_Florida#cite\\_note-nhl-1](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Augustine,_Florida#cite_note-nhl-1)

A trip is planned for early October to St. Augustine. Students will be prepared to understand the history behind the Castillo de San Marcos, the Spanish military hospital, and the Florida Heritage Museum.



## FIFTH and SIXTH GRADE



**Fifth and Sixth Graders** began geography studies with the continent of South America, and will continue with the countries and cities of the other continents throughout the year.

### Math

Students have been taking assessments and are now settled into math groups according to their experience. All seem comfortable and ready to take on new math challenges.

In addition to our daily math lessons, students will be engaging in long-term projects that will give them a taste of how math is used in the real world.

First up, we'll be building model bridges with glue and balsa wood. We're studying bridge history and structure and applying geometric principles to distribute weight and counteract forces. Students will use spreadsheets to keep a budget of the materials and labor they expend. In the end, we'll apply weights and test the bridges for strength and durability.

### Language Arts

Students are getting excited about studying scary stories. We're reading Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*, the story of a young girl whisked into a parallel world where her parents are completely attentive to her. The only problem: they don't want her to ever leave. From there we'll be exploring Edgar Allen Poe's *The Raven*, and some of the more grim of Grimm's *Fairy Tales*. Meanwhile we'll be writing our own scary stories and poetry.



### Social Studies

**Fifth and Sixth Graders** are enjoying their study of Inca culture. This short-lived civilization met its demise with the onset of Spanish exploration in South America. Students have focused on the importance of roads in empire building, religion as a determining factor in a civilization's actions, and the reason behind assimilating defeated tribes into the conquering culture.



## SEVENTH and EIGHTH GRADE

**Language Arts**

Students are learning to recognize the various propaganda techniques that are constantly bombarding them. We're looking at advertising methods, government propaganda posters, and editorial cartoons to see how people's thoughts are often manipulated without their realizing it.

In reading, the students are really enjoying S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*, the raw tale of a small city gang whose more youthful members are not as rough or threatening as they try to portray themselves.

**Social Studies**

**Seventh and Eighth Graders** are spending this term familiarizing themselves with the characteristics of the constitutional government of the United States. Students will be immersed in constitutional law in order to prepare for the State Congressional Hearing competition in Orlando on January 7. Students will be required to act as constitutional experts as they work in teams to answer questions concerning all aspects of the United States Constitution as a panel. More details concerning this competition will be given once an exact location has been determined.

This month students are concentrating on the ideas of John Locke, the Founders' basic ideas about government, experiences that led to the American Revolution, and the formation of our initial national government Museum.

**Math**

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distribute weight and counteract forces. Students will use spreadsheets to keep a budget of the materials and labor they expend. In the end, we'll apply weights and test the bridges for strength and durability.

**SCIENCE**

For many people, the term "pressure" calls to mind images of work piling up, deadlines approaching, or conflicting schedules. In physics pressure is the force per unit area and there are numerous applications of this concept that can be applied in a wide variety of topics.

All classes learned that the formula or equation for pressure is the force divided by the area. In the standard international system of units, or SI units, force is measured in newtons for smaller areas and Pascals for larger areas.

**Grades 3-4** are exploring the idea that certain "core concepts" can be applied over a wide variety of subjects. They have investigated the properties of dry ice, learned about the MSDS, and expansion of gases leading to a build up of pressure. They found out what

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happened when pressure inside and outside of an object is not equal and how heating a gas can have an interesting (and delicious) outcome. We will be focusing on some of the great minds that have given us the theories and principles that govern our physical world. First up is Blaise Pascal.

**Grades 5-6** sought to discover the “why” behind several common phenomenon. Why do you sink in snow and how do you prevent it? Why is it harder to breathe at the top of a mountain? Why does a bed of nails work? Not surprisingly, the answer to all of these questions contained some aspect of “pressure”. We will be exploring the lives and careers of some of the great minds that have given us the principles behind our demonstrations. First up is Blaise Pascal.

**Grades 7-8** have been reviewing the “core concepts” that govern the science of everyday. Applying concepts to real world situations is imperative in the development and perfection of critical thinking and problem-solving. Utilizing the concepts of pressure, students are able to understand the mechanisms of many important circumstances. For example, blood pressure is the force that the blood exerts on a unit area of our artery walls. What causes the pressure to increase or decrease? Atmospheric pressure is the force from the weight of the atmosphere above us pushing down on a unit area. In a fluid, which is a liquid or a gas, the pressure increases with the depth of the fluid because there is a greater weight of fluid pushing down on each unit of area. So, why do our ears pop when ascending or descending through fluids?

Pascal's principle states that any pressure applied to an enclosed fluid is transmitted to every point in the fluid. This principle is the foundation for all hydraulic devices. We will be exploring the life and intellect of Blaise Pascal as well as the influences and obstacles inherent in the century that he lived.

Pressure is a fundamental physical concept with many applications and some very cool demonstrations. Students have been told that they should never attempt any of the demos on their own, so please reinforce this issue unless you are confident in your expertise in performing it safely (no matter how badly you would like to try it!).

## MUSIC

The Music year is beginning with a study of some of the first modern Broadway shows and composers. The music of Frank Loesser and Rogers and Hammerstein are some of the composers we are exploring.

We are also beginning the year brushing up our African Drumming skills. Music theory is integrated into the study of different musical forms featuring the fugue.

### Kindergarten

They are studying rhymes and watermelon in Diane's classroom and our music class is finding songs that use rhymes in their lyrics. We are also singing children's songs that everyone should know. We are exploring what a melody is and what makes rhythm. Already we have played several different percussion instruments found in our music studio.

### First-Second Grades

It is Fairy Tale time and in conjunction with their classroom studies of fairy tales, music class will study the operatic form. We will be studying the opera "Hansel and Gretel" and will experience learning and performing famous scenes from the opera.

### Third-Fourth Grades

We are starting on a wonderful music adventure, first stop Never Never Land and the music of "Peter Pan". In music theory, we will be reviewing the treble clef notes and reading simple rhythms.

## NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL (SPANISH NEWSLETTER)

We will start our school year reviewing what we have learned last year and practicing the vocabulary from the textbook “Paso a Paso”.

### Kindergarten

The children will be introduced in a fun and enjoyable way to Spanish language, a new language for them. They will learn the Spanish song “*Buenos dias a ti...*” (Good morning to you...) and expressions like “*hola*” (hello), “*buenos dias*” (good mornig), “*buenas noches*” (good night/evening), “*me llamo...*” (my name is). They will learn how to count up to ten.

### 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grades

We will introduce the class with a welcome song “*Buenos dias a ti...*” (Good morning to you...). They will learn basic greeting/farewells expressions and how to recognize and write the numbers, colors, and days of the week. Our first reading booklet will be “*Mi primer dia de clase*”.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grades

We will start this new school year reviewing greetings and farewells. The students will be introduced to school vocabulary (*el pupitre, el borrador, el cuaderno etc*) and expressions to indicate gender for not only nouns but also adjectives as English language does not have this type of gender identification. The students will also learn how to use the definite article “*el*” and “*la*”. Our first reading is “*¿Cómo soy yo?*” to incorporate the basic expressions learned.

### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

We will start using the “*Paso a Paso*” textbook along with its workbook. *Paso a Paso* is based on the belief that the purpose of learning Spanish is to communicate with the people who speak it and to understand their culture. We will start *Paso a Paso* with introduction of personal information, greeting/farewells, and cognates. It is important for the students to study the new vocabulary every day.

### 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

The students will learn how to use the verbs “*tener*” (to have) and “*ser*” (to be) in present tense; they will also learn how to differentiate the verbs “*ser*” and “*estar*” in Spanish as in contrast, English language uses a single verb (to be) for these two verbs in Spanish. In the coming week we will be working on the possessive adjectives *mi/tu/su*. The students have to practice the vocabulary every day.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

We will work on stem-changing verbs o/ue, such as *dormir/duermo* (to sleep), *poder/puedo* (can), *costar/cuesta* (to cost), *contar/cuenta* (to count). We will emphasize on the indirect object pronouns *me/te/le* like “*me/te/le duele la cabeza*”. **8<sup>th</sup> Grade** will also learn how to avoid redundancy in common expressions. It's important for the students to study the new vocabulary every day.