

# Ayers Ryal Side School News

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## Dear Parents,

It has been a busy first six weeks of 2009. The students have been working hard in all areas of the curriculum.

In an effort to reduce the use of paper and in conjunction with our efforts at recycling, this will be the last full school printing of the newsletter. We will be switching to electronic delivery of all newsletters on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Recently, you received a purple notice from the PTO asking you to update information for our database. If you are

## Preschool News

The three integrated preschool classes at Ayers Ryal Side have had a busy winter. And it looks like we won't be rounding the corner to spring any time soon! As a community service project, our preschoolers made Thanksgiving placemats, with colorful hand-print turkeys, for the residents of the Essex Park Rehabilitation Center in Beverly. Our January theme was DINOSAURS. The children got to experience making a paper mache volcano, and then delighted in "eruption" of the volcanoes at the end of month. We learned about fossils and made them for ourselves with dough and paint. We made dinosaur habitats, and pretended we were paleontologists searching for bones in our classroom. In February, our theme is SPACE. We are learning about our solar system and some of the constellations. The children already know many of the planets' names and love pretending to be in outer space in the dramatic play area. We've made some equipment that an astronaut might wear, and some of us will be taking a trip into outer space at the end of the month! We are looking forward to reading lots of Dr. Seuss and Eric Carle books in March. I'm thinking we may be trying some green eggs and ham in our classrooms.

Curious Creatures will be visiting the

currently receiving emails accompanying the connect ed messages, you do not need to do anything. You will automatically be added to the list. If you have not been receiving emails from me, please be sure to send in the information. If you would like to request a hard copy of our newsletters, you can do so.

I hope that you enjoy this issue of our newsletter - the teachers have worked together to provide an update of the wonderful learning taking place in all our classrooms! Wishing you a safe and relaxing Winter Vacation!

*Sue Charochak*

preschool classrooms in June to compliment our May theme about PONDSD. I expect we'll meet some turtles, snakes, frogs and other critters that make their homes near a pond. Two of our preschool classes have teamed up with Mrs. Egan's and Ms. Faria's classes for weekly Book Buddies. The older students go to the preschool classrooms and read books to their young buddies. The children, young and older, cannot wait for Book Buddy day each week, because of the special relationships that have been built. As always, be on the lookout for Beverly's Early Childhood Screening, which will happen again in the spring. The purpose of this screening for three and four year old children is twofold: *First*, children who may have special needs are identified early and are provided with appropriate services to enable them to be better prepared to enter kindergarten. *Second*, children who are found to be typically developing will be added to a pool of children who may be eligible as "Peer Models" in the Integrated Preschool for Fall 2009. The Peer program is a tuition-based program.

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## Upcoming Events

- ◆ Feb 25 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Open House
- ◆ March 10 - Early Release
- ◆ March 12 - Full Day K Parent Visits
- ◆ March 13<sup>th</sup> - Reading Festival Begins

## Half-Day Kindergarten

To celebrate Valentine's Day, the children reinforced math skills by playing BINGO with chocolate kisses and enjoyed the story of Arthur's Valentine. We also graphed special Valentine M & M's to practice the meaning of More and Less. For the winter season,

our students have decorated the classroom tree with mittens similar to the mittens in the story, "The Missing Mitten Mystery" by Steven Kellogg.

## Full Day Kindergarten Celebrates 100 Days!

Students in Full Day Kindergarten celebrated the first 100 days in school in their classrooms with several activities designed to reinforce the concept of one hundred. Structures were created with legos, the hallway was measured, stories were written, and the day culminated in a healthy

hundred day snack of trail mix.

The focus of our theme has been Winter!! Students will have the opportunity to showcase their work as parents visit the classroom on March 12 for our winter celebration. Save the Date!

## First Grade News

We will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school and Valentine's Day on Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. There will be a variety of multisensory centers for the students to participate at. We will be passing out valentine cards and having special snacks.

All first graders have been working hard to improve their reading fluency. Please continue to listen to your child read nightly. Also please

support your child with their weekly Focus Share assignment. We have enjoyed learning a little more about one another through this fun activity.

We will be completing Unit 5 in Everyday Math before vacation. Practicing math facts at home will be beneficial to your child's success in math.

## Second Grade News

The second grade will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school on Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-7:30pm. Students and parents will participate in a variety of multisensory activities to celebrate the number 100. This is a special time for the student and his or her parents to come complete centers together, so please leave siblings at home.

In Science, the second grade is studying the different types of soil, learning about composting and the

recycle cycle. We will watch a video called the Rotting Log. In Social Studies, we have been studying what attributes make a person a good citizen. We have read about people who exemplify these attributes, such as Eleanor Roosevelt, George Washington and Martin Luther King, Jr. We also had the opportunity to discuss the presidential inauguration and watch it live on television. It was an excellent experience for the students.

## Third Grade News

The third grade has been busy at work in all areas of the curriculum. In science, Mrs. Repp's class and Mrs. Tarr's class will complete their study of the properties of Rocks and Minerals the week after vacation, while Ms. Santiago's class is completing their study of the solar system. In math, students are working on Place Value and decimals, and will soon begin a unit on geometry. The students are doing a wonderful job mastering their math facts in multiplication and division,

while some have even begun to work on equations! In Reading, classes continue to work on increasing their vocabulary and are learning several strategies to help with comprehension. In Social Studies, students are learning about famous people who lived in Massachusetts and helped shape our history. We are all looking forward to working with our SMARTboards. It is truly an amazing tool and has enhanced every aspect of teaching and learning.



## Fourth Grade News

Mrs. Burns, Ms. Faria and Mrs. Johnson

The Everyday Math program continues to be exciting and challenging. We are working in our unit on division and the students are good at using the partial quotients method (even though our parents are still having a bit of difficulty!!) We are also becoming quicker with the multiplication facts but practice is still important.

Following February vacation, our classes will continue reading in literature circles and in Theme 6 in Literacy By Design. We will continue to practice strategies that they will need for the

MCAS ELA test. We also have written a long composition and compared our pieces of writing to an MCAS model piece.

Our Social Studies travel will take us to the Midwest region of the US. During the second trimester, the students experience electricity in science. They are using some of the nonfiction selections from the new literacy program to further their understanding.

Many thanks to the PTO who sponsored our field trip to Lowell Mills. It was a wonderful experience.



## Fifth Grade News

Fifth graders have been learning about the relationship between fractions and decimals in math. We are multiplying and dividing fractions to find equivalent fractions and will soon be converting fractions to decimals and percents using a mathematical formula. We began this unit by using a fraction stick to represent fractions. In history and social science, the students have been reviewing map skills, using study skills, and learning about the history, economics, and politics of the later colonial/pre-revolutionary period in North America. Fifth grade will be going to the Peabody Essex Museum again for our 3rd field trip in March to reinforce their learning in several areas of instruction. In science, the students are in the middle of our matter unit. We have been doing experiments to help understand the characteristics of solids, liquids, and gases. We were lucky enough to have had the PTO fund a terrific presentation done by the Discovery Museum in Acton. This program helped the students to grasp a concept that is abstract by doing many wonderful experiments that dealt with physical and chemical changes of matter. Can you imagine that there is a way to use a banana to hammer a nail into a board? After finishing up with the matter unit, we will be heading on to weather. We will continue using the computers on Tuesdays in science to some more great activities and lessons. We are starting a PowerPoint presentation on different weather phenomena that the students have researched as a part of a team. A.J. Burnett of Fox25 News will be coming to visit the fifth graders on February 12th to discuss the topic of weather.

# Specialist's Corner

## Music



Hopefully your fifth-grader is driving you crazy playing "Heart and Soul" on every piano they find! These students have been working hard learning the layout of a piano keyboard, how to find the note "C", and how to use all their fingers to play this lovely tune. They should also be able to sing it, so don't let them tell you otherwise! Grade Four students are learning all the states and capitals to the tune of "Turkey in the Straw" in preparation for our States Pageant that will be coming up sometime in the near future; Grade Three students are learning how to read music in preparation for getting their recorders; Grade 2 has been learning all about the instruments of the orchestra and has even learned how to conduct with a real baton! Grade 1 has spent some time talking about the Civil Rights movement and learning how music helped people feel brave—ask them about the Woolworth's Counter sit-in and the song "I'm gonna sit at the Welcome Table". And Kindergarten has been practicing singing by themselves in "If \_\_\_\_\_ had a special valentine....I wonder who she'd send it to?" and learning some very cool partner dances. February's a great month in music class—be sure to ask your super student about it!



## Physical Education

In PE, grades K-5 have been working hard practicing their basketball shooting. Grades 2-5 are finishing up with games of Basketball Golf where they shoot from various spots on the floor and try to make baskets. Grades K-1 are finishing the week with a lively game of animal tag to get their pulse rate up. After vacation, we will begin a unit on volleyball with beachballs.



## ART

In Art, we have been celebrating Chinese New Year, the artist, Grant Wood, winter landscape painting, and photo realistic self-portraits!



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## Library



We had a busy fall in the media center. The library volunteer program seems to be moving along smoothly. A big "thank you" to all of the parents who stepped up to help. We could not manage without you - especially in light of our new schedule.

In media center classes:

Kindergarten continues to practice book circulation procedures and appropriate listening and group discussion skills. In the lab we have been working on mouse control as we visit interactive coloring pages and jigsaw puzzles on line.

In Grade 1 we started the year using Spider Typer to begin to find letters on the keyboard. Currently we are creating masterpieces in MSPaint.

In Grade 2 we began by reviewing MSPaint. We spent several weeks exploring Jan Brett books and visiting her website. Currently we are using Hyperstudio tools to create simple animations by copying and altering individual cells. We just completed a flying bird. We are now working on the life cycle of a flower.

In Grade 3 we began the year using alphabetizing and key word skills in Little Explorers, an online dictionary / encyclopedia. We also created an idea web in Inspiration. We are now beginning to use that web to create a Powerpoint entitled "All About Me."

In Grade 4 we reviewed our keyboarding skills in Type to Learn 3, then we spent several weeks learning the basics of MSWord. Currently we are working on a states project in Hyperstudio.

Notice of Nondiscrimination: All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at the Beverly Public Schools are offered without regard to race, sex, color, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.