

January 2017



WE ARE CUBS OF CHARACTER!

The mission of Whitehouse School is to provide children with a nurturing environment where they will feel safe and accepted. Our school community encourages respect and builds independence while fostering academic and personal growth and creating a love for learning.

WHITEHOUSE NEWS

We Are Cubs of Character!!!

Dear WHS Families,

Happy New Year!!!

I hope this newsletter finds you doing well with many new holiday memories! Remember to submit pictures by February 10, 2017 to the office for our Annual WHS Family Photo Contest. Winners will be selected from the following categories: *Most Exciting Activity, Silliest Picture, Most Educational, and Farthest Location.*

As we look at the month ahead, our school community will continue to promote many of our ongoing whole-school practices. We have been maintaining all of the *greening* efforts that led to our national recognition.

We are also coming together each month as we engage in a common discourse centered on good character and service learning. January's focus will be on ***fairness***. Please discuss this with your children and support them as they shade in pieces of their ***fairness*** bucket puzzles when completing good deeds related to this trait. Our service learning project for the month will be more global in nature. We are holding a gently-used sneaker drive for Guatemalan children. Please place all sneaker donations in the box outside of the Main Office by the elevator.

In addition, we are still engaging in our *Winnie-the-Pooh* thematic unit. As we read excerpts from the two famous novels written by A.A. Milne, we will continue to find opportunities to link learning. We are examining the content of the books, as well as delving deeper into character traits that can be connected to our social-emotional learning goals.

Please stay informed of our efforts and follow us on Twitter:

WHS_Cubs@CubsOfCharacter

Warmly,

Ann T. DeRosa, Ed.D.

Many thanks to you for your generosity as we worked with the
Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts to hold a Pajama Drive
during the month of December!!!



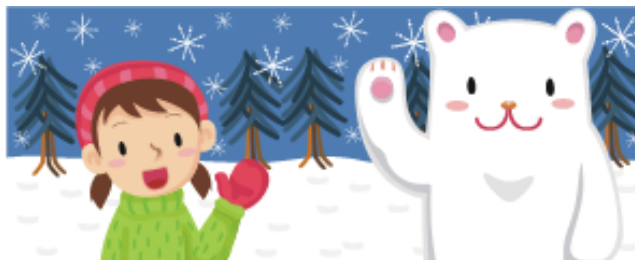
Suggestions to Increase Listening Success at Home

1. Give your child a quiet area in which to do homework or read.
2. Eliminate distractions as much as possible. Turn off the television or radio during homework or conversation.
3. Establish eye contact when initiating a conversation. Try not to hold a conversation from separate rooms.
4. Give simple, concise directions or instructions. Give one to two step directions first. ("Go to your room and bring me your dirty clothes.")
5. Have your child repeat directions back to you to check for comprehension.
6. Rephrase or restate directions a second time. Keep rate of speaking slow and clear.
7. Designate certain listening times in which conversations might be limited to one person speaking at a time without interruption. (Dinnertime and bedtime for example.)
8. Reading books to your children promotes good listening. While you read, have your child answer questions or comment on the story.
9. Listen to your children in the way you would like them to listen to you. Hearing what your child has to say makes him/her feel important while they're talking to you. Children are more apt to listen to you when you listen to them.

Reward your child occasionally when they display good listening habits!

Marie Potenta

Speech/Language Specialist



Nurse's News

Prevention is the Best Medicine

Handwashing---Most Important !!

Handwashing with warm water and soap is our best defense against common viral illness. You should wash your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds or about the time it takes to sing the ABCs. Hand sanitizer is an alternative when you do not have access to soap and water. But it should not take the place of good handwashing.



There are other ways to maximize your immune system:

Vaccinate against the flu.

Ensure that your child is getting enough sleep. Children age 5-10 should get 10-11 hours of sleep a night.

Maintain a healthy diet of fruits and vegetables for you and your children.

Participate in regular exercise. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends children get at least 60 minutes of activity daily.

~ Maureen Sjonell

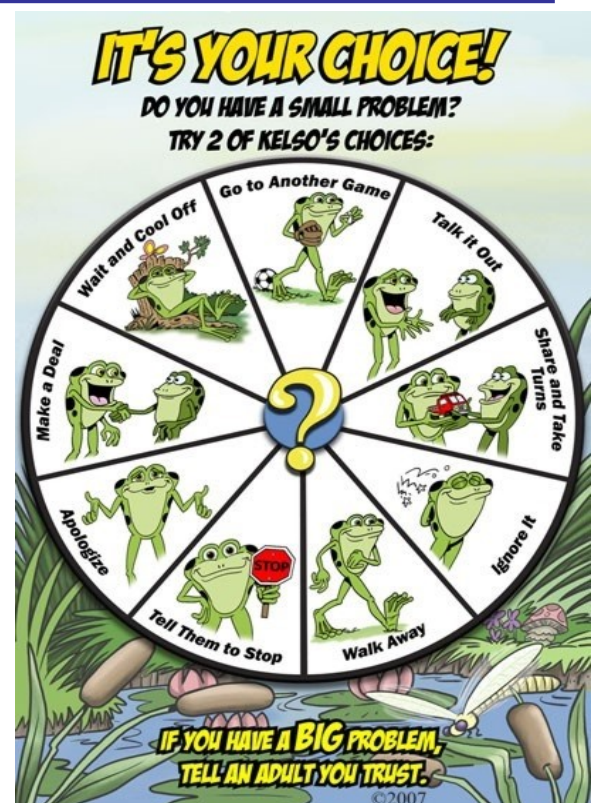
Counselor's Corner

Kelso's Choice is the conflict resolution program that we use at our elementary schools in the district. This program allows our students to develop effective problem-solving skills. It also helps students to deal with a conflict in a positive manner and to make appropriate decisions.

Colorful charts, like the one to the right are displayed throughout our school. The chart challenges students to try two of Kelso's Choices when they have a small problem. Knowing what to do will help students reduce the stress and number of conflicts they have.

Dr. DeRosa and I review this chart with our students each marking period. We encourage you, as parents, to become familiar with the chart and use it with your child.

~Deb Debaro





Happy New Year!! This month we will begin our science unit on the study of wood and paper. The children will be introduced to a variety of woods and paper. They will be observing, comparing, and discussing their findings. Working with these materials, the children will be acquiring vocabulary associated with their properties.

Our kindergarten scientists will be busy this month!

In literacy, the children will be immersed in a variety of phonemic awareness, concepts of print, sight word and reading strategy skill building activities while reinforcing their letter and sound knowledge. During Writing Workshop, the children will be starting some informational writing. They will be teaching people how to do something. Kindergarteners are "experts" at so many things. Be prepared to enjoy the little treasures the boys and girls will produce. They will also continue to try to use spaces, mostly lowercase letters and punctuation. The children have grown so much as writers since the beginning of kindergarten!

In math, the girls and boys will be developing their own strategies for counting, collecting and calculating while observing some teacher introduced strategies. We'll be using these new skills when we reach Day 100!

Since winter weather is here, this would be a good time to work with your child on zipping, buttoning, snapping and tying shoes. Some winter coats can be tricky to fasten, but by giving children lots of practice opportunities, they will get better at it!





In Writing, we have started our opinion unit. Students are currently writing about favorite items in their personal collections. They will also have the opportunity to write restaurant, movie, and book reviews in this unit.

In Reading, we are focusing on studying a variety of non-fiction books. We have learned many new facts about animals, nature, history and other topics. Students are practicing comprehension skills such as previewing, predicting, noticing text structures, and synthesizing information from multiple sources (the picture, the print, the text boxes). The children have also learned how to spot important text features. We will also be focusing on fluency and the importance of rereading. Students are loving the non-fiction books in the classroom!

In Math, students are learning to find the unknown partners in addition equations and are solving word problems. The key to solving these addition/subtraction word problems is understanding the situation and knowing which amount is unknown.

In Science, we are studying balls and ramps (force and motion), as well as doing a variety of STEM activities. This is going to be a busy, fun month!





Second Grade

Happy New Year! We hope you all enjoyed a wonderful, relaxing break. Second grade is back in full swing and we are excited to share with you what we have been learning.

Get out your rulers - we are learning how to measure lengths in inches, centimeters, feet and yards in math. Students are measuring line segments and learning how to estimate distances around squares and rectangles. We will develop an understanding of how two- and three-dimensional shapes are related. Additionally, we will be plotting measurement data onto line plots. Have fun going on "measure hunts" with your child at home. Ask your child to find lengths of different household items and record their findings. Compare lengths of different objects and challenge your child to calculate the differences in those lengths.

Our scientists have been busy working in the lab observing properties of solids, liquids and gasses in science. We have performed several experiments, learning about how the different states of matter can change, when mixed with other states of matter. Our classes enjoy working with lab partners and are learning about the scientific process and how to write lab reports.

In Reader's Workshop, we are finishing up with our Nonfiction Writing Unit and will move on to reading book series. Readers will enjoy participation in book clubs as we compare and contrast characters, settings, and plots of different books within a series. Continue reading with your child at home, even if he or she is able to read independently. Listening to you read will help him/her build fluency and accuracy skills. Question your child about the books he or she is reading to monitor comprehension skills and interest level.

Students are finishing up writing their amazing informational books in Writer's Workshop. They have become wonderful teachers of some fantastic topics while learning about how to organize and create chapters, diagrams, tables of contents and other informational text features. Be on the lookout for some strong opinion writing coming up in our next unit!

We are looking forward to a wonderful new year with your children!

Third Grade

Happy New Year! We hope everyone had time to relax from the hustle and bustle of the past four months.

Throughout the months of November and December, third graders were engaged in reading independently, with partners, and listening to a variety of realistic fiction stories. Students' stamina for reading keeps growing and growing! To develop stronger comprehension, students have learned to dig deeper into the meaning of the text by asking themselves purposeful questions, retelling the story, making connections and inferences, and writing responses to their reading in their reading notebooks.

Third grade students wrapped up 2016 equipped with all of the basic multiplication and division facts. They are now able to take these facts and apply them to solving story problems that include area, order of operations, and the more challenging multi-step problems.

Our science unit, Rocks and Minerals, has proven a big hit among our third graders. Students engaged in team explorations of various sedimentary, metamorphic and igneous rocks, and actively performed testing and data collection on 12 unknown minerals. To connect our in-class geological experience to the real world, third graders visited the Lost River Caverns. What a fantastic trip!

Next we are heading back to Social Studies where students will be learning more about communities, landforms, and developing map skills. Third graders participated in a project of their own to spread generosity and goodwill in preparation of the holidays. Students engaged in a Bucket Filling Holiday Workshop. Each classroom was transformed into a workshop where students participated in five different activities. Students were merrily working together creating gifts for local charities. It was a rewarding experience!

Thank you, parents, for your generous donations of supplies in support of this workshop.





I hope everyone had a magical holiday! I can't believe we're almost half way through with the school year. I always wish for more time with your kids! We all took a break from our respective art lessons last month so we could draw and then paint the Grinch...they came out beautiful and green! We're now ready to jump back into our art projects.

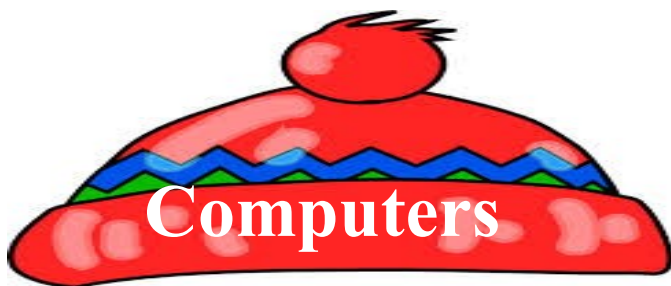
Our kindergarteners did an amazing job making patterns with their caterpillars and then moved seamlessly into creating butterflies (logical, right?). Their butterflies used a watercolor painting technique called *wax resist*. Ask them about it...I'm sure they'll love to share. Next, they are ready to dive deep into the ocean, as we start our texture unit by drawing, creating texture, and painting turtles.

First graders will be finishing up their dancing giraffes as we start the new year. They have waited patiently to get this project all wrapped up. They stopped to create *Pete The Cat* for Halloween and then stopped later for the Grinch. Don't worry...the excitement doesn't end yet...they will learn a really neat magic painting technique when we paint our giraffes.

The second grade Zentangle names came out awesome! They are as predicted...bold and beautiful! As the new year begins, we will be starting our color unit, as we draw, paint, and create complementary colored zebras. Our zebras will be complimenting each other as they hang in the hallway. We will learn about homophones and have fun with this cute *play on words*.

Our third graders have finished with the drawing portion of their Rainforest Bird paintings. They transferred their amazing compositions onto good quality watercolor paper and have already finished with pen & ink. Our next steps will be to work on a separate piece of watercolor paper and learn all the cool techniques they can use to really make their paintings come alive. Their drawings already look amazing...I can't wait for them to add color!

~Dana Pierro
~Mary Coyle



All computer classes celebrated Computer Science Week (Dec. 5—9). Students in every country around the globe, including Whitehouse School participated in The Hour of Code, a one-hour introduction to computer science designed to demystify coding for students and encourage them to pursue technology careers. The Hour of Code campaign was started back in 2013 through code.org. Today, over 100 million students participate—one out of every 10 students on the planet, according to Hadi Partovi, CEO of Code.org. Whitehouse School students, K-3, participated in this year's Hour of Code. Second and third grade students learned to code using the game Angry Birds. Kindergarten and first grade students learned to program using Kodables and The Foos. Please visit code.org for more information on the Hour of Code.

The kindergartners are continuing to master basic computer skills including the mouse and touch screens while reinforcing their classroom curriculum through various educational websites including ABC Mouse. Students were also introduced to the Bee Bots, a programmable bee robot that helps reinforce coding skills. They will be learning how to log on to their computer in the New Year.



The first graders have made amazing progress in the Computer Lab. They have been learning how to utilize *Microsoft Word* as a tool in school and everyday life. Students are learning how to copy and paste objects to create snowmen in the Computer Lab. We are also practicing our typing skills, writing about our snowmen at night. First grade students also used the Bee Bots to reinforce their computer programming skills.

In second grade, students continue to complete many of their assignments in Google Classroom. We emphasized our school's character education initiative in computers by creating a friendly letter to a teacher in the school. Students are also mastering their Google Docs skills by creating snowmen and writing a short story about them.

Every third grade class spends 10-15 minutes on Typing Club to enhance their keyboarding skills. The great news is Typing Club is accessible from home. Since keyboarding is an essential skill, students may choose to practice at home. Please visit the following website to access your child's account: <https://readington.typingclub.com/>

Third grade students also created a Google Slideshow for Spanish Class. Students chose a Spanish speaking country and researched 4 to 5 facts. They used their computer skills to create this co-curricular presentation for Spanish Class.

~Wendy Reardon

~Tiffany Barca





Learn All About It

Whitehouse School Media Center Newsletter

Who will be the First ???

Who will be the first student to record his/her reading on the website?

Who will be the first student to reach the 1,000 minute milestone?

And what is this all about ???

Whitehouse School has FABULOUS READERS

WHS Grades K-3 will get ready to celebrate Dr. Seuss' Birthday and Read Across America Day on March 2nd with a **Fabulous February Reading Incentive Program**. This enriching reading program will run from February 1 - 28, 2017. All minutes need to be turned into the WHS Library by February 28th by 4pm to count toward the rewards. The winners will be announced on Dr. Seuss' Birthday.

~The **WHS class that reads the greatest number of minutes by February 28th** will earn award certificates and be invited to a special lunchtime based-on-a-book movie party in the WHS Library in March.

~ In every classroom, and thanks to Dr. DeRosa, the **student who has the single highest amount of minutes** spent reading will select a book from Dr. DeRosa's reading wagon.

~ WHS will have a billboard by the Cafetorium listing any **students who reach the 1,000 minute mark** (and special certificates will be issued). That is just 35 minutes a night ... sooOOOoOOOoo do-able!

All students should log the amount of time they spend reading outside of school. WHS is recommending 20 minutes a night as a good starting point. Please note that any time with a book, magazine, or online program counts, even if someone else is reading it to the student! And, if the student reads aloud to a sibling, parent, pet, stuffed animal, etc., that counts too!

Minutes can be recorded on this secure Google website <https://goo.gl/kSoZgU> (website is preferred method) or turned in on the form posted on the WHS Wednesday Genesis Blast.

Another Contest to help Celebrate ...

In February, the hallway to the Cafetorium will have a Dr. Seuss quote displayed on the bulletin board. Any student who can correctly tell the WHS Librarian, Mrs. Zanardi, which Dr. Seuss book the quote comes from will receive a sticker. Have fun !!!



Whitehouse School Wishes a
Happy Birthday to Dr. Seuss !!!



Music



Music is in full swing at Whitehouse School! If you are looking for more ways to engage your student in musical learning, take a look at the Whitehouse School music webpage at <http://www.readington.k12.nj.us/Page/4342>, where there is a list of great music websites for your student to visit. Later in the year, grade level concert materials will be added.

Questions to ask when your child comes home on Music Day:

- What rhythm did you work on?
- What melody / notes did you use today?
- What songs did you sing / play / listen to / dance? Have him/her perform for you!
- Do you have any music homework? Third grade students should now be practicing their recorder four to five times weekly and completing their monthly *Practice Bugs*.



We're working hard to support and promote the arts in Readington! Parents are invited to join the new Readington Fine and Performing Arts Alliance (RFAPAA). This organization exists to create meaningful relationships between parents, students, the performing and arts faculty, and the public, and to support all performing and arts departments in the Readington Township Public Schools. Please visit the HBS Instrumental Music website for more information at <http://www.readington.k12.nj.us/Page/5420>.

Mark your calendars! The spring concerts for each grade level will be:



Kindergarten: May 18, 2:15 pm

1st Grade: May 18, 9:00 am

2nd Grade: May 18, 1:15 pm

3rd Grade: May 18, 10:20 am

Mrs. Laurie Levesque
Wednesday and Thursday classes
llevesque@readington.k12.nj.us
534-4411 ext. 4141

Mrs. Elissa Bowen
Tuesday and Friday classes
ebowen@readington.k12.nj.us
823-0454 ext. 2016





No Standing Around in the Gym

Physical Education classes at Whitehouse School are working to keep students motivated. Students are being introduced to enjoyable activities encouraging them to continue an active lifestyle. Children who appreciate being active are more likely to remain physically energetic throughout their lives. As physical educators, our main goal is to find activities that not only address the components of fitness, but also promote our students' interest and ability levels.

The students have been busy learning the basic skills and fundamentals of basketball, along with some fun tricks and challenges. Practice these challenges at home and see how many you can do!

Pinky Has Returned!

Our friend Pinky has made her annual return to play our famous "Target Ball" Game with the children of WHS. In this game, students practice their throwing skills while creating strategies for better teamwork in this fast-paced game.

Interactive systems such as Nintendo Wii and XBOX 360 Kinect have been a fun way to keep the students engaged and very active. Nintendo Wii, which uses motion sensor controllers, requires players to be physical movers and work their skill level while playing baseball, golf, tennis, and bowling. XBOX 360 allows the students to be the controllers. This is a full-body game where the students' movements control individual or partner challenges.

The students have also been playing Pillow Polo Hockey. They have learned the techniques of dribbling, passing, and shooting. During the tournament play, students developed teamwork and communication skills so their team can be successful.

The wide variety of activities available enables each child to find his/her comfort zone with physical activity.

Miss Kozal and Mr. Lillia



Dear Parents,

I hope you enjoyed the winter break. In the past few months, students have been expanding their Spanish vocabulary and learning new commands. They put into practice their Spanish knowledge by writing, reading, doing oral activities and maintaining short conversations with their peers based on their grade level.

Kindergartners have been rehearsing greetings, simple commands and basic questions about their name and how they are feeling. They have continued learning the colors (red, blue, green, yellow, orange and pink,) numbers (up to 15) and the sizes. In addition, kindergarten classes have learned a new song "Saco Una Manita" (I Take Out One Little Hand) and enjoyed playing educational games to practice the new vocabulary.

First grade has been practicing and extending the basic questions (name, age, how they feel, days of the week, weather and favorite color) along with helping the teacher to state the date. They have focused on the numbers up to 50, the face and body parts. First graders have enjoyed reading the book "De La Cabeza A Los Pies" (From Head to Toes) to review the body vocabulary. Moreover, first graders have loved working on the "Monster Project," where they have created a monster and written a brief description of it. They did a tremendous job describing their monster to their classmates in the target language.

Second graders have enjoyed reviewing the questions and they have learned in a dice game. They have expanded their clothing vocabulary and learned the first and third person pronouns for them. This allows them to be able to describe what they or somebody else in the classroom is wearing. They have been delighted by guessing peers based on the description of their clothes. In addition, they have connected this vocabulary to colors, body parts and the seasons. For example: *She is wearing white sandals in summer. The sandals go on the feet.*

Third graders have been focusing on "The Spanish Speaking Country" project. Each student has chosen a Spanish-speaking country to learn about. Third graders have been searching information about that particular country and putting it together in "Español" onto a Google Slide to present to their class. Third graders had a blast working on this project! They have done phenomenal work! In addition, third grade has continued practicing the alphabet and spelling. They have acquired new school supplies vocabulary and utilized it for describing what they have or do not have in their backpacks and for asking to borrow some school materials from their classmates.

To increase students' retention of the lessons learned and to continue to foster their excitement in Spanish, it is suggested they practice the learned and new vocabulary at home. You can find the themed vocabulary and websites to practice it in the world language website.

Saludas, Señora de los Santos