

April 2017



HOME OF THE WHITEHOUSE CUBS

WHITEHOUSE NEWS

Mission Statement: 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

FROM THE PRINCIPAL . . .

Dear WHS Families,

We are Cubs of Character!!!

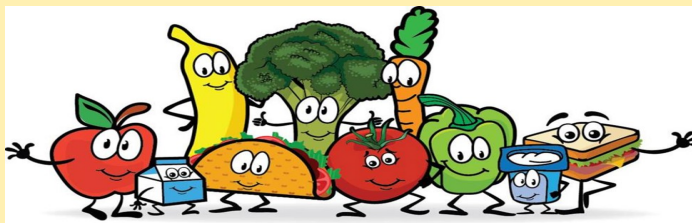
March was a very special month here! Since Whitehouse School is now an official 2017 *New Jersey School of Character*, we are under review at the national level. As part of this process, we have had an extensive visit from an advocacy official who is affiliated with the New Jersey Alliance for Social, Emotional and Character Development (NJASECD). We will find out in May if we have been selected as one of our country's exemplary schools for our efforts with character education. In the meantime, you can learn more about our work in this area if you join us on Tuesday, April 25 at 7p.m. when we are featured at the Board of Education meeting.



The character theme at Whitehouse School for April is *honesty*. Please continue to encourage your children to show good acts of character and shade in pieces from their *honesty* bucket, when appropriate, throughout the month. Buckets are due on or before April 28.



Food For Thought ...



Study Shows Healthier Lunches Lead to Higher Test Scores Do Healthy Lunches Improve Student Test Scores?

A recent article published in *The Atlantic* found a link between quality school lunches and academic achievement. Interestingly enough, the research came from the Economics Department at the University of California, Berkeley. While we know that instructional interventions can impact student performance, the study set out to quantify the impact that good quality lunches might have on standardized test scores. The five-year study considered items such as cost, vendors, and nutritional guidelines, while also focusing on standardized test scores to determine if there is a relationship. The nutritional content of the foods offered by service vendors in schools were rated on the Healthy Eating Index, a measure through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Then, a database was compiled with vendor ratings to be analyzed in comparison to student test scores. *They found that students who were offered high quality, healthy lunches from school vendors scored higher than those who did not have those options.*

Each year, we partner with the personnel from our food service vendor, Maschio's, in an effort to continue to improve our food offerings and to elicit student, parent, as well as staff feedback. This year, we also administered a survey in Computer Class to students in Grades 1 -3. Then, we analyzed the survey results and the input that we gathered from meeting with the children.

Background Information

- Whitehouse School lunch offerings include: hot lunch, bagel meal, or cereal meal.
- School lunches have to meet certain healthy school lunch requirements.
- All lunches have a dairy, fruit, vegetable, grain, and protein component.
- Lunch offerings also comply with sodium, fat, and sugar restrictions.
- Snacks available for separate purchase include chips, pretzels, snack bars, Pop Tarts, and Rice Krispies treats.

Noteworthy

- There were 316 students who took the survey.
- About 42% of students reported that they buy lunch.
- Most students who buy lunch do so at least 3 times per week .

Can you guess what the kids are saying?

1. Which is the least favorite meal offered?

- A. Hot lunch
- B. Bagel meal
- C. Cereal meal

2. The favorite hot lunch is pizza. But, which type?

- A. Stuffed crust
- B. Personal round pan
- C. Local pizzeria pizza

3. True or False?

The least favorite hot lunches are Chinese chicken teriyaki, personal round pan pizza, And grilled cheese.

4. What are the *Top 3 Favorite* hot lunches?

5. What are the *Top 3 Favorite* fruits?

6. What are the *Top 3 Favorite* vegetables?



Suggestions Taken

As a result of additional suggestions made by students, the Maschio's kitchen leader at Whitehouse School, Mrs. Kim Weger, has already added the following as standard daily options:

Strawberry milk

Vanilla milk

Muffin Meal

Mrs. Weger has also added chicken noodle soup to the menu as a selection offered periodically during the month.

Looking Ahead...

Here is a list of possible new items that may be incorporated based on student interest:

Celery

Ice pops

Cantaloupe

Watermelon

Fish sticks

Subs

Answer Key: 1. B – bagel bag 2. C – local pizzeria pizza 3. True 4. Pizza, breakfast for lunch, chicken nuggets 5. Bananas, apples, grapes 6. Carrots, cucumbers, corn

Winnie-the-Pooh Thematic Unit



This year, we read chapter books from A.A. Milne's great works. Teachers spent a substantial amount of time linking learning as we focused on the good character and thought-provoking quotes contained in these timeless adventures. We also asked that each student select a creature from the stories and conduct non-fiction research on that animal. For instance, if your child focused on Piglet, he/she delved into a deeper study about pigs and generated an *All-About* book or project on that topic. Mrs. Pierro also guided students as they embarked on an artistic journey that, as one parent described, would even have Andy Warhol taking notice! You may have also heard your children singing the theme song from the Winnie-the-Pooh movies, as we have been playing it after our school chant during announcements each morning. Hopefully, you have had a chance to tour the building at conference time or during recent weeks to see the end-products from our Winnie-the-Pooh study:

- Door-Decorating Contest (All regular classroom doors)
- Biographical Gallery Walk (Hallway on Faculty Room Ramp)
- Quote Garden (Hallway on Sensory & Vegetable Garden Ramp)
- Hundred Acre Wood Pooh Corner (Hallway near Conference Room)

If you **let them BUILD IT**, they **will learn**.

MakerSpace & Tinker Time

Whitehouse School joined hundreds of schools on March 24 and participated in New Jersey *Makers Day* (NJMD). *MakerSpace* is a popular innovation movement that empowers children and puts them at the forefront of engineering and design, which is included in the STEM concept. We have placed great emphasis on underscoring how the Arts can also be effectively incorporated into these activities. When we add the Arts, we now have STEAM, an even richer experience for children.

You may already know that for the past two years, Whitehouse School has had a *MakerSpace & Tinker Lab*, complete with donated supplies from parents. Teachers take students there and they are given the opportunity to solve proposed problems by designing, building, creating, constructing, or engineering the solution.

This year during NJMD, in keeping with our study of *Winnie-the-Pooh*, under the design leadership of our Enrichment teacher, Mrs. Lori Yukniewicz, each grade level was presented with a different challenge to solve. For instance, *Pooh cannot reach the honeycomb in the tree. Using the following materials, build him a ladder that can withstand the weight of this plastic toy bear...* Last week, you may have even seen Mrs. Zanardi's news article online and in the local papers, summarizing our day and this movement!

http://www.nj.com/hunterdon-county-democrat/index.ssf/2017/03/whitehouse_school_participates_in_stem_program.html

You can also check out Mrs. Yukniewicz's Maker Space webpage:

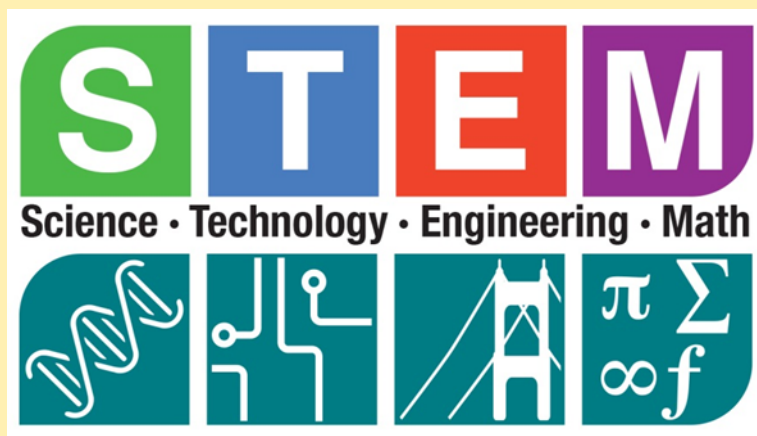
<http://www.readington.k12.nj.us/Page/5648>

The level of thinking and creativity demonstrated by your children is absolutely amazing! Let them guide you as you save some common supplies (e.g., empty paper towel rolls, recycled bottles, tape, egg cartons, newspaper, etc.) and have some family *MakerSpace/Tinker Lab* days at home!





As a 2016 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School, we continue to promote *greening* practices and career awareness in the fields associated with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics). Last year, we featured monthly STEM speakers from our school community. These guests addressed our third graders in short 10 to 20 minute presentations in order to familiarize our youngsters with the important work that is being done in these fields. This year, we expanded our program to also include second graders as audience members during these assemblies. We started the year off with our District Facilities Manager reminding students of proper composting procedures. Later, other district employees addressed students including our Energy Efficiency Coordinator, Director of Technology, and School Nurse. We also hosted the Director of Education for the Raritan Headwaters Association. In addition, several parents spent a session describing their careers as an engineer, chemist, food scientist, and toxicologist. We have a few months left of school and are looking for parents or community members to serve as guest STEM speakers. Please contact me directly if you work in a STEM field and might be available in April, May, or June!



Warmly,

Ann T. DeRosa, Ed.D