



January 2019

Happy New Year

I cannot believe that we are already midway through our school year and in the year 2019! I hope everyone had a peace filled holiday and that students are rested and ready to meet the second semester with more determination and grit, ready to accept challenges, and make mistakes from which they will learn a lot.

Parent Teacher Group

Starting this month, our PTG meetings will be held on the Second Tuesday of the month. This month's meeting will be Tuesday, January 8 at West. Please consider joining us. We are in need of parents to help in a variety of ways. Our PTG does so much for our school. Did you know that the PTG raises money for fieldtrips, school supplies, sponsored school events, and so very much more? Currently, we have a small group of parents doing all of the work. We NEED you! Come join us in January to see what we are about. See you there!

Attendance

Recently I saw a poster that read, "Attendance Matters". I had to laugh because I thought, "Of course it does." But, then I thought, maybe it is worth mentioning. So much instruction goes on in the classroom at this age that cannot be duplicated at home. Students may be able to fill out a worksheet or so when they come back to school after an absence, but, they miss the very important instruction. No matter what, the teacher can never duplicate the instruction in a short make up period of time that is missed. Please be sure to have your child(ren) at school every day when possible. Illnesses, of course, happen, but, when there is no illness, send your child(ren) to school so that they do not fall behind in instruction. It's unbelievable what they must learn, now, in kindergarten and 1st grade in comparison to what you as parents learned when we were their age.

Growth Mindset

In December, we talked a lot about accepting challenges! We Love A Challenge was our theme. I read a book with students about learning to do something new and the challenges that come along with it. The character, Kevin, in the book "clung" to what he knew and didn't want to let go and try something new. In the end, Kevin did let go and found there was a world of opportunity for him. Students shared with me some things that they were afraid to try but really enjoyed once they tried it. One of the main shared experiences was learning to ride their bikes without training wheels. This month, our growth mindset mantra is Feedback is a Gift – Accept it. Stanford researcher, Carol Dwek talks about how we all grow from the feedback we receive throughout life. Rather than just saying, "Good Job reading." It is better to be more specific as in: "I really like the way you sounded out the words that were difficult for you." Or, "I see you are struggling reading that word, try to sound it out and see if that helps." Feedback can be both specific praise and constructive in nature. Please consider the feedback you give your children to see if you can increase their growth.

Partners

We are partners in your child(ren's) education. Please be sure to reach out to the teacher or to anyone else whose help you need to ensure academic, behavioral, social, and emotional success. You are the most important person on the team. As a parent/guardian, you are with the child more than we and you know them better than we. Reach out...we are here for you!



HAPPY NEW YEAR

First Grade: I hope you enjoyed the break with your families. First grade is ready for the New Year and the new season. We will be exploring the winter season, penguins, owls, and polar animals. Martin Luther King Jr. will be an important person in history about whom we will be reading & writing. Our math focus in January will be 2D shapes. We will continue with strengthening our math skills by learning strategies to help us subtract. Practicing math facts at home is a great way to help your child.

Check with your child to see if your child needs new crayons glue sticks, or other supplies we use daily.

Happy New Year!!!

Kindergarten News: Happy New Year and welcome back! We are excited to pick up where we left off and continue to challenge ourselves with reading, writing and math. Our kindergarten students will be diving into reading and writing independently this semester. Mastering letters, sounds, and popcorn words will make this an easy transition. Please continue to work on these skills. We will be leaning about snowy weather, snowmen, polar animals, and Martin Luther King. Students will also be introduced to 3-D shapes and addition this month. We will be comparing, adding and grouping numbers.

Our 100th day of school is coming up soon. Please watch for a letter to come home from your teacher with 100th day information. Remember, this time of the year, the weather changes quickly, so make sure your child is bundled up with coats, gloves and hats. If warm enough and dry we will be playing outside.

Young Authors: Many of you have been working hard with your child making and writing a Young Author's book. Please continue to do this. It is a wonderful experience for the student and a great way to do something together. Books are due at school no later than Friday, January 18th. Thank you for supporting your child's learning by working with them on this book!