



South School Newsletter

February 16, 2012

****Creative Thinking Skills**Effective Communication**Love of Learning**Respect**Responsibility****

Upcoming Events

- 2/20 Winter Vacation Week Begins
- 3/5 Scholastic Book Fair Begins
- 3/6 No School - Presidential Primary Election**
- 3/8 Early Release 12:20 Dismissal
- 3/8 Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 3/13 Kindergarten Registration 9:00-11:00 & 1:00-2:00
- 3/15 Kindergarten Registration 9:00-11:00 & 1:00-2:00
- 3/27 Term II Report Cards Issued

Principal's Curriculum Corner - Mrs. Mulvey

All students in grades 3, 4, and 5 are required by state law to participate in the upcoming March and May MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System). In March the Reading portion is administered to third graders and the English Language Arts test is given to both fourth and fifth graders. In addition, fourth graders participate in the Long Composition on March 20, 2012. Here are ways you may try to help your child do well on these standardized tests. Explain that the tests will show how much he has learned. Encourage her to do her best, but do not put so much emphasis that she feels stressed. Know that in school, teachers familiarize their students with similar test tasks and guide them in test taking strategies. Ask that he reads the test directions carefully and goes back to the text to locate answers. Emphasize that he take his time by checking over his answers. Plenty of time is provided to all and the first to finish is not the desired outcome. Be sure your child gets to bed on time and eats an energy-boosting breakfast. Continue reading books and chapters in stories aloud with one another and talking about the plot and the characters. Offer a final phrase of encouragement on test day saying, "YOUR BEST WILL BE JUST FINE".

MCAS Dates

- 3/20 Grade 4 Long Composition
- 3/21 Grade 3 Reading Test #1
- 3/22 Grade 4 ELA #1
- 3/23 Grade 5 ELA #1
- 3/27 Grade 3 Reading Test #2
- 3/28 Grade 4 ELA #2
- 3/29 Grade 5 ELA #2



Classroom News

On Thursday, January 26th **grade 2** had a very special visitor. Lt. Colonel John Lee, Mrs. Mills' son-in-law, visited us in our classroom via Skype from Afghanistan! We used the Smart Board to see Lt. Colonel Lee and thanks to Miss Rosenthal (our own gr. 2 technology expert) Lt. Colonel Lee could see us on the I Pad. Rooms 6 & 7 asked him some very interesting questions about the country of Afghanistan. Lt. Colonel Lee answered all our questions about his life as a soldier serving our country. He also talked to us about the children of Afghanistan. He told us what they wore and the games they played. The boys played soccer and cricket. They wore long pants and jerseys, just like us. The girls wore beautifully colored robes. He also talked to us about school in Afghanistan. Most of the boys attend school but, at this time only a few girls are in school. The school the children attend was built by the soldiers at Camp Phoenix. Lt. Colonel Lee said that Room 6&7 children were very polite and asked good questions. He said that he would come to the South School for a visit when he returns from the country of Afghanistan. We all hope that is soon! First graders in **room 5** celebrated the 100th day with many different activities! We started with a home project where the children had to make a poster depicting 100 items. In class we read 100 day stories, made a 100 day booklet and sat silently for 100 seconds all while wearing 100 Day crowns and glasses. The children also took 100 steps from our classroom door and drew a picture of what they saw when they reached their 100th step. We had a great day and enjoyed celebrating this milestone. Our **fourth grade** visited Boston's Museum of Science last Thursday. Students had the opportunity to visit the special exhibit, "A Day in Pompeii" and an Omni Theater presentation on the Ring of Fire. Students made many connections to lessons taught during walk-to-read and web quests through time. We were impressed by how many students were able to see how life in Pompeii A.D. 79 parallels our lives today. Following our trip students created poems on the catastrophic eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which will be displayed outside the library.

Third Grade students received "Special Valentines" from their parents. Parents sent in letters written to their child, highlighting the things that make him or her special. Some parents described his or her unique talents or abilities, some included cute stories from childhood. The letters were in sealed envelopes addressed to the child's homeroom teacher (the contents were kept secret). The letters were then read to the homeroom class, not revealing the identity of the child. The children had to guess whom the special "Valentine" was. The letters were then presented to the child as a special valentine surprise in a fancy bag for "forever keeping".

The students in all of the **fifth grade** classes presented their own weather reports to the class. Each meteorologist had to include fronts, wind speed, temperature and precipitation. The students did a great job creating a weather map too! Meteorologist Mia is showing off her weather skills!

Classroom buddies in **room 2** and **room 18** met and practiced different math concepts. The fifth graders guided the kindergarten students through three math stations: shape walk - where they walk through the school and look for shapes, number stories - fifth graders had prepared simple addition stories for the kindergartners to solve on the white boards and measuring with linker cubes - fifth graders helped reinforce how to measure objects in the classroom. The fifth graders loved being role models and teachers for the kindergartners and the kindergartners loved learning from the fifth graders.



Nurse's Notes ~ Mrs. Kaplan

Students in kindergarten, first and second grades have been learning to de-stress with chair yoga, stretching and breathing exercises. They have learned the importance of stretching periodically throughout the day. The students have learned several neck, back, hand and leg exercises they can do in their own chairs for a brief stretching and relaxation session. Most importantly they have learned to breathe correctly so that their bellies expand like a balloon on inspiration and flatten when we exhale. Most people have been breathing incorrectly for most of their lives!!! Ask your young yoga experts about balloon, lion, elevator, flower, sun

and straw breathing. To do a Balloon Breath, place your palms on your belly and inhale to expand your belly like a balloon. Exhale and feel your belly gently flatten. For Sun Breaths, inhale bringing your arms out to the sides and overhead, palms up. Exhale bringing arms down to the sides. Stack your hands in front of your chest for Elevator Breaths and inhale bringing your arms overhead. Exhale bringing your hands and arms down. Lean forward as if to smell a flower and inhale. Exhale leaning back. Straw Breathing is a great way to cool off after exercise. Curl your tongue and inhale over your tongue. Close your mouth and exhale through your nose. For Lion Breaths, inhale through your nose. To exhale, stick your tongue out with a quiet "HA". Make claws with your hands if you like!!! Repeat each of these several times.

Here are some additional stress reducers:

- Allow yourself quiet time everyday.
- Make your daily schedule realistic.
- Do one thing at a time...focus on whatever project you are working on or whoever you are with at the time.
- Prepare for events ahead of time-make lunches and choose clothing the night before school or work.
- Every day, do something that you really enjoy.

On February 3rd, students and staff were educated and entertained at an assembly concert by songwriter Jay Mankita. His songs focus on healthy food, exercise, fresh air and sunshine. He inspired and motivated the students to eat a diverse array of different foods, eat more plant based foods, especially fruits and vegetables, spend more time outside in the fresh air and sunshine, and to be more active. The students were able to sing and dance with Jay as he sang songs from his album, "Eat Like a Rainbow". Many of the students were familiar with his songs as he provided a CD to each teacher prior to his concert. Free downloads of the album are available at www.eat-like-a-rainbow.com. A special thank you goes to the Stoughton Cultural Council for supporting this program.

Music ~ Ms. Bauman

Save the Dates!

K-2 Concert: Tuesday, April 3 @ 9 am

3rd Grade Concert: Thursday, May 24 @ 9 am

Fine Arts Festival: Wednesday, June 6 @ 7 pm