



Grand Prairie News

A Word from the Office

This time of year and especially the whole month of December is a very busy month for many of us. The hustle and bustle of the holidays can consume any of us, if we let it, no matter what holiday we observe. While it is important to create and maintain family traditions, it is easy to forget that we can "over schedule" our children very easily during the holiday season.

School is still an important part of a child's routine during the holidays, and our children need to have some impression of a routine to stay balanced and healthy. Please help us by ensuring your child is maintaining good work habits and getting enough rest so that they can get the most out of each day they are here at school, not only academically but socially and emotionally.

Thank you all for your efforts to make your child's experience here at Grand Prairie a positive one. Our school is solid, not because of the physical structure, but because of the people in it: the parents, students and staff. I hope you have a wonderful holiday season, full of memories and moments that will last forever.

Mr. Hermanson

December 2009



Special points of interest:

- ☺ December 18—Winter Holiday Parties
- ☺ December 18—Early Dismissal Kdg -12:30 p.m.
1st-2nd 2:00 p.m.
- ☺ December 21—January 3
No School
- ☺ January 4—School Resumes
- ☺ January 15—No School, Teacher's Institute
- ☺ January 18—No School, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

Reading Corner

Strategy of the Month: Questioning

In order to be a good reader with strong comprehension, readers need to actively ask and answer questions as they read. Encourage your student to be aware of different types of questions including:

Right There: These are questions where the answers to these can be found somewhere in the text, also known as literal questions. **For example:** **What is the name of the main character in this book?**

Think and Search: These are questions where the reader must think about how ideas relate to each other. **For example:** **Your child has just finished a chapter on the solar system. A question might be: On what other planet would you like to live on and why?**

Author and You: These are questions where the reader must make connections between one's own ideas and what the author has stated. **For example:** **Your child has just read a book on recycling. A question might be: What is something the author talked about that you could do to help recycle in your own community?**

On My Own: These are questions that can be answered without reading the text, also known as opinion questions. **For example:** **What was your favorite part of the story? Do you think the main character made the right choice in this story?**



Holiday Parties

Winter Holiday parties will be held on Friday, December 18th at the following times:

Kindergarten 11:15-12:15 p.m. **Kdg. lunch will take place at 10:45 to accommodate for this time change*
1st-2nd 12:45-1:45 p.m.

*****Set up for parties will be allowed no more than 15 minutes prior to the parties start time.*****

This is also an early dismissal day (1 hour earlier than usual)—students will be dismissed at the following times:

Kindergarten 12:30 p.m. 1st-2nd 2:00 p.m.

Parking will be available in the lots behind the school as well. All parents however, must enter through the main doors. This will be a high volume traffic day. Please carpool if you can! With early dismissals it is imperative that cars are not parked along the curbs in either parking lot so that buses and cars are able to pick up students. Your cooperation is appreciated. As with the Halloween party, only confirmed room helpers will be allowed to attend the parties. These changes were implemented with the well being of our students in mind. A couple years ago there were over 600 visitors in the building at one time during parties, which translated into parking and security issues for all. We understand that parents may be frustrated that they were not able to attend the parties. However, we must keep the safety and security of the children in mind at all times. Additionally, the inequities between parties and treats had gone far out of control. We now have a system in place that equalizes the amount of "things" students receive in order to be fair to all kids.

Social Work News

Due to the need to address the state of Illinois' newly implemented social/emotional standards, a social skill program titled "Superflex" is being conducted in various classrooms at Grand Prairie Elementary School. The classmates have been actively engaged in participating in classroom lessons, discussions, and reading children's literature to reinforce certain concepts while also being taught to problem solve various school/peer conflicts. Other areas of focus are getting along with others, verbal and non-verbal communication and cues, learning how to compromise, and focusing to enhance concentration and learning. The students and teachers are loving the program and are having fun with it!

Toys and Weapons at School

Please remember (and remind your child) that headphones, toys, games, electronic games, etc. are not permissible at school unless approved by the office or a teacher. Generally, these items are only approved when they are brought for show and tell or some other special event. The school is not responsible for these items if they are lost, broken or stolen. Also, it is very important to remember that if toys which can be mistaken for a weapon (squirt guns, plastic knives, etc.) are brought to school or on the bus, a serious discipline consequence will be issued. It is the responsibility of the parent to search through backpacks and pockets to make sure these items don't accidentally come to school.

Emergency School Closings

In the event of an emergency school closing the following procedure will take place:

District 157-C will initiate the "Xpedite" phone system to all parents/guardians. This system will simultaneously transmit a recorded message informing you of a school closing. Please be mindful that there is a **5-second delay** when answering the phone before receiving the recorded message—PLEASE DO NOT HANG UP.

In the event that any parent is uncertain about the emergency closing, they may call the school their child attends to receive a recorded message indicating that schools are closed.

Information is also available through the following media outlets:

Radio (AM Stations)

WGN 720 WBBM 780

Radio (FM Station)

ZONE 94.7

Television Stations

CBS	Channel 2	WGN	Channel 9
NBC	Channel 5	FOX	Channel 32
CLTV	News Channel	ABC	Channel 7

PLASE News

The Parents of Lincoln-Way Area associated with Special Education (PLASE) group invites anyone interested to their next general meeting on February 9, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at Pioneer Grove Education Center, 601 Willow, Frankfort. Please contact 815-806-4600 for additional information.

Multiple Intelligence

First and Second Grade Multiple Intelligence Classes completed our unit study of Historical Eras. This unit included history of both Frankfort and early days before this country was named The United States of America. Students had the opportunity to explore games that both Native American and Colonial children played. The unit also included the study of Veteran's Day and what it means to be a veteran. Our new unit of study is on Geography. Students will practice and learn using the resources of maps, globes and an atlas. The unit will include the study of our earth including its people, resources, climate and physical features. Grand Prairie students are very fortunate to have the use of many resources for student learning thanks to our Frankfort 157c Education Foundation.



Student Arrival and Departure from School

In order to maintain a safe environment for all students, we need everyone's help in following the correct procedures when picking up and dropping off students. If someone new will be picking up or dropping off your child, please provide them with the appropriate directions regarding our procedures and make sure you send a note to the office. Here is a short list of some of the important procedures.

*Cars should not park along the car rider drop zone area - this is an active loading area, not a parking area.

*Pedestrians should use the crosswalks in the car rider area to get from the parking lot to the sidewalk.

*Striped "No Parking" zones should not be used for parking, pedestrian gathering or as a drive-through.

*If you need to exit your car to load/unload your child and his/her things, please park in the lot and escort your child to/from the sidewalk.

*The large front parking lot is used **only** for bus arrivals and departures. Buses arrive and depart **THROUGHOUT** the day. This is also an emergency vehicle lane.

*Please do not park in the large front parking lot and walk through the buses to get to the building during arrival and departure times.

***Vehicles that pass a stopped school bus with an extended stop arm, from either direction, may be reported to the police by the bus company or the school.**

*If you need to pick up your child prior to dismissal time, you must check in at the office, sign your child out and your child will be sent to the office to meet you.

*Student supervision in the morning does not begin until 8:05 a.m. Please do not drop off your child before this time.

THANK YOU for your help as we strive to keep all of our children safe!

A.M. Arrival Times
8:05—8:30 a.m. Car/Bus Riders
P.M. Dismissal Times
1:15 - 1:30 p.m. Kindergarten Car/Bus Riders
2:55—3:05 p.m. 1st—2nd Car/Bus Riders

Character Counts

"Character is simply habit long continued."

The pillar of character for the months of December and January is "CARING". Children will participate in activities and lessons focused on: kindness, compassion, expression of gratitude, forgiveness and helping others in need.

How To Be a Caring Person: *Treat people with kindness and generosity *Help people in need *Be sensitive to people's feelings *Never be mean or hurtful *Think about how your actions will effect others *Always remember - we become caring people by doing caring things!

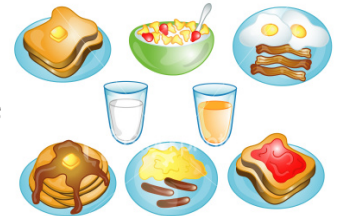
Winter Weather Wear

It is important that students come to school dressed to go outside for recess. Students will go outside in the morning and at lunch unless it is determined that conditions are too harsh. Please have your child prepared to go outside every day and remind them to take their coat, hat, etc. to recess each day. Thank you in advance for your help.

Nurse's Notes

Kids need their morning meal, it's a good investment.

While adults need to eat breakfast each day to perform their best, kids need it even more. Their growing bodies and developing brains rely heavily on the regular intake of food. When kids skip breakfast, they can end up going for as long as 18 hours without food and this period of semi-starvation can create a lot of physical, intellectual and behavioral problems for them.



If you and your kids regularly skip breakfast in the interest of saving time or getting a few more minutes of sleep, remember that eating a wholesome, nutritious morning meal will probably save you time in the long run. By recharging your brain and your body, you'll be more efficient in just about everything you do.

Most doctors believe that eating breakfast everyday is the secret to staying healthy. Children will be less likely to become overweight and will maintain blood sugar levels and energy. Jean Dyer R.N.

Great News!

Grand Prairie Elementary Students Help Donate One Million Books to Children in Need

September 2009 - 2nd graders from Grand Prairie Elementary joined Super Bowl MVPs Peyton and Eli Manning and Scholastic Book Clubs to help donate one million books to disadvantaged children.

This fall, students in Mrs. Clousing's class pledged to read 100 books as part of **Scholastic Book Clubs' Classrooms Care** program. The philanthropy-based literacy campaign is designed to teach children about the joys and importance of reading and giving.

"We reached our goal of 100 books as of November 16, 2009." Due to their hard work students across the county will benefit from donated books from Scholastic Book Clubs. Congratulations Mrs. Clousing's class! Way to go!

Physical Education

Our annual Speed Stacks Sale was held on Conference Day. Our students had the opportunity to order various cup stacking items. If you missed being part of our group order you can always to www.speedstacks.com or call 1-877-468-2877 to place an order.

We are planning our 6th (after school) Annual GP Speed Stacks Tournament on Feb. 9th (for 2nd graders) and Feb 10th (for 1st graders). Mark your calendars! Look for the January flyer/permission slip that will give all the details.

Our classes collecting the most box tops for the 1st trimester were K7, K8, 1C, 1H, 2C and 2B. The boys and girls enjoyed their free recess.