



Building Strength by Working Together



Save the dates:

- PTO meeting, 6:00pm: **March 4th**
- Return your Parent Survey to the Main Office: **March 7th**
- State Testing in Grades 3-4: **March 10th-March 14th**
- Board of Trustees Meeting: **March 11th 4pm**
- Joetta Clark Diggs/Sports Assembly: **March 18th, 10 am**
- Spring Break: **March 21st-28th**
- PTO Candy Bar Sale Fundraiser: **begins March 21st**
- School Reopens: **March 31st**



Please Note!

Our best wishes and support go out to our 3rd and 4th grade students as they prepare to take their State assessments this month.

NJASK for 3rd and 4th graders:

March 10th -

March 14th

Teacher-Leaders

Over the course of this year, our faculty has continued to strengthen as a professional learning community. We are proud of the collaboration and openness to growth that our teachers demonstrate as they work together in grade-level teams and cross-grade level partnerships to share best practices in teaching, utilize assessment data and lesson plans based on the data, and implement classroom management systems and routines. We commend staff members who regularly step up to lead school wide or grade level initiatives and volunteer their time and resources to help to strengthen the community and implement programs to meet the needs of our students.

It takes courage, energy, and initiative to be involved, to share an idea, to suggest a solution to a problem and then to be willing to be part of the solution. In order for a plant to grow, we must take the first step to plant the seeds. In order for it to flourish, we must take care of the seedling and provide it with nourishment.

Our teachers are leaders who have planted strong seeds and we need the help and support of our parents to make these seeds grow even stronger and afford maximum benefit for your children.

We encourage your presence at PTO meetings, parent-teacher meetings, workshops, and school events. We are eager to hear your

suggestions and ways to work together to address concerns and make improvements.

Some ways that you can do this during the month of March include the following:

- Attend the March PTO meeting.
- Complete the Parent Survey and use it as an opportunity to suggest positive school-wide improvements.
- Reach out to your children's teachers and make conference times to discuss your children's 3rd semester progress report.
- Arrange a time to visit your child's classroom to volunteer time to read or participate in a special classroom activity like the Lunchtime Literature Club described below.

Your time and sharing are investments in your children's education and in supporting the growth of our teacher-leaders and strengthening positive and beneficial home-school connections.

Celebrating our Student Stars!

2-A's Lunchtime Literature Club by Mrs. Bryden

Each day, the second grade students in 2-A and their teacher, Mrs. Bryden, are treated to a tranquil half hour of classroom dining and award-winning children's literature. Thanks to Lady Liberty's classroom computers and Internet access, 2-A is able to tune into StorylineOnline.net and enjoy magical storybook excursions. 2-A's Lunchtime Literature Club is mesmerized by well-known actors from the Screen Actors Guild Foundation as they present a wide array of outstanding literature, model fluency, and foster a love of reading.

One of 2-A's favorite selections is "No Mirrors in My Nana's House." The story is read by Tia & Tamera Mowry and then sung by Sweet Honey in the Rock. 2-A loves to have guests, so visitors are always welcomed to join their Lunchtime Literature Club. StorylineOnline.net's Summary of No Mirrors In My Nana's House by Ysaye Maria Barnwell is as follows:

"There are no mirrors in my Nana's house.... No mirrors to reflect the cracks in the wall, the clothes that don't fit, the trash in the hallway. No mirrors. But there is love. The beauty in this child's world is in her Nana's eyes. It's like the rising of the sun..."

"You have to get up to plant the seed and see if it grows, but you can't just wait around. You have to water it and take care of it."

- *Bootsy Collins* (pioneering funk musician)



State Tests!

The month of March is a very important month in the lives of your children and in the life of the school. Important State mandated tests will be administered to students in grades 3-4. As parents and guardians, you can help us continue to prepare your children for these tests by doing the following:

Make sure that your child goes to school on time by 8:00 and attends school every day stays in school until the mandated dismissal time.

Make sure that your child completes all homework assignments every night.

Support the school in reinforcing that your child follows all school rules.

On testing days, make sure your child attends, is on time, has had a good night's rest, and a nutritious breakfast.

PTO NEWS

The PTO would like to thank all of the parents and staff who volunteered their time with the Pre-Valentine's Day Dance that was held on Feb. 8th. There were a total of 54 students who attended.

A copy of the PTO's financial report can be obtained from Ms. Owens-Chavers in the main office.

Please continue to support the school's uniform policy.

Cyberbullying

Last month, your children were given a Computer Use Policy to take home for you to read with them and sign. The most important reason for this policy step is to ensure the appropriate, ethical, and legal use of computers in our building, and protect your children from access to inappropriate information and a dangerous form of bullying called cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is sending or posting harmful, demeaning, or cruel text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices. It can involve:

- *"Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images;*
- *Posting sensitive, private information about another person;*
- *Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad;*
- *Intentionally excluding someone from an online group (Willard, 2005)*

Children and youth can cyberbully each other through:

- *E-mails and Instant messaging,*
- *Text or digital imaging messages sent on cell phones,*
- *Web pages and Web logs (blogs),*
- *Chat rooms or discussion groups such as myspace.com, hi5.com, tagged.com, blackplanet.com and migente.com" (adapted from the following site:*

<http://123elearning.wikispaces.com/cyberbullying+presentation#toccyberbullying%20presentation7>

Parents and teachers can be proactive in preventing this kind of misuse and abuse of technology by ensuring active supervision of the use of computers and cell phones, and becoming informed about the harm that cyberbullying can create. We need to be aware that our children's often innocent involvement in chat rooms and internet activities puts them at risk of predators and individuals who may use their personal information/pictures in harmful ways, including but not limited to identity theft, stalking, and harassment.

Over the course of the next few months, students in grades 4-8 will be involved in a series of lessons facilitated by Mr. Silver that will examine this issue in more depth and teach the practices of safe "online netiquette". An excellent resource for parents and students is the website listed above where much of the information shared in this article has been drawn.

Please consider reviewing these online safety rules with your children to help foster safe and ethical internet and digital communication practices:

1. *"I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents' work address/telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parents' permission..*
2. *I will tell my parents or my teacher right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.*
3. *I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother or father along.*
4. *I will never send a person my picture or anything else without first checking with my parents.*
5. *I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable.*
6. *I will talk with my parents so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online and appropriate areas for me to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission..*
7. *I will not give out my Internet password to anyone (even to my best friends) other than my parents.*
8. *I will check with my parents before downloading or installing software or doing anything that could possibly hurt our computer or jeopardize my family's privacy.*
9. *I will be a good online citizen and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law.*
10. *I will help my parents understand how to have fun and learn things online and teach them things about the Internet, computers and other technology." (adapted from Kids Online Safety Rules)*

Technology is an essential tool that we use in our work and leisure worlds and we all need to be educated in how to best utilize it for learning and improving our quality of life. Let's all work together to educate our children about the best, fairest, and safest ways to use digital devices and cyberspace privileges both in and out of school. For more information, or if you have questions, concerns, or suggestions about how to strengthen our safe use of technology, please contact Mr. Silver, Mr. Patton, Ms Bryden, Ms Brower, or Mrs. Thomas.

