



Danbury Elementary

Newsletter

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Ann Holloran, Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It has been a crazy couple of weeks. Last week, I came down with the flu and the week prior, I was swamped with administrative paperwork! I am starting to feel better and some deadlines have passed. Every month, I receive a magazine called *Educational Leadership* written by ASCD (Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development). This month's theme is "Differences Not Disabilities."

I will usually do a "picture walk," read the titles of the articles, captions, and quotes. Then if something catches my eye, I will read the entire article. One such article was entitled, "How Did You Get to Harvard?" by Thomas Hehir. On the first page, the opening says "How does a student who faces major obstacles to accessing the curriculum make it to Harvard? By developing the right learning strategies." The author Hehir started teaching at Harvard sixteen years ago after a 30-year career as a special education teacher and administrator. Although the article focused on students with disabilities, I believe the information gained can be beneficial for any student.

Here are the highlights:

- The majority of the students by the end of middle school had an understanding of their disability, knew how they learned, and what tools and skills they needed to be successful.
- The student, parent(s), and educators didn't accept that their disability should limit his/her potential.
- They had adults in their lives that believed in them!
- At times, the students would receive specialized instruction. However, they also had full access to a challenging curriculum.
- They made sure that some of their academic load focused on their strengths such as the arts, writing, oral debating, or athletics.
- They developed strategies—how to effectively organize their writing; using text-to-speech technology; coping skills for anxiety; organizational tools.
- They understood that there would be highs and low in their educational career but they set the bar high.

This four-page article just summarized the finding of the work done by Thomas Hehir. I am going to add his entire book to my summer reading list! I look forward to finding additional ways in which even at the elementary level we can have all of our students set their goals high no matter the obstacle!

Have a great weekend!



Finally in 5th

Last week, fifth grade students took the SBAC standardized test in ELA. Many students took their time to use strategies we discussed in class, such as reading the question carefully, eliminating improbable choices, rereading the text, etc. They also used the ACE strategy for written responses: Answer, Cite, Explain. We have two “normal” weeks before taking the math SBAC before vacation.

In ELA, we’ve started a new unit with the essential question, “Who goes seeking adventure and why?” We have read a story about adventurous boys keeping busy in their own back yard, the discovery of the Titanic, and the life of an astronaut. While reading, we continue working on drawing conclusions, inferring, word analysis, and fluency.

The ELA essential question ties in nicely with the work students did on the explorer projects. Last week, students presented information about an explorer to the class. It was wonderful to hear the connections they made between different explorers. Marco Polo inspired Christopher Columbus, Ponce de Leon traveled with Columbus, and Hernán Cortés and Hernando de Soto likely attended the same university.

In science, we have begun our living systems unit by first understanding the meaning of structure and function. We are now learning the parts of the respiratory system, including new vocabulary terms such as trachea and alveoli. Next week, students will build a model to better understand how all the structures work together.

Math continues with fractions as student learn how tape diagrams help find a fraction of a number and learn to multiply. We have also taken some time to review operations with decimals, area, volume, powers of ten, etc. to prepare for SBAC.

Last Monday, students were excited to receive their own copy of *Bridge to Terabithia*. Each night, students are assigned pages to read and we discuss our reactions and thoughts about character, plot, etc. Students are welcome to listen to the book on audio and follow along, read with a partner, or read independently. As they read, students should be making “Think Marks” to respond and reflect on the text.

Reminder: Band and Chorus Concert is April 19th at 6:30 at NMMS. Students should wear a white shirt with black pants/skirt.

Lunch Menu April 10-14, 2017

Monday
Hamburger
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Tuesday
Shepherd’s Pie
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Wednesday
Fish Nuggets
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Thursday
Turkey Sub
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Friday
NO SCHOOL

Breakfast \$1.25
(reduced \$.30)
Lunch \$2.75
(reduced \$.40)
Milk \$.35

This facility is operated in accordance with the USDA policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, religion, or national origin.

Congratulations

Tess Sumner’s poster was awarded 2nd place in the 2017 NHWPCA Clean Water Week contest. Tess will receive a prize and get to meet the governor!



PE with Mrs. Frost

Students in Physical Education classes are enjoying fun indoor activities. The weather does not stop us as we move into Spring. Our K/1 students continue to explore many different locomotor and skill activities. Activities in skipping, hopping, jumping and dance movements have been enjoyed by all. Parachute fitness is another way to warm up and get exercise in PE. Our K/1 students have also practiced skills in balancing and combination movements related to gymnastics. Ball skills have been introduced with dribbling, catching, passing and rolling. Partner work is important in learning sharing and cooperation.

Second grade students have been working on a variety of locomotor movements, hoop activities, parachute fitness, and dance warm ups. They had the pleasure of trying inverted balances, balance stunts and individual stunts. They are very creative with their imaginations and creations in balance. The second graders have also been practicing ball skills using the chest pass, catching, dribbling in self-space, dribbling while walking, and dribbling and passing.

Grade 3 students have warmed up in PE doing a variety of dances, partner exercises and parachute fitness fun. Students worked on volleying and underhand skill elements for activities related to volleyball and 2-square. Assessments were done on the underhand elements. We then moved to basketball skills focusing on dribbling elements, chest pass, catching, dribbling while jogging and at different speeds, dribbling in self-space and general space. Students were assessed on dribbling at slow-moderate speeds.

Fourth grade students finished up with volleyball assessments demonstrating elements of the overhead volley. We then moved to basketball skills working on dribbling elements, dribbling in self-space and general space, increasing and decreasing speed, switching hands, and dribble, pass and shoot drills. We worked on many dribbling drills, dribbling in general space, changing directions and passing, and shooting. Assessments were completed on dribbling in general space, changing directions and speed.

Grade 5 students practiced volleyball skills using the overhead pass, forearm pass and serving. They had the opportunity to learn and practice these skills in a volleyball game setting, learning some of the rules along the way. Assessments were completed on the overhead pass. We moved on to basketball skills with focus on the elements dribbling. We practiced on dribbling drills, relays, keep-a-way and dribbling in game situations. While some students are talented with experience in basketball, others are learning more about the skills and utilizing those skills in a game situation. We are preparing for middle school activities and work on cooperation, teamwork, kindness, and diversity. The students were assessed on dribbling in a game situation using a mature pattern.

Spring is here and we are waiting for the snow to melt and things to dry up. Once the playground is safe and dry we will move outside for PE classes. Please make sure students have sneakers, water bottles, and outdoor clothing, especially for those colder morning PE classes.

