



Center School Newsletter

"Hawk Talk"

Celebrating children and learning



Volume IV, Issue 4

March 4, 2020

Principal's Points

- One of our School Improvement Plan Goals is to *Provide a safe social , emotional, and physical teaching and learning environment that meets the needs of all students.* We are accomplishing this goal by a) all staff completing Year II ALICE Training, b) holding ALICE Drills where students are in different environments (i.e. cafeteria & Playground), c) Integrating the Armed Security Officer into all aspects of the school day, d) Training all Staff in an emotional intelligence approach/program called RULER. The RULER approach will be rolled out to students starting in the 2020-2021 school year. More information for parents will be forthcoming.
- During the past couple of weeks, students were administered a mid-year STAR assessment in the areas of Reading and Math. As a school, we had 5% more students demonstrating mastery in Reading and Math. Individual student results will be provided to parents along with report cards.
- Parent Teacher Conferences will be held on March 11th and 12th. Conferences should be scheduled directly with your child's Classroom Teacher. Report Cards and STAR Results will be distributed at the conference.
- Planning for the transition of moving Oxford Center School to the current Great Oak Middle School facility has been underway for some time now. Staff has begun to visit this facility to become familiar with their new classrooms. We are in the process of planning for students to visit between now and the end of school so that they can begin getting a better sense of where we will be calling home. More information regarding this transition is forthcoming.

Nursing Notes

- Cold and flu season is here. Many children have stomachaches, headaches, respiratory illness, and we have had 9 confirmed cases of the flu since returning in January. Please remember that children need to be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication, prior to returning to school. If your child is seen by a physician, be sure to get a doctor's note to verify their absence(s) for illness. We work hard to encourage hand washing before meals and after coughing or sneezing, we have hand sanitizer in our classrooms and in the lunchroom, and we provide tissues to all classrooms to help cover coughs and sneezes. Please help us at home by encouraging proper hand washing, washing water bottles daily, and keeping sick children home until they are well. Please be sure to email your school nurse at elkenh@oxfordpublicschools.org with any health updates for your child.

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, March 4th
Grades Close

Wednesday, March 11
Parent/Teacher
Conferences (report cards)

Thursday, March 12
Parent/Teacher
Conferences (report Cards)

Friday, March 20
Town Meeting 2:00 PM

Friday, March 27
No School – Professional
Development Day

April 1st thru 4th
School Musical, The
Rockin' Tale of Snow
White

April 10th - Good Friday
No School

April 13th – 17th
Spring Recess – No School

PTO Happenings

BOX TOPS – Continue to clip and send in old format box tops. New format box tops need your receipt scanned in the Box Tops app.



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Grade 3 Happenings

- **ELA-** Students have recently embarked on a great unit where students will be reading short books and writing small essays about them. The stories are very engaging because they deal with problems that students may encounter in life such as making friendships, growing up, and always doing the right thing, even when it is not easy. Some of the books we will be reading include [A Bike Like Sergio's](#), [Spaghetti in a Hotdog Bun](#), [Each Kindness](#), and [The Invisible Boy](#). It has been great discussing these books and learning the important lessons that each book shares.
- **Math-** Students have been working on a unit consisting of Perimeter, Area, and Geometry. In addition to linear measuring using U.S. and Metric units, they are learning the difference between perimeter and area and how to calculate those measurements. In addition, students will work with hands-on materials to identify and to learn about the characteristics of shapes such as triangles, squares, rectangles, rhombuses, and trapezoids.
- **Science-** The new unit for Science is called *Water and Climate*. Students will have hands-on-experiences for exploring the properties of water, the water cycle, weather and climate, interactions between water and other earth materials, and how humans use water as a natural resource. They will be seeing how science affects everyday life and the influence of engineering and technology.

Grade 4 Happenings

- Readers Workshop, the students will continue their exploration of Unit 3 titled *Reading History*. In this Unit, students will focus on establishing a reading life, thinking deeply about the characters, and interpreting the text. The students will learn that when readers want to develop a large interpretation of the whole text, they need to think about all of the points of views within the text.
- Writers Workshop, the students will continue their exploration of Unit 3 titled *Bringing History to Life*. In this unit, the students will research the topic Westward Expansion and write an informational piece about the topic. The students will learn how to present relevant information with historical details, text features, and quotes.
- Math, the students will continue exploring the math concepts within Investigations Unit 4 titled *Measuring and Classifying Shapes*. In this unit, students will develop ideas about the attributes of two-dimensional (2-D) and three-dimensional (3-D) shapes and how these attributes determine their classifications. In addition, the students will develop ideas about measurable attributes and the techniques, tools, and the units used to measure the objects.

Crayola Colorcycle is always ongoing. Bring your used markers of any brand into school for recycling.

Happenings at OCS

Colin Bailey
Ms. Corrigan
Inspired by Van Gogh



Painting Party with Mrs. Lombard





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- Science, the students will investigate electricity and magnetism while learning useful application of electromagnetism in everyday life.

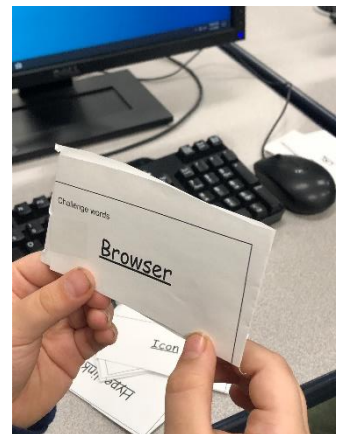
Grade 5 Happenings

- **Readers' Workshop:** In Reader's Workshop, we are currently working on researching both sides of debatable topics. Students are making claims and supporting them with the perfect balance of textual evidence, statistics and data, and elaborating with personal thoughts and ideas. Students should continue to read independently at home to keep skills fresh such as determining main ideas and supporting details, tackling complex words, understanding text structure and why authors choose to write with various styles, summarizing, and self-questioning to monitor their own comprehension.
- **Writers' Workshop:** In Writer's Workshop, students are generating essays to communicate the claims they have made regarding their debatable topics. In doing so, students are using structure, referencing research, unpacking quotes and statistics, and elaborating with personal thoughts.
- **Mathematics:** Students have been working with decimals to the thousandths place. In doing so, they are understanding place value, reading and writing decimals, rounding, comparing and ordering, plotting on number line, and adding and subtracting decimals.
- **Science:** In science, students are engaged in understanding the use of models and their real world applications. Classes will be beginning mixtures and solutions. In doing so, they will investigate concepts of changes in properties, solutes and solvents, concentration, and density.
- **Social Studies:** In social studies, students are studying the thirteen British colonies and the daily lives of those who called it home.

Art

- Third and Fourth graders have been studying the works and life of tragic artist Vincent Van Gogh. 3rd graders were inspired to create their own masterpieces after looking at his series of Sunflowers. Students learned how to create a painting that showed movement and rhythm as well as paint thick and mix right on the paper like Van Gogh. They learned how to double load their paintbrush and practiced various acrylic painting techniques. 4th graders took it a step farther and focused on movement, rhythm and balance as they created their own unique spin on one of his most famous paintings, Starry Night

Students created flashcards to help them learn vocabulary words in the computer lab



Students in Miss Corrigan's 4th grade class work on using graphic organizers to help determine the text structure of a passage in the library.



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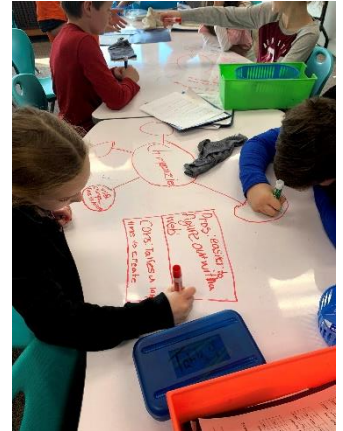
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- Fifth graders have been delving deep into the color wheel, studying analogous colors and how to create gradients. They drew some pretty amazing dragon eyes and used their knowledge of color to create a unique and interesting composition that highlights their knowledge of colors and how they can work together to create an amazing piece.
- On Monday night, MARCH 2nd – Annual District Wide Art Show. EVERY STUDENT FROM CENTER SCHOOL was HIGHLIGHTED AND CELEBRATED during this fun celebration of the arts.
- I look forward to working with your children and am always impressed and amazed to see how they grow, change and create over the course of the school year. I hope you will always feel welcome in the art room and enjoy all the masterpieces that the 2019-2020 school year will bring!



Music

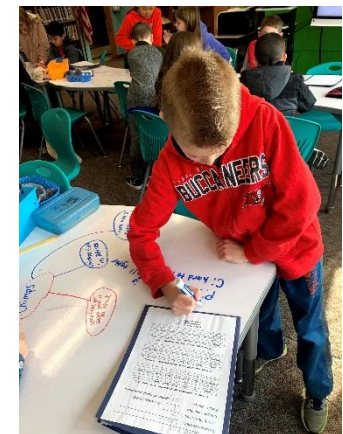
- **3rd grade** has begun working on "Over the Rainbow". We have discussed the context of the song in "The Wizard of Oz" and how the lyrics of the "land over the rainbow" were from a lullaby sung by someone to Dorothy. We will be listening to several versions including Ella Fitzgerald and a Big Band arrangement to inform our own vocal take on the classic. Ask your child about "John Kanaka" and "Green Sally". Have them teach you the song and movements!
- **4th grade** has begun working on percussion ensembles. We will practice improvisation on drums using call and response. The call is the same each time but the response is improvised. We have focused on proper instrument performance and staying together at different tempi. Vocally we are studying the jazz classic "It Don't Mean a Thing" by Duke Ellington. We've been having fun singing in a jazz style and made connections between our drumming and the vocal call and instrument response in the song.
- **5th grade** is continuing their work on ukuleles. Students are proficient at performing their fingering warm ups and the "a minor" and "C" chord. We have begun working on "F" and will soon introduce "G". We have also enjoyed playing along with Imagine Dragons "Thunder" and Joe Cocker's "Feeling Alright". 5th grade is reviewing the notes of treble clef and rhythms. We are now making the tradition from "titi and ta" to the counting system to prepare them for Middle School.

From your Media Specialist, Mrs. Redfern:

- Since early December, Mrs. Lubanda and I have been sending emails home to alert you of upcoming projects and tests. If you have not received anything from us, please check your spam folder; I am using the email address on record from PowerSchool, so if you have recently changed your email, please be sure to update it with the office.

Library

- Students in all grades are beginning to discuss elements of structure of nonfiction text (description, sequence, cause and effect, compare and contrast, problem and solution).





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They are reading passages to identify the keywords and clues authors use to determine the structure of the text. Following this, a unit of text features is planned. They are also still working on their Around the Genres project where they are encouraged to read different types of genres. Many students are enjoying trying something new! Multiple students from each grade have already met their goal and have received a HAWK ticket; they will also be entered into a drawing for a gift certificate to the Spring book fair in April.

Computer Lab

- All classes should have finished their vocabulary quizzes by now. Hopefully, you saw the flash cards they created, and they were able to use them to study. We will do this project again in the third marking period with new vocabulary words. Next up for all grades is the topic of Digital Citizenship:
- 3rd grade: We'll introduce the topic of cyberbullying (which was a vocabulary word) and discuss the difference between personal vs. private information (what should not be shared online without parent/guardian permission)
- 4th grade: They will review the 2 topics above and add "trustworthiness" - how do you judge what websites to trust and how "bias" pertains to trustworthiness.
- 5th grade: They will review the 3 topics above and add a discussion on being part of a global community - it has privileges but also responsibilities.
- 4th and 5th grade students will have study guides available in Google Drive for each topic at least one week in advance of their tests and an email will be sent home to let you know when they are coming up. 3rd graders will have a study guide that I create for them in their Google Classroom folder.

Tech-sports

- Our grade-level groups have been busy with several projects. Creating the newscasts every other week takes up much of our time, but the results are priceless! If you have not seen them, go to the OCS website; under "Parents and Students" then "HAWK Video Announcements".
- Another project we have started is celebrating Random Act of Kindness by writing notes or sending pictures to teachers and support staff to show our appreciation for all of their hard work. We will be working on this project for the next several weeks.
- As always, feel free to send me an email with any questions or concerns!
redfernj@oxfordpublicschools.org



Physical Education

- In Physical Education, students have been participating in the Gymnastics unit. Students have learned both introductory skills as well as some advance gymnastic skills. Some of the skills in the unit include: the forward roll, backwards roll, cartwheel, round-off, handstand, backbend and balances. As the unit, progressed students have been able to challenge themselves by using the balance beam as well as the vault.



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- The purpose of the unit is to teach students body control as well as strength, but in a fun and challenging atmosphere. Students of varying abilities have been able to develop their confidence as well as their gymnastic skills through repetition and instruction.
- The unit will end with a will be a culminating assessment. Students in 3rd grade will be asked to perform a forward roll, while 4th and 5th grade will perform cartwheels.





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