

Joseph J. Chella
Principal

Catherine Robinson
Assistant Principal

The Bennet Star



February 2014

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Winter is clearly upon us! I hope you are all staying warm through this extremely cold weather. This year is moving right along. As a school community we have been working hard to make every student's experience at Bennet Academy both educationally enriching and enjoyable. I would like to thank you for your partnership in this effort and for playing such an important role in our school community.

As we all know, the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) is no longer being given (except for the Science CMT in grades 5 and 8) in the state of CT. We will now be giving the Smarter Balanced assessment. This year is a field test for the new assessment. The first day of testing is Monday, March 18th. The testing will run through April 4th. Each student will not be testing every day throughout the testing window. I have attached a schedule of the testing dates for you to refer to throughout the testing period. Please encourage your child to do their very best on these tests. I ask that, to the best of your ability, you make it a priority to have your child get a good night's sleep, eat a solid breakfast and be present and on time for school during the Smarter Balanced administration. I really appreciate your help with this request. If you have any questions regarding the Smarter Balanced, please do not hesitate to contact me.

On a different note, we at Bennet are very lucky to have such a generous and dedicated PTSA. Whenever we need their help, they're always there for us! I want to share a fun and exciting upcoming PTSA fundraiser that will take place at Bennet. Our second annual March Madness Staff vs. Students Basketball Game is going to be held here at Bennet in the Cone Gym. There will be no cost for this family fun event. More information will follow soon. I hope you all will continue to support our PTSA efforts and join us for this event!

Lastly, here at Bennet we continue to focus on maintaining a positive learning environment for all members of the Bennet community. We are having another Positive School Climate school-wide assembly. During this assembly we will share the "Positive School Actions" that students from across all teams generated to help us all fulfill our STARS program goals on a daily basis. Each team will also be performing a skit to represent these positive actions. We also look forward to an appearance from our mascot, the Bennet Bear! Moreover, we will be adding a component, the STARS Game Room, to our positive behavioral support program, our STARS Program. This will allow students who receive a STARS Award, in addition to how students are already acknowledged, to spend 45 minutes in the STARS Game Room to play board games, the Wii, a 10-1 activity table or spend time playing in the Rec Gym. We are very excited about this addition to our STARS Program. We ask that you continue to talk with your child at home about how he or she can be a positive contributor to our school climate.

Again, thank you to everyone for your consistent support in making Bennet such a great place to learn! Our staff and students are very lucky to have your support!

Sincerely,

Joe Chella, Principal

PRINCIPAL

HOURS

5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

February 4

March 4 and 18

April 1

May 6 and 20

June 3

Smarter Balanced Testing Schedule

March/April

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
10	11	12	13	14
17	18 Math 9:30 - 10:30	19 Math 9:30 - 10:30	20 Math 9:30 - 10:30	21 Math 9:30 - 10:30
24 Math 9:30 - 10:30 Math 1:00 - 2:00	25 Math 9:30 - 10:30 Math 1:00 - 2:00	26 Math 9:30 - 10:30 ELA 1:00 - 2:00	27 ELA 9:30 - 10:30 ELA 1:00 - 2:00	28 ELA 9:30 - 10:30
31 ELA 9:30 - 10:30 ELA 1:00 - 2:00	1 ELA 9:30 - 10:30 ELA 1:00 - 2:00	2 ELA 9:30 - 10:30 ELA 1:00 - 2:00	3	4



Future Problem Solvers



Surveillance Society

Students in the Future Problem Solving Program (FPS) just completed their third problem for the school year. The topic was *Surveillance Society*, an examination of how surveillance methods are changing the world we live in.

A big “thank you” goes out to all the parents who volunteered to chaperone our Surveillance Society Seminar field trip. FPS students traveled to Portland High School on January 8 to hear two guest speakers discuss advancements and issues in surveillance methodology. A police detective and a lawyer from the ACLU gave the students an extensive examination of how surveillance is currently being used and how it may be used in the future. We were surprised to learn that all of China’s 1.3 billion citizens are recognized by the country’s comprehensive facial recognition surveillance system. Facial recognition was also used at the last Super Bowl, allowing authorities to recognize and apprehend 19 fans who had outstanding warrants.

Here is some background information from researchers at Future Problem Solving International (fpspi.org): Google Earth aims to photograph every street in every country on Earth, surveillance satellites can photograph a person walking down the street from space, and cities are increasingly being blanketed by closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras both indoors and outdoors.

People use cameras in their houses to watch for burglars or even to survey how their babysitters are looking after their children. In London it is estimated that there are at least 1.5 million CCTV cameras in city centers, parks, stations, airports, shops and so on, yet a 2008 report by UK Police Chiefs concluded that CCTV solved only 3% of crimes.

Do CCTV cameras keep people safe? While “surveillance” has traditionally referred to camera surveillance, it now includes the interception of electronically transmitted information such as phone calls or internet history used for data mining and individual profiling. How do you know when and where you are being watched? Who controls the data that is gathered? Who can view it? How might it be used? Should the need for public and personal safety outweigh an individual’s right to personal privacy? These are just some of the questions FPS students are discussing and devising solutions for at Bennet Academy.

Contact the FPS coach: Samantha Randazzo at 860-647-3571 ext. 70576 or samranda@manchesterct.gov

In the month of January we emphasized the Pillar of Justice. Justice is treating everyone fairly.

Webster’s dictionary defines justice as “reward or penalty as deserved”.

Justice and Fairness Do’s

- ◆ Treat all people fairly
- ◆ Listen to others and try to understand what they are feeling and saying
- ◆ Consider all the facts, including opposing views, before making a decision
- ◆ Make impartial decisions, using the same criteria, rules, or standards for everyone
- ◆ Correct your mistakes

Fairness Don’ts

- ◆ Don’t take advantage of other people’s mistakes or ignorance
- ◆ Don’t take more than your fair share
- ◆ Don’t let personal preferences, prejudices or other feelings improperly interfere with decisions which should be based on merit





Sixth Grade Physical and Immunizations

All sixth grade students are required to have a physical and proper immunizations by June 1, 2014 on file in the Bennet Academy Health Office. The blue state physical forms must be dated after January 2013 to June of 2014. The State of Connecticut also requires that each student have a Tdap booster after age 11; two varicellas; and a meningococcal vaccine. Failure to provide documentation of the proper health requirements may result in your student not being allowed to enter grade 7 at Iling Middle School. If you have any questions, please call and speak with a school nurse at 860-647-3582. Thank you.

ABSENT LINE

Please call the 24 hour absent telephone line every time your child is absent from school:

860-647-3583

Please leave your child's name, home base teacher, team, and the reason for the absence.

Thank you!

Bennet Academy S.T.A.R.S. Award Winners

Congratulations to the following students who received a S.T.A.R.S. Award at Bennet Academy recently: Justine Fitch, Ashlynn Klavins, Osvaldo Valerio, Tracia Biswas, Charles Kelley, Natalya Davis, Vivian Hudson, Luis Ramos, Dale Bard, Jaki Haynes, Vanessa Hudson, Brianna Murrell, Rebecca Kennedy, Cory Williams.



Their pictures are highlighted on our new Bennet Academy television monitor located outside the main office. We are proud of our students for the positive choices they are making at Bennet Academy.



Meet Your Officers:

President
Grahame Slogesky

Vice President
Malynda Smith

Secretary
Shannon Kievman

Treasurer
Richard Walsh

The first annual Townwide PTSA Reflections Program was a success. Over 75 students submitted artwork, essays, poems and photographs in this contest which pays tribute to the arts. A reception was held January 14 at Cheney Hall in Manchester, courtesy of the Manchester Rotary Club. We hope to be able to offer this program again next year and would love to expand the Reflections committee. If you have any interest in getting involved, please let us know.

Our next meeting takes place Tuesday, February 11, 6-7 PM in the Media Center. Please join us! It's never too late to join Bennet PTSA. Lately we have used funds to support our students by contributing bottled water to the science department for its salmon project; and soon we will support Bennet's efforts with Nutmeg At Night by providing snacks.

Just because it's February doesn't mean we can't enjoy some ice cream! Take the family out and see other Bennet families, all for a great cause – Bennet PTSA! On February 25, between 6-9 PM, eat in, take out, or zoom through the drive thru at Dairy Queen on Hartford Road. 10% of all sales will benefit Bennet PTSA and programs for our kids! No special coupon is needed – just mark your calendar and be there!

There is a Box Tops for Education program going on now – top 3 Box Tops collectors will win an iTunes gift card. Be sure to bring in those box tops – just package them in a baggie with your student's name, homeroom, and team name so they get credit for what they bring in!

The Bennet PTSA is busy planning the staff/student basketball game for March Madness – its just around the corner! Snacks and chaperones needed.

The time has come to begin work on the Bennet Academy 2013-2014 yearbook. The yearbook is done online and must be completed by April 15. We could use some help!

If you would like to help, email bennetacademyptsa@gmail.com.

Physical Education News

Bennet Physical Education - Ms. White and Mr. Constantine

What we've been up to:

This month we have started our Personal Fitness/Weight Room Unit. We have a beautiful weight room facility that the students have really been enjoying. The students have been learning about heart rate, and setting goals to improve their physical fitness. We will also be having Officer Patria of the Manchester Police Department coming to do a presentation called, "Stop the Violence" at the end of the month.

Nutmeg at Night T-Shirt Drawing Contest

Anyone interested in submitting a drawing for the Nutmeg at Night T-shirt Contest should submit their entry to Mrs. Rafala, no later than March 14th. Please remember: Your entry must be based on the 2014 Nutmeg nominees, use a blank 8 ½ X 11 white piece of paper, use ONLY black ink or black marker and write your name and school on the back of the entry. Feel free to drop off entries before March 14th if you finish. The winner will be announced on March 21st. The winner's drawing will be printed on the t-shirts that are given to all participants of the Nutmeg at Night Reading Competition, being held April 30th at Bennet Academy.

Bennet Academy Art Class

Mrs. Guzzi's classes have begun their two point perspective projects based on the artwork of Wayne Thiebaud. They are currently doing color studies including intermediate, secondary & tertiary color in light & dark values in preparation for their final projects which will be a three dimensional-looking, theme-based cake design with perspective above, below and at the horizon line.

Mrs. Reimels classes have been working on a printmaking and fiber-arts project based on graffiti art and the art of African American author/artist Faith Ringgold. In their printmaking design the students include symbols of their personal interest, the climate they live in or events they celebrate with one letter design.



Jada Tasby & Brandon Efanayi mix colors to create secondary, tertiary & intermediate colors.



Alyssa Spina & Brittney Bolling use brayers to ink their Styrofoam plates in preparation for printmaking.



John Slogesky mixes colors to create secondary, tertiary & intermediate colors.



Students in after-school activities will board late buses at 4:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

SAFETY

REMINDER

TO PARENTS

Please be sure to have your child exit and enter your car on the sidewalk side of the street. You may also drop off your child in the staff parking lot on School Street.



MUSIC DEPARTMENT STAFF

Mr. Kleiner,
Band Director

Mrs. Browning,
Orchestra
Director

Mrs. Sandefer, Choral
Director and
Classroom Music

Mr. Marino,
Classroom Music



Music Notes

Musical Notes

CONCERT DATES

Concerts are an opportunity for students to share with parents, family and friends all of their hard work. Our musicians will have an opportunity to once again showcase their talents at two more evening concerts. Please mark the dates on your calendar so that you can help celebrate their successes.

Townwide String Concert – Tuesday, April 8, 7:00PM at MHS

Townwide Band Concert – Wednesday, April 9, 7:00PM at MHS

Townwide Chorus Concert – Thursday, April 10, 7:00PM at MHS

Bennet Spring Concert – Tuesday, May 13, 7:00PM at MHS

STUDENT RECOGNITION!

Many Students in Band and Orchestra are developing good practice routines and remembering to hand in their practice logs. For every 100 minutes of practice students will earn a star. Students will receive recognition for their efforts at morning rehearsals. Practice logs are 10% of the student's grade for instrumental music.

In the month of January, Band and Orchestra students were recognized for achieving the Level 1 Silver Star Award which is given when students reach 1000 practice minutes. Each student was awarded a silver star to display on their lanyard and a certificate. The music department would like to congratulate the following students for all of their effort.

Orchestra – Liam Chenette, Mary Dunne, Rebecca Kennedy, Noor Majid, Brianna Murrell, Alyssa Pare, Bailey Phelps, Aneesia Rivera, Alyssa Saynganthone, Sarah Turley and Jenna Waggoner.

Band – Zach Bidwell, Evan Brown, Emily Christensen, Aliza Ebor, Tommy Ekis, Kate Hedlund, Johan Jaramillo, Megan Kievman, Victoria Rivera, Kristian Velasquez-Garcia.

The following students received a Level 2-Silver Star Award for 2000 practice minutes: **Johan Jaramillo, Megan Kievman**

Ensemble Rehearsals

Students have been assigned ensembles based on their team. Rehearsals run from 8:30 – 9:10am, during the ISP time block. Please help your child to remember their instrument and music on rehearsal days.

DAY A: ORCHESTRA for teams Clementé, Truth and DaVinci

DAY B: ORCHESTRA for teams Franklin, Escalanté, Ruby Bridges and Lincoln

DAY C: BAND for teams Ruby Bridges, Clementé and Franklin

DAY D: BAND for teams Escalanté, DaVinci, Truth and Lincoln

DAY E: CHORUS for teams Franklin, Escalanté, Ruby Bridges

DAY F: CHORUS for teams Lincoln, Clementé, DaVinci, and Truth

Bennet Academy, MLK Recognition and Celebration 2013-2014



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, *"Somewhere along the way, we must learn that there is nothing greater than to do something for others."*

Following in the tradition of Dr. King, a young Emily Christensen (presently a 6th grade student at Bennet Academy) began a legacy of giving, as she sought to overcome the sadness brought about by the death of a young friend, T.J., after a battle with Cancer.

It all started the day 6 year old Emily told her mom "I really miss T.J. I wish we could do something. I really want to help kids who have cancer."

Emily had just been given a big bag of old, broken crayons and, as she remembered an activity she had done in her preschool class, she had a flash of insight. Her church had recently challenged families to exemplify a parable from Matthew 25:14. Parishioners were encouraged to start with a small sum of money provided by the church, use ingenuity to multiply it, and then donate it to someone in need. Emily started with \$50 and to date she has raised over \$73,000 for the Connecticut Children's Hospital and the Minneapolis Children's Hospital.

"Crayons for Cancer", created by Emily Christensen, is a fundraising organization which assists parents of children with cancer. The monies raised help pay for parking and meals at children's hospitals, so parents can be with their children during chemotherapy treatments.

Emily and her friends and family collect old and broken crayons, then they host "crayon parties" where everyone pitches in to melt big batches of crayon shavings down into creative shapes and molds. After that, they sell them to raise money for children with cancer. Emily, with the help of her dad, has her own website: crayonsforcancer.org. This fundraiser has been going strong for five years, and it has expanded to involve PTAs, churches, UConn sororities and fraternities, and area schools. Several chapters have even been formed in other states. When Emily was only 7-years-old, she was flown out to Anaheim, California to a red-carpet event where she received the *Well-Done Award*, an annual award sponsored by a church in California.

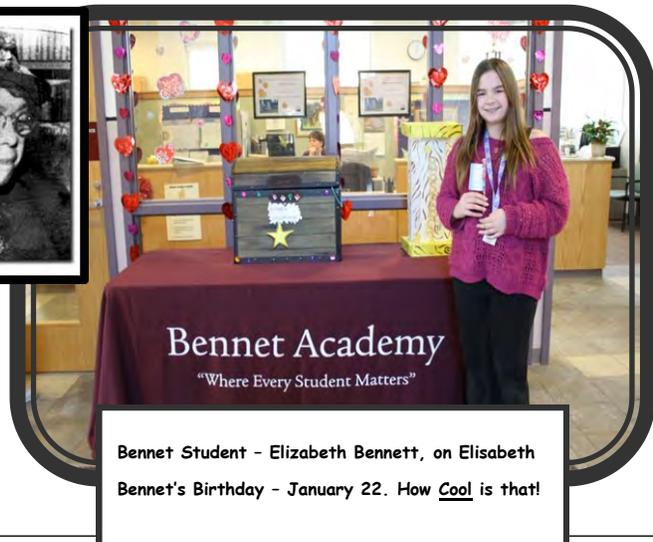
Even with all this recognition and popularity, Emily remains humble and committed to her project to this day. She is truly an inspirational young person who exemplifies service and sacrifice.

Happy Birthday Elisabeth Bennet

Happy Birthday

Elisabeth Bennet –

Born January 22, 1881



Bennet Student - Elisabeth Bennett, on Elisabeth Bennet's Birthday - January 22. How Cool is that!

Team Franklin

Language Arts

In preparation for Black History Month in February, Team Franklin has been blending elements of the history of African American experiences in the US. This theme will be supported with information about how African Americans have contributed to the growth of our country through inventions, sciences, literature, and industry.

What's the Theme of This Year's African American History Month?

Every year there's a different theme for February's celebration of African American History Month, also called Black History Month for short. The 2014 theme is **The Golden Jubilee of the Civil Rights Act**. The theme this year is announced annually by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH).

About the Association for the Study of African American Life and History

The organization's stated goal "is to promote research, preserve, interpret and disseminate information about Black life, history and culture to the global community." It is currently located temporarily on the campus of Howard University. It was Established on September 9, 1915 and founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson. The organization is the founders of Black History Month.

Retrieved from <http://brooklyn.about.com>

Science: Mr. Ortiz

Physical Science: Elements, Compounds and Mixtures. Students will be exposed to the periodic table and learn how to read the information on the element square. They will explain the characteristics of elements and give examples of these characteristics as well as classify elements as metals, nonmetals, and metalloids using the elements characteristics and properties. We will discuss how elements make up compounds and how the chemical process combines two or more elements. Finally, students will explain the properties of mixtures and how mixtures can be separated.

The salmon eggs have been delivered and they are doing great. We will have the salmon eggs for about 100 days; until the eggs hatch. At this stage the salmon will be at the Alevin stage of their life cycle. We are scheduled to release the Alevins in Mid-May and will be taking a field trip to Salmon River Park in Colchester to explore the salmon's natural habitat and to release them into the river.

Mathematics: Ms. St. Laurent

In math, we are completing our Bits and Pieces III Unit. Most recently students have been focusing on multiplication and division of fractions and decimals with an emphasis on the relationship between numerals in fraction form as they compare to numerals in decimal form. As we conclude the unit, students will be working on a performance task that shows their understanding of the fraction/decimal relationship.

Next we will be tackling the concept of integers and the coordinate plane. Most students are familiar with positive coordinate numbers, so we already have a good base of information. We will be discussing negative numbers that relate to temperature and altitude, opposite numbers on a number line and values of numbers as we move left on the number line. We will be locating points found on the four quadrants of a coordinate grid and understanding the rational numbers' absolute value related to its distance from 0 on the number line. As always, we will be connecting these concepts to real world applications.

Social Studies: Ms. Swanbon

In Social Studies, we are currently studying the Atlantic Provinces of Canada and their physical characteristics. Topics of interest for the students within these provinces include the Titanic, the fishing industry of the Atlantic, fish farms, and the Underground Railroad. Students will investigate and discuss how the environment aided or hindered each issue.

When finished, students will be investigating the provinces of both Quebec and Ontario. From there, they will move on to explore Canada's Breadbasket Region. Several of our students are currently doing enrichment projects where they are creating digital stories about several issues concerning Canada today. Digital storytelling involves research, creating a script, adding digital images to match the script, record a voice over, and adding music to enhance the mood or tone of the movie. These will be posted to the site next week. The students have been doing an incredible job and we are very proud of them and their effort. I hope you will enjoy these wonderful examples of their work when completed.

Team Lincoln

Happy New Year!

Language Arts and Reading classes on Team Lincoln ended the 2013 year with the "All American Slurp" story from the students' Anthology. Comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences of two cultures provided the forum for a team activity. Mr. Duva was the Master Chef and made a Chinese soup. He provided chopsticks to all the students and challenged them to eat the soup and noodles, using **only the chopsticks!** Mrs. Silagi introduced a Chinese math game to the students for them to play in teams, and Ms. Moretto instructed the students on how to paint the Chinese alphabet, using the Chinese brush strokes. Name signs and door signs were made by the students to bring home.

All classes are working on Figurative language, using the DOK levels of questioning techniques. Short stories and poetry, of classic poets and authors, are being rediscovered by Lincoln students. Robert Frost is a perfect choice for this cold New England weather.

We still have miles to go before we "warm up!"

Mrs. Silagi's math class will be building on their knowledge of fractions to learn about operating on decimals and percents. We will be using the Connected Mathematics book Bits and Pieces III, Computing with Decimals and Percents. In this textbook they will be exposed to a variety of real world situations where people often use decimals and percents to develop algorithms for solving problems. This will include estimating the results of operations on decimals, knowing when to use each operation, and using their knowledge of place value in working with percents. Challenge your child on a shopping trip to estimate the total of your purchase. Does your child overestimate or underestimate? When shopping and there is a sale, see if your child can tell you how much the item would cost at the sale price (ex. 30% off). Remember - there is a website the students can access that provides extra help on homework and extended practice if needed. <http://www.phschool.com>

Science classes are viewing the last of the research projects based on elements. Our salmon have arrived and we are busy calculating their growth on a daily basis. Ask your child how this calculation is carried out and how they determine how much a salmon will grow in a 24 hour period. The second round of field trips for Connecticut River Connections will be scheduled soon. The other half of Ms. Moretto's and all of Mrs. Salagi's homeroom will be involved.

Our Fall session proved to be educational and fun!!! Hats off or I should say hats on to the students who braved Long Island Sound in December aboard The Envirolab....It was really cold but memorable. Good news....each day will now become a tad longer as we inch our way towards February.

Social Studies classes are continuing their study of Latin American countries. It only seems appropriate that we study our neighbors to the South. It may help us think we are warmer, when we are experiencing the frigid temperatures in the lower latitudes. We will begin with a general knowledge study of the entire country, followed by individual country research. Do you know what river is shared with our neighbor? Why did the Panama Canal get built? Does the United States own all of the Baja Peninsula? Many Latin Americans only speak Spanish, while other neighboring countries speak English, French and ancestral languages from the Aztecs and Mayans. Join us in our search for knowledge about our allies, just over the southern border.

Just a friendly reminder: Students should read 30-35 minutes each night.

Check Planners and reading logs weekly.

Watch, read or listen to the news, to stay current!

Team Clementé

Team News...

The teachers of Team Clemente would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. We hope you had an enjoyable holiday season filled with many happy memories.

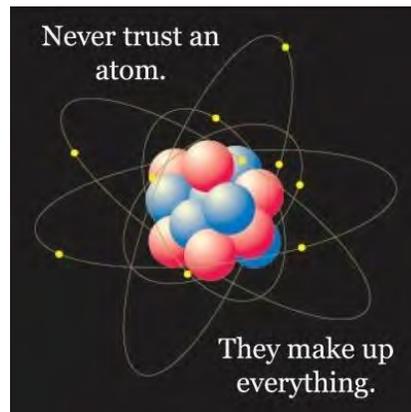
Language Arts

In writing, Team Clementé students continue to refine their expository writing skills. Students are asked to plan for and write expository essays that are fluent, well elaborated, and organized. Ask your child how he or she used “Golden Bricks” to add powerful details to his/her last essay. In the revision process of writing, students are learning to recognize and correct vague pronouns as well as errors in subject-verb agreement.

In addition, students are being asked to participate in the Annual Connecticut Elk’s Association Drug Awareness Essay Contest. The theme for this year’s contest is “Down with Drugs, Up with Awareness”. This is a 500 word essay that can be typed or handwritten. The contest is open to all grade 6, 7, and 8 students.

In reading, students are exploring both literature and nonfiction in order to determine the theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details. They are providing summaries of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. We continue to work on reading fluency and expanding independent reading to include various genres. Please encourage your child to read at least 30 minutes each night.

Science News



Students have been participating in numerous labs where they are asked to: identify a problem statement/question, form a hypothesis, design a procedure to test the hypothesis, perform the experiment they designed while recording data in both a table and written format, and create graphs to display their data. They are also formulating conclusions that state whether or not their hypothesis was supported by the data they collected and making suggestions for future research. Watch for formal lab reports coming home and ask your child about his/her favorite lab this week. We will be starting our new unit on Weather and Climate. A new science textbook titled: Weather and Climate will be issued to your child and I will be collecting the Matter text.

Team Clementé continued

At home suggestions:

Is your child enthusiastic about science? Are you looking for projects he/she can do at home? Try visiting:

<http://www.miniscience.com/SciProjIntro.asp>

This website has project suggestions and gives you a level of difficulty. Have fun!

Visit www.Schooltube.com and ask your child to sing "Meet the Elements," or listen to "The Element Song." Both songs were used in our last unit to reinforce understanding.



! MATH !

Students have been persevering with our study of fractions and decimals. They now understand that multiplying, dividing, adding, and subtracting decimals will be part of their everyday life if they intend on ever having money and that decimals are another way of representing fractions. We have used this knowledge to dine at the "Hamburger Hut" using Menu Math situations that represent real life. There was a lot to cover in this unit, which relied heavily upon knowledge from 5th grade. The unit comes to a close at the end of the month and we will begin a short unit on positive and negative numbers. We have many successes to celebrate on Team Clementé. I'd like to give a shout out to: Dehlani Chinan, Vivian Hudson, and Jayce Camacho, for scoring a perfect 100 % on a recent decimals test. Also, to Corinthia Saez, Tysean Bass, Andrew St. Amand, Chelsea Morttey, Julia DiLoreto, and Thomas DiBattista for coming sooo close with a score of 95%! Great job all!

Social Studies News

Team Clementé students have been introduced to a unit on Canada. We have started learning about the country's Geography and had our first quiz. In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., students have been learning about the Civil Rights Movement and have reflected on Dr. King's speech. They have viewed the *The Children's March* and have been asked to respond to this time in history. Students are very interested in the events that took place and had great questions and discussions. In addition to this, students continue to strengthen their Geography skills on a daily basis.

Team Escalanté

Science News

In Mrs. Fioriello's class, we are wrapping up our unit on Matter. The students have been describing the properties of compounds and mixtures. The last area we have been working on is: explaining the differences between the states of matter. Our next unit of study is Weather and Climate. We will start working on the layers of the atmosphere in February.

We're calculating the daily development of the salmon, making predictions on when we think they will hatch and observing changes weekly. Please ask your child about the development of the salmon eggs. The salmon tie in to our ecosystem unit in the spring.

In writing classes, we are working on informational and explanatory writing. The students have been working on writing introductions and will continue to elaborate on their writing .

Reading

The students are practicing strong listening and speaking skills through conversations and collaborations with peers by building on the ideas of others and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. After reading the book, *Faithful Elephants* written by Yukio Tsuchiya, the students engaged in lively discussions about the grief, fear and sadness war produces, and the decisions that have to be made when war affects not only human beings but innocent animals. The students learned to justify and/or critique conclusions outlined in the story and to articulate new perspectives using evidence in the story to support their claims.

Social Studies

The students have packed their bags and are on their way to Latin America. After becoming familiar with the names of the countries that comprise Central America, South America and the Caribbean Islands, the students will use their knowledge of the five geographical themes to research a country located in Latin America. Bon voyage.....

Math

We made it through Unit 2, which included adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing by fractions and decimals. The students worked hard to solve and understand fractions and decimal problems, as well as apply their knowledge to real-world problems. We ended our unit with a visit to a candy corner, bakery and snack shop. Students worked in groups to "buy" items based on prices per pound, per dozen and per item. The discussions and math talk were amazing! We will begin Unit 3 this week, which will challenge students to think about positive and negative numbers.

English (Vocab)

In vocabulary, we are working on some interesting lessons involving our new vocabulary words and how we can apply them in our writing. Ask your students about their interesting stories about being a nose! Our last vocabulary list included eight adjectives, so it was the perfect time to brush up on our knowledge of adjectives.

Check your child's planner daily and be on the look-out for the weekly

T.N.T. (Tuesday-This-n-That)

Team Davinci

Team DaVinci has completed Unit 2 for Language Arts in the Common Core, and our students post tests showed much improvement in the areas of narrative writing, text structure and figurative language! We have also completed the second round of NWEA testing for Reading. The goal is to improve 2 to 3 points from the fall to winter assessments. Our team averaged 14 points! Wow! We are so proud of our students! We will take the Winter NWEA assessment for math the first week in February.

In Social Studies, we have learning about population and immigration. We have also started a unit on Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights movement. Our students have had very in-depth discussions in class, and are enjoying this very important piece of history.

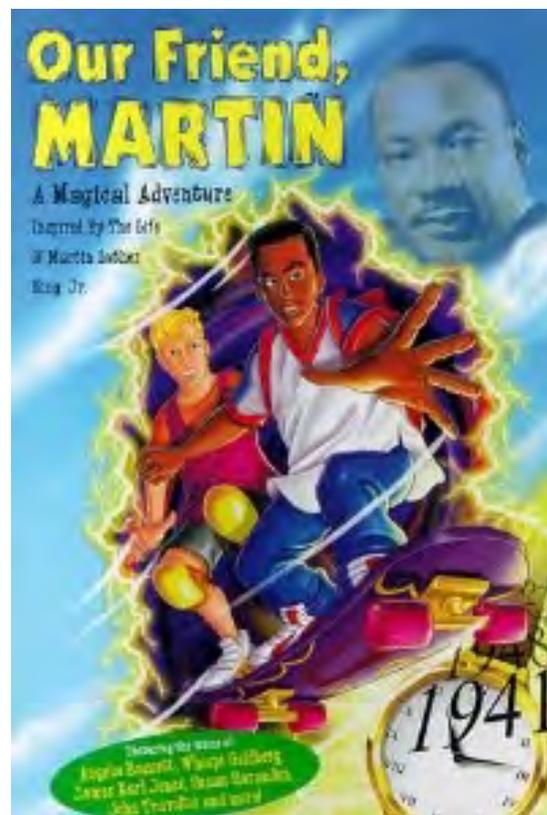
In Science, students have been working on a unit about compounds and elements and have just finished a project. They will be finding the compounds in candy! They are also studying the stages of development of live salmon.

Math classes have just wrapped up unit 2 on division and multiplication of fractions and decimals and will be studying positive and negative integers next.

We would like to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Reisine on the birth of their son, Elijah Christopher who was born at the beginning of December!

Stay warm!

Team DaVinci
Robin Gibson, Jessica Matlock and Noah Reisine



Team Truth

Brrrr! It is certainly cold outside, the perfect weather to curl up with a good book and a warm blanket. Team Truth believes that the more we read, the more we know. We will have a Nutmeg at Night celebration in April, and the Nutmeg Award winning books have been included below. They are excellent books that can be enjoyed by both young and old. The students at Bennet will have an opportunity to design shirts for this event. The winning T-shirt design will be printed, so please encourage your child to design their own.

The Candy-makers by Wendy Mass

Closed for the Season by Mary Downing Hahn

The Fingertips of Duncan Dorfman by Meg Wolitzer

The Great Wall of Lucy Wu by Wendy Wan-Long Shang

Inside Out and Back Again by Thanhha Lai

Mike Stellar: Nerves of Steel by K.A. Holt

Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper

Saving Armpit by Natalie Hyde

Wild Girl by Patricia Reilly Giff

Wildfire Run by Dee Garretson

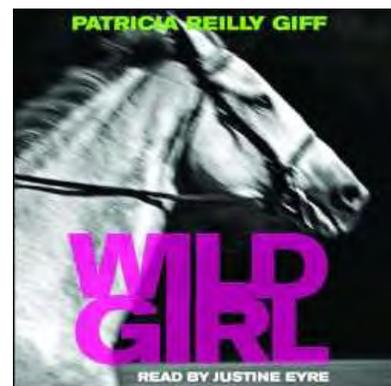
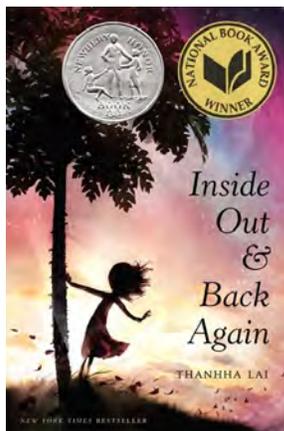
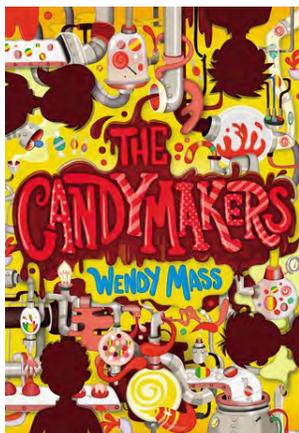
In math, we wrap up our study of fractions and decimals and we begin learning about integers. Since Mother Nature is giving us so many examples of negative numbers, perhaps mathematical discussions can continue at home. Please remember that the students all have a copy of our math text at home to help with their homework. We also have the web sites www.phschool.com and www.phschool.com/cmp2 for assistance or extra practice. Extra help is going to continue on Mondays and Wednesdays after school.

In social studies, students are working on research reports. Each student has been studying a Latin American country and reporting their findings to the class. We continue to use the five themes of geography as our outline for study. The classes have been working very hard and are eager to share their work.

Every student on the team cut out a hand print and printed their name on it. We then put them on a large star that will hang in the Cone Gym. This is our team's way of acknowledging that we will do our best to honor the STARS tenants. Team Truth would like to thank Ms. Moretto of Team Lincoln for all of her hard work. Next time you're in the Cone Gym, check them out.

In Science the students will continue working on the structure of elements. We started learning about the Periodic Table and general characteristics of an element. Your child has been assigned an element to research and will present their project to the class.

Our next topic in Science will be Weather and Climate. Students will also be carrying out a Fast Plant experiment.



Team Ruby Bridges

Language Arts

Team Ruby Bridges is working on Unit 3 - Determining the Big Idea. Students are reading short articles and non-fiction texts. They are analyzing the text for main idea and supporting details. Students will be writing summaries comparing two pieces of text using Venn diagrams or other graphic organizers. Students will apply these skills to their guided or whole class reading group books as well.

Social Studies

In Ms. Broidis' social studies class students have been studying the Five Themes of Canada. Each student is doing a research project on a Canadian Province of their choice. They are using multiple resources and we will have a museum walk to display posters.

Math

In Ms. Stevenson's math class, students are working on Unit 3 - Decimals. We started with a review of adding and subtracting decimals and now we are working on multiplying and dividing decimals. Problem of the month for January was due by January 24, 2014 and February's problem of the month will be assigned on February 3rd and due on February 24th. A copy can be found on the Ruby Bridges Website.

(<http://teachersites.schoolworld.com/webpages/TWeyrauch/mrs.cfm?subpage=1783718>)

Science

In Mr. Weyrauch's science classes we are beginning our unit on Weather and Climate. Students will discover how and why we have changes in weather. We have also begun our Salmon Unit. The Salmon eggs arrived in mid-December and are doing quite well in water temperatures just over freezing. Students will learn about the life of a salmon from egg to adult. Parents and students can find more information on our website at:

http://teachersites.schoolworld.com/webpages/TWeyrauch/weyrauch_science.cfm

It is with great pleasure that Team Ruby Bridges would like to recognize Khadija Jana as our student of the month for January, 2014. Khadija is an absolute delight to have on our team as she consistently demonstrates S.T.A.R.S. behavior. Khadija always responds positively to any suggestions to guide her through her academic endeavors. Khadija has demonstrated excellent listening skills and is a tremendous support to her peers. Ruby Bridges could not have asked for a kinder, more respectful student to have on our team. Khadija easily and eagerly adapts to new academic and social cultures as she has moved around quite a bit as a young student. Khadija is originally from India and is unfortunately moving to Rhode Island in February. Khadija will be terribly missed by her team.

In her free time, Khadija enjoys swimming, playing tennis and reading. One of her passions is art. Khadija won 2nd place in the Town Wide PTA Reflections Contest. The theme of this contest was Believe, Dream and Inspire. Khadija decided to illustrate a peacock because she wanted to create beautiful and interesting designs on the feathers of the bird.

We wish Khadija the best of luck in the future.

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We're on the web:
<http://publicschools.manchesterct.gov>

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Terri Smith, Human Resources Specialist
Manchester Public Schools
45 North School Street
Manchester, CT 06042
860-647-3595



Title IX Notice

Title IX is a federal law which states: "No person in the United States shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal assistance.

Manchester's Title IX coordinator is:

Terri Smith
Manchester Public Schools
45 North School Street
Manchester, CT 06042
Phone: 860-647-3595
Fax: 860-647-3327

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of Title IX for the school district and coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX in all areas covered by implementing regulations. The major responsibility is the prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination.

