

Robertson Elementary School  
65 North School Street, Manchester, CT

# Robertson News



Mrs. Courtney, *Editor*

**Principal: Mr. Wolf**  
**Secretary: Mrs. Hegenauer**

**February, 2015**  
**Volume 10, Issue 6**

## Message From the Principal's Desk

School time is valuable time for your children. The school day begins at 9:05 a.m. and ends at 3:25 p.m. at Robertson School. Every minute of each day is important. We are concerned because of an increase in the number of times that some students are removed from school before the day is over.



The vast majority of our students have outstanding attendance records and spend every minute of each day in class. We certainly understand that occasionally a doctor or dentist appointment cannot be made at another time, but some students are being removed early on a regular basis, sometimes as often as two or three times per week.

The last 15 to 20 minutes of each day are extremely important. Often the teacher will review the day's learning activities, review homework assignments and give important reminders. No student can afford to miss this time period regularly without suffering a negative impact. Just as we expect that each student will arrive at school on time in the morning, we expect that they will stay until 3:25 in the afternoon.



If you plan to remove your child early for a doctor's appointment or some other important event that can not be scheduled at another time, we require that you send a note in the morning to your child's teacher indicating this. Thank you.

So far this winter, we have had 5 no-school days due to the weather. Many parents have told me they just don't know what to do with their children on these days because the weather is too nasty to play outside. The solution is...have them read! It's the perfect opportunity to enjoy a good story. You may even want to read with them and share the fun!



Here are the totals for the first Robertson Soup-er Bowl: Patriots 273, Seahawks 232. That's over 500 food items for our Robertson Family Resource Center pantry. Thank you to all parents, students and staff that participated. You are really making a difference in the Robertson Community!

### DRESS FOR COLD WEATHER

January and February are the two coldest months of the year in Connecticut. Students should dress warmly, bringing a hat, gloves or mittens, and a winter coat to school each day. We plan to go outdoors for lunch recess every day, unless the weather is inclement or extremely cold, so it is truly important that students are appropriately dressed.



If your child is in need of a warm winter coat, mittens, a scarf or a hat, please call the school at (860) 647-3372, and ask for Mrs. Prager, our School Social Worker.

## Message From the Principal's Desk, Cont'd.

### VALUABLE ITEMS IN SCHOOL



Our Parent/Student handbook states that there are certain items that should not be brought to school. This is a good time of year for a reminder. Electronic games or other electronic gear, radios, games, headphones or trading cards are among the items that should not be brought to school. All of these can cause a distraction from instruction.



Also, gum and candy are not allowed in school. This is not a complete list and other items may be excluded from school, at the discretion of staff members.

Students will be given a warning upon the first violation of this rule. Continued violations will result in school staff removing the item(s) from the student's possession. It is each student's responsibility to ensure the safety of his or her own personal belongings. If something has a significant monetary or personal value, the item should not be brought to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property.

Please remember that pick-up of students after school and drop off of students in the morning takes place in our ***back parking lot***. School staff is on duty in the morning and afternoon to supervise.

### **THE FRONT PARKING LOT IS NOT DESIGNED FOR PICK-UP AND DROP OFF OF STUDENTS AND POSES A SAFETY HAZARD TO STUDENTS AND ADULTS.**

When picking up in the afternoon, please meet your children where the cement barriers are in the back. This allows us to see where and with whom each of our students goes.

Also, if you are asking another adult to pick up your child, be sure to notify the office in advance either by note or phone call. Thank you.



### Upcoming Events

PTA Mtg: Feb 11<sup>th</sup>  
PTA Event: Valentine's Dance on Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>  
Watch for more info in your child's folder.

**Half Day/Dismissal at 1:17 p.m.: Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**No School: February 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>**

### BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION

This is just a reminder that we still collect the "Box Tops for Education" that can be found on many of the General Mills products. Please continue to clip them and save them for our next "Box Top Race."

We are able to trade-in the box tops for a monetary reward that we can use to purchase extra equipment and supplies and help defray the cost of field trips.

Thank you to so many of you who have participated in our "Box Top Races" so far this year.



### ABSENCE NOTES

Please remember that whenever your child is absent from school, for any reason, they must bring a note from their parent/guardian explaining the reason for their absence. It can be a simple note that states that they were ill.



Even if you call in and report the absence on our absence line, state law says that you must still send in a note when your child returns to school.

Thank you for your assistance with this.

## Message From the Principal's Desk, Cont'd.

### **90 MINUTE DELAY SCHEDULE**

When school opens 90 minutes late, the entire morning routine changes:



Students should NOT arrive at school before 10:15 a.m. because there is no supervision before that time.

The school day will begin at 10:35 a.m. and it will end at 3:25 p.m. for all of our students.

Morning buses run 90 minutes later than usual. (For example, if your child's bus usually picks them up at 8:20, it will come at approximately 9:50). Afternoon buses will run on their regular schedule.

***NO BREAKFAST IS SERVED WHEN THERE IS A DELAYED OPENING. CHILDREN SHOULD PLAN TO EAT BREAKFAST AT HOME ON THOSE DAYS.***

We do serve lunch on delayed opening days, but there is no recess.

All school cancellations, delays and early dismissals will be automatically announced to your phone number on file at school through the district's "School Messenger" service. The school no longer makes phone calls. Please be sure that we have your updated phone contact information on file.

Other sources for information about school closings, early dismissal or delayed opening are WTIC radio (1080 on the AM dial) and TV channels 3, 8, 30 or 61. All will have up to the minute information.

**PLEASE KEEP THIS NOTICE HANDY THROUGH THE REMAINING WINTER**



### **MANCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE**

Manchester Public Schools is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. Manchester Public Schools does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, access to boy scouts or other designated youth groups, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Manchester Public Schools does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding Manchester Public School's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

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

or

Shelly Matfess, Assistant Superintendent  
for Pupil Personnel Services  
Section 504 Co-Coordinator  
Manchester Public Schools  
45 North School Street  
Manchester, CT 06042  
860-647-3452

or

Linda Hodgkins, Coordinator of School Health Services  
Section 504 Co-Coordinator  
Manchester Public Schools  
45 North School Street  
Manchester, CT 06042  
860-647-3324

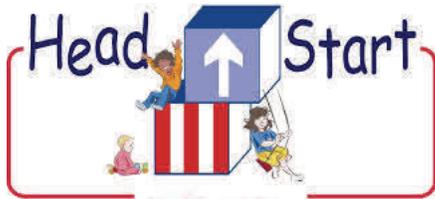
## HEAD START ENROLLMENT

The Manchester Head Start program is a federally funded, town supported, child development program now enrolling children born in the years 2010 and 2011. Manchester Head Start provides:

- Pre-School Education
- Family Support Services
- Parent Involvement
- Nutrition
- Health & Mental Health Services
- One Full Year/Full Day Program

To be eligible, families must be Manchester residents, meet the Federal Income Guidelines or have a child with Special needs.

Please call 860-647-3502 for further information or enrollment.



## STUDENT INSURANCE

The Manchester Board of Education makes student health insurance available to families that would like to purchase it. You may go to either of the following links to access the insurance brochure and sign up.



[http://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/uploaded/District\\_Office/Parent\\_Guardian\\_Resources/Images/CT\\_2014-15\\_MB\\_Brochure.pdf](http://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/uploaded/District_Office/Parent_Guardian_Resources/Images/CT_2014-15_MB_Brochure.pdf)

Or [p://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/page.cfm?p=939](http://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/page.cfm?p=939)

## Lib./Media Center: Mr. Hadge & Mrs. Courtney

Did you know that the Robertson Library has a display case? Does your child have a collection they would like to share with the school? We would love to have it in our display case for a week or two.



If you have any questions, please speak with Mr. Hadge in the library. Applications for the display case are available in the library.

If you received a notice for an overdue book for your child, please help them look for it and return it to the library as soon as possible. Overall we are doing pretty well with book returns this year. Let's try to keep that going! Thanks for your help!

This year we have initiated an award for any class that returns all of their books on time. The Golden Book Award stays in that classroom until another class returns all of their books on time.



The first class to win the Golden Book Award is Mrs. Parson's class. Congratulations!

The K-8 Resource web page can link you and your child to many of the sites they use in school every day along with giving you access to the Robertson Library catalog. Bookmark this page on your computer for easy access at any time: <http://mpspride.org/page.cfm?p=1220>

## Physical Education: Ms. White & Ms. Falkowski

Kindergarten through second grade students used their knowledge of pathways to apply it to moving in various ways like animals! We had multiple stations during PE class where they had to perform a movement like a certain animal (using loco-motor skills).



Moving forward, we will be working on the skills of hopping, leaping and jumping.

Third through fifth grade students had a couple of days of fitness activities, completing obstacle courses, and using yarn balls to exercise.

We then did our mid-year fitness testing to try to make improvements from the fall. The students in grade 4 who passed all four fitness components on the fall testing will be receiving "Fitness Phenom" t-shirts in the next week or so!



## Mrs. Sheroff: Art Studio & Ms. Ignatowicz

Congratulations to the Lutz Museum Artists! It was a pleasure being with you and your families celebrating you and your artwork and enjoying the museum!



Kindergartners have been painting and printing. Students used bristol and camel's hair brushes. We also used pencils, Q-tips, shaped sponges, and texture hand printers.

First grade artists have been studying about penguins. We have been making penguin hats using line, shape and form.



Second graders have been studying about Elements and Principles of Design. When we started making our penguins out of clay we paid extra attention that the principle of design we were using was a form.

Third grader students used form, line, shape, and color to make their coil pot.

Fourth grade artists made woven little baskets to go along with Mrs. Gatmaitan's suggestion to go along with their Native American studies.

Fifth graders have been studying about color such as monochromatic, analogous and complementary colors. We have been using watercolors, tempera paints, and pointillism.



## Language Arts

Students are using the letter-sound relationships to read and write words. Students are working on segmenting words into sounds to sound-spell words. Students are also using the skill of blending individual sounds to read unfamiliar words.

Students are well on their way on learning how to read and write some of the 40 high-frequency Dolch sight words. By the end of the year the goal is for every kindergartener to be able to read each of the 40 sight words without hesitation.



As you read to your child, ask them to find the sight word “the” or “said” in the story. Can your child write a simple sentence using sight words and sound spelling? *Example: I can see a hrs on the frm.* (I can see a horse on the farm).

Give your child a topic to write about such as his/ her favorite toy, a pet, or his/her favorite food. Make sure he or she uses a capital at the beginning of the sentence, spaces between words, and punctuation at the end!

The kindergarten students are continuing to have fun reading fiction and non-fiction texts during shared reading, read alouds and guided reading. During those reading opportunities the students are learning to apply many reading strategies, such as sounding words out, looking at the picture, and looking for repetitive language.

The students are also learning before, during and after comprehension skills, such as making predictions, retelling events and determining the author’s message and purpose.



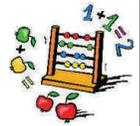
Please help us reinforce these comprehension strategies at home, both when you read to your child and when he/she reads aloud. Ask them who the characters are, where the setting is, what the problem and solution were.

We are currently reading stories about winter and enjoying all the versions of *The Gingerbread Man*. Ask your child what his/her favorite Gingerbread story was and why? Check out more stories at your public library!

## Math

Currently, students are learning how to add by combining two groups/sets (numbers) to get a total/sum. Students have been taught that when the number zero is added to any other number, the sum is equal to the other number (“the total quantity is the same and doesn’t change”).

Students have also learned that when the number 1 is added to any other number, the total is one more than the number that 1 was added to. We will continue to practice addition throughout the school year. By the end of the year, your child should be able to add within five fluently (there are 21 addition facts), and be able to add within 10 with manipulatives and/or by using the “counting on” strategy.



During February, the students will be introduced to subtraction. By the end of the year, students will be expected to be fluent with subtraction facts within five and be able to subtract within 10 using manipulatives and/or using other strategies.

Please have your child practice adding and subtracting at home. For example, you can have them count out five red fruit loops (cereal) and 3 blue fruit loops. How many fruit loops do you have all together? Now, take 4 fruit loops away. How many are left?

## Science/Social Studies

Students continue to learn about winter through fiction and non-fiction stories.

Students will explore dental health and enjoy a visit from a dentist on February 6th!

(Continued on page 7)

## Kindergarten News, Cont'd.

*(Continued from page 6)*

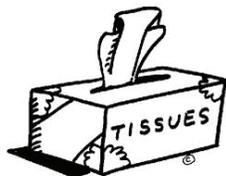
The students will also read stories about famous black Americans during Black History Month. Kindergarten will also continue to learn about feelings and how to get along with others using our Second Step program.



- ⇒ Homework is due on Thursday of each week. This is a great way to practice skills being taught in the classroom as well as being responsible!
- ⇒ Please pack a healthy snack for your child every day.
- ⇒ Please empty your child's backpack and/or Home-School Folder daily.
- ⇒ Please send a towel/blanket with your child each Monday. *(Blankets are sent home every Friday to be washed, and returned on Monday.)*
- ⇒ Please send in an extra set of clothes for your child. If your child is sent home with clothes, please send in a new outfit the next day. *(Please keep in mind that we are heading into the cold winter season)*

***Please help your child learn  
to tie his/her shoelaces,  
put on gloves, and to  
put on and zip his/her winter jacket***

- ◆ Extra non-perishable snacks are a great donation for our classroom cabinets; these are used for students that forget or don't bring in snacks.
- ◆ 'Tis the season for stuffy and runny noses. Boxes of tissues are always a welcome donation, but NOT mandatory. Thank you!!



## 1st Grade News: Mrs. Parsons, Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Beauregard, Mrs. Rawlins

Your children are darling and we are really enjoying working with them.

In reading/language arts, we continue to read daily in our Guided Reading groups and work cooperatively in literacy centers. During this time, the children are learning to use non-fiction text features, including headings, table of contents, captions and maps/keys. We are also learning to apply comprehension skills, such as noting details, story structure, summarizing and drawing conclusions.

Writers in first grade have begun informational writing. This involves non-fiction writing using both writing and drawing to teach about a topic. We are working towards writing our own informational books.

In math, we have begun working on addition facts to 20. We are also counting by tens, adding two-digit numbers, doubles and working with tens and ones. We certainly appreciate all of the math fact practice you do at home with your child; it makes a tremendous difference in their ability and confidence.



*i have a dream!*

In social studies, we spent much time remembering and discussing Martin Luther King, Jr. This month, the major themes are Black History month, Chinese New Year, President's Day and Ground Hog Day. We are also continuing with the "Second Step" series, teaching lessons on how to control our emotions and how to solve social problems we may encounter.

Students who can identify their emotions accurately tend to be more socially and emotionally competent. In addition to using situational information, students can also use internal physical clues, such as a fast heartbeat or stomachache, to identify their emotions.



The 100<sup>th</sup> day of school is February 6<sup>th</sup> – of course, pending any snow days. It is hard to believe we are already more than half way through the year!

## 2nd Grade News: Ms. Dandeneau, Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Paszek, Ms. Ruggiero

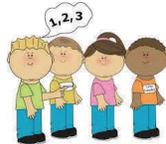
These cold snowy days are great for catching up on our reading. We have a school-wide reading challenge: Rocking in our Read Shoes! Please encourage your child to read every day and document the books he or she reads on the reading challenge log. The February logs are due on the 27th. Keep on reading!



Next, we begin our Informational Unit in which we will learn about different kinds of non-fiction texts (magazines/newspapers, how-to texts, biographies, and information books). We will learn to use text features to help us make meaning of what we read. Biographies will be featured, too, in Social Studies as we learn about African American leaders in Black History Month.

We are wrapping up our Opinion Unit as students write about how they feel about the stories they read and the characters within them. This month we will learn to write how-to texts and then begin work on informational texts.

**Math**: We have been reviewing place value as a foundation for two-digit computation. We have learned to add and subtract 2-digit numbers without regrouping. Students are learning to regroup, first in addition and then subtraction.



**Science**: Students will be conducting investigations with solids and liquids. They will identify ways to classify objects using supporting evidence from investigations of observable properties.

### **Help at Home**:

- ⇒ Practice counting by 2s, 5s and 10s. Rather than starting at 0, start at a larger number, which is what we have been working on in school.
- ⇒ Please use math in everyday situations. Make up number stories and ask your child to solve them.
- ⇒ These are the three major strategies for adding 2 and 3 digit numbers that you can practice with your child:

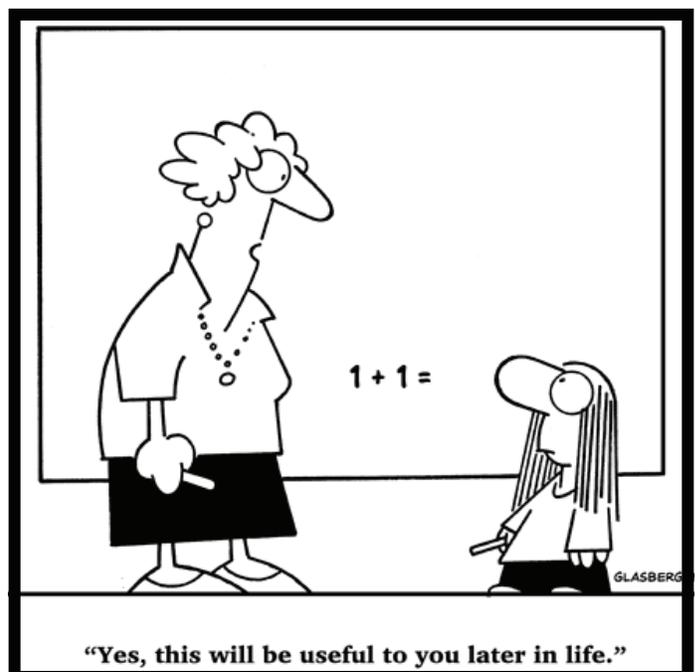
Students start with one number (usually the larger one), then count up the amount of the other number, first by tens, and then add the ones. For example,  $47+33=?$  Start at 47. Count up 30 more, and then add 3 more.

Another strategy is combining the tens and the ones separately.  $29+37=?$  Add the tens,  $20+30=50$ , then add the ones  $9+7=16$ . Add 50 and 16 to get the answer.

The third strategy is adjusting and compensating. For the problem  $52+29=?$  You would say 29 is close to 30, so  $52+30=82$ , then take away the one that was added to make 30, and the answer is 81.

**F.Y.I. – Early Closings** : As the weather is turning cold and snowy, early closings could be in the near future. If you suspect that there is going to be an early dismissal, it is helpful to talk to your child about their dismissal plan in the morning, before school.

Make sure that they know where they will go after the 1:17 p.m. dismissal.



## 3rd Grade News: Mrs. Case, Mrs. Mercedes, Mr. Pepin

Third graders learned about making resolutions, and set goals for the rest of the school year.

Some examples of resolutions made were mastering basic math facts, moving up a level in reading and being helpful to classmates. Ask your third grader about their New Years Resolutions!

### Math

We have completed Unit 2: Exploring Multiplication and Division. Your third grader can:



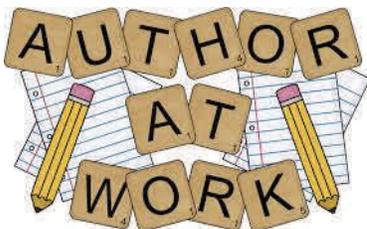
- \* represent and solve problems involving multiplication and division
- \* understand the properties of multiplication and the relationship between multiplication and division
- \* multiply and divide within 100
- \* multiply one-digit numbers by multiples of 10

**Although we have completed this unit, it is still very important to practice math facts!** Our next unit: Fractions!

### Literacy

In reading, we are finishing up our unit on Text Structure. We have been focusing on non-fiction texts, and determining the main idea of our reading.

In writing, we are finishing our informational books! Our third grade authors have gone through the writing process and are proud of their work!



### Science

Our third grade geologists have been learning a lot in science! They have learned that Geologists conduct tests to identify minerals! Minerals are one color and are what make up a rock.

We are also exploring the three types of rocks: Igneous, Sedimentary and Metamorphic! Ask your third grader to tell you the differences in each type of rock!



### 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 over-all implementation of Title IX for the school district and coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination.

## 4th Grade News: Mrs. Gatmaitan, Ms. Brini, Ms. Ortiz

We have started our study of magnetism and electricity. During this unit we will be studying circuits and the flow of energy. Given only a light bulb, battery and wire, students will have to find a way to make the light bulb light up. At this point they should be able to tell you what magnets are attracted to!



We kick started the new year with a new unit on fractions. Students have been adding, subtracting and creating equivalent fractions. Knowing their multiplication and division facts will really come in handy for this unit so please make sure they are practicing at home.

In reading and writing, we have been continuing with our nonfiction units on Na-  
tive Americans. Students were really excited to start collecting information and are eager to complete their rough draft! Ask your child about their topic and what they have learned. The unit will wrap up with a classroom magazine in the coming month!



Fourth graders have been campaigning for the very first Robertson Soup-ER-bowl! Students, staff, and parents have been donating non-perishable food items to be donated directly to the Robertson Family Resource Center. Each item counted as a vote toward their favorite team. Ask your child how they were involved. Thank you for your support.

**DONATE  
FOOD  
HERE**



Please continue to check Wednesday folders for important newsletters home.

## Music: Ms. Grieco

This month, students in room 8 will be working hard on their singing, instrument playing and mi, re, do patterns.

Students in grades 1-5 have been singing and playing mi, re, do pat-



terns on xylophones for several class periods. All the hard work that they have put in has truly paid off. They can now decode patterns that I play on the piano, play them by memory, and sing them without even looking at the notes as a reference. I am very proud of their progress.

Students in grades 3-5 have also been working on their note name reading skills.

Students in Kindergarten have been practicing their "Doubles Rap" to help them with their addition facts. They are also singing several songs including "Hushabye", "Sing a Rainbow" and "Bingo." Please ask your music student to share what they are doing in music class.

Also, feel free to stop by room 8 and check out our new Musician of the Month students for February.

Have a musical month!



## 5th Grade News: Mrs. Fagan & Mrs. Frye

Fifth Grade is ready for a fantastic February full of fun and learning!

**Language Arts:** The students have been diving deep into our past, learning about the first settlements of America. They have been reading informational text on the 13 colonies, researching, and creating projects based on our country's past.



They also have been learning how to organize and create their own piece of informational writing.

Each student has chosen their own topic to become an expert on teaching the other students new and exciting information they have found!

These writing pieces will be completed during the month of February. We will continue to read more nonfiction informational text on this subject. It's so much fun to learn about how America began!

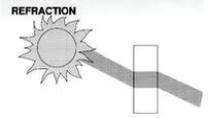
**Math:** Math Stations are now in full operation! We have many stations for the students to learn, create, compute, and problem solve!

Among some of the stations we have are a vocabulary station, problem solving station, and fraction station. We are also working on the computer program, Fastt Math where the students work on their fact fluency.

$$\frac{3}{8} + \frac{6}{4}$$

We will be starting multiplying and dividing fractions. The students will also continue practicing adding and subtracting fractions with word problems.

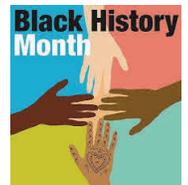
**Science:** We are continuing to learn about color and light. Students will investigate how light is refracted as it passes through a lens or through one transparent material to another. They will be able to explain that all visible objects are reflecting some light to the human eye.



The students will also be able to determine whether a material is opaque, transparent, or translucent based on how light passes through it. It's so exciting!

**Social Studies:** February is Black History Month! We will be reading about famous African Americans and doing projects to learn more throughout the month! We will also be reading poems as class read-alouds.

We will be learning about all the wonderful accomplishments of these remarkable men and women!



Thank you for all your support!

