



# Robertson News

Beth E. Courtney, *Editor*

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

**January, 2015**  
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## Message From the Principal's Desk

Happy New Year to the entire Robertson Community! I hope that the holiday season was an enjoyable one that provided opportunities to spend time with friends and family.

We are now entering one of our longest stretches of uninterrupted instructional time of the school year. We look forward to working together to provide your child with the essential skills in reading, writing and mathematics.



Homework assignments will provide your child with practice and reinforcement of these skills as well as opportunities to apply these skills in problem solving situations. Please be sure to set aside a regular time for your child to do their homework. It could be shortly after they get home from school, before dinner or after dinner, but try to have it be the same time each day. Provide your child with a well-lit, quiet work place, away from the distraction of television, radio or music. Make sure that there are pencils, erasers and paper available.

Homework assignments are designed so your child should be able to do them independently. Helping them is OK, but do not do the work for them. Remember that many of our grades have a daily independent reading assignment. Be sure to ask your child about their homework every day.

The beginning of a new year is an appropriate time to offer some parking lot safety reminders. For the safety of our children, please obey the posted "Entrance Only," "Exit Only" and "Handicapped" signs. Keep cars at least 10 feet away from the student pick-up area in the back parking lot.

The easiest and safest way to pick up your child is to park your car in a designated space and then walk over to get them and escort them back to your car. Please do not expect them to walk through the traffic to get to your car. Always remain in your car when you are in the traffic lane. Remember that drop-off time in the morning is from 8:35-9:05 and pick-up time in the afternoon is from 3:25-3:40. If you are late, you should use the front parking lot as your student will be brought back into the office.

It is important to be patient and cooperative with other drivers. With everyone's cooperation, the parking lot quickly empties in 5 to 8 minutes.



***The front parking lot is not to be used for dropping off or picking up students.***

*(Continued on page 2)*

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

(Continued from page 1)

### **MORE ON SAFETY**

Once again we are appealing to parents regarding student safety while walking to and from school. Each year we are notified by the Manchester Police that some of our students are still not being safe while on their way to school and home from school. They do not always walk on the sidewalks and often cross the street without the assistance of the police crossing guard. Some stop at stores along the way and arrive at school late.

The walk to and from school should be a time when children are able to enjoy the company of their friends, but we still receive occasional reports of students harassing other students on the walk to or from school.

Parents, we need your help. Talk to your children once again to review the safety rules that we have offered in the past. Emphasize the importance of respecting the rights and property of others. When you spend the time discussing these topics with your children, it does make a lasting impression on them.

**Also, and this is very important, review with them that they are never to accept a ride from a stranger.**



Congratulations to Mrs. Beauregard and Ms. Grieco! They both found out during December that they had been awarded grants.

Mrs. Beauregard applied for and received a grant from Target that will enable the entire first grade to take a field trip in the spring.

Ms. Grieco applied for and won a district Innovation Grant that will enable her to purchase iPad minis for her music room. This technology will help her students interact with music in many new ways, including composing their own songs.

iPad mini  
Every Inch an iPad.



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.

### **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.

Happy New Year to all!

The PTA-sponsored book fair, which was held the first week of December, was a great success as always. Many books were purchased and many books were given to classroom libraries as well as the school library. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped out. We could not have a book fair without our volunteers.

Did you know that the Robertson Library has a display case? Students of all grades are invited to apply to bring in collections (shells, rocks, etc.) to share with their fellow students. Applications are available in the library and we look forward to many interesting displays in the coming months.



### **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/](http://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/uploaded/District_Office/Parent_Guardian_Resources/)

[Images/CT\\_2014-15\\_MB\\_Brochure.pdf](http://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/Images/CT_2014-15_MB_Brochure.pdf)

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

This year we have been fortunate to have numerous technology additions to our classrooms. Kindergarten classrooms have just received iPad minis. First through fourth grade classrooms each have 5 additional laptops. Each fifth grade classroom has 10 Chromebooks. Robertson students are very excited to be learning new technologies!

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.



## LANGUAGE ARTS

Students are now 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 to 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.

### Sight Words

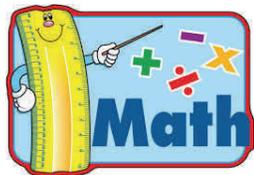


The kindergarten students are continuing to have fun reading fiction and non-fiction texts during shared reading, read alouds and guided reading. During those reading opportunities the students are learning to apply many reading strategies, such as sounding words out, looking at the picture, and looking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

## MATH

The kindergarten students have shown improvement in their number sense. The students recently finished the unit in which they not only learned how to read and write numbers to 20 but also learned how to compose and decompose teen numbers to one group of ten and however many ones (Ex. 18 equals 1 group of 10 and 8 ones). The students also worked on ordering numbers by finding the missing number (before, after or between a given number) and comparing numbers using math words: more than, greater than and less than.



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 with the addition unit throughout January.

By the end of the addition unit 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.

Please have your child practice adding at home. You can have them count how many forks and how many knives are on the table and then add them together to get a total of utensils.

## SCIENCE/SOCIAL STUDIES

In December, the kindergarten students learned about different holiday celebrations celebrated around the world through fiction and non-fiction books and group discussions.

In January students will be learning about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and in Science they will begin the 5 Senses unit.

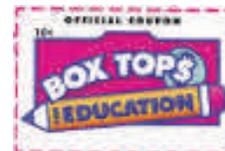


### Upcoming Events

PTA Meetings- Jan 14<sup>th</sup>, Feb 11<sup>th</sup>

**No School: January 1, 2, 19, 20**

Box-Top Collection Competition: Please cut and send in box-tops to help our school earn money.



(Continued on page 5)

## Kindergarten News: Mrs. Clare, Mrs. Osella, Mrs. Schueler, Mrs. O'Coin, Mrs. Polochanin

(Continued from page 4)

### PBIS

Students are continuing to practice and display our school's core values throughout all aspects of the school day. Robertson's three core values are:

1. Be safe;
2. Be respectful;
3. Be responsible.

Please continue to help your child employ these core values at home, in school and in their community. Students that go above and beyond with these core values have the opportunity to be nominated for a positive office referral, which is announced to all the school on the intercom and at our whole-school Beehive Meeting.

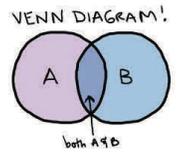
### Reminders

- ◆ 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, 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

We hope you had a pleasant and relaxing vacation! We are back in our routine, and working hard.

In reading/language arts, we are working on skills such as: story structure, comparing and contrasting using a Venn Diagram and other story maps, writing I in sentences and making predictions.



In math, we will continue focusing on addition and subtraction, which are very important parts of first grade mathematics. The children will work on adding and subtracting to 20, fact families and "turn-around" facts. When the children understand turn-around facts, they can figure out  $2+5$  by counting on from the greater number (5). This is much more efficient than starting from the first number (2) and counting on.

The children will also write and solve story problems. We are working on tens and ones, comparing and ordering numbers, counting by 2s starting from any number as well as counting back by 2s, and will learn how to classify numbers as even or odd.

In science and social studies, we are discussing the Arctic, penguins and will celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

We are also using the Second Step program to help develop the students' ability to identify and manage strong feelings. Students are learning that it's natural to experience a range of feelings, but that it's not okay to act mean or hurtful towards others even though we may feel very strongly when we get angry. We are learning how to calm down using breathing, counting and positive self-talk.



Students are getting ready to write by teaching all about a topic. First graders just love being asked to teach what they know! Therefore, the children are learning to organize this information and to use their teaching voice to write about subjects they know well.

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

In reading, students are continuing to select a variety of books on their own levels. The students are learning to pay close attention to characters as they read, in alignment with the Common Core Standards.



The children are studying characters, reading closely to gather evidence about character traits.

They are also continuing to improve their ability to retell stories by determining the importance of events. The children are thinking about how characters respond to major events and challenges, as well as thinking about how characters feel throughout the twists and turns of a story.

In our Writer's Workshop, students have learned how to write friendly letters. We have also begun learning to write their opinions, using details to support their ideas. In grammar, we will continue to work on using phonetic strategies to read and spell as well as continuing to work with capitals and periods.



In Foundations, our word study program, students are learning about closed syllable exceptions, such as "ild" in the word "wild" and "ind" in the word "find." They will learn to categorize suffixes as vowel suffixes and consonant suffixes. The students will learn to isolate, say, and spell the base word of a word before adding the suffix. For example, they will isolate the word "crunch" in the word "crunches."

In math, the students are learning the following skills using math manipulatives:

- \* Two-digit addition with and without regrouping;
- \* Two-digit subtraction with and without regrouping;
- \* Problem solving by drawing a picture and/or a diagram;
- \* Analyzing word problems to determine what operation to use to solve multistep problems.

Practice of basic number facts is an ongoing priority in second grade. Please continue to practice addition and subtraction facts 0 – 20 with your child.



Happy Holidays! We hope that you and your family have a restful holiday!

Happy Holidays!



### 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

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

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

In reading, we have been examining text structures (how a text is organized) and we learned that in non-fiction there are five different ways a text can be structured.

1. One way is description, which is when the author is using adjectives and other descriptive language to give the reader a better image and understanding of the topic.
2. There is also sequential structures, which means the author has put the information in order of how things happened or can happen. For example “How – to” books, recipe books, history texts and cycles of animals are some examples of that.
3. Then there are texts written with a problem/ solution structure, where the author presents a problem with one or more possible solutions.
4. Cause and effect structures are often used along with problem and solution because they are related.
5. The last non-fiction text structure authors use is compare and contrast. This is when similarities and differences of people, objects, or ideas are being discussed.

After reading a non-fiction book, ask us what text structure is being used and why we think that. It is a good way to keep us practicing good reading habits. Understanding how texts are organized can help us also understand author’s purpose, which all help us become a better reader. Reading is thinking!



In writing, we are in the process of drafting pages for our own non-fiction books. We have chosen a topic to research and discussed subtopics/chapters. This helped us create our own table of contents page. We are so excited to continue learning about our topics. Every day we discover interesting facts and can’t wait to share them with everyone. Ask us to share one thing we learned about our writing topic daily to “keep us on our toes” (idiom).

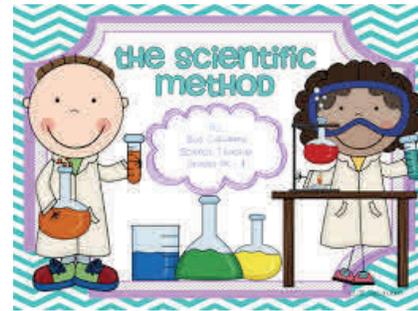


For math, students have been continuing our unit on multiplication and division. We have learned how they are related and all the different ways we can solve both operations. There are so many ways!

In third grade we have to be able to solve the same problem in more than one way AND explain our thinking. We must use math words and the right tools to help us solve problems.

We also looked at number patterns and determined their pattern rule. Understanding patterns can help you solve problems too! We continue to sharpen our skills on solving word problems both single and multi-step.

The scientific method is still a focus and having done a couple experiments, we are getting better at becoming scientists. We will also continue our exploration of rocks and minerals for the next several weeks. Third Grade Rocks!



### 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 would like to thank all families that made it in for conferences. It was wonderful to get to know you all. We appreciate all the hard work and dedication you give to your children each and every day!

**Math**: During the month of December, we have studied factors, multiples, and how to solve word problems. Students should be able to write equations to work problems with letters representing unknown numbers.

They have also had practice with two-step word problems. Have then look for important information and clue words first!

Unit 3 also included finding patterns in numbers and continuing the pattern. This was presented as function tables and linear models. Please remember to also have your child practice their basic fact skills each night. They can use Moby Max, Xtra math and Fastmath websites as well as arcademics.com.

If you need student username and passwords again, please let us know.

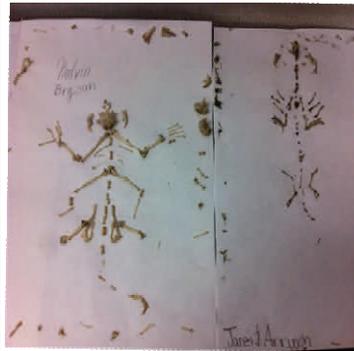
**Language Arts/ Social Studies**: During the month of December, we began our non-fiction unit. Students did a great job identifying the structure of non-fiction articles. Fourth graders have even started their own research paper!

Please ask your child what their topic is and how many sources they have found. We will continue with this project into January and will end with a class magazine.

Please remember to read, read, read each night! As always, if your child needs a book to read at home, they may sign out and borrow a classroom book to read at home.

**Science**: All classes have completed the ecosystems unit and had a wonderful time dissecting owl pellets. Thank you to all parents and family members that came in to assist with this! In January we will start magnets and electricity. Below are a few pictures from our owl

pellet dissection!



**Technology**- The media and technology specialist came into our classroom to give fourth graders their very first lesson on writing computer code! After a quick lesson on commands, they were able to get onto the computer and start practicing. Some even had the chance to create their own video game. They can continue to work on this at home at <http://code.org/learn>.

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

Fifth Grade is ready to blast into the New Year with new resolutions and goals for all of us!

**Language Arts:** In January, fifth grade will be learning about informational text. We will also be writing informational writing pieces focusing on the 13 colonies. Students will be researching and writing about their chosen topic.



We will also be focusing on skills such as citing evidence from text, drawing conclusions, and making inferences from notes that they have taken on specific text related to their subject.

Students should continue to read 25 minutes a day and soon, maybe even a challenging 30 minutes! The students' stamina is increasing!



**Math:** This month, students will continue to work on fractions! Students will be adding and subtracting fractions with like and unlike denominators. They will also be solving word problems involving fractions. They will practice these skills in math stations as well. There are fractions everywhere in our daily lives!

**Science:** We will be continuing to explore sound and light. The students will learn how to describe how light is absorbed and/or reflected by different surfaces. They will design and conduct light absorption experiments that vary the size, length, direction, and clarity of a shadow by changing the position of the light-blocking object or the light source. Learning about sound, shines a new light on the world. Get it?

**Social Studies:** Students will continue to explore the foundation of our country. We are researching and learning about the original 13 colonies. We are learning about note taking and utilizing this skill to better our projects. There is so much to learn about our forefathers. It is so interesting! Just ask your brilliant children!

It was a pleasure to see you all at conferences. Also, we would like to thank you for coming out to see our students sing at Barnes and Noble. What a turnout! Thank you for all of your support!

## Music: Ms. Grieco

Happy New Year Robertson Music Families!

I have very exciting news! Robertson's Music Department has been awarded a Creativity Grant for iPad minis for our music room.

The iPads will be available in the next few months and will be utilized for a variety of music lessons for students in grades Kindergarten through 5! Students will be able to create their own songs, play on world instruments not otherwise available to them, and improve their music skills with apps on these iPads.

In January, students in grades three through five will work on songs and chants from Japanese culture.

Students in grades Kindergarten through 2 will work on dances and several books set to music.

Students grades Kindergarten through 5 will practice their rhythms and mi, re, do patterns.



Please feel free to stop by Room 8 to see pictures of the Musician of the Month students, past and present.

Thank you to all of the parents who supported our music program by bringing your children to our Barnes and Noble performance in December.

Have a jammin' January!