

Robertson News



Mrs. Courtney, *Editor*

Principal: Mr. Wolf
Secretary: Mrs. Hegenauer

October, 2015
Volume 11, Issue 2

Message From the Principal's Desk

The safety of our children can never be over-emphasized, whether it be at home, at school or in between. We have already sent a letter home reminding our Robertson School Community of general safety precautions that should be reviewed at home with every student. Because we are living during times when we must pay close attention to specific safety precautions, it is certainly worth our while to repeat this.

“Stranger Danger” is a concern that is raised every year. It is important that school personnel and parents and guardians review the necessary safety precautions to be used when encountering strangers. Please remind your child to **NEVER** enter the vehicle of stranger. In fact, students walking to and from school or their respective buses should avoid any and all contact with strangers.



It is critical to bring matters of this nature to the attention of the school principal and the police as soon as possible. Parent(s) or guardian(s) should call the school at 860-647-3372 and the Manchester Police Department at 860-645-5500.

In addition, other safety issues that should be reviewed with children include:

- look both ways before crossing streets;
- use designated crosswalks in the streets;
- walk with a buddy;
- do not speak to or with strangers;
- never get into strange vehicles;
- obey traffic signals, extending courtesy and respect to local merchants;
- remember that just because you see the car, the car may not see you;
- use safety precautions regarding bicycles, scooters, and skateboards;

We appreciate all of your help and support in reviewing these important safety precautions with your child and look forward to another successful and safe school year together.



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

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.

MANCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE

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, 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. Manchester Public Schools' is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons and equal access to Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding Manchester Public Schools' nondiscrimination policies and practices 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

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Please use extreme caution when driving a vehicle through the school parking lots and on the streets nearby. In the morning before school and at dismissal time there are many people, both students and adults, walking along the sidewalks and IN the parking lots. Be sure to obey the posted signs.

Those spaces marked for handicapped parking, in both the back parking lot and the front, are only for vehicles displaying a state handicapped tag. Violation of any of the parking lot regulations can result in a costly fine from the Manchester Police Department. The police will focus their attention on school parking lots and the streets surrounding the schools this fall, to insure student safety.

Unfortunately, some vehicles were ticketed last year for violations.

The parking lot regulations are designed to keep our children safe. Please keep this in mind at all times.

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 to be used for the drop-off or pick-up of students. If you are running late in the morning (after 9:05) you may park in the front lot and walk your student into the school office to sign them in. If you arrive late in the afternoon (after 3:40) you may park in the front lot and come into the school office to sign your student out.



The back parking lot is supervised by school staff from 8:35 – 9:05 every morning and from 3:25 – 3:40 every afternoon. The back doors are locked until 8:35 and after 9:05 so please do not drop a student off outside of that time frame.

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

ROBERTSON WEB SITE

Be sure to check out the Robertson School Web Site! You can access this site at:



www.publicschools.manchester.gov

Then click on the *Schools* tab, find Robertson and click. It is a user-friendly site filled with helpful school information that includes curriculum outlines, an events calendar, PTA news, photos and much more. We are continuously updating this site and including more and more useful and inter-

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

Our complete Parent/Student Handbook is now available to you electronically on our Robertson Website. To access our website, please go to: publicschools.manchesterct.gov. Then click on the Schools tab, find Robertson and click.

In addition to our Parent/Student Handbook, our website contains lots of other information that will be helpful to you throughout the school year. We hope you will visit it often.

If you do not have access to our website at home, we will be happy to provide you with a hard copy of the handbook upon request.

EARLY DISMISSAL FROM CLASS

While we discourage early dismissal of students from class because of the instructional time they lose, we realize that there are times when this is unavoidable – such as a doctor appointment. If you plan to pick your child up before the school day is over we ask that you send a note to your child's teacher. In the note please state the reason your child needs to leave school before the end of the day and what time you will come in to pick them up. Thank you

BELL SCHEDULE



Our school day starts at 9:05 a.m. and ends at 3:25 p.m. The first bell rings at 8:55. At that time, students may walk to their classrooms. The late bell rings at 9:05 at which time the school day begins. If students arrive after 9:05 they are considered tardy and parents need to sign them in to school in the office. Students will be issued a late pass before going to their classroom.

Please be aware that there is no supervision at school before 8:45. Students are not allowed in the building before this time unless they will be eating breakfast. Walkers should plan to arrive at 8:55.

BUCKLAND ALLEY

Access to Robertson through the use of Buckland Alley is prohibited. Only authorized vehicles such as maintenance or trash haulers may use this access to the school. This is not a safe location to pick up or drop off students. When driving on the streets surrounding the school or in our parking lots, please think ***Student Safety First***.

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 prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination.

Kindergarten: Mrs. O'Coin, Mrs. Clare, Mrs. Schueler, Mrs. Polochanin

Our open house curriculum night took place on September 10th. Our Kindergarten team enjoyed meeting so many families. We hope our presentation answered most of your questions about the kindergarten curriculum. If you were unable to attend, a hard copy of our presentation was sent home. If you have any questions, please email your child's teacher.



In math, we have been using lessons from our new Envision math resource that ensures that all students develop a positive approach to math. To begin the new school year, our activities have a very strong connection to the theme of getting to know one another. Students have been singing songs, using Big Books, and exploring hands-on resources such as the Jumbo Cube and making graphs. Daily, the students discuss and record data about the calendar, days of the week, and weather. We also have begun our first Math Unit focusing on "Counting to Ten." Children have been learning to form numbers 0-5 correctly, as well as counting objects to 5.

The Kindergarten students are continuing to work on their "All About Me" theme. We are learning about feelings, parts of the face, and how we are alike and different. Thank you for sharing your "All About Me" posters. The students enjoy hearing about each other's families and interests. If your child is still working on the All About Me Poster, please send it in by the first week of October.



The students have also been exploring big books through shared reading and discovering many new centers. Our shared reading using enlarged texts will include discussions before, during, and after the reading. This strategy will create a high degree of interaction as we encourage students to voice opinions and exchange ideas about the text.

The Shared Reading Experience will also provide many insights into student's reading development, such as vocabulary development, letter-sound knowledge, comprehension, and knowledge about text structure.

In our Foundations program, letter formation is closely connected with sound instruction. Students will learn the letter name, its formation, and its sound simultaneously.

Students have been introduced to the Wilson Writing Grid that is designed to guide students in proper letter formation. It consists of 4 lines:

- ◆ Sky Line
- ◆ Plane Line
- ◆ Grass Line
- ◆ Worm Line

We have worked with the letters:

c, o, a, g, d, l, t, and f .

Each and every day, the students have become more and more proficient at writing their names; but practice makes perfect! If you can, please set aside about five minutes a day and have your child practice writing his or her name. If they can already write their first and last name, then practice writing their name in lowercase letters. Your involvement is truly appreciated!

Tissues are welcome and are voluntary!

Please empty your child's backpack and home/school folder daily.

Please send in a healthy snack daily.

Towels/Blankets for rest can be returned on Monday.

½ day on October 21st
No School October 12th
Picture day is on October 13th

First Grade: Mrs. Parsons, Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Beauregard, Mrs. Rawlins

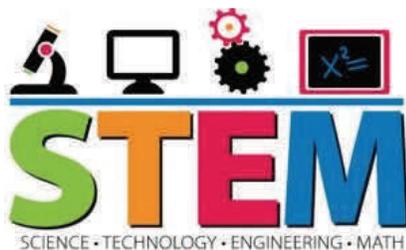
First graders are off to a great start! We are quickly adjusting to our new schedule and making new friends. We are building a community of learners and will be working cooperatively at our learning centers.



We launched our Readers/Writers Workshops, and for the past few weeks we have been learning to get to know ourselves and our classmates as readers and writers. We also have been learning the routines of workshop that will happen every day in our classroom. We are practicing “turning and talking” and sharing things that are close to our hearts, and learning new vocabulary words.

In math, we’re learning expected behaviors and routines for mini-lessons, centers and independent work. We are also reviewing writing numbers and math vocabulary.

Science has been a lot of fun in first grade! Our STEM specialist has worked with students to practice working in teams, solve problems, and use observations to make predictions and draw conclusions about the world around them. Students have explored the movement of objects and have made



fences to contain hermit crabs. They closely examined feathers, too. The children look forward to the STEM class each week!

Social Thinking helps children think about social expectations in school, home and the community. It encourages children to think about how they interact with others, in order to regulate their behavior to keep others having good thoughts and feelings about them. We began learning about “Whole Body Listening.”



Whole Body listening is more than just hearing with the ears. It includes listening with the eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, body brain and heart. Please ask your child about Larry, and have them explain the concept of Whole Body Listening to you.

It was great seeing so many families at Curriculum Night! Please remember to contact us with any questions you may still have.



2nd Grade: Mrs. Osella, Mrs. Mundy, Mr. Jones, Ms. Ruggiero

Second Graders have started the year strong. In Reading, they are working on building their reading stamina, listening to non-fiction and fiction stories and responding to the stories they have read, reading silently, and buddy reading with a partner to discuss the stories using accountable talk.

Students are excited about writing stories in Writer's Workshop. We are working together on building a community of writers by discussing our favorite reading memories, favorite authors and why we write. You can help your child to improve both his or her reading and writing skills by asking them to retell the stories they have read.

In math, students are focusing on using basic fact strategies. We are practicing working in cooperative learning groups and introducing students to guided math groups.

Some examples of strategies that can be used to figure out or remember facts are:



Addition Properties: The zero property states that zero added to any number is the same as the original number. The commutative (or order) property states that the order of addends does not matter: $3 + 4 = 4 + 3$.

Subtraction Rules: There are two rules for using zero in subtraction. Zero subtracted from any number is the original number and any number subtracted from itself equals zero.

Counting on and counting back: For facts such as $9+1$ or $7+2$, you can count on from the greater number. Similarly, for facts such as $6 - 1$, you can count back.

Doubles and near doubles: If you have two groups of 8 objects, you have double 8, or 16, objects. Doubles facts are usually easy to remember, and can be used to learn other facts. Since $8 + 8 = 16$, and 9 is one more than 8, $8 + 9$ will be one more than 16, or 17.

Using 10 to add 9: The place-value system

makes adding 10 to a number easy – just increase the digit in the tens place by 1. You can use this to help add 9 to a number. Just add 10 to the number, then subtract 1.

Fact families: A fact family is a group of related facts using the same numbers. One example would be $4 + 3 = 7$, $3 + 4 = 7$, $7 - 3 = 4$, and $7 - 4 = 3$. Fact families are also useful for solving problems with missing addends, such as $4 + \underline{\quad} = 7$.

Take out the flash cards! We will have timed 0 – 20 addition and subtraction fact tests throughout the year. The facts should be mastered by the end of May.

Nutrition is the focus of our first Science unit. Using My Plate and other resources, we are learning about the five food groups: grain, fruit, vegetable, dairy and protein. Mrs. Gardner has introduced the unit to the students through various hands-on activities. We have also been learning about healthy snacks. Remember to send in a healthy, easy-to-eat snack. Water is a good choice to drink. If you choose to send in juice, it must be 100 percent juice (No open containers, please. They spill easily and stain the carpet.)

Students have set personal goals to be accomplished at the end of the year in grade 2. Some goals include: using my manners more in school; completing math facts more quickly; reading “not too fast and not too slow;” and making new friends.

HOMEWORK- Please remember to read every night for at least 20 minutes and complete the assignments in the monthly homework packets. A fun homework activity could also be for your student to go on FastMath for 10-15 minutes each night to practice their basic facts.

We enjoyed seeing you all at the Open House and look forward to working with your student this school year.

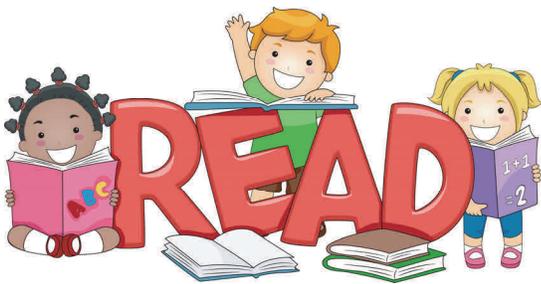


3rd Grade: Mr. Pepin, Mrs. Case, Mr. Moynihan

Third graders have been working hard in Reading and Writing! Our launch lessons have been preparing us for **Reader's** and **Writer's Workshops!**

Reading:

We have been working on improving our **reading stamina** (the amount of time reading independently) and thinking about our reading! We have also explored our classroom libraries and learned about the different **genres** of books! Please encourage your third grader to **read every night** to help strengthen their reading stamina!



Writing:

We have been listing topics that interest us as writers. We learned that writers use **memories**, **wonderings**, **imaginations** and **observations** to write stories. We have been working on "**writing long and writing strong**"! We read stories from featured authors to get inspiration, and we use their techniques to improve our writing! We are preparing to create our first published piece!

Math:

Grade 3 is having a lot of fun in math during the first 20 days of school. We are learning how to work independently in small groups in order to follow the **Guided Math Workshop** model. We have also begun baseline assessing to learn from our students so we can drive our instruction to meet each child's individual needs.

Mr. Pepin, Mrs. Case and Mr. Moynihan have been planning with each other as they are becoming acquainted with the new **Envisions Math program** that will be starting shortly. Parents will now have the opportunity to go online and view what their students are learning and become familiar with different strategies to help their child be successful with math. The students will also have online capabilities to work on different math activities for extra help and enrichment!

Social Thinking:

This month, the third grade launched our **Social Thinking Curriculum**. Scholars have been learning about all of the different kinds of smarts and reflecting on their own unique sets of strengths and areas of growth. Aside from that, they have learned what it means to have their bodies and brains be a **part of the group**. We have also begun to develop common language and expectations around what the **expected behaviors** and **unexpected behaviors** are in various situations. We are so excited as we have already seen our scholars grow their social-emotional awareness and intelligence over the first few weeks of school!

SUPERFLEX®



4th Grade: Mrs. Blundo, Ms. Ortiz & Mrs. Gatmaitan

Dear Families,

It has been a pleasure getting to know all of our new fourth graders and their families! We are looking forward to a wonderful new school year. Most of September was spent getting to know each other and the expectations of fourth grade. We have been practicing Reader's and Writer's workshop as well as guided math stations. This year there will be an increase in small group and individual instruction through a workshop model. Please ask your child what they enjoy the most so far!

With Reading and Writing workshop we have been brainstorming things that they like to read and write about. Please help your child come up with some ideas or ask them what their interests are. Building our stamina has also been an important part of this month. Please make sure your child is reading at least 20 minutes every night!



In math, we are starting a new program called Envision Math 2.0. There are a lot of digital features as well as parent support options. We will be starting this program during the month of October. Please look for an introductory letter describing our first unit of study in the Wednesday folders.

September has primarily been spent practicing our basic facts. Your child can practice their facts online through MobyMax.com, FastMath (K-8 Resource page), or Xtra-math.org. Their usernames and passwords will be sent home through their Wednesday Folders as well.

You will notice that your child is expected to take on more responsibility and ownership for their behaviors, homework, and work habits. To help with this transition, we have already started our new social thinking program, Superflex. Your child has already learned what it means to be a "social detective" by using their ears, eyes, and brains to figure out what is happening around them. They have also learned the difference between "expected" and "unexpected behaviors" and how others treat them because of these. Parent updates and workshops will be coming in your Wednesday Folders.



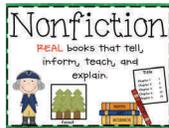
We hope that you and your child have had a great start to fourth grade. Please feel free to contact us at any time. Our emails are listed below!

Rosina Blundo	rbrini@mpspride.org
Nikki Ortiz	nortiz@mpspride.org
Regina Gatmaitan	b25rgatm@mpspride.org

5th Grade: Mrs. Fagan, Mrs. Frye, Mrs. Kearney

In September, we spent time getting to know each other and setting our classroom expectations. We've been building our reading and writing stamina each day! In October, we're jumping deeper into the curriculum.

Language Arts: Fifth graders will be reading and analyzing both fiction and non-fiction texts this month. We will be working on distinguishing between main idea and details in non-fiction books, and identifying theme in fiction stories. These are challenging concepts and students will work with reading partners and as a class to improve their reading comprehension. Students will also be working on narrative writing. They will be writing short stories about important moments in their lives.



Math: Students have been working since the beginning of the year on their facts and reviewing concepts they learned last year. We have been setting the expectations for math workshop and trying out some engaging small-group activities.

We will soon dive into our new Envisions math program. Students will be developing their understanding of place value and begin working with decimal numbers out to the thousandths place. Students are tested weekly on their multiplication and division facts. Try quizzing your students on their math facts at home as well!



Students have math, language arts, and spelling homework each night. Students should also be reading for 20 minutes each night.

Thank you for your help in monitoring their daily homework!

Library: Mr. Hadge & Mrs. Courtney

The library is off to a great start this year.

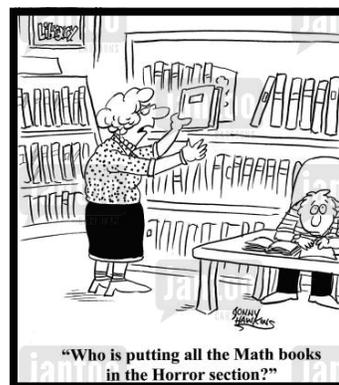
Kindergarten and first grade classes have been learning about library procedures, parts of a book, and fiction and non-fiction. Children in grades two through five have been exchanging books weekly. Very soon the librarian will be going into their classrooms to assist with research and technology skills.

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. Book mark this page on your computer for easy access at any time: <http://mpspride.org/page.cfm?p=1220>.

Our school website address is: <http://mpspride.org/page.cfm?p=714>.

There is a display case in the library for students to display collections they would like to share with our school. We have had rock collections, doll collections, seashells, and many others. If your child has a collection they would like to share with the school please have them pick up an application in the library. We are looking forward to seeing many interesting items in our display case.

Please remember to help your children have a great library year by keeping track of their books, taking care of their books, and returning them on time. Thanks for you help!



Art: Mrs. Sheroff & Ms. Beyer

Welcome Fellow Artists!



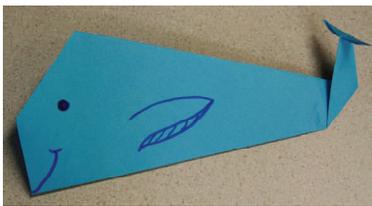
This year, we will be displaying student artwork at the Board of Education, The Lutz Museum, the Superintendent's Office, a rotating art show, Pediatric Dental Associates' office, the Town of Manchester exhibit, and our Robertson Annual Art Show in May.

In art class, we have been going over the rules:

Respecting Teachers,
Respecting Students &
Respecting Art Supplies.

Kindergartners have been exploring lines: straight lines, wavy lines and zig-zag lines. Students have been using texture plates and drawing their own texture leaf.

First Graders created their own unique hand pattern with a star. They are on display outside the art room. They are making origami whales using geometric shapes and then they will add them to their own background.



Second Graders are observing different landscapes by Monet and Munch. Then they are either making their own landscape using a shading technique or starting a scarecrow scene. Each class made their own mini book.

Third Graders are studying asymmetrical and symmetrical masks. We observed many African masks and a Guatemalan mask. Students are in the process of making a bird mask.



Fourth Graders are starting a group project also using symmetrical and asymmetrical stenciling designs in a collage fashion. Teamwork and an open mind to others' ideas makes this work nicely.

Fifth Graders are working on multimedia printing, which takes a lot of concentration. Clay is added to enhance their collage.

Creativity comes in so many forms ... Enjoy yours!



Music: Ms. Grieco & Mr. Hayden

Happy October Music Families!

Room 8 has been abuzz with music for the last month and your students have plenty of new songs and games to share with you.

Students in grades Kindergarten through grade 5 have been practicing their rhythms using instruments and a game called the "Poison Pattern."

Students have also been working on the concepts of high and low as well as "tempo," which means the speed of the beat in music.

The following is a brief list of the songs/chants that each grade level is working on. Please feel free to ask your student(s) to perform them for you at home.



Kindergarten: Hushabye, Lion Hunt, Miss White, Circle Round the Zero, Head and Shoulders

1st Grade: Mi Cuerpo, This Way Go Willoughby, Doggie Doggie

2nd Grade: Put Your Hands on Your Hips Canon, Alabama Gal

3rd Grade: Turn the Glasses Over, Rocky Mountain, Old Roger

4th Grade: In the Morning, John Kanaka, Sailor Sailor, How Do You Doot dee, Baker's Hat

5th Grade: Sunshine Canon, Flowers are Dying, Baker's Hat

Have a wonderful month!

Manchester Public Library

Late Fall Storytime Session - The six-week session begins on November 2nd with programs for children from birth through 4th grade. Storytimes are offered for infants, one-year olds, two-year olds, three-to-five year olds and elementary-age children. Registration begins October 26th for Manchester residents and October 28th for non-residents.

Call [860-645-0577](tel:860-645-0577) for more information or visit our website, library.townofmanchester.org.

Locations: Mary Cheney Library, 586 Main St, Manchester, CT and

Whiton Library, 100 North Main St, Manchester, CT

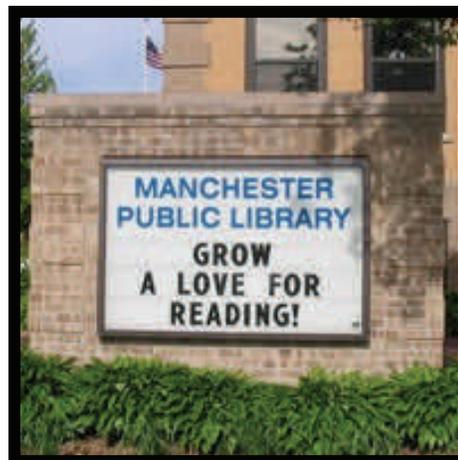
Sciencetellers -The Sciencetellers will present their awesome Dragons & Dreams program on Saturday, October 31st, 2015, 10:30 a.m. at Mary Cheney Library!

This story features interactive and explosive experiments with dry ice, fog, smoke-filled bubbles, flying rockets and more.

Enjoy this spectacular adventure and be swept away to a world where dragons are real and dreams come true!

Call [860-645-0577](tel:860-645-0577) for more information.

Location: Mary Cheney Library, 586 Main St, Manchester, CT



Physical Education: Ms. White & Ms. Falkowski

Kindergarten through second grade students have been settling in back to school learning about personal and general space. They have been practicing how to move in space, but keep our bodies to ourselves. They have also just completed three classes learning various relay races, a helpful tool for field day and other various games we play throughout the school year

Third through fifth grade students have been playing various cooperative activities to get to know each other and learn strategies to solve problems on their own during a game.

Grades three through five just began running in our Running Club (not before or after school, but during P.E.). At the beginning of each class, the students will participate in a timed run. The first run was for two minutes. They were challenged to run the entire time without stopping (practicing pacing). As the time amounts increase throughout the school year, the students will be given multiple opportunities to earn Running Club certificates!

This is preparing the students for fitness testing approaching in October. The four tests are the push-up, curl-up, sit & reach (flexibility), and the PACER test (running).



All-Star of the Month:

One student from each class will be selected as All-Star of the Month each month. These students will receive a prize, certificate and a letter sent home! They will be selected at the end of September for October All-Stars.



****Note to ALL parents:** the annual district wide Cross-Country Challenge will be occurring in Spring 2016. Our department unanimously decided to change from fall to spring due to more available dates! Stay tuned for more information.

