Room 29 Newsletter- February 2012
Grade 4

The school year is flying by! We are now approaching the halfway mark, a most fruitful time of year, filled with exciting studies and enriching activities.

Math – During this month students will be learning about long division, angles, coordinate grids, and long division. **<u>You can further the learning at home by asking your children to look for and describe angles in their surroundings. You can also quiz your child on his/her multiplication and division facts 0-12.</u>** In our next unit of study, the children will deepen their understanding of fractions. From there they will begin the study of measurement including perimeter and area. **Please remember to read the parent newsletters that precede each unit. They are filled with other great ideas for extending the learning beyond the classroom.**

Social Studies – We are about to begin the study of Colonial America, including the 13 original colonies and the impetus behind their formation. Students will learn about the geography, economy, and lifestyle of the colonies and interesting historical figures such as Ben Franklin. The fourth grade team is planning a Colonial Day culminating celebration to take place this spring. Details will follow. In addition, we will be visiting the New Canaan Historical Society this spring to learn about local life in Colonial times.

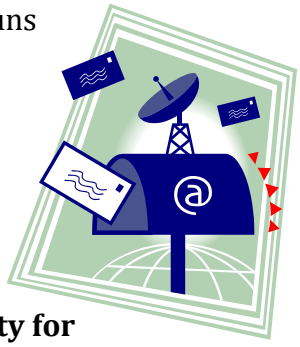
Science – Students are in the midst of learning about magnetism and electricity. Many hands-on investigations are allowing students to discover the properties of magnets, how to build a circuit, and which objects act as insulators and conductors. With time the children will actually build series and parallel circuits and create an electromagnet.

Literacy– Our class has been hard at work learning a multitude of reading strategies and skills. Currently, the children are reading from a wide variety of **non-fiction** literature with a focus on identifying text structures and features. Students are learning to identify main idea and supporting details and make inferences based upon them. Each student has now chosen a topic to **research**. They are learning how to integrate information from multiple texts, take notes, and then use them to write a report that demonstrates a knowledge of their topic. **Please note that our PTA has generously purchased Grolier online for use our students' use at home and school. To log on, please go to http://go.grolier.com and enter in the username and password, all lowercase as follows: Username: sps2 Password: sps2.**

In addition, all students are working toward increasing their reading stamina so **reading at home for pleasure for at least 30 minutes a day is key. Please take the time to ask your children about what they are reading and what they are learning *about* reading.** I'm delighted that students love to read and are taking advantage of the opportunity to borrow books from the school library. **Please make sure, however, that any book your child borrows, returns to school for others to enjoy.**

Connecticut Mastery Testing – Believe it or not, CMTs are just around the corner. Testing will begin at the end of February. The skills that students will be tested on are imbedded in classroom instruction on a daily basis in all curriculum areas. For those who are so inclined however, additional CMT practice can be found on the website **cmtreview.com**

Reminders:



- The **second grade post office** begins this Monday, Jan 30 and runs through Tuesday, Feb. 14.
- There will be an early release day on Wed., Feb 15 for staff development.
- There will be no school during winter recess, which runs between Feb 20th and 24th.
- The end of the next marking period is March 2. Report cards will come home on the 16th and report card conferences will take place the following week. **This is an important opportunity for us to discuss your child's progress and set readiness goals for fifth grade.**

Donations – This is the season of runny noses. Our supply of tissues is running quite low. Donations would be much appreciated! Also, we are always accepting donations of construction paper.

As we approach the second half of the school year, I am hopeful that all students will continue to work as diligently as ever. This is the time to "buckle down" and keep the momentum going! Please continue to monitor your children's work and enforce high expectations, particularly where effort and appropriate behavior are concerned. Many thanks!

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