

STCS



Westdale News

December 2014

From the Principal

Volume 1, Issue 1

Dear Westdale Families,

December is a short but busy month! Don't forget that our 2nd Grade Music Program is on Tuesday, December 9th at 6:30 p.m. at **Arrowwood Elementary**. Our students and teachers have worked very hard getting ready for this event.

On December 12th our staff will be participating in our annual Ugly Sweater Competition. This is the kick off of our December Community Service Learning Project. We will narrow it down to the top 3 staff members. Beginning Monday students will be able to vote for their favorite ugly sweater, with a nonperishable food item. Voting will go on until Friday, December 19th. The staff person whose food collection weighs the most is the winner. All the food collected from this goes to the Eastern Michigan Food Bank to help local families who are in need of help.

Each month we have been focusing on a different Life Principle. Our Life Principle for December is compassion. At our assembly on Friday students will learn more about this Life Principle and ways to show it in actions and words.

Pajama Day is Thursday, December 18th. Students may wear their pajamas to school for the day. Just a reminder that we do go out for recess every day so students will need to make sure they are dressed warmly enough for that.

Our December Read In is Friday, December 19th from 1-2 p.m. There is a sign up sheet attached to this newsletter. Each student may invite someone special to come. Since we are limited on space in the classrooms, please only one person.

Just a friendly reminder that we go outside every day for recess unless the temperature or wind chill is less than 10 degrees. Please make sure your child has a coat, hat, gloves/mittens. Once we have snow, students will also need boots and snow pants. Thank you for your support with this.

Sincerely,
Karen M. Volk

Westdale Elementary Principal

Important Dates:

- December 5th-15th- Five Below Fundraiser
- December 9th- 2nd Grade Music Program
- December 10th -Dental Bus Presentation
- December 12th- Westdale Assembly
- December 18th- Pajama Day
- December 19th- 2nd Grade Field Trip
- December 19th- Popcorn Sale
- December 19th- Read In from 1-2 p.m.
- December 22nd- January 5th- Winter Break

Young Fives

During November, the Young Fives students had a great time joining the Kindergarten students for HOWL Day. We learned about how the Pilgrims had to churn butter and actually made butter in our classroom. We also heard the story of Thanksgiving and made a retelling bracelet. The students also had the opportunity to compare clothing of long ago with clothing of today. The Young Fives students are looking forward to the activities that we have planned for HOWL Day in December!

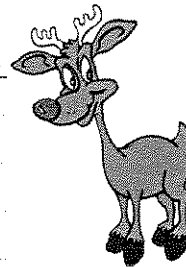
Kindergarten

In November we spent HOWL DAY discussing what Thanksgiving is, what it was like to live years ago, and even made and tried a Thanksgiving treat. In December we will have the opportunity to write letters to Santa and wear pajamas to school one day. (More details will come in a special note home).

In class we continue to work on word wall words, letter sound recognition, patterns, and number sense. Please keep practicing at home as well as reading. READING to your child every night for 20 minutes is the single most important thing you can do to support their education.

First Grade

Reindeer on the loose...All of the first grade classes just finished making Reindeer sweatshirts. The kids had a great time making the reindeer using their handprints and footprint. Thank you to our volunteers for helping us with this special project! You will be able to spot the first graders wearing their sweatshirts every Friday in December!



PTO

Our next PTO meeting will be Wednesday, January 21st at 6:30 p.m. in the music room. Child care is provided

Second Grade



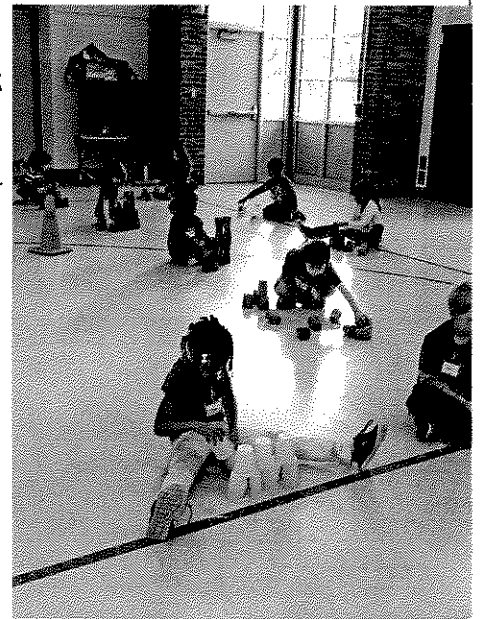
Westdale Second Graders who participated in Kids Run the Nation Program. Back row: Katelyn Dowdell, Matthew Shaner, Anya Walsh, Allison Mize, Logan Green, Antoine Young, and Jessica Fox. Second row: Ella Cubic, Alex Gilles, Patrick Schmiegel, Christian Harris Price, Faolan Hill, and Mia Gonzales. Front row: Lane Trabalka, Mai Zong Lo, Abby Scott, Gracey Brandel, and Saleh Saleh.

From the Gym

Westdale students practiced Sport Stacking in Physical Education class during the month of November. Sport Stacking is an exciting individualized & team sport where participants stack & unstack twelve plastic cups in a predetermined sequence. Westdale students had a great time learning the different stacking combinations during class. We worked on the 3-3-3 and the 3-6-3 patterns while using both hands equally.

Sport stacking helps students develop bilateral proficiency, which assists in equal performance on both sides of the body. By increasing bilateral proficiency, a student develops a greater percentage of the right side of the brain, which houses awareness, focus, creativity and rhythm. Stacking helps train the brain for sports and other activities where the use of both hands is important, such as playing a musical instrument or using the computer.

If you are interested in learning more about this great sport, please go to www.speedstacks.com or contact Mrs. Bordeaux.



Christmas Shopping Ideas!

Are you looking for some gifts for your kids that are educational, yet TONS of FUN? Here is a list of ideas for you!

Buy a fancy notebook and a fancier pen ~ Get your child writing at home! Have them write magical stories to share with you and the rest of the family.

A deck of cards ~ There are so many great games you can play that will get your child thinking from Kindergarten through 2nd grade. (Game ideas: number recognition, which number is more or less, adding numbers, subtracting numbers). My own kids LOVE these card games.

Wipe boards ~ All kids love the wipe board and dry erase markers. You can practice sight words, math problems, and make words using wipe boards.

Books ~ There are so many special Christmas books with popular characters that your kids will love.

Llama Llama Holiday Drama, by Anna Dewdney

Pete the Cat Saves Christmas, by Eric Litwin

Snowmen at Christmas, by Caralyn Buehner

Christmas Cookies: Bite Sized Holiday Lessons, by Amy Rosenthal

There are many wonderful books out there. Kids LOVE new stories and they LOVE when you read with them. Books are great stocking stuffers.

Board games are always fun. The magic of board games is family time!!

Apples to Apples ~ a fun game using the comparison strategy

UNO ~ a math game

Skip-Bo Junior ~ A game of number sequence and strategy

Think, Fun, Math Dice Junior (found at Meijer) ~ Great with learning about the missing number in math problems. My kids LOVE this!

Hedbandz – a game of thinking and describing.

Yahtze – a thinking / math game (There are many early versions of this game: Toy Story & Disney princesses)

Memory games – There are many different characters to buy and Memory is great for training our brain to visualize and remember.

Simon – the electronic memory game ~ trains brain to be a quick thinker and helps with audio and visual memory

Bop it ~ Helps with memory and motor skills

Scrabble – recommended for 8 year olds, but many of our first and second graders could handle playing an adaptive version of it.

Boggle and Boggle Jr. are both great games. Boggle Jr. is perfect for preschool – first grade. Boggle is great for first grade and second grade. Another game my own kids LOVE!!!

Pictionary Junior ~ A great game for thinking, describing, and using good details.

Checkers ~ A great game for thinking and strategizing.

Have fun with your kids and make learning fun. Your kids will forever cherish the time that you read, play, and explore with them. Have a wonderful holiday season and an amazing 2015. Happy Shopping!!!

Music News...

Isn't December a great time for music? In kindergarten we have now learned seven color songs this year- ask your student to sing a few for you! We will be singing a lot of traditional holiday songs the next couple of weeks and playing instruments and learning movements to go with them. In first grade, we have been doing some rhythmic reading, and we created our own rhythms and melodies on xylophones. This month we will learn about different styles of music, and also different holidays and how music is used to celebrate those holidays. The second graders and I have been working diligently on our music for our music program, "How the Penguins Saved Christmas." We have our big performance THIS WEEK!! Our program will be performed at Arrowwood School on, Tuesday, December 9th at 6:30 p.m. The second graders are doing a fantastic job! Their reward will be our field trip on Friday, December 19th, to see the Heritage High School choirs perform! It will be a great performance and the kids will love it! It was made possible by a grant from the Saginaw Township Community Schools Foundation. We are so lucky! -Mrs. Mary Casler and Miss Emily Simmermacher

Recess Fun!





You Are Invited to A Read In

**Where: Westdale Elementary
(Your child's classroom)**

Who: Westdale Parents
(Space is limited in classrooms
so adults only, please)

**When: Friday, December 19th
1-2 p.m.**

Bring a good book and enjoy reading the afternoon away
with your child.

***Please return to school by Wednesday, December 17th.

Student Name: _____

Parent Name: _____

____ Yes I will attend

five BELOW [FUNDRAISER]



YOU'RE INVITED! TO A FUNDRAISING SHOPPING EVENT FOR

Westdale Elementary

DATE: Dec. 5, 2014-Dec. 15, 2014
TIME: Sun: 9a-10p/Mon.-Sat:9a-10p
WHERE: 3435 Tittabawassee Rd.
Saginaw, Michigan 48604

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