
PAW PRINTS

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From the Principal's Desk Catherine Long

Happy Holidays!

It's difficult to believe that the calendar year is almost over! This is the last edition of Paw Prints before the winter holidays. I hope that everyone is able to take some time to enjoy family and friends in the coming weeks.

Medication in School

Please remember that we have very strict guidelines on distributing medications to students. If your child needs to receive any medication (prescription or over the counter) the school needs the following items: parent/guardian's written authorization, written physician authorization, and medication in the original packaging. All of these items must be brought by a parent or guardian; students cannot bring medication to school. The form needed for written authorization can be picked up at school, or found on the internet at: <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/forms/pdf/525-13.pdf>

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the health room.

Curriculum 2.0 Mathematics: What does it mean to "dig deeper"?

Students and staff continue to make wonderful progress with our new curriculum also known as the Elementary Integrated Curriculum. Teachers in the Arts and grades K-2 are implementing the program this year and we are preparing for all teachers to implement the new material and philosophy. One strategy we are implementing is to use staff meeting time to provide training on the Common Core Standards. Recently we spent time looking at the Eight Standards for Mathematical Practice. They

can be found on following website: <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards/mathematics/introduction/standards-for-mathematical-practice/>

Several staff members thought that number three, *Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others*, provided good insight on what it means to "dig deeper" when teaching mathematics.

Here is a description of that practice: "Mathematically proficient students understand and use stated assumptions, definitions, and previously established results in constructing arguments. They make conjectures and build a logical progression of statements to explore the truth of their conjectures. They are able to analyze situations by breaking them into cases, and can recognize and use counterexamples. They justify their conclusions, communicate them to others, and respond to the arguments of others. They reason inductively about data, making plausible arguments that take into account the context from which the data arose. Mathematically proficient students are also able to compare the effectiveness of two plausible arguments, distinguish correct logic or reasoning from that which is flawed, and—if there is a flaw in an argument—explain what it is. Elementary students can construct arguments using concrete referents such as objects, drawings, diagrams, and actions. Such arguments can make sense and be correct, even though they are not generalized or made formal until later grades. Later, students learn to determine domains to which an argument applies. Students at all grades can listen or read the arguments of others, decide whether they make sense, and ask useful questions to clarify or improve the arguments."

When students bring home work that may appear at first glance to look like material previously taught, consider how the activity might be used to develop

students' abilities to make conjectures, justify their arguments, and recognize counter examples.

Extended Family Vacations

In the last few weeks I have received several notices of families who will be out of the country for extended visits with families. Thank you for keeping us informed of your family's plans. There is no doubt that students benefit in many ways from time with their extended family, learning or practicing a second language and spending time in another culture. It is important to know that teachers are not able to provide the materials in advance that will be taught during these long absences. Teachers have an outline of their long term instructional plans, but the daily lessons are based on students' current performance, therefore materials are not prepared that far in advance. I also wish I could say that I provided teachers enough planning time to be three or four weeks ahead of schedule! When you contact your child's teacher about a family vacation, the teacher will provide suggestions on how to maintain academic skills, and he or she will make every effort to help your child get caught upon return to school. They are not able to provide the handouts, worksheets etc. that students will be using in class prior to a family leaving town.

Student Corner

Proud Panther / Excellent Effort / Awesome Achievement Awards

Proud Panther Awards are awarded to students (K-5) who demonstrate outstanding character by modeling the six PAVE values (responsibility, respect, cooperation, caring, honesty, and moral courage). The following students were *November* winners: **Jack Wiersma, Lily Kerchner, Lucy Kerchner, Max Meringoff, Alexis Tungcod, Maya Colavito, Brooke Entwistle, Antonio Perrotta, Donggeon Kim, Cooper Sosin, Claudia Romero, Leo Peele, Lamar Robinson, Jacob Maged, Myles Lobato,**

Meet the Ritchie Park Staff- Lifelong Learners

Each edition of Paw Prints will include a short article by a member of the Ritchie Park staff. They will describe something new they have learned to do over the summer, or since the school year started. The Ritchie Park staff is committed to continuous growth!

Meet Jessica Nusbaum

I have had the privilege to travel to many places on my vacations from school. One of my favorite things to do on vacation is take pictures. I have collected numerous pictures over the years, some are sitting in albums, some in a box and many are in cyber space on my computer. Finally, last summer I decided I was going to do something more with my pictures than store them in a box. I have always been envious of people who scrapbook because their pictures are displayed so beautifully. I had tried scrapbooking, but one page took me forever. I decided it was not an efficient strategy for me. That is when I chose to try making a photo book on the computer. I thought it would be faster than scrapbooking by hand, but still a great way to display my pictures. I know how to use a computer but am not that computer savvy. For my first photo project, I used the I-photo software to create a book of my picture from my vacation to Peru. To my surprise, it was easier than I thought it would be. The biggest challenge was my decision to start the project, once started it was a breeze. Similar to my students who check their math problems before they turn in their quiz, I had to carefully check my photo book before I sent it to be printed. The project took me a couple weeks to finish but I was very pleased with the result. My sisters even asked me to make a copy of the photo book for them. Since then, I have completed one more photo book but have plans to make many more.

Gabrielle Nadler, Paige Nesbit, Jake Berlin, Daniel Espejo, Kristina Mickens, Caroline Cornish, Amanda Crabill.

Excellent Effort Awards are given to students (K-5) who have positive attitudes toward school work, use feedback to improve their work, and complete work thoughtfully and on time.

November winners were: **Miki Leslie, Torrin Thomas, Alex Villatoro, Xander Arnold, Anna Shakhbazyan, Kareem Ahmed, Jorge Solares, Alexandra Gunz, Randy Frejoles III, Karina Uppal, Samantha Gonzalez, Renee Harvey, Sophia Kestell, Shariar Vaez-Ghaemi, Jordyn Gershoni, Dinithi Navarathna, Abigail Wiersma, Clara Paternostro, Julia Blitz, Sooyeon Seol.**

Awesome Achievement Awards are given to students who meet all or most of the grade level indicators in all major subjects each month.

The following students were **November** winners:

Cabell Faulkner, Shannon Lim, Jet Wah, Skyler Walcoff, Lauren Richards, Heather McCoy, Amara Alexander, Delaney Crawley, Maya Gvirtzman, Eesha Kurella, Johnathan Sun, Lexi Kullen, Trevor Gutmann, Julianna Olano, Aashna Singh, Kaitlyn Knapp, Gabriela Weaver, Jennifer Song, Keerthana Merugu, Rithik Patel, Kenneth Trinh.

From the Instrumental Music Department

Mrs. Kanowith is proud to announce our very first instrumental concert of the school year. The students have been working very hard preparing for their “debut” and are looking forward to showing you what they can do after just four months of lessons. Both our 2:00pm in school assembly and our 7:00pm evening concert will take place on Thursday January 26th. If the evening concert is canceled due to bad weather, it will be rescheduled for Thursday February 2nd. *Attendance is required for all instrumental music students!* This concert is a very important step in their development as musicians, and will be an experience that they will not want to miss. Dress for students is white on top and black on bottom *for both the assembly and the evening concert!* If your child has a music stand, please have them label it with their name and bring it to school the day of the concert. Thank you for all of your help and support of the instrumental music program. Our students look forward to playing for you!

Upcoming Events

Dec. 26th – Jan. 2nd Winter Break

January 12th 7:00 p.m. Math Night

January 20th PTA Variety Show at Richard Montgomery HS

