

# Essex Elementary School Newsletter

December 2018

# Principal's Message by Jennifer Tousignant

Dear EES Families,

Recently I received a letter from Dena Sherwood, Founder and President of Arms Wide Open Childhood Cancer Foundation. She wrote to let me know that our fifth grade student, Abigail Alexander, has received the 2018 Humanitarian Award from the foundation. For the past few years, Abigail has asked for donations to the foundation in lieu of birthday gifts. She has had a lemonade stand at the Ivoryton Farmers Market where she raises awareness and funds to fight childhood cancer. Abi and her family attend and volunteer at the foundation's major events and fundraisers.

In addition, third grader Joshua Sweet raised funds for students to participate in sports programs who otherwise would be unable to do so. Last year he was sad to learn that some friends could not join sports programs due to lack of funding. Josh decided to do something about it and raised \$200 for this purpose. Thank you Josh!

During this time of giving, I see Abi and Josh's selfless hearts of gold as a reminder to share our own personal gifts and talents for the betterment of others. These students are two of the many who make our EES community proud each and every day! We have GREAT kids!

I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season spending it with those you hold most dear. ~Jenn

## Important Dates:

Tuesday, Dec 4: Winter Concert (in school 1:30; evening performance 6:30pm) in EES gymnasium and PTO Gingerbread Contest in EES cafeteria 5:30-8:00pm (snow date Dec 11)

Monday, Dec 10: Report Cards home

Dec 24-Jan. 1: Winter Holiday Break

Wednesday, Jan 2: School back in Session

# Grade 6 News

## Community Building

The 6th graders participated in a morning of enriching and exciting team building activities led by Brian Drinkard, PE teacher from DRES. Students were pushed out of their comfort zones, worked together to navigate through obstacle courses, and solved complex problems. After each round, students engaged in reflection thinking about what worked well and what could be improved upon. It is our hope the students will apply these teamwork skills to their work at EES and in their everyday lives.

## Academics

In Math, students have finished Unit 2: Introducing Ratios and are currently in Unit 3: Unit Rates and Percentages. A “Family Materials” newsletter was sent home describing different topics and tasks to try with your child. In Writing Class, students wrapped up Personal Narrative/Small Moment stories with a “Write Around” Compliment Celebration. Students received positive feedback from their fellow 6th graders, as well as 5th graders.

In Reading, students have started Social Issues Book Clubs. Already, their reading volume has increased and the level of their thinking has been amped up. In this unit, students look closely at the relationships between characters. They evaluate who has power, how it affects the relationships, and weigh positives and negatives, as well as examining themes. In Social Studies, students are learning map reading skills and the tools of geography. In Science, students are now actively involved in learning the human body is a system of interacting subsystems made of cells. As part of our technology integration, students will be working in small groups to create Google Slide presentations in order to share their research on a particular subsystem.

## Veterans Day

In honor of Veterans Day, 6th graders wrote letters and designed holiday cards to send to active service members.



# GRADE 4 SCIENCE NEWS

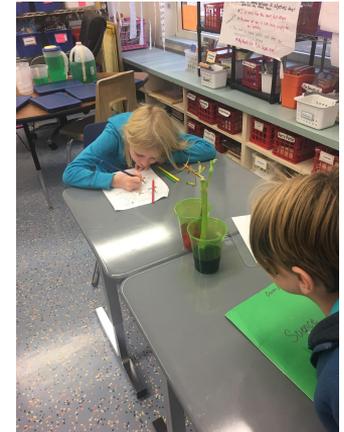


## Outdoor Classroom Learning...

As part of the science curriculum, the Audubon Society led a focused study of the ecosystems at the Clarke Community park in Old Saybrook. Fourth grade students were split into groups and assigned a group leader from the Society. These educators specialized in bringing “science to life” by providing experiences to promote learning about ecosystems and their inhabitants. Students explored the woodland and pond habitats. Students studied plants that were located near the water’s edge. They were given journals to document information, which included soil and air temperatures in a given area and descriptions of plant and animal life that they observed.

## ...and in the classroom

Grade four is immersed in adopting a new framework for teaching science called [The Next Generation of Science Standards](#). It is a new approach to learning science in which science is no longer taught as facts, but as a tool for explaining phenomena. NGSS science is about using knowledge to figure things out and about making sense of the world in which we live. It’s about drawing conclusions based on observations of the world around us. The fourth graders have been exploring structures of both plants and animals and drawing conclusions about the purpose of various structures that are adaptations of living things. Last month, the students conducted an experiment that demonstrated the vascular system of a plant and its role in photosynthesis. They learned how to make a claim (draw a conclusion) and support their claim with evidence and reasoning from what they learned and from their experiment. They have also been learning about the role of annotated diagrams and their usefulness in explaining a process or phenomena. We are looking forward to more hands-on learning as the year moves on!



Grade Two recently finished our first writing unit on personal narratives. In this unit, students generated plans and wrote stories about a particular “small moment” in their lives. Beginning lessons focused on students being able to craft stories with a beginning, middle, and end and integrate temporal words (time words) to help organize specific events. Second graders then explored elaboration and craft by learning how to include details such as action, dialogue, and description into their stories. In addition, students practiced *showing* how a character was feeling instead of merely *telling* the feeling. Editing stories for capitals, punctuation, and spelling along with revising the content of the story was also integrated into writing workshop time. The second grade teachers are very proud of all the progress students have shown throughout this unit!

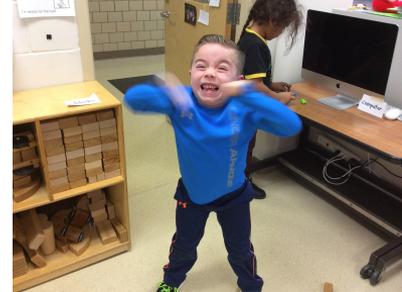
After having just wrapped up our personal narrative writing unit, we are diving right into informational writing. The second graders continue to focus this month on reading nonfiction texts, so the timing of learning to plan and write informational texts could not be better! The children will be learning to write an introduction that will capture their reader’s attention, and a conclusion that emphasizes why the topic is important. They will organize their books to include a table of contents, headings, pictures, labels, and captions to teach their reader more. The children will be learning to write with detail by giving examples, making comparisons, and using adjectives and adverbs. The topics for their nonfiction pieces will come from subjects they are already experts in.

# Kindergarten

We have been busy learning in Kindergarten! During Reader's Workshop, we will be strengthening our reading super powers. Our super powers give us the ability to decode text and grow into independent readers. During Writer's Workshop, we will be working on making our writing easy to read through the use of writing conventions. We will also be working on writing sentences to tell stories.

In math, we will be working on recognizing even ("double") numbers and odd ("not double") numbers on the ten-frame. Through the use of manipulatives, we will practice solving addition and subtraction problems. We will also work on writing equations to represent these problems.

In science, we will continue to work on investigating the seasons by studying the changes we see in plants and animals. We will also continue to work on "The Zones of Regulation" by studying tools we can use to calm ourselves down or get our bodies ready to learn.

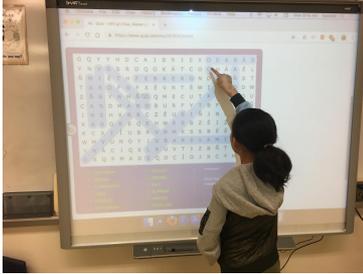


Kindergarteners have been noticing how our bodies look and feel when we are in each "zone."



## ¡Hola amigos! ¡Felices Fiestas! (Happy Holidays!)

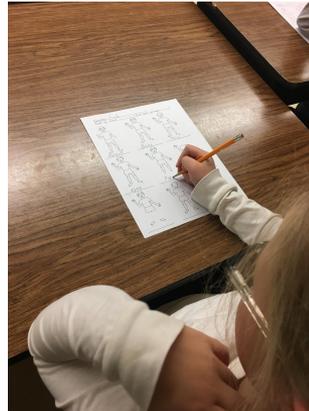
All students in 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th grade have a Spanish Google Classroom that they can access at home. The links and the games I create are posted in Google Classroom to offer opportunities for students to build critical thinking and creative problem solving skills. During FLES time images, drawings, signs, songs, and props are used often to make connections without English translation. Different projects at each grade level help students use the four basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Total Physical Response (TPR) is one of the methods used frequently in class and it is based on the coordination of language and physical movement (James Asher).



- 6<sup>th</sup> grade students have been working on personal pronouns and regular and irregular verbs in Spanish. They will start looking at different autobiographies in Spanish to prepare for writing their own.

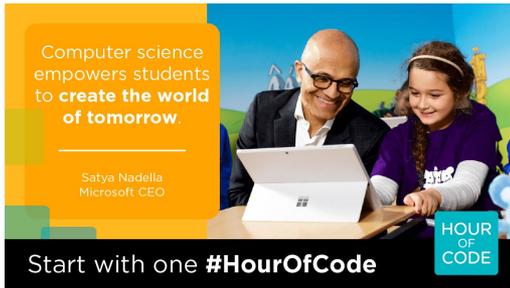


- 5<sup>th</sup> grade students have been working on adjectives in Spanish. They are going to be looking at different family projects in Spanish to prepare for writing their own.
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade students have been working on the calendar and numbers to 100 in Spanish. They will start learning the alphabet in Spanish and comparing it to English sounds.



- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students have been working on learning body parts in Spanish. They will start learning vocabulary for fruits and will be able to express whether they like a fruit or not.
- 1st and 2nd grade students have been singing and learning basic Spanish through songs and games.

# HOUR OF CODE



**Computing jobs are the #1 source of new wages in the U.S.**

**500,000**

current openings

**43,000**

computer science  
graduates in 2016



HOUR  
OF  
CODE

Start with one **#HourOfCode**

For the 5th year in a row, EES will be participating in the Hour of Code. The Hour of Code is a global movement that believes the students of today are ready to learn critical skills for 21st-century success. We live in a world surrounded by technology. We know that whatever field our students choose to go into as adults, their ability to succeed will increasingly depend on understanding how technology works. A tiny fraction of kids, however, are learning this important skill. Only 35% of all high schools in the United States teach computer science. At EES our students don't just have one hour of coding education, we work on coding through the school year. Students in grades K-2 will work on coding in the library media center during the month of December. They also get to participate in various coding stations in coming months. Students in grades 3-6 will participate in coding projects at various points during the year. Coding is engaging and uses critical thinking and problem solving skills. Encourage your student to code at home so they can learn how to create games like Minecraft and Fortnite instead of just playing them! Check out the EES Library Media Website for lots of coding activities as well as examples of coding projects completed by our students!

<https://sites.google.com/a/req4.k12.ct.us/ees-library-media-center/>

# MATHEMATICS AT EES

## A MATH RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES!

Looking for a way to help your child love math? Check out BedtimeMath.com. Bedtime Math strives to help families introduce math as a fun part of their daily routine, as common and beloved as the bedtime story. Bedtime Math provides easy ways to roll math into the day, whether at bedtime, bathtime, or dinnertime.



## DECEMBER CCPS PROBLEM OF THE MONTH

If the average time it takes to grow a 6-foot Christmas tree is 7 years, how many inches of growth is that per year?

What would be the total income from 23 million Christmas trees sold at an average cost of \$5.10 per foot of height, if the average tree sold is 6 feet tall?

## NOVEMBER CCPS PROBLEM OF THE MONTH SOLUTION

**Question:** When will I be a billion seconds old?

### **Hints:**

1. What information do you need to solve this problem?
2. How many seconds are in a day? A year?
3. How many days and years have I been alive?
4. How much longer will it be until I reach 1 billion seconds?

### **Solution:**

60 seconds each minute x 60 minutes each hour x 24 hours each day x 365 days each year = 31,536,000 seconds per year.

So...every 3 years, you live about 100 million seconds. You have to live only 10 times that long to live 1 billion seconds.

$1,000,000,000 / 31,536,000 = 31.709$  years.

Mrs. VanderMale is already over 1 billion seconds old (WOW! She's old!) When will you be a billion seconds old?

# The Reading Team

It is important that your child not only read the words in a text but also understand the meaning of what he or she is reading. You can help your child read with understanding by giving assistance in using various comprehension strategies. Here are some you can try:

- Making connections to things he or she already knows
- Creating mental pictures of what is happening in a story
- Asking questions while reading
- Determining important points
- Reading “between the lines”
- Synthesizing or summarizing information
- Using strategies for figuring out difficult words

Here are suggestions for using some of these strategies with your child.

**Asking questions** – Ask questions such as, “Why is this happening?”, “What might happen next?”, or “Does this make sense?” Such questions help children make connections among various parts of a story.

**Reading “between the lines”** – Your child needs to learn to use information in the story, and from his or her own knowledge and experience, in order to make inferences – that is, to discover meaning that is not stated outright. This strategy of reading “between the lines” involves gathering clues and using them to “create” meaning.

**Synthesizing and summarizing** – Your child needs to learn to take all the information from his or her reading, summarize the important points, and then put it all together like the pieces of a puzzle.

# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Your children are learning about and applying the concepts of The ZONES of Regulation, MINDFULNESS and a GROWTH MINDSET here at EES. At this very busy time of the year, when emotions are running high, stress can be high, patience and time is short, we thought we would share a parenting perspective grounded in those concepts.

## PARENT FROM A PLACE OF GRATITUDE

- Practicing gratitude improves mental and physical health, increases empathy, and improves sleep *It even changes the brain!*
- Each time you are about to say, “I have to” replace it with **“I get to”**
- “I have to take my daughter to ballet” vs. “I get to take my daughter to ballet”
- “I have to put him to bed” vs. “I get to put him to bed.”

## APPLY GROWTH MINDSET TO YOUR PARENTING

- No one is born knowing how to parent.** When frustration overtakes you, use it as an opportunity to grow from the experience, and decide what you’d do differently next time.
- When it all seems too difficult, remember the feeling of things being hard is the **feeling of both your brain, and your capacity as a parent, growing!**

## THE “90 SECOND RULE”

- When you resist a feeling, you inadvertently remain stuck in that feeling.
- When you accept the feeling, **it’s gone in under 2 minutes!**
- In the critical 90 seconds of an emotion, be sure to communicate your strong feelings to your child and how you plan to cope with them. **“Mommy is feeling very tired and grumpy right now”**

## TIPS FOR HANDLING A RED ZONE

- Make safety the first priority
  - Limit verbals
- This is *not* a teachable moment
- Validate your child’s (or any other person’s) feelings
- Evoke some of the emotion in yourself
  - Give them - AND yourself - time and space
- Process later using STOP, THINK and GO Problem Solving concept
  - Designate a safe spot in your home - have a relaxation or regulation station!
    - Avoid power struggles
    - Teach and guide your child with self-calming techniques and tools when he/she is in a calm regulated state  
( note: third bullet 😊 )

# DECEMBER 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
						I	
2	3 A	4  B Winter Concert EES, 6:30pm	5 C	6 D	7 A	8	
9	10 B	11 C Winter Concert Snow Date	12 D	13 A	14 B	15	
16	17 C	18 D	19 A	20 B	21 C	22	
23	24  winter/	25 Winter Holiday Vacation				28 	29

Winter Concert: *Tuesday, December 4th*  
6:30pm at EES

Winter Concert Snow Date:  
December 11th



## December 2018 Breakfast Menu

**BREAKFAST IS AVAILABLE AT ALL SCHOOLS - COME JOIN US FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT MEAL OF THE DAY**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>12/3</b> Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/4</b> Yogurt Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/5</b> Zucchini Bread Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/6</b> Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/7</b> Apple Cinnamon Muffin Fresh Apple Slices & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk Or Fresh Homemade Fruit Smoothies
<b>12/10</b> Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/11</b> Yogurt Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/12</b> Banana Bread Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/13</b> Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/14</b> Blueberry Muffin Fresh Apple Slices & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk Or Fresh Homemade Fruit Smoothies
<b>12/17</b> Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/18</b> Yogurt Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/19</b> Zucchini Bread Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/20</b> Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk	<b>12/21</b> Apple Cinnamon Muffin Fresh Apple Slices & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk Or Fresh Homemade Fruit Smoothies
<b>12/24</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>12/25</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>12/26</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>12/27</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>12/28</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>
<b>12/31</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>1/1/19</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break Happy New Year</b></p>			

**Full Pay Students Breakfast Meal Price \$ 1.25**

**Free & Reduced Eligible Students – No Charge**

Fat-Free Chocolate & 1% Low-Fat Available Daily with Breakfast or \$0.50 a la carte.

Our menus follow dietary guidelines for reduced fat, salt and sugar while increasing whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

As part of a balanced breakfast, Fruit or Fruit Juice and Fat Free or Low-Fat Milk are offered daily. All Bread items are Whole Wheat.

Menu Subject to change without advance notice.

For suggestions and questions about School Lunch Program please call 860-526-9546 ext. 1420



## December 2018 Lunch Menu

**BREAKFAST IS AVAILABLE AT ALL SCHOOLS - COME JOIN US FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT MEAL OF THE DAY**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>12/3</b> Stuffed Crust Cheese Pizza Or Stuffed Crust Pepperoni Pizza Tossed Salad w/ Croutons Whole Fruit Sherbet Chilled Fresh Fruit Cup	<b>12/4</b> Grilled Chicken Parmesan Sandwich Tomato Sauce & Cheese Steamed Vegetables Chilled Fruit Cup	<b>12/5</b> Pasta Bar Tomato, Meat or Alfredo Sauce Warm Garlic Bread Steamed Carrots Chilled Fruit Cup	<b>12/6</b> Turkey Grinder Or Cheese Grinder Baked Chips Veggie Sticks w/dip Chilled Fresh Fruit Cup	<b>12/7</b> Sausage, Egg & Cheese Sandwich Or Egg & Cheese Sandwich Hash Brown Potatoes Vegetable Sticks Fresh Fruit Cup
<b>12/10</b> Personal Pizza Or Personal Pepperoni Pizza Tossed Salad w/ Croutons Whole Fruit Sherbet Chilled Fresh Fruit Cup	<b>12/11</b> Crispy Chicken Pattie Sandwich Lettuce & Tomato Baked Potatoes Wedges Chilled Fruit Cup	<b>12/12</b> Pasta Bar Tomato, Meat or Alfredo Sauce Warm Garlic Bread Tossed Salad w/ Croutons Chilled Fruit Cup	<b>12/13</b> Hamburger or Cheeseburger Lettuce & Tomato Oven fried Potatoes Chilled Fruit Cup	<b>12/14</b> Toasted Cheese Sandwich or Toasted Ham & Cheese Sandwich Tomato Soup Baby Carrots Chilled Fruit Cup
<b>12/17</b> Stuffed Crust Cheese Pizza Or Stuffed Crust Pepperoni Pizza Tossed Salad w/ Croutons Whole Fruit Sherbet Chilled Fresh Fruit Cup	<b>12/18</b> All Beef Hot Dog on a bun Baked Beans Veggie Sticks w/ dip Chilled Fruit Cup	<b>12/19</b> Pasta Bar Tomato, Meat or Alfredo Sauce Warm Garlic Bread Green Peas Chilled Fruit Cup	<b>12/20</b> Beef & Bean Nachos Salsa & Sour Cream Roasted Corn Chilled Fruit Cup	<b>12/21</b> Fluffy Pancakes Blueberry Topping Sausage Links Fresh Fruit Cup
<b>12/24</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>12/25</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>12/26</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>12/27</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>12/28</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>
<b>12/31</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break</b></p>	<b>1/1/19</b>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>No School – Holiday Break Happy New Year</b></p>			

Meal Price \$ 3.00

Milk \$0.50 each

Adult Meal Price \$ 4.50

Our menus follow dietary guidelines for reduced fat, salt and sugar while increasing whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Meals include a source of protein, grains, vegetables, a milk & fruit or juice. We proudly offer locally grown, seasonal fresh fruits & vegetables. All Bread & Pasta items are Whole Wheat.

Menu Subject to change without advance notice. Sandwich and or Salad choice available.

For suggestions and questions about School Lunch Program please call 860-526-9546 ext. 1420