

Essex Elementary School
Newsletter

December 2017

Principal's Message by Jennifer Tousignant

Happy December!

Our young musicians have been working diligently to prepare for our annual Winter Concert planned for December 4th. All students will attend the concert at 1:30 that day and everyone is welcome to attend the evening concert as well. Thank you to Mrs. Wilson and Mrs. Perreault for all of their efforts in preparing our third through sixth grade musicians for this concert!

Our first trimester has come to an end and report cards will go home on December 11th. If you have any questions about your child's report card, please contact his/her classroom teacher.

I wish you a magical holiday season with your child and look forward to seeing everyone back at school on Tuesday, January 2nd.

Fondly,

Jenn

Important Dates to Remember:

Monday, December 4: Winter Concert *date
change 1:30 in school concert

6:30 evening concert

Monday, December 11: Report Cards go home

December 25 - January 1: Holiday Break, no school

Student Arrival Information by Jennifer Tousignant

Dr. Levy, State Trooper Tretter, the Essex Police Department and I were involved with the changes made to student drop off this fall. Law Enforcement views our current procedures as a safer alternative to the double lane we had in the past where cars were passing others and nearly hitting them. We moved to one lane for this reason. In addition, we had over 30 students being dropped off before the school day began when we could not provide adequate supervision and had an incident in which students were unsafe. The morning traffic in our drop off area was lighter at the start to the school year because 30 students were dropped off before 8:10. It is my understanding that when the building had double the population, there was always traffic on Main Street at drop off time. Most elementary schools in America have this issue. People who need to travel past the school around that time either need to be patient, find an alternative route, or leave at a different time. I do this myself to avoid high school bus routes. If you are dropping off, students may exit vehicles as soon as you enter the coned area. This allows us to unload approximately five cars at a time keeping the flow of traffic moving at an appropriate pace. I am working with Dr. Levy and Law Enforcement Officials on a new plan for drop off for next year. We do not believe implementing a drastically different plan mid year is a good idea as the plans being discussed may cause great confusion mid-year and would be more logical to implement at the beginning of a new school year. Our student population is anticipated to decrease again next year which means we may be down a bus, opening our options for both bus and student arrival changes. Our ultimate goal in making changes to drop off is to safely get over 300 students and nearly 100 staff members into the building in an organized way.

Thank you again for your patience and support as we carefully plan improvements for next year. ~ Jenn

Mathematics Update!

Hello Families

Lots of exciting things are happening in our math classrooms! In grades K-5 students are completing their second unit in Bridges and demonstrating critical and creative problem solving through the strategies they self-select to solve new problems. Students continue to work in workplaces (math centers) engaging in motivating activities and games. In grade 6 students have completed their first unit of EngageNY demonstrating an in-depth understanding of ratios and their application to problem solving. This week Math Olympiads began for students in grades 4-6, meeting Thursday mornings beginning at 7:45. If your child would like to join us they are welcome to join at anytime. Math Olympiad interest forms are available in the 4th, 5th and 6th grade hallways.

~Shannon VanderMale, Math Coach

Can you help?

The following household items are needed to support upcoming problems and investigations in our K-5 classrooms. If at any time over the course of this year you have any of these on hand please send them in with your child.

- Empty yogurt containers (8oz or 10oz)
- Paper grocery store bags
- Paper towel tubes and toilet paper tubes
- Egg cartons
- Plastic scoop (laundry detergent)
- Empty containers in the following customary units: 1 cup, half cup, half-gallon, gallon, 2-quarts, 1-quart, pint, 1oz.
- Empty containers in the following metric units: 1-liter, 2-liter, 50ml (travel shampoo, lotion)

Problem of the Month

Level A:

Austin had a bag of 17 acorns. Eight squirrels came up to him. He gave each squirrel an acorn. Then five more squirrels came up to him and he gave away one acorn to each of them. How many more squirrels can Austin feed?

Show how you figured it out



Version B

Austin likes to watch squirrels find and store acorns for winter. Brown Squirrels can carry two acorns at a time. Gray Squirrels can carry three acorns at a time and Black Squirrels can carry five acorns at a time. There are 24 acorns.

How many trips would each squirrel have to make to store the pile of acorns?

If all three squirrels worked together to store the acorns how many trips would the squirrel need to make to store all the acorns?

Version C

How many different ways could the three squirrels divide up the 24 acorns and not leave any left over? Each squirrel must carry his maximum load on each trip.

Reading Update

Maura Doxsee, Leah Page and Ann Roussel

We all know how important it is for our children to read. Take a look at this table. Increasing your child's reading by just 10 minutes a day can have a dramatic effect on their reading. A child who reads for just 20 minutes a day reads approximately 1,800,000 words per year; however, if they increase that by 10 minutes for a total of 30 minutes they will be reading approximately 2,600,000 words per year. Parents often ask, "How can I help my child?". The answer is READ!!! Let them read silently, aloud, read to them and let them see you as a reader. If you aren't sure of your child's reading level ask their teacher so you can find the books that will help them build their reading muscles.

Differences in Print Exposure

Despite its importance, students' exposure to print also varies widely. In a study of the out-of-school activities of fifth graders, Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding (1988) found that time spent reading books was the best predictor of a student's reading proficiency. They also noted that many of the students in the study rarely read books on their own; indeed, around 20% of the students devoted less than a minute per day to book reading.

| Percentile Rank | Minutes of Reading Per Day | Baseline - Words Read Per Year | Plus 10 Minutes - Words Read Per Year | Percent Increase in Word Exposure |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 98 | 65 | 4,358,000 | 5,028,462 | 15% |
| 90 | 21.1 | 1,823,000 | 2,686,981 | 47% |
| 80 | 14.2 | 1,146,000 | 1,953,042 | 70% |
| 70 | 9.6 | 622,000 | 1,269,917 | 104% |
| 60 | 6.5 | 432,000 | 1,096,615 | 154% |
| 50 | 4.6 | 282,000 | 895,043 | 217% |
| 40 | 3.2 | 200,000 | 825,000 | 313% |
| 30 | 1.8 | 106,000 | 694,889 | 556% |
| 20 | 0.7 | 21,000 | 321,000 | 1429% |
| 10 | 0.1 | 8,000 | Based on reading level, ~300,000 words | |
| 2 | 0 | 0 | | |

Distribution of time spent reading books outside of school, with estimated words read per year and projection of increased words per year if each child's average daily time spent reading were increased by ten minutes. Adapted from Adams (2006), with baseline data from Anderson, Wilson, & Fielding (1988).



Engineering with Legos!

Join us for an exciting program designed to teach students more about engineering concepts and computer programming using LEGO Mindstorms. This eight week program will provide students the opportunity to design, build, and program LEGO robots through a structured curriculum. This program is sponsored by the EES Foundation. A letter will be sent home with a registration form to be filled out and returned to school.

This program is available to EES students in grades 4 - 6 and will be held on Tuesdays in the Media Center from 3:00 to 4:15.

Coordinators: EES teachers Miss Elise Johnson and Mrs. Tracy Plumley

Cost: \$20 for an eight week session - Checks made payable to EES Student Activity Account (funds available for those in need - see Mrs. Tousignant)

Session I - Tuesdays from January 9 to February 27 (snow date March 6)

Session II - Tuesdays from March 13 to May 8 (snow date May 15)

Due to anticipated popularity of this program we will be selecting 20 students for each session through a random draw. The first 20 students selected will be placed in Session I and the next 20 in Session II.

Kindergarten News

We have been busy learning in Kindergarten! During Reader's Workshop, we are 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 are working on making our writing easy to read through the use of writing conventions. We are also working on writing sentences to tell stories.

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

In science, we worked with the Audubon Society to make observations about the weather. We are continuing to conduct an investigation to determine if pinecones open or close based on weather conditions. We additionally did various investigations with pumpkins through the months of October and November.



Grade 2 News

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.

GRADE 4 NEWS

Outdoor Classroom Learning

As part of our recent science unit, on October 12th, the Audubon Society lead a focused study of the ecosystems of the Clarke Community Park in Old Saybrook. Fourth grade students were split into four groups and assigned a group leader from the Society. These educators specialize in bringing “science to life” by providing experiences to promote learning about ecosystems and their inhabitants. Students explored the woodland and pond habitats. They used binoculars to identify local bird life. 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.. Students also worked in small groups to create combination creatures that featured traits that would allow it to survive in the natural world.



5th Grade Mathematicians

Grade 5 students recently finished their latest unit on adding and subtracting fractions with unlike denominators. Our mathematicians used a variety of strategies to find common denominators, including money and clock models, double number lines, ratio tables, and least common multiples. Students also practiced finding greatest common factors as they learned to simplify fractions. Finally, 5th graders learned to multiply a whole number by a fraction, and then solved these types of problems within the context of real life story problems.

What's the Better Buy?
8 bars for \$10 or 20 bars for \$23

What's the Better Buy?

8 bars for \$10
or
20 bars for \$23

It's easy to mess up this problem, because easy subtraction tells you that 8 bars for \$10 is the better buy. When you apply it to a larger scale, you find that 20 bars for \$23 is the better buy.

| | | | | | | |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
| 30 | 24 | 30 | 16 | 8 | 14 | 2 |
| \$10.00 | \$8.00 | \$10.00 | \$2.00 | \$10.00 | \$10.00 | \$2.50 |

| | | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 30 | 40 | 20 | 10 | 5 |
| \$12.00 | \$4.00 | \$3.00 | \$1.50 | \$5.75 |

↑
Better Buy

Which is a better buy?

8 bars for \$10 Dollars or 20 bars for \$23 Dollars

Box #1

| | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------|
| 8 bars | = | \$ 10.00 |
| 16 bars | = | \$ 20.00 |
| + 4 bars | = | 5.00 |
| <u>20 bars</u> | = | <u>\$ 25.00</u> |

Box #2

| | | |
|---------|---|----------|
| 20 bars | = | \$ 23.00 |
|---------|---|----------|

↑
Buy This one!

Students used a variety of ratio and number relationship strategies to determine the better buy.

6th Grade News

In science, we just finished our unit on cells, which is part of our first instructional segment on systems and subsystems in Earth and Life Sciences. The students created outstanding models showing the interaction between organelles in a plant cell. 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 are working in small groups to create google slide presentations in order to share their research on a particular subsystem.



In social studies, we have finished the research phase for the industrial revolution. We have learned about important inventions, factory life, and the negative impacts on the environment. Currently, students are in the process of creating a persuasive advertisement, advocating for either “farm life” or “factory life”.

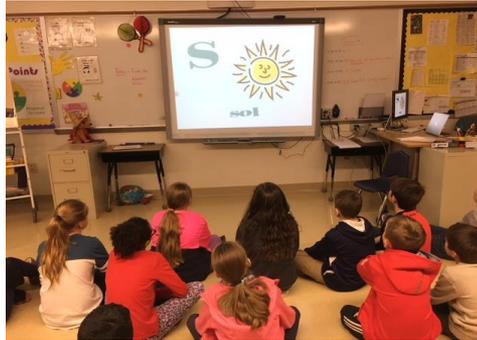
In Writing Class students are finishing up their Personal Narratives. We will have a celebration to share their wonderful “small moments” stories. Students worked very diligently throughout the whole writing process- from seed idea, drafting, giving and receiving feedback, all the way to published piece. Our next Reading and Writing Unit will be Nonfiction/Informational. Students will be exploring this genre and producing their own piece of informational text.



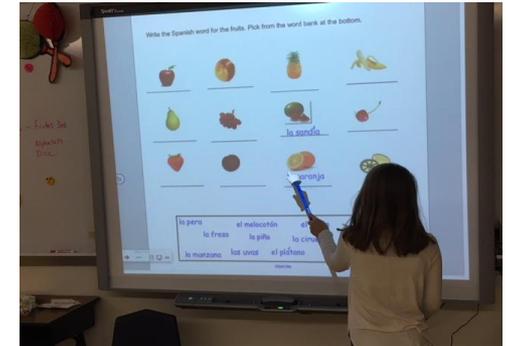
¡Hola amigos! ¡Felices Fiestas! (Happy Holidays!)

All students in 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th grade have a Spanish Google Classroom. It is a very useful tool as I post the vocabulary that we are studying in class and I also link songs and games that I create to help students learn vocabulary and expressions in a fun way. When students have a test, they can find the study guide for the quiz and a “Rags to Riches” game (they can go up to \$1”000.000) that will help them be successful with the answers in the test.

- 6th grade students have been working on personal pronouns and verbs in Spanish. They are now looking at different autobiographies in Spanish to prepare for writing their own.
- 5th 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.



- 3rd grade students have been working on learning fruits in Spanish. They are now looking at different skirts to buy fruit in Spanish.



- 1st and 2nd grade students have been singing and learning basic Spanish through songs and games.



- 4th grade students have been working on calendar and numbers to 100 in Spanish. They are now learning the alphabet in Spanish and comparing it to English sounds.

Hour of Code at EES!

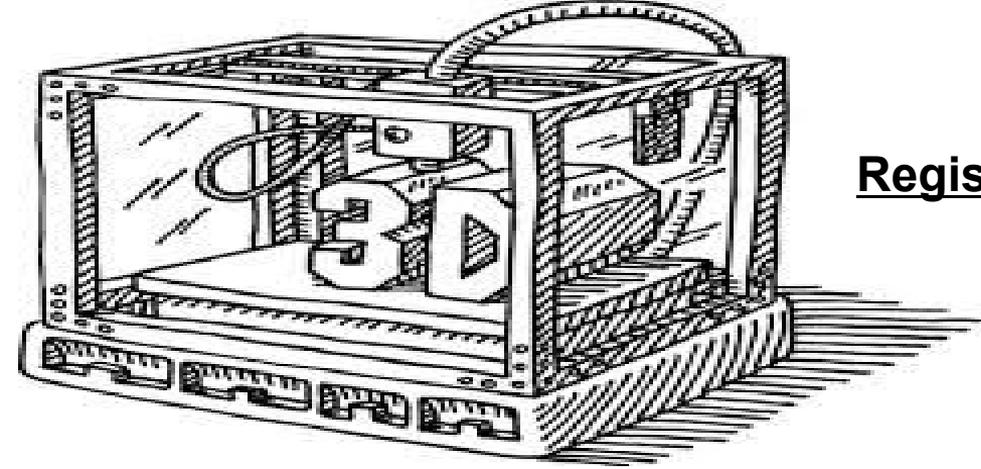
For the fourth year in a row, students at Essex Elementary School will be participating in Hour of Code during the month of December. This global event reaches tens of millions of students in more than 180 countries. Students will be doing coding activities available on the Hour of Code website, using the OSMO coding activity with ipads, and programming Sphero robots to complete a set of tasks, among other activities. Check out the Coding section of the Library Media Center website for coding activities that students can do at home.



2nd graders work together to 'code' a hopscotch programming activity.



EES Makerspace Club Registration forms available soon!



Funded through the generosity of the Essex Elementary School Foundation, third through sixth grade students are invited to participate in the EES Makerspace Club. Students will learn about the key differences between invention and innovation. Working collaboratively in small groups, students will either invent a brand new item from scratch or take a pre-existing item and recreate it with improvements. Students will use TinkerCad software to design their item and print it on the 3D printer. The design groups will use an engineering design loop to test, evaluate, and redesign as necessary. This is a 4-week afterschool course for a maximum of 20-25 students in grades 3-6. This club will be run by Mrs. Renee Mitchill, our Media Specialist, and Mr. Chris Hutchins, our Network Technician. \$10 per participant.

This club will meet on Wednesdays beginning on January 10 through 31, with a snow date of February 7.



December 2017 Breakfast Menu

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

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| |  |  |  | 12/1 Apple Cinnamon Muffin Fresh Apple Slices & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk Or Fresh Homemade Fruit Smoothies |
| 12/4 Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/5 Yogurt Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/6 Banana Bread Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/7 Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/8 Blueberry Muffin Fresh Apple Slices & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk Or Fresh Homemade Fruit Smoothies |
| 12/11 Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/12 Yogurt Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/13 Zucchini Bread Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/14 Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/15 Apple Cinnamon Muffin Fresh Apple Slices & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk Or Fresh Homemade Fruit Smoothies |
| 12/18 Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/19 Yogurt Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/20 Banana Bread Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/21 Grab & Go Cereal Graham Crackers Fresh Fruit & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk | 12/22 Blueberry Muffin Fresh Apple Slices & Dried Fruit Choice of Milk Or Fresh Homemade Fruit Smoothies |
| 12/25 <p style="text-align: center;">No School Holiday Break</p> | 12/26 <p style="text-align: center;">No School Holiday Break</p> | 12/27 <p style="text-align: center;">No School Holiday Break</p> | 12/28 <p style="text-align: center;">No School Holiday Break</p> | 12/29 <p style="text-align: center;">No School Holiday Break</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 2017

Lunch Menu

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

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|---|---|--|--|
|  | |  |  | <p>12/1 Sausage, Egg & Cheese Sandwich Or Egg & Cheese Sandwich Hash Brown Potatoes Vegetable Sticks Fresh Fruit Cup</p> |
| <p>12/4 Stuffed Crust Cheese Pizza Or Stuffed Crust Pepperoni Pizza Tossed Salad w/ Croutons Whole Fruit Sherbet Chilled Fresh Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/5 Crispy Chicken Pattie Sandwich Lettuce & Tomato Baked Potatoes Wedges Chilled Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/6 Pasta Bar Tomato, Meat or Alfredo Sauce Warm Garlic Bread Steamed Carrots Chilled Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/7 Hamburger or Cheeseburger Lettuce & Tomato Oven fried Potatoes Chilled Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/8 Toasted Cheese Sandwich or Toasted Ham & Cheese Sandwich Tomato Soup Baby Carrots Chilled Fruit Cup</p> |
| <p>12/11 Personal Pizza Or Personal Pepperoni Pizza Tossed Salad w/ Croutons Whole Fruit Sherbet Chilled Fresh Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/12 All Beef Hot Dog on a bun Baked Beans Veggie Sticks w/ dip Fresh Watermelon Slice</p> | <p>12/13 Pasta Bar Tomato, Meat or Alfredo Sauce Warm Garlic Bread Tossed Salad w/ Croutons Chilled Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/14 Beef & Bean Nachos Salsa & Sour Cream Roasted Corn Chilled Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/15 Belgian Waffle Strawberry Topping Sausage Links Fresh Fruit Cup</p> |
| <p>12/18 Stuffed Crust Cheese Pizza Or Stuffed Crust Pepperoni Pizza Tossed Salad w/ Croutons Whole Fruit Sherbet Chilled Fresh Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/19 Chicken Quesadillas Or Cheese Quesadillas Salsa & Sour Cream Black Bean Rice Chilled Fruit cup</p> | <p>12/20 Pasta Bar Tomato, Meat or Alfredo Sauce Warm Garlic Bread Green Peas Chilled Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/21 Turkey Grinder Or Cheese Grinder Pretzels Veggie Sticks w/dip Chilled Fresh Fruit Cup</p> | <p>12/22 Homemade Chicken Noodle Soup with Fresh Vegetables Apple Crisp Chilled Fresh Fruit</p> |
| <p>12/25 No School – Holiday Break</p> | <p>12/26 No School – Holiday Break</p> | <p>12/27 No School – Holiday Break</p> | <p>12/28 No School – Holiday Break</p> | <p>12/29 No School – Holiday Break</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.

Menus 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

DECEMBER 2017

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---------|-----------|----------|---|----------|
| | | | | | 1 D | 2 |
| 3 | 4  A Winter Concert EES, 6:30pm | 5 B | 6 C | 7 D | 8 A | 9 |
| 10 | 11 B | 12 C | 13 D | 14 A | 15 B | 16 |
| 17 | 18 C | 19 D | 20 A | 21 B | 22 C | 23 |
| 24 | 25  Winter! | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29  | 30 |
|  Winter Holiday Vacation | | | | | | |