

**MARCH  
2009**

# **Cook Hill News**



**Cook Hill Elementary School 284-5400**  
Principal, Jan Murphy

**Congratulations to Mrs. Murphy on her recent  
nomination ~**

**COOK HILL'S ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR**

**Thank you, Mrs. Murphy, for your undeniable devotion to  
creating a positive environment for students, staff, and Cook Hill  
families.**

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*From the desk of Mrs. Murphy....*



## Project Wisdom

Last year we expanded our curriculum to include an exciting character education initiative as part of each school day with the implementation of a program called Project Wisdom. In a world where many students routinely face challenging situations that require practical social skills and strength of character, trends in education are supporting programs like Project Wisdom that teach concepts such as integrity, respect, confidence, courage, honesty and diligence.

In fact, schools across the country are now routinely covering these topics along with the traditional cornerstones of education: reading, writing and arithmetic. According to the U.S. Department of Education, a total of 136 state and local education agencies have received as much as \$24 million in character education grants since 1994. More important, emerging data now indicates that effective character education improves academic achievement.

Cook Hill is proud to be one of over 14,000 schools nationwide utilizing this collection of daily words of wisdom which set a positive tone each day for everyone in our school. Project Wisdom's messages not only impart new knowledge to the students, but also work to develop responsible and caring individuals. The verses are rich in history, culture, and literature. They inspire, teach and encourage students to reflect upon the larger issues of life.

Each day, students listen to a short message containing a quotation from an historic figure, celebrity, modern hero. Project Wisdom's research shows that the program reduces incidents of disruptive behavior such as bullying and teasing, helps develop a more positive school climate and creates benefits that are perceived to be immediate and don't dissipate with time.

### School Safety ...a reminder....

#### **A little known statistic.....**

Children are safer in our schools than any other place. The statistics show that there is a higher incidence of winning Powerball than getting seriously hurt at school.

What are the most threatening weapons at school? WORDS!!! Teasing, name calling and inappropriate language are far more likely to hurt students than dangerous weapons.

Please continue to support us in our effort to extinguish mean behavior. We are committed to that.

### CAS ELEMENTARY ARTS AWARDS

Congratulations to **Jack Grube** and **Eric Thompson** for being nominated as the Cook Hill School recipients of the CAS Elementary Arts Awards. They were treated to a fun awards banquet with their families on February 4<sup>th</sup>.

### SPELLING BEE WINNERS

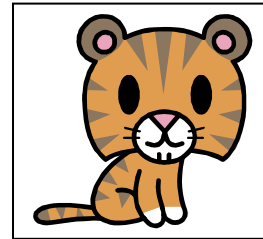
Congratulations to our Grade 5 Spelling Bee Winners. The winners from Mrs. Grazioso's class are **Megan Jalbert** and **Alicia Eldridge**. The winners from Ms. Innaimo's class are **Alyssa Soderlund** and **Jack Grube**. The winners from Ms. Winkel's class are **Lauren Blum** and **Kathryn Oswald**.

**Lauren Blum** is the Cook Hill School Alternate Runner Up. **Jack Grube** is the Cook Hill School Runner Up. **Kathryn Oswald** is the Cook Hill School 2009 Spelling Bee Winner. Congratulations to all and Good Luck to Kathryn on 3/31 in the Townwide Spelling Bee.



### March Dates

- 3/2 Read Across America Day – Wear Stripes
- 3/3 Talent Show Auditions 3:30 – 4:30
- 3/4 Talent Show Auditions 3:30 – 4:30
- 3/5 Burger King Night 4 – 8 pm
- 3/10 Good Stuff Bakery
- 3/11 PTAC Meeting 3:30 pm  
PTO Meeting 7:00 pm  
Perfect Treat
- 3/13 Grade 2 Cougar Pride Assembly 2 pm
- 3/16 Report Cards Grades 1-5
- 3/17 Amore Pizza Day
- 3/18 PTO Book Fair/Bingo Night
- 3/19 PTO Book Fair
- 3/20 School Store  
Pajama Day
- 3/23 DARE begins for Grade 5
- 3/25 Grade 2/3 Music Concert (10 am or 2pm)  
Night Conferences 6 – 9 pm
- 3/30 Night Conferences 6 – 9 pm
- 3/31 Townwide Spelling Bee 6:30 pm  
Talent Show in Gym
- 4/1 Talent Show in Gym



### Read Across America

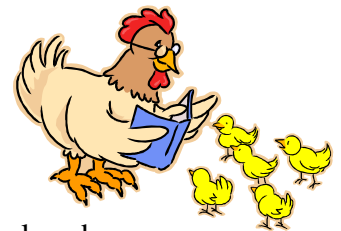
The annual celebration of *Read Across America* will take place on Monday, March 2. Students are asked to donate \$1.00 and wear stripes and hats to honor Dr. Seuss's famous cat. The money collected will be used to defray mailing costs of the Books of Hope project.

### Boxtops

Continue to send in Boxtops to school. The easy fundraiser helps fund schoolwide projects including *Read Across America* and the "Reading is Magic" program.

### Reading is Magic program

Students enjoy hearing their names announced when they reach milestones in the "Reading is Magic" program. After a student has read 40 hours their bunny is placed on the wall outside the library. Students who read 70 hours have a book donated to the School Library in their honor. The program will end May 6.



### Volunteers Always Needed for School Store

The Cook Hill School Store is in need for volunteers for our monthly school store. We need anywhere from 6-9 helpers each month to make sure things run smoothly. We have shifts from 9:15-11:15, 11:45-1 and 1-2:30. Any amount of time you can give would be appreciated. If you would like to help us and even pick a particular month, please contact Colleen Villano (Scheduler) at 265-1561 or [cvillano02@comcast.net](mailto:cvillano02@comcast.net). The dates for the last few stores are: 3/20, 4/17, 5/15 and 6/12. Thanks! - Alesia Manicone – School Store Chairwoman.

# Grade Level News from Classrooms

## Kindergarten News

Kindergarteners have been very busy reading their sight words and we've finished learning all of our capital letters! We've begun our lowercase letters with Mrs. Eckert. In math we have been measuring in all sorts of ways. We've measured lengths, weights and much more! Kindergarteners were very excited to celebrate Valentine's Day with many fun activities. We also enjoyed reading in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday and look forward to Saint Patrick's Day. Kindergarteners will soon begin reading groups! Happy Reading!

## First Grade News

Our first graders will be working hard this month. They continue to practice their reading, writing, and comprehension skills daily. They have been studying computation strategies in math and will work to strengthen their number sense with place value and numbers to 100. Our science unit changes with the weather! During the month of March, we will continue to develop our curiosities and knowledge of weather through observation and hands-on inquiry. We will be studying concepts about air, as well as seasonal changes and temperatures. We observe Dr. Seuss and Read Across America on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Second semester report cards go home on March 16<sup>th</sup>. The students celebrate St. Patrick's Day at Skyview Rehabilitation Center on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Finally, we will attend the theater production of Charlotte's Web on March 30<sup>th</sup> at SCSU's Lyman's Auditorium.

## Second Grade News

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to Miss Mondelli who is completing her student teaching experience with Mrs. Cragin. It's a pleasure to have her be a part of the second grade community!

Mrs. Brazauski's class will be having some "spring" conversations as they discuss the new season. They will also be enhancing their writing with new lead and ending ideas.

The children in Mrs. Koons's class had the opportunity to learn why Abraham Lincoln may have grown a beard! They performed a reader's theater skit for their reading buddies called, A Letter to Lincoln. Boy did they ooh the audience with their fluency skills!

You were "write-on" **Wee Deliver** volunteers! Thank you for all your help. Special thanks to Rebecca Henry for training the volunteers, coordinating class schedules, and devoting countless hours to help the program run smoothly.

**Trust us!** The next Cougar Pride program on March 13<sup>th</sup> @ 2:00 p.m. is going to be one to remember! Why? The second graders will be the star performers for the next character pillar, Trustworthiness. We hope you can attend.

### **Parent Tip:**

As Dr. Seuss's birthday approaches, it's a great time to get out those zany and fun books. Reading the rhyme patterns is an excellent way for children to practice fluency.

## Third Grade News

With the CMTs fast approaching we have been very busy in third grade. In math some of us are learning about multiplication and some of us are learning about fractions. In reading we are continuing to learn how to make meaningful text connections as well as how to find text evidence through our "Overcoming Obstacles" Reader's Workshop unit. Writing is always fun in third grade as we all work on writing great personal narratives. We are continuing to learn about the history of Wallingford and are looking forward to our walking tour this spring! We are glad that all of the children had a relaxing February break...THINK SPRING!

## Grade 4 News

Fourth grade is ready to march in to spring! We have been working to spring! We have been working preparing for the Connecticut Mastery Test coming up. We have just finished our non-fiction adaptations and food web unit in reading workshop. We will apply the information we have learned from this unit while studying regions of the world in social studies. In science, we will be testing and observing the relationship between land and water. Scientists, be prepared to get dirty!

## Grade 5 News

With February vacation behind us and cold weather slowly slipping away, we now have to turn our eyes on to the CMT's beginning March 2<sup>nd</sup> and going through March 20<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully, everybody's hard work and effort will pay off. Be sure that your fifth grader is getting a good night's sleep and a healthy breakfast to ensure their best performance. We all believe in the abilities of our students and want them to be able to do their best.

DARE will begin in late March following the completion of the CMTs.

## February in Preschool

February was a cold month with lots of snow and ice. We used the weather conditions to experiment and explore the properties of snow, ice and water and how it changes with the temperature. It was also the perfect month to tell families and friends how much we care about them. We made Valentines, designed special post cards and mailed them home. The children learned new Valentine songs, poems and circle games. We also enjoyed a festive Valentine's party and delivered Valentines to friends, family and teachers. Some of the children celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school and made celebration head bands.

Daily we continue to work on letter recognition, phonemic awareness, concept development, and social skills. The children are learning to work together by being a good listener, turn taking, participating in group activities and following school rules.

*Ground hog day* came and went with the anticipated occurrence and prediction that there will be 6 more weeks of winter! **ugh!**



## Ideas for Reading at Home What can parents do?

**Have you ever wondered if you're doing all that you can to encourage your child to be a good reader? Here is a simple checklist of ideas to consider when reading with your child at home.**

### What can parents do?

- **Read to your child everyday! Make reading aloud to your child for 20 to 30 minutes a treasured time together. Read smoothly and with expression, so your child hears what good reading should sound like.**
- **Read together in a peaceful, quiet spot free of distractions. Turn off the TV, dishwasher, telephones, and iPods.**
- **Create loving associations with books – talk about them, laugh about them, share them with other family members and friends. You never know what a child is thinking**

**about a book (or anything else for that matter) until you ask! Sometimes their answers are very surprising!**

- **Listen to your child read side-by-side. Ask questions and talk about what they are reading to you. Have them predict what they think will happen next or how a story will end. Book talks with children should sound very similar to how you would suggest a good book to a friend. Ask your child to tell you in their own words what happened in the story.**
- **Let your child see you read. When children see you read for information, study or pleasure, they see that reading is important – to you!**
- **Set up a special reading spot in your home where your child can read and write freely. A book basket holding their favorite, high interest books encourages lots of rereading. Pencil and paper encourages writing. Practice makes perfect!**
- **Different children like different kinds of books. Boys are often surveyed and found to prefer action stories and non-fiction books. Go to the public library to search for books of high interest to borrow rather than buy. Librarians always seem to know highly sought after children's' books.**
- **If you think you don't have time to listen to your child read . . . think outside the box! Children can sit on the kitchen counter and read to you while you cook dinner; or they can keep a basket of favorite books in the car and read to you while you drive to errands. There is always time to listen!**

**Happy Reading!  
From  
Mrs. McGreen  
TLC Teacher  
Cook Hill School**