

MAY
2009

Cook Hill News

From the desk of Mrs. Murphy...



ROLE MODELS

The word "role" is a synonym for position, function or job. It also suggests the idea of responsibility and the concept of having character. Most often, we tend to think of role models as positive people who enrich our lives by teaching important lessons and values. In reality, role models can actually work both ways, showing good and bad behavior.

Our students look to you as parents and to us as educators to communicate expected and acceptable behavior. In that regard, we are their primarily role models during most of their young life. When we work together, we become the strongest role models for children and what we do matters - a lot.

In fact, they see just about everything we do and most likely will end up doing it themselves. So we need to think when we are tempted to model behavior we might otherwise not want children to copy. We have all been temped to scream when we become angry or tell a little white lie to get out of doing something, or even talk about others behind their backs. Unfortunately, these behaviors are easily learned and can often turn into unacceptable behavior if we are not cognizant of our actions.

We may also carry prejudices and biases that at times can be hard to mask. The last thing we want is for children to pick up on our bad habits... but they take it all in. "Do as I say, not as I do" applies here. Whether we like it or not, we are role models for children and need to pay attention to our less desirable habits and attitudes. They all translate into messages that we may not intend for children to receive.

Step up to be the best you can be. And when you make a mistake, such as losing your temper or not following through on something you say you'll do, be sure to admit the mistake and let your child hear you. A child hearing, "I was wrong. I shouldn't have done that," is a powerful thing. It tells your child: "We're human and fallible, but we do our best, and when we fall short, we admit it." And any adult who communicates that just might be the ultimate when it comes to being a role model.

WALKER/PARKING UPDATE



The students who are walkers recently attended a mini-assembly to review the rules and procedures for dismissal. Stressed was the need to "WALK"....and a bit of humor was interjected as they are called "walkers" for this reason.

The students reviewed the importance of walking and following the procedure for remaining in the circle until parents arrive in the circle to load. Students were told they are not allowed to run to the street or curb, rather to wait for parents to arrive in the circle. Sue Calaluca, Cristina Mondelli, and Fran Pepler have all been working with me to make the dismissal procedure SAFE for all students.

REMEMBER: There is **NO Parking** in the circle. If you have the need to walk to the building to meet your child, please use the parking lot. This will be monitored

**** Parents: Remember to sign the "Cook Hill Walker Dismissal" procedure sent home to you. It must be returned to the classroom teacher as soon as possible. Every parent must sign it!*



Parent Pointers

Be Safe Online

- ▶ Keep the computer in a location that is easily monitored.
- ▶ Do not allow your child to share any personal information – such as real name, age, email address, mailing address, and phone number-- without your endorsement.
- ▶ Encourage children to talk with you about any online communications that might be confusing or inappropriate.
- ▶ Start with an approved list of Web sites, and have your child request permission to visit others as the need arises.

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FUN FACTS

A bald eagle may use the same nest year after year. Each year, it might add more twigs and branches to the nest. One bald eagle nest that was used for many years was found to weigh more than two tons!

An eagle can spot a rabbit from about 1 mile away.

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INCOMING GRADE 1 STUDENTS

If your child is in a full time kindergarten, please come in to the office to sign up your child for a grade one class for next school year. All new students must be registered at their school. If you know of any children in a full time kindergarten, please let those parents know that they must register their students immediately.

Helping Kids Help Themselves by Louise Donovan, M.S.Sp.Ed, M.S.Ed.

Do kids realize that they have strengths? Do they know what they are? Do they know how to use them? These are questions that should increase our awareness of how the children with whom we live and work view themselves. Would having children know their own relative strengths really make a difference in their lives? Researchers think so. The evidence is clear that those children whose strengths are identified and who are taught *through* their strengths have better outcomes than children who are taught through their weaknesses.

How do we go about helping children discover these powerful assets? First, consider the one factor that children can control: their thoughts, feelings or behaviors? If you answered “thoughts”, you were right! Feelings and behaviors are controlled by thoughts. So, if children “thought” they possessed personal strengths, their feelings and behaviors would, in turn, reflect those beliefs.

Giving children feedback about how they are using their strengths is a powerful method in changing their thoughts and attitudes about their capacity to succeed. If they hear, “I noticed that you took your time to check your work. That shows me how careful you are.” They would check their work more often, using that strength that they have come to recognize in themselves through you. Even when frustrations or conflicts arise, words of encouragement which carry a powerful message could be, “I know that you care about your school work because I’ve seen it. Use that strength to keep going.”

When giving your child compliments, avoid comments which compliment their talent or intelligence, which are typically inherited traits beyond personal control. Instead notice and reinforce those values, qualities and strengths that will impact your child’s attitudes throughout life.

May Dates

- 5/1 Chamber of Commerce Read Aloud Day to Grade 1
Grade 5 Popcorn Sale
Art Show 9-4 pm
- 5/2 Art Show 10 – 2 pm
- 5/3 PTO Clothing Drive
- 5/4 Teacher Appreciation Week
Wallingford Symphony Orchestra Grade 3, 4
Townwide Elementary Concert Rehearsal
Elks Club Poster Contest Winners 6 pm
- 5/5 PTO Program “Smarty Plants” Grade 1
- 5/6 Last day to hand in reading sheets
PTO Program “Edison’s Workshop” Grade 4
School Nurses’ Day
Community Recognition Dinner
- 5/7 Burger King Night 4 – 8 pm
- 5/8 PTO Mother’s Day Plant Sale
Grade 5 Popcorn Sale
Nutmeg Bloggers to Public Library
- 5/12 Good Stuff Bakery Day
- 5/13 Grade 4/5 Music Concerts 10 am/2 pm
PTAC 3:30
PTO 7 pm
Perfect Treat Day
- 5/14 Grade 3 Field Trip
- 5/14 School Store
- 5/19 Amore Pizza Day
- 5/20 Kindergarten Field Trip in am
- 5/21 Grade 3 Field Trip
- 5/22 Moran Band visits Cook Hill 9:15 am
Diversity Day for Grade 3
- 5/25 NO SCHOOL
- 5/26 PTO Progrm 9:30 am “Bullies, Courage and Other Worries”
Townwide Elementary School Concert at Lyman Hall
- 5/28 Junior Achievement Day
Secretary of State Susan Bysciewicz visits Grades 3, 4, 5



Writing Center News

Students may submit articles, stories and poems to the Writing Center. To date, 55 students have been “published”. Articles are chosen based on the quality of writing, as well as the theme/season. Not all articles are published. Some are chosen for display and others are read aloud at the Cougar Pride Assembly.

Reading is Magic Program

The last day to submit the bunny sheets will be May 6. Students who have read at least 20 hours will be invited to the celebration. At the 20 week mark students read almost 11,000 hours. Wow!

Dear Cook Hill School Community,

Once again the Wallingford Public School System is displaying an amazing array of student art work at the Wallingford Senior Center. The Jordan Abeshouse Memorial Art Exhibit is a yearly event, which breathtakingly shows the progression of work from Kindergarten through High School. Such a unified collection reveals the progress of our students and exposes the joyful expression of their ideas.

As your art teacher I am very excited to show the impressive achievements of our young artists. Taking a few moments out of your busy schedule to share and celebrate with the students will be an uplifting experience for you, and is a gesture greatly appreciated by all.

Please join us on Opening Night at the Wallingford Senior Center located at 238 Washington Street. Doors open at 5:00 P.M. and view is until 9:00 P.M. I look forward to seeing you there.

Yours,
Lisa Fachini
Cook Hill School Art Teacher

Exhibit Schedule

Thursday April 30, 2009	Opening Night	5:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.
Friday May 1, 2009		9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Saturday May 2, 2009		10:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.

NOT ATTENDING COOK HILL NEXT FALL?

If your child will not be attending Cook Hill School next year, please call the office at 284-5400 for a withdrawal form as soon as possible.

5th grade parents: if your child will not be attending Moran or Dag next year, please call the office for a withdrawal form as soon as possible.

Attention: all parents with children at daycares, including the YMCA, a Change of Transportation form MUST be filled out each year. Please call the office for a form at 284-5400

Grade Level News from Classrooms

Kindergarten News

During the month of April, the students participated in many spring activities. The children listened to the Tale of Peter Rabbit. After listening to this story, the Kindergartners made their own Peter Rabbit and wrote about their favorite vegetables. The Kindergartners went on an egg hunt on the school grounds. Everyone had a great time finding some special treats! All three classes continue to participate in guided reading groups and are learning new reading strategies. The children also got to participate in their first music concert at Cook Hill School during this month!

First Grade News

May we fill you in on what's happening in first grade as we head into May? We will be *responsible* for demonstrating the character trait responsibility at the next Cougar Pride Program on April 30. It's *fair* to say we are excited about attending a carnival organized by our friends at Skyview on May 14. Also, we can't *beleaf* we get the chance learn more about plants during a special PTO program called Smarty Plants and through our science kits! May *May* be our best month yet? *Maybe!*

Second Grade News

The time for our field trip is almost here! Second graders are anxiously looking forward to their trip to the Downtown Cabaret Theatre on May 6. They will be watching a live performance of The Little Mermaid. This is a new experience for several of our second graders since they have not yet seen a live production. For this reason, several of our class activities have related to the various aspects of what is involved in a theater production. Of course second graders are also reading the story of The Little Mermaid.

Also, second graders have had a great time working on our new science unit, Balancing and Weighing. Some of the activities include simple experiments with balance, constructing mobiles, and using an equal-arm balance to compare and weigh items. What a fun way to learn about balancing and weighing!

Third Grade News

Third graders are approaching Spring with lots of excitement. We have been busy writing the Main Event and using exciting sentence starters, elaboration, and dialogue. We all just wrapped up our Reader's Workshop unit on non fiction books and are reading the fantasy book, The Chocolate Touch, as we look for text evidence to help John figure out his chocolate problem.

Third graders are learning their multiplication facts along with division and have been very busy getting tested on their facts. Our ice cream scoop bulletin boards are looking great! Students are excited to learn about Plants and Soil Properties in our new science kit. We recently planted Brasica plants and will soon pollinate them with bees. We recently sent home cabbage plants to all third graders to grow at home and be part of a scholarship contest through Bonnie plants. We continue to learn about the History of Wallingford as we prepare for our annual Tour of Wallingford in May.

Grade 4 News

Where did the month of April go? The fourth graders have been very busy. We are all working on some form of poetry. Mr. Marottolo's class has been studying the tropical rainforest and has written acrostic poems about the animals they have researched. Mrs. Wissbrun's class is continuing to research the desert, rainforest, and the polar regions. Ms. Hsu's class has been focusing on the geography of the state of Connecticut. In reader's workshop, we are exploring the genre of fairy tales and folktales and learning about the elements of storytelling. In math, the focus has been fractions, decimals and geometry. We are all looking forward to our next science unit where we will be learning about electricity.

Grade 5 News

It is hard to believe that the fifth graders will soon be moving on to the middle school. They have so much to look forward to in May and June. This month, the students will be working hard planning their graduation which will be held on June 19th. Each class is responsible for coordinating events to make their graduation a special day.

The fifth graders have started DARE with Officer DeBaise. She has already taught the students so much about how to make good decisions.

In social studies, we are learning about the American Revolution. This coincides with our Reader's Workshop Unit on Historical Fiction. All students are reading books about the Revolutionary period. In computers, the fifth graders are busy creating a power point presentation on some component of the American Revolution.



April in Preschool

It's raining, it's pouring....

The Preschool is blooming with signs of spring.

With themes of weather, rain and wind,
plantings and flowers, springtime begins.

Field trips planned to the zoo, bowling, Kid city and the park.

Finally outside for fresh air fun.

Everyone's cheerful cause spring has sprung!



Odyssey of the Mind: 3 Cook Hill Teams at State Finals in Bethel, CT

On March 28, 2009, three teams represented our school at the Connecticut Final Competition for Odyssey of the Mind. Having created their own scripts, backdrop and props, they showed the results of their hard work during the winter months, and left audience and judges deeply impressed with their performance.

- One team of 3-5th graders chose to put on "Teach Yer Creature", they built a mechanical creature that would perform certain tasks and "learn" specific behaviour. Most of the kids in this team participated in the program for the first time, and they made an incredible 7th place.
- The other 3-4th grade team opted for a classical theme and enacted "The Lost Labor of Heracles", where they had to represent Heracles performing an extra task, and show how that task got lost in history. This team excelled in the spontaneous contest (2nd place) and also presented a formidable Heracles show, they came in 5th overall.
- The 2nd grade team put together a very impressive "Candy Factory", in which the manufacturing of 5 different sorts of "healthy" candy was to be presented. In Primary Division, teams were not rated.

- Finally the Kindergarteners, who did not participate in state finals, set up an act in the Cook Hill Talent Show and presented two songs from the Muppet Show. They had so much fun enacting and decking various mini-shows, they will continue their meetings even after the official OM season is over...

All these children have learned a lot, regarding teamwork as well as performance skills.

Especially the coaches, but also volunteer judges and tournament helpers have all done a wonderful job, as have all the parents. We really appreciate all of your support, as well as financial support from Wallingford Education Foundation. We can't wait to start another OM season in fall... Look out for flyers in September and meet us at Open House Night!

Odyssey of the Mind Participants – Jillian Lenti, Samantha Chagnon, Patricia Acorda, Matthew Marek, Samantha Korittke, Linus Koepfer, Jordan Spiars, Alexis O'Connor, Austin Haeberlen, Julia Mansfield, Sabrina Sands, Glory Villano, Ysolimer Tavarez, Devon Spiars, Carlee Crispens, Riley Sweet, Mallory Crispens, Elizabeth Lenti, Amelia Mansfield, and Simon Koepfer.



Rock Cats Singers!!!!!! Lauren and Zachary Blum, Julia Hilinski, Julia and Tim Tangari, Isabella Welch, Jason and Alaina Montgomery, Jake and Julia MacKenzie, Dayton Alderige, Nicholas Gonsalves, Maggie and Joey Richo, Joey Widman, Camille Henry, Stephen Zenisky, Thomas Leffingwell, Linus Koepfer, Jordan Davis, A.J. Volpe, Anika Kumar, Sean Webster, Eric Thompson, Michael Martino, Glory and Jason Villano, Matthew Crisman, Rebekah Powers, Jordan and Devon Spiars, Brenna Dean and Kylie Gethings.

DRESS CODE – From Parent Handbook

The following clothing items should **NOT** be worn to school:

- Tank tops with spaghetti straps
- Halter tops
- Cut off shirts
- Belly shirts
- T-shirts with inappropriate words
- Short shorts
- FLIP FLOPS OR BACKLESS SANDALS (SAFETY ISSUE)
- Heelies

Congratulations to our **All Town Band and Orchestra Students**. They will participate in a town-wide Elementary Music Concert on May 27th at 7:00 pm at Lyman Hall High School.



Congratulations to the following students who have been selected to participate in the annual All-Town Band program:

Patrick Simpson	Katelyn Earley
Samantha Vitale	Jason Madej
Jennifer Skulski	Kathryn Oswald
Chloe Rinell	Sam Henry
Jordan Welch	Chris Gill
Alyssa Soderlund	John Dokurno
Shannon Gilhuly	Alexis Peck
Madison McNamee	Sarah Jacobsen
Joseph Ricci	Patricia Acorda

All - Town Chorus students are as follows:



Mary Rose Torres
Gabriela dos Santos
Eric Thompson
Alicia Eldridge
Alexis Lucibello
Sevina Jackson
Lily Abbott
Samantha Boughton
Annie Simpson