



News from South School's Starfish

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Principal's Corner

Second Step: A Social-Emotional Learning Program

Hello South School Friends and Families!

The holiday season is here and our programming is in full swing here at South School! I often use this space to write about specific programs and how they can connect to home (and I will do that shortly) but first I'd like to encourage you to visit the South School website at <http://ss.rsu13.org/node/2355> where you will find an impressive list of South School events and happenings. Our staff works very hard to bring high quality experiences to your child!

On another note, with winter approaching, please know that we send the kids outside for recess as long as it "feels" like 10 degrees or above so kindly send your student with a warm winter coat, hat, and

gloves. If you are in need of any of these items please contact me at (207) 596.2020.

Now back to our regularly scheduled programming! Our new social-emotional learning program called Second Step provides me with a Principal Toolkit which offers some helpful ideas for creating a "positive discipline" environment. I think these concepts could be helpful for parents as well. The underlying notion is that a supportive emotional environment allows students to look at their behaviors collaboratively and thereby, frees them up to decide how to make amends. Consider the following:

Create Safety: Greet the student with a smile, use a warm friendly tone and open body language. Express caring

Provide Support: Listen, show empathy, and respond in a neutral, non-judgmental way to the incident.

Show curiosity: Behavior always means something. What lies behind behavior? What need was the student trying to meet?

Distinguish the behavior from the child: Behaviors can be changes, but the unique temperament and characteristics of the child can't. Support the child while you talk about the changing behavior.

I hope you consider these ideas, and as always, feel free to reach out to me for further detail.

Best,
Justin Bennett

RSU 13
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November 2017 Newsletter

Upcoming Events

- ☺ Dec 11-15—Spirit Week
- ☺ Dec. 12—Miss Eudy & Mrs. Linscott's Farnsworth Fieldtrip
- ☺ Dec. 13—Mrs. Oliver's Farnsworth Fieldtrip
- ☺ Dec. 13—5th Grade Chorus Fieldtrip
- ☺ Dec. 14—Miss Wood & Mrs. Joki's Farnsworth Fieldtrip
- ☺ Dec. 15—PTF Holiday Fair
- ☺ Dec. 19—Books in Every Nook Distribution
- ☺ Dec. 20—Kindergarten Christmas Caroling
- ☺ Dec. 21—Holiday Assembly
- ☺ Dec. 21—End of Month Assembly
- ☺ Dec 22-Jan 01—No School
- ☺ Jan. 04—4th Grade Skiing
- ☺ Jan 11—4th Grade Skiing



Teacher's Wish List— ss.rsu13.org

Pillars of Gratitude

In the month of November, in the spirit of Thanksgiving, our focus was on “gratitude”. Students were given pumpkin and corn cut-outs on which they wrote about what or who they are grateful for. Our Art Teacher, Mr. Wehnke created two beautiful pillars of gratitude in our front lobby, which we adorned with the pumpkins and corn. Students wrote heartfelt messages about being grateful for their families, friends, homes and teachers.



Kindergarten Students Spreading Good Cheer!

Kindergarten students at South School had a great time celebrating Thanksgiving by spreading happiness and good cheer to our friends at the Knox Nursing Home and the Woodlands Long-Term Care Center. While there, students sang Thanksgiving songs and wished the residence a “HAPPY THANKSGIVING!”



Third Grade and The Great Mail Race

Third grade students just finished their letters for the “Great Mail Race”! The Great American Mail Race is a project in which students write to students in other schools around the country. They write about their personal interests (hobbies, likes/dislikes, etc.) and their school and community. The class who receives this letter is encouraged to respond to it, and then find a new school to write to. The

Great American Mail Race is like an educational version of a chain letter.

Students learned how to locate elementary schools in other states, learn how to address envelopes and how to put their letters in the mail.

We are hopeful to hear back from all the states we wrote to.



Behind the Scenes Work at South School

Staff Secure Additional Resources for Students

There are some wonderful things going on behind the scenes here at South School that many people are not aware of. South School staff and our PTF work tirelessly to secure additional resources for our students through various avenues.

We have had two recent fundraisers; The PTF held it's annual Yankee Candle Fundraiser, which is always a success, and South School recently ran a new Cookie Dough fundraiser. Through the Cookie Dough fundraiser, with your help, we made \$1700! Thank you to Mrs. Siletti for organizing this fundraiser—we can't wait to get eating those cookies!

Funds raised for South School are used for enrichment programs like Chewonki, Mad Science, etc. Additionally, we use these funds for special fieldtrips, for example, 2nd grade students were able to attend the Nutcracker performance at the Camden Opera House and our 5th grade class was able to attend a showing of the movie Wonder to coincide with a class project of

theirs.

Additionally, Teachers have been working with Donor's Choose to secure items needed for their classrooms that were otherwise not obtainable through the school's budget. Numerous classrooms, including our entire Title I department, have been awarded Hokki Stools while other teachers have received easels, listening centers, standing desks, etc. Donor's Choose was founded in 2000 by a high school teacher in the Bronx and empowers public school teachers from across the country to request much-needed materials and experiences for their students. It's a great program – check it out at donorschoose.org to see how you can help!

Another great thing happening here is Mrs. West's Book in Every Noo-work. In collaboration with Tilbury House Publishing in Thomaston, Mrs. West has secured \$927 worth of new books for our students to

take home with them as well as book sets that will remain in classrooms. We appreciate this support from our local community and thank Mrs. West for her hard work!

Winter is Here!



We go to recess as long as the “real feel” temperature is 10 or above and whether or not there is snow on the ground. Please make sure your child is comfortable while at recess by sending them to school with:

A warm coat

Mittens

Hat

Boots

Snow pants

Old Grey Goose Visit South School!

The South School Title 1 literacy and math team, along with the school's music teacher, hosted the internationally renowned band, Old Grey Goose on Nov. 16, 2017. The whole school enjoyed a concert in the morning, which was a preview of what individual classrooms would experience throughout the day. That evening, Old Grey Goose taught families traditional dances that have been done for hundreds of years. FUN was had by all. Parent comments included:

"A wonderful atmosphere, music, learning experience."

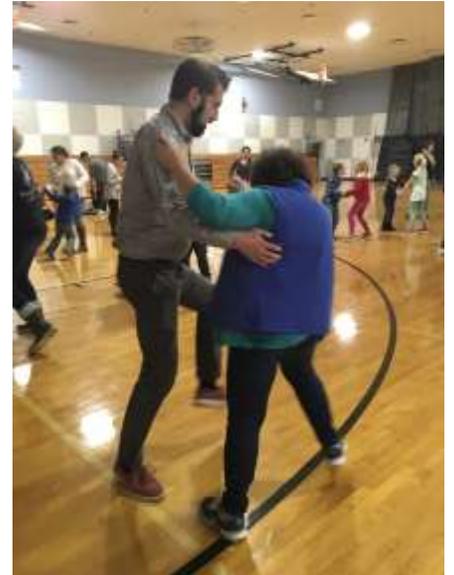
"Dancing with my son, quality time."

"All of it! Love live music. Dance lessons are rare but so important."

The following are just two examples of how integrating music with literacy and math can improve acquisition of those skills.

Music can improve speech and reading skills by increasing one's ability to distinguish different sounds and understand the patterns of language.

Music patterns, such as repeating melodies, refrains of a song, or the beat of a rhythm, prepare children for a variety of number patterns. For. ex. the sequence of odd and even numbers, counting by 5's, 10's, etc.



Restorative School Practices

Reconciliation Circles Helping to Resolve Recess Matters

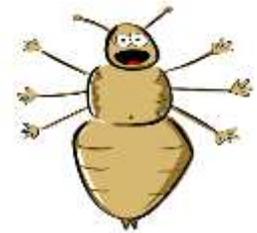


Restorative circles help to:

- ⇒ Address the needs of those harmed
- ⇒ Recognize the purposes of misbehavior
- ⇒ Invite and encourage accountability by the wrongdoer
- ⇒ Works to “put right” or repair the harm
- ⇒ Use inclusive, collaborative processes to put things right
- ⇒ Heal
- ⇒ Empower everyone involved to learn, grow and change
- ⇒ Improve the future

A “Pesky” Problem

It is not uncommon for sporadic cases of head lice to crop up in our school and community throughout the year. This is a pesky but common problem that impacts schools around the country. Whether schools admit it or not, there is always a case or two of lice within the school throughout the school year.



Head lice are not a sign of poor hygiene and they do not transmit disease. Lice are parasites that are generally found on the scalp, around the ears and at the back of the neck.

The most common symptoms of head lice is itching, scratching or a rash on the back of the neck. If you suspect your child is infested with lice please check their head immediately and treat appropriately. Additionally, it is imperative that you treat your house and bedding as well. For additional advice on dealing with this problem go to: <http://ss.rsu13.org/node/1385>

Although exclusion from school is not required, it is expected that the student receive a treatment prior to returning to school to make sure they are not carrying live lice that can be transferred from one student to another. We appreciate your help with this sensitive matter.



To join South School’s PTF email:
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