

## February 2012 Parent Update

### Robert LaRoche, Principal & Molly McMahon, Assistant Principal

#### Mark your calendar

The first day of school for the 2012-13 school year is August 29, 2012 for all students!

#### Personal Ownership

This month, the Panther PRIDE core value is personal ownership. For Fitzgerald, this means taking responsibility for your own actions, words and efforts. We talk to students about how important it is to take ownership for your own actions and words, even when it is tough. We can always solve a mistake when we are honest! It is also important to take responsibility for your efforts on classwork, homework and projects. We want everyone to give their best!

#### News from the library teacher (Ms. Kathleen Finnerty)

*Did you know that...*

Each month we focus on a new genre in the library? Students have learned that a genre is a kind of literature. So far this year we have learned about: September – Realistic fiction; October – Mystery; November – Historical Fiction; December – holiday stories; January – award winning books (Newbery and Caldecott awards). Coming up we will focus on:

February – Biography; March – Fairy Tales/Folk Tales; April – Poetry; May – Science; June - Fiction/Fantasy

Please ask your child what the genre of the month is! Many students borrow the "genre of the month" books that are on display.

*Did you know that...*

This year we have also implemented a "vocabulary word of the week" program. Each week two classrooms provide a word with definition and use it in a sentence. These words are posted in the library windows and we try to use them as much as possible in our weekly conversations. We hope this will help expand the vocabulary of all of our students! Here are the words we have learned so far: Vocabulary, Dictionary, Thesaurus, Genre, Community, Participate, Classify, Teamwork, Citizen, Dilemma, Habitat, Geography, Mystery, Region, Infer, Pod, Veteran, Gratitude, Reluctant, Light-hearted, Persevere, Anticipate, Improvise, Thoughtful, Holiday, Discombobulate, Resolution, Data, Equality, Persuade, Visualize, Scanned

I keep a library blog which I try to update frequently to keep families aware of what's happening in the library. It can be accessed from the Fitzgerald School website if you click on "@your library" on the left-hand menu, or by clicking this link:

<http://fitzgeraldlibrary.blogspot.com/>

#### In School Enrichment

After taking a holiday break, the Enrichment Programs resumed in January! Museum of Science presented "Observing Air & Flight" to the 2nd grade, and coming up the first week of February, the "Secret World of Bubbles" will be presented to the entire school - this is a fun and engaging show about physical properties and scientific questioning. Ask your students about it! The enrichment committee will be meeting in February to review this year and start planning programs for next school year. If you have any suggestions or feedback, please email [ktooconsult@yahoo.com](mailto:ktooconsult@yahoo.com). Lastly, thank you again for a successful light bulb fundraiser!

#### PTO Valentine's Day Festival

Fitzgerald PTO would like to invite you to our first Valentine's Festival. There will be plenty of festivities, including Valentine crafts, whoopee pie decorating, movies, and a dance party with an Alice in Wonderland theme! The festival would not be complete without a Mad Hatter tea party! We are looking for donations of sandwiches, fruit, veggies, scones, breads, muffins and desserts. Please let us know what you are able to provide ahead of time. We will also be needing some friendly faces to help put with the activities. Please contact Maura Moxley at [Maura.moxley@gmail.com](mailto:Maura.moxley@gmail.com) or Shannon Poe Kennedy at [shannon@lago.org](mailto:shannon@lago.org) or Bridge Hildebrandt at [pappalardobridge@hotmail.com](mailto:pappalardobridge@hotmail.com) with donations and/or questions.

#### After School Clubs Announcement

Winter Session of Afterschool Clubs begins the week of February 6..... and Spring Session planning is already underway! Spring Clubs will run for 6 weeks beginning April 9. Spring offerings may include tennis, hula hooping, digital photography,

mural art, storytelling, cooking, and mad science! Fitzgerald After School Clubs is run by Fitzgerald parents. Questions or comments, please contact us at [fitzgeraldclubs@gmail.com](mailto:fitzgeraldclubs@gmail.com).

### **February District Review**

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will be reviewing our district the week of February 13<sup>th</sup>. You will see visitors touring the buildings throughout the district.

### **Signing in / out at the office**

It is essential that all visitors / volunteers sign in at the office. Whether you have a meeting, are volunteering or just want to drop something off to your child, you must sign in at the office. We ask that you do not go around the building without a visitor or volunteer tag. This is for the safety of all our students and staff. We thank you in advance for complying with this important procedure.

### **No Idling**

In an attempt to keep our school green, we ask that there is no idling outside of the school. If you are dropping something off for your student or giving a message to the office, we ask that you PARK and come in. Please do not leave your car running outside the school on either Beal Rd. or in the parking lot. Live drop should be relatively quick in the morning. During afterschool pick-ups, please shut your car off while waiting. Thank you in advance with our efforts to be more green!

### **Tardy students**

Since the holiday vacation, we have had a much larger number of children who are tardy to school. We ask that you please do your best to have the children here at 8:25am. It is important that they have time to prepare for their day and do not miss any part of the routines or curriculum which begin promptly at 8:42am.

### **Kindergarten Registration for 2012-13 is now Open**

Kindergarten Registration is now open (January 30<sup>th</sup> – March 23<sup>rd</sup>) at the Parent Information Center, located at the Whittemore School. Please set up an appointment to register if you have a Kindergarten aged child. (781) 314-5672. Spanish (781) 314- 5612. For more information visit: <http://www.walthampublicschools.org/picregK.cfm>

### **From Our School Nurse, Mrs. Cathy Vieira**

Winter? What is up with this winter? It's warm, it's cold, it's raining, it's snowing; oh well, it's New England. Whatever the weather outside is like, it is winter. We know that winter goes hand and hand with the cold and flu. So, here are some tips for protecting ourselves and our children from cold weather vs. from cold and/or flu viruses.

#### *Cold and virus protection:*

Eat a well balanced diet; Drink plenty of fluids; Exercise daily; Manage stress; Get plenty of sleep every night; Wash your hands often using soap and water for at least 20 seconds or hand sanitizers; Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze with your inner elbow or a tissue; Stay home if you are sick; Talk with your doctor about receiving a flu vaccine.;

We are in the midst of cold and flu season. It is not too late to get your flu shot.

#### *Cold weather protection:*

Dress for the cold by wearing: Several layers of loose-fitting clothes; Hat; Scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth; Gloves or mittens (some people feel mittens are warmer than gloves); Winter coat with sleeves that are snug at the wrist (water and wind resistant coats are best); Water-resistant shoes/boots; Snow pants (are good to wear if you are going to be out playing for long periods)

#### *It is important to stay dry:*

Wet clothing caused by getting wet from the snow or by perspiration under all of the clothing layers will increase heat loss from your body, causing chills or shivering. Do not ignore shivering, because it is the first sign that your body is losing heat.

When you are too wet or are experiencing persistent shivering is a sign to return indoors.

It is important to go outside and get fresh air, sunshine, and exercise as much as possible. Following the above guidelines will help you enjoy the winter weather while keeping yourself fit and healthy.

Remember being out in the cold does not get us sick; germs get us sick.

## February Dates

Wednesday February 1<sup>st</sup>, Early Release, 1pm Dismissal, Parent Conferences

Week of February 6<sup>th</sup>, Afterschool Clubs begin

Tuesday February 7<sup>th</sup>, In School Enrichment, *The Secret World of Bubbles*, All grades

Tuesday February 7<sup>th</sup>, PTO Meeting, 6:30pm in the cafeteria

Friday February 10<sup>th</sup>, Valentine's Festival, Hosted by the PTO

Monday February 20<sup>th</sup> – Friday February 24<sup>th</sup>, No School, February Vacation

Tuesday February 28<sup>th</sup>, Early Release, 1pm Dismissal, Teacher Professional Development