



Craneville News

Dear Craneville Families,

Which March comes melting snow, mud, Music in our Schools month, and MCAS, and much, much more. The weather may be warming up a bit, but the playgrounds will continue to be wet and eventually muddy. Please continue to send your child with boots, snow pants – if they would like to play in the snow, and mittens or gloves. Our supply of spare clothing is limited so for younger children a change of socks or an extra pair of pants might also be a good idea. On March 8th, in celebration of Music in our Schools month, the fourth and fifth grade band members will be participating in DEAL—Drop Everything and Listen—and traveling in small groups from classroom to classroom to perform and answer any questions about their music or playing an instrument. Mr. Mercier’s class with the help of Mrs. Buxton will be performing their original opera on March 16th, 17th and 18th. Be sure to ask your child to tell you all about these performances.

Please pay attention to the MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) schedule in this newsletter. Grades 3, 4 and 5 will be taking the English Language Arts portion of the MCAS assessment this month. Please remember that although the MCAS is an important, high stakes assessment it is only one piece of the puzzle. Reducing student, teacher and parent anxiety about MCAS is important to ensure authentic performance. You can support your child in their efforts to show what they know in several ways:

- A good night’s sleep and a healthy breakfast will support their stamina, perseverance, concentration and focus during the assessment.
- Encouraging your child do stick with it, show what they know, and give it their all will support their attitude and self confidence.
- Reminding your child that they have been working with their teachers and classmates all year to exercise and build those ‘brain muscles’ will support the idea that the MCAS assessment is about thinking and problem solving strategies and not simply ‘remembering’ bits of information.
- And lastly, remind your child of the words of Miss Bonkers in Hooray for Diffendoofer Day, by Dr. Seuss, “**Don’t fret!**” she said. “**You’ve learned the things you need to pass that test and many more- I’m certain you’ll succeed. We’ve taught you that the earth is round, that red and white make pink, and something else that matters more – we’ve taught you how to think.**”

March MCAS Schedule

- March 22 4th grade long composition (make-ups on March 31st)
- March 23-24 3rd grade ELA MCAS
- March 25, 28 5th grade ELA MCAS
- March 29-30 4th grade ELA MCAS

Kathy J. Buckley



PTO Membership

Membership is open all year!

Join Today!

Our mission is to enhance the educational experience of every child at Craneville while providing the school’s staff with a solid support system.

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

I would like to remind everyone that the one-day **Scrapbook Retreat** is March 5th from 9:00 am - 9:00 pm at the Wahconah Country Club. Tickets are \$40 for this all-day event, which includes lunch, raffles, a goody bag and vendor instruction. This is a fundraising event, in which money raised will be added to the playground fund. The PTO playground fund not only covers maintenance cost of the playgrounds at Craneville, it is also used to buy new playground equipment and the toys used by students during recess. If you are interested in attending this event, please contact Laura Topping at Ljtmom2@aol.com. It's sure to be a great day of reliving great memories and making wonderful keepsakes.

The orders for the Butterbraid & Cookie Dough Fundraiser are due March 4th. Please have your order forms in to you child's teacher by this date. Delivery is scheduled for March 22nd from 3:00 - 6:00 pm. Please mark your calendar, if you are unable pick up your order on this date, please make arrangements with Lisa Lotano at 842-5192 or Brooke Bencivenga at 329-6571.

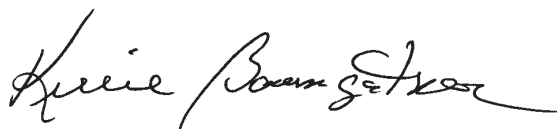
On March 17th, Vic & Sticks will bring their musical comedy show to Craneville. A husband and wife team that will share their "Recycled Rhythm Program" with the students and staff while teaching kindness and singing about the three R's (Reduces, Reuse and Recycle.) Thank you to Cathy Streibel (Cultural Enrichment Chair) for setting up this show.

A **BINGO Family Night** will be held March 25th from 6:00 - 8:00 pm. It will be a fun night of games and prizes with a bake sale and a guest caller. I hope you can attend. The cost is \$5 per family and free to PTO members. Look for more info to come home with your students.

As the months become warmer, we begin to look to the end of the year, and with that comes the need to look at next year's PTO Board. Many of our hard-working chair people will be stepping down in June. Please check out page 4 of the online version of *Craneville News* for a list of PTO Committees. If you are interested in working with one of the committees or taking on a chair person position, please contact me at mkbaumgartner@aol.com.

A big Thank you goes out to Michelle Looney, Maureen Boino and Catherine Schneider for volunteering to be on this year's Nomination Committee. This committee will be searching for volunteers willing to serve as next year's PTO President, Secretary, and Treasurer. If you are interested in serving on next year's Executive Board, please contact Michelle at 496-8230, Maureen at 684-2877 or Catherine at 684-4279. I look forward to seeing you at the next PTO meeting on March 7th At 7:00 pm in the Music Room.

Think Spring!



Kellie Baumgartner
PTO President

Box Tops Challenge Coming soon!



It's an easy way to raise funds for Craneville. The Box Tops program gives Craneville 10 cents for every top sent in. Watch for details in your child's folder.
Start Saving!

PTO Officer Search

Do you want the Craneville PTO to remain a vital part of our children's educational experience? If so - we need your help.

The PTO is in search of a President, Secretary and Treasurer for the 2011-2012 school year. These are one-year positions.

We need to fill the positions so that the PTO can continue to offer our students all the "extras" they currently receive, such as Cultural Enrichment, Book Fair, Field Trip funding and Family Fun Nights to name a few.

Please give this serious consideration. If you have any questions or would like to put your name in for nomination please contact Catherine Schneider at cbschnei@berkshire.rr.com or 684-4279. Nominations will be presented at the April PTO meeting.

Thanks for your consideration,

The Nomination Committee
Maureen Boino
Michelle Looney
Catherine Schneider

Butter Braid and Cookie Dough Fundraiser Reminders

Orders due by March 4th.

Delivery Date is Tuesday March 22nd. Pickup time is 3:00 - 6:00 pm. If you are unable to pick up your order during the scheduled time, please make alternate arrangements with Fundraising Co-chairs Brooke Bencivenga and Lisa Lotano.

Brooke Bencivenga can be reached at 329-6571 or bjbenciv@gmail.com.

Lisa Lotano can be reached at 842-5129 or l1otano@berkshire.rr.com.

THE CRANEVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PTO PRESENTS A

One-Day Scrapbooking Retreat



Proceeds to Benefit the Craneville PTO Playground Fund

- ★ Raffles
 - ★ Giveaways
 - ★ Demos
 - ★ Games
 - ★ Swap Box
 - ★ Make & Takes
 - ★ Chair Massages
For a Fee
- Small Supplies Fee

★★★ *Don't Forget...* ★★★
Photos and Supplies

- Ⓢ Vendors will be on site with products available for purchase
- Ⓢ Use of advanced scrapbooking tools
- Ⓢ Plenty of table space

Generously supported by:

Wahconah Country Club

★ Location:

Wahconah Country Club
20 Orchard Road
Dalton, MA 01226

★ Admission: \$40.00

Includes:

- Lunch
- Goody Bag at check-in
- Snacks and Beverages



~ For more information ~

Please contact Laura Topping
at l1tmom2@aol.com.

4 PTO Board

PTO Executive Board

Kellie Baumgartner President 684-2036 mkbaumgartner@aol.com (Open Next Year)	Maureen Andersen Vice President 684-1154 paandersen@juno.com	Robyn Huban Treasurer 684-3451 rhuban@aol.com (Open Next Year)	Laura Topping Secretary 684-2176 Ljtmom@aol.com (Open Next Year)
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PTO Committees

Adopt-A-Family	Michelle Looney
Book Fair	Jeff & Erin MacAdoo (Open Next Year)
Community Readers	Beth O'Connor
Beautification	Annie Ronayne
Cultural Enrichment	Cathy Streibel (Open Next Year)
Fundraising	Lisa Lotano and Brooke Bencivenga
Literacy Week	Maureen Andersen
Mini Course/Language Classes	Kellie Baumgartner (Open Next Year)
Membership	Pat Rudd
Newsletter	Mary Minella
Picture Day	Cindy Campoli (Open Next Year)
Playground Maintenance	Kevin Boino and Doug Collins
Refreshments	Barb McMahon (Open Next Year)
Sponsor-A-Book	Barb McMahon (Open Next Year)
Teacher Appreciation	Kellie Baumgartner (Open Next Year)
Special Events	Jill Dunham (Open Next Year)
Publicity	Stephanie Gallagher

THANK YOU TO ALL THE CHAIRPEOPLE, I KNOW HOW HARD YOU ALL WORKED, YOU ARE THE REASON THAT OUR PTO IS SUCCESSFUL!!!

If you are interested in working with one of the committees or taking on a Chairperson position, please contact me at mkbaumgartner@aol.com.



Kellie Baumgartner
PTO President

Character Trait



March's Character Trait is
Responsibility

We expect children to show responsibility by:

- being trustworthy
- completing tasks
- being reliable and dependable
- acknowledging our mistakes

Preventing Sun Damaged Eyes during the winter

Submitted by Nancy Hopper, RN, Craneville School Nurse

Its winter, the sun is reflecting off the snow and ice. Bright reflections off snow and ice can subject your child to 12 times more light than is necessary.

Most people actually get 80% of their life time sun exposure before they turn 18. Cumulative sun exposure can cause cataracts later in life. Cataracts are the leading cause of blindness.

Children under the age of 10 are more at risk for sun damage since their eyes cannot block ultraviolet radiation as well as an adult's eyes.


Sun-burning of the eye, photokeratitis and snow blindness can occur from exposing eyes to excessive ultraviolet radiation. Sun-burning of the eye temporarily causes red, teary and extremely sensitive eyes. Snow blindness causes the cornea of the eye to burn, producing pain and a temporary loss of vision.

Sunglasses and ski goggles that are wrap around with 100% ultraviolet protection, made of polycarbonate material and impact resistant are recommended for children to prevent sun damage from skiing or ice skating.

CRANEVILLE HEALTHROOM NEWS

- Thank you, Hillcrest Dental for giving education to children in grades, K-3 on dental care. Students from the Berkshire Community College LPN Program will do nutrition presentations for some classes in grades K-4 on March 22nd, March 29th, April 5th and April 12th.
- Don't forget to have your child prepared for recess during the winter months. Children should have hats, gloves, boots, coats and snow pants.

Notes From the Band Room...

 **MARCH IS MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH!** We will be celebrating by presenting our D.E.A.L. (Drop Everything And Listen) concerts at school. These are not formal concerts, just time for students to share new music they have learned and celebrate that we have the opportunity to learn about music in our schools. These concerts will also be shorter than our big Winter Concert, so parents may not want to take time off from work. More details were sent home in February. Dates and time are listed below. All first year students are now playing eighth note rhythms. These require fast finger changes, so keep up the daily practicing to play these rhythms correctly. Second year students are being challenged by other types of eighth note rhythms. These involve using single eighth notes and rests, and dotted quarter notes with eighth notes. All students are encouraged to be expressive and mindful that each piece of music should have it's own feel and character about it. And remember, the best way to learn something is to do it!, so playing your instrument daily will make you a great instrument player!

Mrs. Campbell

D.E.A.L. CONCERT DATES AND TIMES:

Craneville D.E.A.L. Project, Tuesday March 8th at 1:20
Kittredge D.E.A.L. Project, Wednesday, March 9th at 1:30
Becket Washington D.E.A.L. Project, Thursday, March 10th at 12:45
Berkshire Trail D.E.A.L. Project, Friday, March 11th at 12:20

*March is
Music in Our Schools
Month!*



Kindergarten: Mrs. Filiault

It is time to send in your Moon Observation homework booklets. We have been learning about the night sky in our science discussions.

Presidents Abraham Lincoln and George Washington have been discussed.

We have been continuing to challenge the children's hearing of onset and rimes in words.

Look at the key picture. Name it. When you change the onset letter you can change the word to rhyme with the ending sound. -at -an -an -am -ab -ack etc. Cat, Bat, Fat, Hat...

Our focus during writer's workshop is to focus on one topic. I have introduced story parts. A story has a beginning, next, a middle, and an ending. I want children to experience what it is to find meaning in the moments of their lives, and so I want them to write about moments that do not come already packaged with ready-made significance (retelling cartoon story lines.)

We graphed our predictions of: "Will the groundhog see its shadow on Groundhog's Day?" The children really love the snow! The adults don't!! We also graphed our prediction of who would win the Super Bowl. New England was an overwhelming favorite until I told them The Patriots weren't playing this year! Another graphing experience allowed the children to sort by color, count and graph their results using candy hearts. We continue to explore with coins. Children should be playing with coins at home naming the coin and its worth. Our 100 Days in school was a real success. Counting to 100 is fun!!! Skip counting by 10's to 100 is fun, too! We celebrate Chinese New Year. Year of the rabbit! Hope you enjoyed the winter break!

Kindergarten: Mrs. Keiper

February was a month full of many special events in our classroom, such as the 100th Day of School, Valentine's Day, and the Chinese New Year!

We celebrated the 100th day of school by having each child bring in a collection of 100 things. We had a variety of 100 things such as Legos, pennies, candy, toothpicks, plastic frogs, rocks, cards, paper clips and beads. We also read Miss Bindergarten Celebrates the 100th Day of Kindergarten. We counted to 100 by 1's, 5's and 10's. We made 100th day hats and ate a special 100th day trail mix!

On Valentine's Day, the children enjoyed exchanging valentines with each other and received a lot of special treats. Thank you to the room mothers and parents who brought items for our party!

On Friday, February 18th we celebrated the Chinese New Year with a parade at the all school Community Gathering. The children made a banner, lanterns and dragon hats for the parade. Gung Hay Fat Choy!

Kindergarten: Mrs. Lummus

We reached our 101 day of school in February. The class celebrated the 101st day with a Dalmatian celebration. The class participated in counting activities. They had to take 101 steps with Mrs. Lummus. The class made numbers using pretzels and marshmallows with Mrs. Langenheim. They also made pictures using 101 black dots with Mrs. Traversa. They made Dalmatian ears with Ms. Colleen,

Cheyenne's mom. They made a penny toss graph by flipping pennies 101 times.

As part of our Social Studies curriculum we read stories about Abraham Lincoln and George Washington in honor of President's day. The class also learned about the Chinese New Year by reading stories, making dragon masks, lanterns and participating in a dragon parade. The kindergarten welcomed everyone to the school wide community gathering with the dragon parade.

The class continues to add words to the word wall. The **at**, **an** and **ay** word families have been introduced. We also began writing stories. Our stories have a title page, a beginning, middle and an end.

Some special visitors: Officer Strout, Evan's mom. She is a Dalton police officer and she brought her cruiser to show and tell. Also Evan's Dad brought in match box cars for everyone to race on Evan's new track.

First Grade: Mrs. Drury and Mrs. Robbins

For Black History month we read about Rosa Parks and Ruby Bridges. We examined a painting of Ruby Bridges by Norman Rockwell and compared it to actual photographs of the events that initiated integration in the public schools. We have been learning about presidents, focusing on Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. In Math we are learning to recognize coins and their values. The children enjoy playing, "I've got a president in my pocket," by asking questions to show what they know about presidents to guess the mystery coin.

In word study we are looking closely at long and short vowel patterns. The following are the patterns with silent e at the end that we have looked at: -ame, ake, -ice, -ide. We will continue to examine a variety of short vowel patterns. Remember to look for these patterns in the word sorts that are sent home and the weekly spelling lists. Our writing is getting better and better. We are being very cautious about where we add periods. Keep the story ideas coming! For comprehension strategies we are working on making a mental image in your mind while reading. We are reading My Father's Dragon and practicing making mental pictures in our minds while listening to the story.

First Grade: Mrs. Geller and Mrs. Accardi

In reading, we are learning to use the comprehension strategy of make a picture in your head. This strategy will be particularly helpful when reading longer passages and chapter books. In word study, we continue to sort words with same spelling patterns. We are also learning the routine for buddy study and personal spelling lists.

In math, we have worked a great deal with coins including characteristics, names, value and adding coins together. We also enjoyed the start of a unit on measurement. We have measured anything and everything in our classroom using connecting cubes, tiles, paper clips, rulers and our very own feet!

We have enjoyed many special days together including the 100th day of school and Valentine's Day.

First Graders... thank you for creating and sharing your awesome 100 day projects! On the 100th day we estimated, counted, graphed and ate candy hearts.

A BIG thank you to Mrs. Harford for our Valentine goodie bags! Have a safe and fun-filled vacation!

First Grade: Mrs. Pugh

Where has the time gone? With the snow days and February vacation, it will be nice to get into a routine again! It's hard to believe that we will be into March soon! I hope everyone had a wonderful February break. Thank you to everyone who helped with the Valentine party by providing snacks, drinks and crafts. We had a wonderful time! We also celebrated the 100th day of school. We spent the day counting to 100 in many different ways. Zero the Hero brought a birthday cake to celebrate and we had fun counting and looking at all of our 100 collections!

During our literacy block we are working on contractions, word endings and long and short vowels. We are also learning about synonyms and plurals. We continue to learn about story elements, different ways to begin and end stories and how to make our writing more interesting by the words we choose.

In Math, we are learning about counting to 100, grouping 10's and 1's, skip counting, hundred charts, estimating and ordinal numbers. We are also learning to find all the different combinations of certain numbers (ways to make 10.) We also continue to work on addition and subtraction strategies. Next, we will move into geometry.

Thank you for helping to replenish our supply of glue sticks and dry erase markers! It is truly appreciated! Have a wonderful month! ~ Mrs. Lisa Pugh

Second Grade: Mrs. Koperniak

Friendship was our theme for February and we celebrated with Valentines and great friends. Our favorite Valentine books were *Teeny Witch and the Perfect Valentine* and *Roses Are Pink, Your Feet Really Stink*.

In Writing Workshop, the students created winter poems by using their five senses and writing similes. The children, also, wrote humorous poems by writing many funny excuses in their works titled *Why I Can't Find My Homework*. Our focus on organization led us to develop a list of characteristics for writing a how-to paragraph. Students used the words first, next, then and finally.

Comprehension — The children learned how to identify the setting of a story. They can recall a familiar story and tell when and where the story takes place. They listened to many realistic fiction stories, in which the characters, events and setting could be real. The children know that good readers always monitor how well they understand what they read.

Accuracy — With the help of the book *Silent Letters Loud and Clear*, the children learned to spell words containing digraphs — kn, wr, ph, and gh.

Fluency — The children practiced reading accurately and fluently with intonation that sounds like natural speech. They use punctuation such as question marks and periods and key words such as action words to know when to let their voices rise or fall.

Expanded Vocabulary — Many books about snow such as *Snow Bears*, *When Winter Comes*, and *The Big Snow* provided the children with lots of new words. Also, the *Little Polar Bear* series

by Hans de Beer are rich literature books, which the children listened to.

In math, we practiced the process of addition with two-digit numbers using regrouping. We, also, added amounts of money, added 3 two-digit numbers, and solved problems involving addition by using data from a table.

In honor of President's Day, each student wrote a letter to President Obama, so now we await his response.

Second Grade: Mrs. Shepley

February had been another busy month. We are reading stories that support the theme "Changing Times." One of our stories "*At Play Long Ago and Today*" taught the lesson that how play has changed but at the same time stayed the same. We did a Venn Diagram to compare and contrast this.

In word work we learned digraphs, the s sound spelled c, the j sound spelled g and dge, and the bossy r controlling the e, a, ea. On Thursdays we play Sparkle to review the words we have learned during the week. The children love this activity.

We celebrated 100th day of school. We did a 100th day worksheet and made a trail mix using ten different ingredients. Each child counted out ten of each item so that their trail mix contained 100 items. We ended our fun morning of sharing with a 100th day read aloud. During math we sorted our 100 things by 2's, 5's and 10's.

We also made Valentine bags to decorate our classroom. Children wrote about what friendship means to them and these beautifully written pieces are displayed in our classroom.

We have almost completed Chapter 5 in math. The children learned two-digit addition, adding money, and adding 3 two-digit numbers. We are also doing Round the World daily. Please keep practicing those flash cards. Children should know their addition and subtraction facts like lightning!!

In science we are studying Energy and Motion. We did an experiment about how light moves by playing flash light tag. We also did another experiment using different items to see if the object was transparent, translucent or opaque. After February vacation we will be starting our ancestor unit.

As a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. children choose BIG words and wrote how their big words would help make the world a better place. These beautifully written pieces will fill the pages of our next book and their BIG words will be on display on our bulletin board in the hallway. The compassion and support from their young hearts overwhelms me. They are truly amazing children and I treasure every day with them.

We celebrated Valentines Day with poems, word searches, and exchanging Valentines with our friends. As always our classroom is open to you, we love visitors.

Third Grade: Mrs. Bills

3-Bills has been busy with a lot of interesting things. Students have been working on their woman's essay for the Berkshire Museum contest. Congratulations to Amanda and Haley for having their essays submitted into the countywide contest. Good luck! More creative writing has been done this month in our classroom. Every student wrote at least four different types of poetry.

We are almost finished with our poetry unit. Our 3rd graders are now familiar with words from Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Shel Silverstein, Jack Prelutsky and Langston Hughes. Vocabulary such as stanza, verse, simile, rhythm and line are familiar terms now. There are several students who have enjoyed writing poetry so much that they are doing it at home and in their spare time. (YAY!)

The Poetry unit is helping us prepare for upcoming MCAS in March. We will do a lot of practicing for the reading MCAS test between now and March. The students will feel confident and be well-prepared for this mandated state test. Please help at home by studying the ELA vocabulary terms that I sent home.

Flashcards, games and practice are helping us learn our multiplication facts. Please continue to practice these at home. Can you beat your teacher online? Visit the arcademicskillbuilders.com website and race on the speedway while practicing your multiplication facts.

Students have been learning about their home state of Massachusetts. We have explored different regions of Massachusetts using online resources such as Qwiki. It is a fun way to learn as we visit real places without leaving our seats in Dalton.

A huge thank you to our room mothers, Edie Mulligan and Deb Wendell, for putting together a terrific Valentine's Day party complete with many yummy goodies and candy heart chopstick game! We all loved it!

Fourth Grade: Mrs. Bohl

News from Mrs. Bohl's & Miss Shouldice's 4th Grade Class With March comes the first day of spring. Although it is nice to anticipate the beautiful weather approaching, it is hard to believe how quickly this school year is passing.

Writing ~ The student's have been crafting essays, taking care to develop their ideas thoroughly. We are working on editing our work carefully so that we can end with a piece of writing we can be proud of. After our mock MCAS day, where the students worked through the writing process to produce a long composition, we spent a great deal of time conferencing about what we did really well in our writing and what we could work on. Our long composition day is approaching, so please make sure that your child is well rested and has a nice breakfast, as it can be a long day for them.

Reading ~ Literature groups are running smoothly. The students have taken their roles seriously and are gaining a deeper knowledge of the text as they discuss their reading with peers. They have shown a great deal of responsibility and independence during circle times.

Math ~ The students are gaining an understanding of the process of division. Although much of what we are doing can be done mentally, we have really been focusing on the process by which you divide. This will prepare them for computing longer division equations. After division we will begin geometry and measurement.

Social Studies ~ We have begun our study of states and capitals. There will be weekly quizzes on the regions as we learn them. The students are still doing weekly geography, which is averaged together at the end of the term into a test grade.

Fourth Grade: Miss Clark

The year is certainly flying by in 4-Clark! It is already March! But, we're not worried; we have plenty to keep us busy until the end of the year! We have MCAS coming up nearing the end of the month. We are feeling really prepared, ready, and rested from our break! Our writing has greatly improved and we're becoming more confident writers everyday. Our writing pieces have made Miss Clark really proud! In math, long division went really well. We learned our steps by constantly repeating, "dead mice smell bad cheese!" (Divide, multiply, subtract, bring down, check!) Learning to find averages was probably the most fun because we learned how to calculate our own grades. We're moving on to geometry and measurement next. We finished up reading the book Matilda and we enjoyed comparing it to the movie. Each day, we become more comfortable and accomplished readers.

As always, feel free to contact Miss Clark if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Fourth Grade: Miss Mallet

I hope that everyone had a relaxing vacation! Time is flying by and MCAS are quickly approaching. The students will be writing their long compositions and completing the reading portion from March 21st - March 31st. In order to help prepare the students for the writing portion, we will hold a "mock" composition day. This will allow the students to become more familiar with the process.

Everyone has been working very hard over the past month:

Math: We have successfully learned how to multiply two digit numbers. We then moved on and conquered long division.

Reading: The entire class is reading Because of Winn-Dixie. We have been focusing in on the skill of summarizing and have spent a great deal of time talking about setting, plot and characters.

Writing: We have been reviewing the parts of a five paragraph essay. We are focusing in on making sure that we have solid introductions.

Grammar: As we continue to review the parts of speech, we finished studying verbs and are now going to explore adjectives.

Science: We are finishing our chapter on electricity and are moving forward to chapter three. This chapter will combine magnets and electricity. Our next unit will be light and sound.

Fourth Grade: Mrs. Sickell

I hope that everyone had a relaxing February vacation! Although February was a short month, we were able to accomplish many things. In Math, we completed our unit on long division. We are now beginning our unit on geometry. There is a great deal of vocabulary in this unit but also some fun hands on projects that will take place. In Language Arts, we have learned about adjectives and how they make our writing more interesting and detailed. We also learned about similes and metaphors, and Greek and Latin word parts. In Writing, we have been trying to include our Voice in our writing and working on organizing our ideas into paragraphs. In Reading, we currently have three reading groups that are progressing nicely. In Social Studies, we have learned 23 states and capitals so far. Please be sure to revisit the maps that we completed because the students need

to be able to match the states and capitals and they need to know the location of the states as well.

We will have our first MCAS testing sessions in March. This test session will be the English Language Arts test that includes a long composition. We will have a practice day soon so the students are familiar with the process and will feel comfortable on the actual day of the test. The most important thing we can do for the students is to help them to relax and feel confident. I will send more detailed information as the testing gets closer.

Fifth Grade: Ms. Coakley

WOW. Spring is right around the corner! I can not wait. Hopefully no more snow days! We are doing so much in 5C. The students are learning lots.

Math - We are working extremely hard in math. We are working on our the basic math skills to make all of our math strong across the board. Please be working on basic adding/subtracting and dividing/multiplying at home. The kids are really enjoying our graphing unit because we were able to do more hands on projects and graph Starbursts!

Science - We just started learning about Life Science. We started with vertebrates and invertebrates. These are animals with and without back bones. This unit is always interesting to the students because they love animals and like to learn about them. We will soon be learning about the different biomes (where all the animals live).

Reading - There is a lot going on in reading. We are prepping for the MCAS and doing reading groups. For 40 minutes each day the students and I prep for MCAS through practice MCAS packets or focusing on a reading skill that will really help us during test day. Then for 30 minutes each day the students work independently in reading groups completing questions, holding discussions, learning new vocabulary and doing some research. The students are doing a fabulous job with this! I enjoy seeing their independence blossom!

English/Writing Workshop - We are doing a huge research project on an animal the the students picked out themselves. The students are so excited to be doing this project. We are researching the animal, collecting notes, making a five paragraph essay and drawing a realistic picture of the animal. I love how excited they get to learn something new.

Each day the students amaze me with their growth. We only have a few more months to make the best of fifth grade and I know we will. Please if you have any questions or concerns email me at mcoakley@cbrsd.org. Think Spring! ~Meg Coakley

Fifth Grade: Mr. Mercier

In Math, 5M completed the Data, Graphs, and Probability chapter. The children are currently engaged with the Geometry chapter. During Reading instruction, we have been having fun with finding different examples of figurative language in literature and then creating our own. The students have also been working together to prepare for the Reading MCAS exams. After looking at reading comprehension responses provided by the Department of Education, the children developed an

understanding of how their writing will be graded for the state exams. Using a rubric, the kids evaluated their own essays and then revised.

The MCAS Reading Comprehension Exams will be taken on March 25th and March 28th. If you are interested in providing your child with additional preparation for the MCAS, you can go to www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/student/. It has sample questions, student work, and scoring guides. If you would like me to print out any of these materials for your child, please send me an e-mail or note.

We have also started the action-packed French and Indian War/American Revolution unit. To start the unit, all of the students and myself chose if we wished to align ourselves with the French, the British or the Native Americans. As someone who is half-French, my choice was easy. Of course, the French and Indian War will be rough, but I have a feeling that things will work out for my group.

We will have performances of our original opera, "Banished," on March 16th, March 17th and March 18th. The performance for our parents will take place on Thursday, March 17th at 7:00 PM. The children worked very hard to write the libretto and music, paint the backgrounds, and lean their lines. We look forward to seeing you at this year's opera.

Thank you to Mrs. O'Connor for assisting us with the costumes for the opera. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate in contacting me. Have a great month.

Fifth Grade: Mrs. Morris

By Nick and Steffen

February was a short month, but we finished a lot of work. We completed dividing with 2-digit divisors in math, and started data and graphs. Afterwards we reviewed familiar graphs like line graphs and bar graphs, and learned how to make new ones like double bar graphs and stem and leaf plots. Our social studies class finished debating to determine the "Undisputed Champion of Explorers." Marco Polo won the title in our room. Then faced Ms. Coakley's class who chose Francisco Coronado. Unfortunately, Coronado defeated us. Hopefully, the explorer test this week won't be too difficult to conquer. In science we are learning about the six kingdoms, and we are almost done with the animal kingdom. During writing we learned how to use cause and effect in our writing, and we wrote some poems. Also, we analyzed open response questions and answers so that we could tweak our own open responses and make them better. The goal is to write a complete, accurate and clear response for a score of 4. Finally, we practiced these techniques by doing a few selections from old MCAS test. It was a very busy two weeks.

Fifth Grade: Mrs. Touponce

By Madison and Kelly

Happy Valentines month! February has been a very exciting month! We have had many exciting events and many more coming up in March! In math, we just took a test on graphing, we might get to eat lunch as a class if we all get a 90% average! In science we're classifying animals! We're learning all about the animal kingdom and all the different organisms in it! We got

our average for the last math test and got a pajama & movie day! We watched the movie HOLES! In Social Studies, we have been learning about colonial times.

A note from Mrs. Touponce: As the weather warms up outside, our busy brains are warming up in the classroom! We are continuing our reading groups for Trumpet of the Swan, Hatchet, and Numbering All the Bones. The stories are really heating up! In addition to reading these chapter books, we are also continuing to prepare for the upcoming Reading MCAS... we realized that the trick is to just go back to the story to look for clues to the answers — it's that simple! Wow, we are going to totally rock this test! Lastly, I hope you get a chance to see the Friendship Projects that went home. It was so great to hear nice compliments from all our classmates... and we even made special keepsake origami boxes to keep them in. In the spirit of friendship, I hope you all have a wonderful vacation with great family and friends!

Art Notes: Mrs. Clark

Kindergarten: Eric Carle collages. We have just finished creating collages inspired by the work of Eric Carle. We used Eric Carle's techniques for making paper and using the paper in our collages. Once our "paper" was made, it was cut into four pieces to be shared with other students in their collage-making.

Next, we are on to making sculptures out of wire, burlap and beads.

1st Grade: Paper weaving and sparkle-y patterns. We learned how to weave using construction paper and once our weaving was complete, we added patterns of our choice using sparkle-y crayon. We had very creative ideas for patterns, such as using: spiders, spider webs, rainbows, flowers, horses and many other designs.

2nd Grade: Surrealism picture. Students looked at the fascinating artwork by Surrealist artist Rene Magritte and learned about Surrealism. Then they set out to create their own surreal picture which looks realistic, but has imaginative things happening. This is also how Surrealist artists created their work.

3rd Grade: Sumi-e painting and clay. (Some groups are sumi-e painting; we will all get to clay eventually) Students are learning about the culture and ways sumi-e artists paint. We have learned that sumi-e means black ink and picture in Japanese, that sumi-e artists sit with a very straight posture, that they paint from their hearts and that they have a very deep appreciation for nature. We have practiced painting the willow and cedar trees. Then we learned how to paint clouds, mountains and waves. We have added some color to one of our sumi-e paintings.

Clay: Students that are currently working in clay have made either a person, dinosaur or animal. We painted them with tempera paint and we have shared our work with the rest of the class. Now the sculptures are on display in the showcase in the front of the school. Next we will be working on Van Gogh inspired self-portraits.

4th Grade: Weaving. We have learned several weaving techniques such as plain weave, how to create waves, squares and triangles. Students are using some of these techniques in their weaving. We are looking at artwork by contemporary weaver Sheila Hicks, who became famous for weaving in a similar way to our weaving.

5th Grade: Tile Project. The tile project is well under way. We have transferred our sketches onto our tiles; we have learned how to use all of the underglazes and underglaze pencils. We are learning about the process of ceramics which is both an art and a science. Students are now painting the underglaze on their tiles. Thank you for taking a look at their sketches.

*Portfolios are beginning to be sent home as we finish projects.

March



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p><i>Music in Our Schools Month!</i></p>		1	2	3 Language Mini Courses	4 Cookie Dough & Butterbraid Fundraiser Orders Due	5 9:00 am – 9:00 pm Scrapbook Retreat at Wahconah Country Club
	6	7 DA anti-bullying presentation 7:00 pm PTO Meeting	8 DA anti-bullying presentation K Registration D.E.A.L. - Drop Everything And Listen	9 DA anti-bullying presentation K Registration	10 DA anti-bullying presentation K Registration Language Mini Courses 7:00 pm School Cmt. Mtg. at Nessacus	11 DA anti-bullying presentation
13	14	15	16 Staff Inservice HALF DAY OF SCHOOL* 5-M Opera Dress Rehearsal	17 🌿 Cultural Enrichment Vick & Sticks 5-M Opera Language Mini Courses	18 5-M Opera	19 9:00 am Berkshire Robotics Challenge Lenox Memorial HS
20	21	22 MCAS Testing Grade 4 Long Composition 3:00 - 6:00 pm Cookie Dough & Butterbraid Fundraiser Pick Up	23 MCAS Testing Grade 3 - ELA	24 MCAS Testing Grade 3 – ELA Language Mini Courses 7:00 pm School Cmt. Mtg. at Nessacus	25 MCAS Testing Grade 5 – ELA 6:00-8:00 pm Family BINGO Night	26
27	28 MCAS Testing Grade 5 – ELA	29 MCAS Testing Grade 4 – ELA	30 MCAS Testing Grade 4 – ELA	31 MCAS Testing Make up day Language Mini Courses	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div> Tuesdays and Thursdays – Homework Club	

MCAS DATES

Please do not make appointments for your children during the following weeks due to MCAS Testing.

March 22th - March 31

May 10th - May 24th

Upcoming Events...

- April 4** PTO Meeting • 7:00 pm • Music Room
- April 8-14** Spring Book Fair – Buy One, Get One Free!
- April 13** Report Card Distribution
- April 18-22** Spring Vacation • NO SCHOOL
- May 2** PTO Meeting • 7:00 pm • Music Room

*Half Day of School – Students released at 12:05 pm