*MT. PLEASANT ELEMENTARY * SCHOOL NEWS

Love and Kindness are never wasted. They always make a difference. They bless the one who receives them, and they bless you, the giver.

Barbara DeAngelis

Important: If your child is going to be absent or tardy from school, please call the Call for Safety number, 973-535-8000 X7105 and leave your child's name, homeroom teacher, and if they will be late or absent. If your child is going to be absent, kindly leave a reason. Do not email the teacher as they often do not get a chance to check email once the school day has begun. Also, if a teacher is absent, the email may not be read. Once the school day has begun, you can call the main office at 973-535-8000 X 8140 to report your child's absence or tardiness.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our students safe.

Please also be aware that students are not permitted to wear smartwatches to school, as per Board of Education Policy 5516. These devices are considered cell phones and allow for two way communication, which impedes the privacy of the other students in the classroom. Please email me directly if you have any questions or concerns.

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 17 - Kindergarten Holiday Museum - 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.

December 18 - Holiday Luncheon for Staff courtesy of the PTA

December 19 - Author Visit for grades K-4 - Jason Kraus

December 20 - Pajama Day

MPE Pride Event - 11:15 a.m.

December 23 - January 1 - Schools closed for holiday break

This week at MPE:

Community Meeting/Mitten Collection

MPE students had another great Community Meeting! Students read the book, *The Mitten Tree* by Candace Christiansen. In this story, a woman knits mittens for children during the winter months to keep them warm. Throughout the story, her knitted mittens are hung on a tree for children in need to take. This heartfelt story teaches a lesson on kindness and helping others, two topics the MPE community will continue to be focusing on in the upcoming weeks!

In the spirit of kindness and helping others, MPE will be collecting **new mittens** to be donated to children in need this winter. Kindly send in donations to school with your children. We will have collection boxes outside the main office. The last day for donations is **Friday**, **December 20**. We encourage you to talk with your child about the story and helping others.







Toys for Tots

Thank you to all who donated toys for the MPE Toys for Tots collection sponsored by the MPE Student Council. Our collection bins were overflowing! The generosity of the MPE community is incredible! The toys will be donated to children who are less fortunate than our students.



PTA Meeting

It was a great time at the PTA meeting on Tuesday evening as Mr. Darst presented on the topic of *How Parents Can Support Their Children's Literacy Development*. There was so much information shared and the big takeaways were:

- Prioritize reading at home
- Stay Positive (Don't make reading a chore)
- Visit libraries and bookstores
- Celebrate and discuss what everyone is reading in your home
- Be a role model, be a reader!!!!!

A special thank you to Mr. Darst and the PTA.

Friendly Reminder: School starts at 8:05 am. Students can be dropped off at MPE from 7:35 am - 8:05 am. After that time, students are marked late. Three tardies are counted as an absence. *Please make every effort to have students arrive to school on time. It is so important to establish school routines early in your child's educational career! Bonus: if you drop off your child(ren) before 7:50 am, there is usually no traffic!!!!!!!!!*

In the Classrooms:

Kindergarten

This week kindergartners continue to be "engineers" designing, planning and trying out ways to solve problems. This week's problem? How do we build a *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* tree that can hold alphabet letters? We want our trees to be strong enough to hold more than one letter, like in the book! We are also learning that there are many ways to share a book during Reading Workshop. We are learning the features of retelling, choral reading and seesaw reading. In writing, we will introduce a new unit where kindergarten writers will try their hands at shape stories. What is shaped like a circle? What is shaped like a square? Now, can you write a story about it? In Math, we continue to compare sizes. Some of our key vocabulary is: taller, shorter, heavier, lighter, bigger, and smaller.

First Grade

This week the first grade students continued to learn how to use decoding strategies to read tricky words independently. Students paid close attention to the beginning letter of the word to help them think, does it look right and does it make sense? In math, students completed chapter two and began exploring flat and solid shapes. In social studies, students took a trip around the world to different

countries and learned about their holidays celebrated in December.

Second Grade

This week in second grade, students continued learning all about place value in math. Students learned how to break apart multi-digit numbers into hundreds, tens, and ones. They also learned the value of each digit to be able take numbers in standard form and put them into expanded form. In science, students continued exploring different states of matter. Students learned all about liquids, and how different liquids are more dense than others. Students also made and explored Oobleck - a creation that qualifies as both a solid and a liquid! They learned that in this circumstance, Oobleck is called a "Non-Newtonian fluid," which takes on properties of both solids and liquids. Second graders are so excited to continue learning about matter!

Third Grade

The third grade is continuing their study of nonfiction texts. They are learning about the different types of text structures and are learning how to develop reading responses based off their articles. The classes are also working into their nonfiction research unit in writing, in which the students are now taking using their research to develop paragraphs about them. In math, we continue to learn new strategies with multiplication, focusing this week on making tables and combinations. In social studies, the third grade will begin studying their first tribe- the Lenape! Students will become familiar with the Lenape way of life and how it differs from current life. Lastly, in science, the third grade is focusing on weather instruments and understanding what each one measures.

Fourth Grade

This week fourth graders continued exploring nonfiction text features. They completed non-fiction "text surgery" and used TIME for kids magazines to find and cut out different text features. In writing, students continued writing their opinion pieces. In math, fourth graders continued to learn different strategies for solving two and three digit by one digit multiplication. In science, students worked in centers to learn about the different characteristics of each invertebrate group. In social studies, students learned about the different NJ Battles of the Revolution and the importance of the Declaration of Independence.

Fifth Grade

Social issue book clubs are underway, and the students have been doing a wonderful job! In writing workshop, students have been learning strategies and methods that will help them to create more interesting leads for argument essays.

The fun never ends in fifth grade science! On our quest to learn everything about matter, we are starting to understand the relationship between atoms, molecules and elements. Our scientists recently worked in groups to construct molecules made of gumdrops and toothpicks. They also studied the Periodic Table. Ask them to share the Periodic Table Song Video on my Google Classroom. Many of the students can't get enough, and have memorized the lyrics! This week we are conducting

investigations that involve physical and chemical changes.

Physical Education

Students in grades K-5 are focusing on ball skills for the next few weeks; tossing, catching, passing, dribbling and shooting. Grades 3-5 will transfer their skills to small sided basketball games. Fitness is still a focus at the beginning of each class through various activities and games. The holiday season is upon us and that means fun games. Holiday theme games will be incorporated into each lesson while still focusing on healthy habits and fitness concepts. Please remind your child/ren to bring sneakers on PE days. Thank you and Happy Holidays!





World Language

In Spanish this week:

- Kindergarten is learning their colors and fruits with the story *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.
- 1st graders are learning their animals and colors with the book Brown Bear, Brown Bear.
- 2nd graders are learning about body parts by creating their own monsters from our Monster factory unit.
- 3rd grade is learning about the Pura Belpre award that Latino books are given and who Pura Belpre was in the hispanic community.
- 4th grade is learning about Quinceaneras in the hispanic culture and comparing how they are similar to Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, Sweet 16's and birthday parties.
- And to kick off our Spain unit, 5th grade is learning about a fair in Spain called "La
 feria de abril" by creating a 5 circle word web and comparing it to an event/fair they
 have been to.