

AITKEN TO KNOW

A Newsletter for parents, teachers and students at Aitken School

The mission of Mildred H. Aitken School, in partnership with children and families, is to maintain a safe, nurturing environment in which responsibility, mutual respect and high academic standards are achieved.

DATES TO REMEMBER

December

- 12/02 Evening of Giving
- 12/09 Report Card Distributed
- 12/14 Holiday Shop
- 12/15 PTO Meeting 6:30pm
Holiday Shop
- 12/26 - 01/02 Holiday Break



January

- 01/02 No School - New Years
- 01/03 K & Pre-K Registration
Begins
- 01/10 Blood Drive
Aitken School Council
3:10 pm
- 01/12 RIF Free Book
PTO 6:30pm
- 01/16 No School - MLK Day
- 01/16 - 01/20 Creative
Awareness Week
- 01/19 Progress Reports
Art & Talent Show
- 01/26 K & Pre-K Evening
Registration 5:30 - 6:15

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents,

Thank you for all your generous donations to the Feinsein Doorways food drive that you have given! These donations will definitely make the holidays brighter! November certainly flew by and December is here along with colder weather. Please take a moment to label your child's coats, hats, mittens and Feinsein sweatshirts.

1st Trimester Ends

Our first trimester ended on Tuesday, November 29th . Student report cards will be distributed on Friday, December 9th . Since it is a new trimester, our library, art and physical education schedules change slightly and your child's classroom teacher will inform you of the changes.

Aitken Holiday Shop

The Aitken Holiday Shop is almost ready to open and is scheduled during the day on Dec. 14 & 15. In early December, you will receive the date that your child's class will visit the shop. Thanks to the many PTO elves make this event possible for the children where they can purchase gifts for their families at a very low cost due to the "elves'" shopping expertise.

Aitken Evening of Giving

On Friday, Dec. 2, our Evening of Giving will be held in the cafeteria, 6:30-7:30 PM! Information will be sent home shortly regarding this charitable event that gives back to the greater Seekonk community.

Free & Reduced Lunch Applications

Just a reminder - Free and reduced lunch applications are available throughout the year. Please call the office (508-336- 5230) if you would like an application sent home to you.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL CONTINUED

Parking lots

Thank you to all drivers for your cooperation during the arrival and dismissal of students. The parking lots have been virtually trouble free recently and we need to be very mindful of the same good practices once the snow starts to fly. The dismissal is usually over in 10 minutes so thank you for your patience during this time. If you are in a rush, it is always best to park your car on the street, and if you need to chat with another parent, please make sure your cars are in parking spaces.

Gifts to Staff Members

The Aitken School staff is always very grateful for the support and kindness that is shown. Teachers and other staff members have received training in the laws and would like you to be informed about the law prior to the gift giving season. The following paragraphs appear on *The Official Website of the State Ethics Commission* and clarify the law as it pertains to giving gifts to school employees. **"Gifts to Public School Teachers and Staff"**

In general, a public employee may not accept any gift worth \$50 or more that is given because of the position he or she holds. Public employees may accept gifts that are worth less than \$50, but they have to disclose in writing that they have done so if, based on the specific circumstances, a reasonable person would think that the public employee might unduly show favor to the giver or the giver's child, or be influenced by the giver.

The Ethics Commission created an exemption to permit class gifts to teachers. A teacher may accept a gift, or several gifts during the school year, from public school students and/or their parents and guardians, with an aggregated value of up to \$150, if the gift is identified only as being from the class, and the identity of the givers and the individual amounts given are not identified to the recipient. Gifts received pursuant to this exemption are not required to be disclosed. The donor is unknown, so a reasonable person would not conclude that the gift would influence the teacher's conduct with regard to any individual or would cause the teacher to favor any individual.

CHANGE IN DISMISSAL ROUTINE

If you need to have your child's dismissal routine changed, please send a note to your child's teacher in the morning. If an emergency occurs during the day you may call the school. HOWEVER, office personnel will call you to verify the change in routine. We will use the emergency numbers that we have on file and WILL NOT take telephone number changes over the phone. Please update your phone numbers on file if one has changed or one has been added or deleted.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION – Beginning January 2017

Kindergarten registration for Aitken students turning 5 years of age by August 31, 2017 will be held beginning in January 3, 2017. You may register your child daily from 10 AM until 2 PM or in the evening on January 26th from 5:30-6:15. All registration forms may be picked up at Aitken School beginning on January 3rd or may be downloaded from the Seekonk Public Schools' website at any time.

To register your child you will need:

- proof of residency
- your child's original birth certificate (copy will be made)
- immunization record
- completed registration and home language survey documents

Kindergarten screening will be held at Aitken School by appointment on Mondays: March 6, 13 & 20. Appointments will be made when you register your child.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL CONTINUED

PRE-SCHOOL SCREENING REGISTRATION – Beginning January 2017

The Seekonk Public Schools' integrated preschool program is located at Aitken School and serves 3 and 4 year-old students. The preschool classes have model students and students on Individualized Education Plans. Each year, model, tuition-paying students are drawn by lottery for available spots. In order to be eligible for the lottery, students must register and be screened in March.

If interested in having your preschool aged child screened as part of Child Find or to be a potential model student, you may register your child. Pre-school screening registration for all Seekonk students turning 3 years of age by August 31, 2017 will be held beginning January 3, 2016. You may register your child daily from 10 AM until 2 PM or in the evening on January 26th from 5:30-6:15. All registration forms may be picked up at Aitken School beginning on January 3, 2016 or downloaded from the Seekonk Public Schools' website at any time.

To register your child you will need:

- proof of residency
- your child's original birth certificate (copy will be made)
- immunization record
- completed registration and home language survey documents

Pre-school screenings will be held at Aitken School by appointment on Wednesdays: March 1, 8 & 15. Appointments will be made when you register your child. In order to be in the lottery for a model spot in the preschool, your child must be registered and screened in March.

Thank You and Happy Holidays

Another year is about to end... Thank you, parents and guardians, for all the help that you offer to support the students during school and at home. Your work does not go unnoticed! Thank you, also, to the PTO for devoting so much time and energy and for providing activities for the children and families of the school. It is truly appreciated by all of us!

I also want to let you know that I will be donating a kidney to my sister on Dec. 6 and anticipate that I will be out for most of the month. In my absence, Karen Cicatiello, the Aitken school psychologist of 18 years, may be contacted with any concerns or questions that you may have. You are always welcome to email as well gagliardin@seekonkschools.org

Have a wonderful holiday season and a super 2017!

The last day of school before Christmas vacation is Friday, December 23. It is a full day and students will be dismissed at their normal times. School will resume on Tuesday, January 3, 2017.

Yours truly,

Nancy Gagliardi

Principal



HOLIDAY TIPS FOR PARENTS

By, Tara Haggerty

Believe it or not, the holidays are coming upon us. This time of year can be a great time to connect with others and share memories. However sometimes the holiday season can be stressful on the family.

Here are some ideas that may ease some of the holiday stress:

1. Routines –When holiday activities are not scheduled, having a consistent routine allows the child to have a sense of security of what to expect during the week. It is especially important to establish a bedtime routine. When children get enough sleep, they are better able to deal with change and they are less likely to fall apart during the holiday festivities.

2. As much as possible, keep to a healthy diet and regular exercise – Too much sugar and junk food can lead to feelings of fatigue and may affect mood. Exercise is also a good way to relieve holiday stress

3. When traveling, allows your child to bring a familiar object, toy, game or book – This will provide some continuity and security for the child when they are away from home.

4. Prepare for the holidays together – If you include your child in planning and scheduling the holiday activities, they will feel like they are part of the process and they will know what to expect.

5. Create family traditions – This will provide comfort and a holiday routine for years to come. Try to make some traditions low key, such as reading a holiday book or baking holiday treats to prevent your child from becoming over excited throughout the season.

6. If possible, try not to schedule too much – Combine parties or activities to reduce interruptions in your weekly routine.

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

Time is flying by, it's hard to believe that I am writing the Dec. Newsletter article! Now that all the students are on Reflex, Google Apps for Education, and other websites it is time to focus on Online Research Strategies and doing it safely. There are many kid friendly search engines out there and you don't have to look too far to find one. Check out these friendly sites, AskKids, KidRex is powered by Google Search and safe for kids, or DuckDuckGo, set one as their homepage, for a more extensive list check out the Common Sense Media search guide. You can also turn on Google Safesearch, look for the gear in the right hand corner of Google search page, Click "Turn Safe Search On". Happy Searching! The Hour of Code is coming, Dec. 5-11. Let's try to get all students "coding" and interested in Computer Science, it is in their future. We will join tens of millions of students in over 180 countries to complete at least one Hour of Code at school! Students can also do it at home, and most of them love it. Ask them about it, I am sure they would like to share it with you. 🌲 Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season. 🍷

Mrs. Keough

Check out my blog for a review of some of the search engines mentioned in this article. <http://seekonktechintegration.weebly.com/>

P.E. NEWS



PHYSICAL EDUCATION AT AITKEN MEANS MOVEMENT FUN FOR EVERYONE

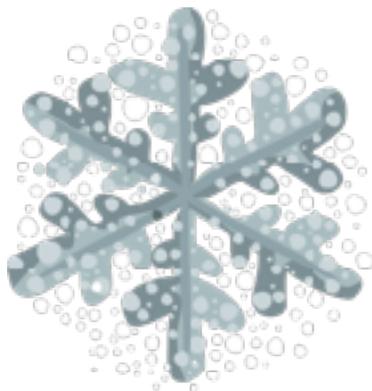
by Mr. Queenan

“SWEAT AND SMILES”

The students in all grades have learned about nutrition and food groups during class.

The classes have learned how their bodies use these food groups for energy and strength.

The classes are beginning the skill of leaping and hand dribbling in November. They also will continue aerobic activities.



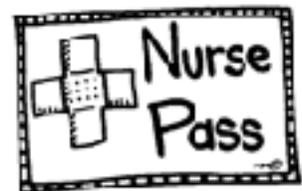
FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE

Fill their plates with healthy foods this fall..... Think about freezing those holiday leftovers

We try to get as many fruits and vegetables into our child’s diet as possible but it can be expensive and take a lot of time! A great solution to decrease cost and time is to incorporate frozen produce. Here are some tips from to help you ensure your child is getting their five servings of fruits and vegetables even when their favorites may not be in season:

1. Stir-it up. A simple veggie stir-fry utilizing a bag of frozen veggies, sautéed with peanut sauce and piled on a serving of steamed brown rice is a go-to recipe. You can check it out by clicking [here](#).
2. Get souped. It’s such a shame to let your beautiful leafy greens wilt and make their way to the trash. Instead, opt for frozen spinach or kale to add in soups or casseroles for an added boost of fiber and nutrients, without the risk of spoiled produce.
3. Embrace the smoothie craze. If you’re one of those people that repeatedly falls short on meeting your fruit and veggie goal, start your day with a smoothie. You can add all kinds of powerful plant foods, from berries to greens to tropical fruits! Even better, enjoy your creation smoothie-bowl style. Allow yourself the chance to sit down and mindfully “eat your smoothie.”
4. Be innovative. Thawed, frozen corn is a delicious addition to homemade salsas while thawed, frozen peas add a burst of flavor and texture to veggie-heavy salads. And fruit can be used in a variety of baked goods, such as breads and muffins. When baking with frozen raspberries, leave them frozen until you are ready to add to the batter so they maintain their integrity and won’t “bleed.”
5. Feast on fruit for dessert. You won’t only be satisfying your sweet tooth with fruit, you’ll be consuming more vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, too. Thawed, frozen raspberries topped with a spoonful of yogurt, a drizzle of dark chocolate or a sprinkling of homemade granola might just change the way you look at dessert.

6. Get saucy. Frozen fruit is ideal for creating a fruit compote to top on your pancakes or waffles. Or better yet, let your frozen fruit take a walk on the wild side and create the sweet-savory balance by using it as an ingredient for a marinade or salsa in your dinner recipes.



DIFFERENTIATION NEWS

Please remember that if you ever have any questions about what we are doing with differentiation, I can be contacted at manickasb@seekonkschools.org or at 508-336- 5230. I also have a webpage on the Aitken School website that has interesting information for parents of all students.

Grade 2: Students in Mrs. Rondeau's class are practicing place value skills with money. Two activities are: Collect \$2.00 and Money Task Cards. Mrs. Jodat's class is practicing time skills.

Grade 3: The students in 3 rd grade are finishing measurement and data. Next, we will most likely review addition, subtraction, and time.

Grade 4: Math students are covering factors, multiples, prime, and composite numbers. We also will be reviewing fraction and place value skills. The reading groups are reading fiction and concentrating on deeper comprehension skills.

Grade 5: Reading groups are reading a novel of their choice while practicing comprehension skills. The students set weekly goals and complete daily tasks while reading.

FROM THE ART ROOM

Dear Parents,

December in the art room is going to be all about clay. The students are excited to build 3D forms and to get their hands messy! That being said, on art days please dress students appropriately! December will be chilly so layers are best so they can remove sweatshirts and easily roll up sleeves. Children have the option to wear an art smock or apron but please dress them in something you don't mind getting a little dirty. Clay tends to dry out hands too so a little lotion when they get home might be useful.

Students in grades 1 through 5 will be working on various projects according to grade level. I plan to use air dry clay for grade 1 and 2, and earthenware clay for grades 3-4. I will be sending home a "clay contract" will students so they know what is expected in class and how to safely and appropriately use these materials. I'll need you to sign it to just so we're all in agreement, students will also sign and initial.

I cannot wait to see what our students create in clay! Thinking ahead January we will be wrapping things up here in the art room as I prepare to move over to Martin School. I will be sending home portfolios with all our student's artwork. January 19th is our art show where we will display all our students hard work for the year. Please make every effort to attend as it shows our students how we value visual arts. Students will be performing in the Talent show too, if your child is performing please take the time to find their artwork after the performance and help color our collaborative banner. I'll have the selfie station set up for parents and friends to take pictures together.

If you would like to volunteer to help artwork please contact me at walshm@seekonkschools.org

Thanks for your support of students creativity and support of the arts here at Aitken school.

Sincerely,
Ms.Walsh



IN THE LIBRARY WITH MRS. LAMAR

November lesson plan overview:

This month we are learning about making inferences, author's purpose, main ideas, figurative language and parts of a book.

Centers:

Students are busy using the computer center to earn Accelerated Reader points. Coming soon - book recommendations!

Technology:

Fifth grade students wrote letters to those serving our country abroad, fourth grade designed and created their own book covers, and second grade created a three page book explaining what they would do if they were president.

In honor of Veteran's Day, the third grade read [America's White Table](#) by Margot Thies Raven. We discussed the symbolism of setting the table and what each piece meant. We gave "words of gratitude" to those who have served. Here are pictures of the completed tables in Mrs. McCormick's, Mrs. Thurber's and Mrs. Lacroix's classes.

A TIME FOR GIVING

By: Lynn Owens & Joanna Rioux

During this busy time of year many of us are in the spirit of giving. One of the best gifts you can give your child is a book. When children read they open up a whole world filled with information and imagination. If your child doesn't have a library card you should take him or her to get one. The library will provide access to a wide range of books. At this time of year books about Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa, winter, and snow are all very popular. Your children will enjoy reading some favorite stories from the past and discovering some new ones as well.

Journals also make great gifts! Children can record their daily thoughts, write about a special vacation, or their holiday traditions. What's important is that your child is continually reading and writing.

Remember, a book is a gift that keeps on giving! We wish you and your families a joyful holiday season!



AN ARTICLE OF INTEREST SHARED WITH YOU BY KAREN CICATIELLO, THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

Here is hoping that your holiday season is off to a great start. Even though holidays can be a joyous time for many people, they also can be the source of anxiety and stress. This month's article is titled TIPS FOR PARENTS ON MANAGING HOLIDAY STRESS from the American Psychological Association. This article gives an overview of tips to help parents deal with holiday stress. You can access the entire article online by going to either <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/parents-holiday.aspx> or to the Aitken to Know website at <http://blog.aitkentoknow.com/blog/>

