

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.

A Message from the Principal

Dear Parents,

Welcome February and Happy Groundhog Day! It's always fun to find out if we are going to have some more opportunities to build snow families or if spring is just around the corner.

2ND TRIMESTER PROGRESS REPORTS

Parents of students in grades 1-5 received mid-trimester progress reports on January 27th. If you would like to have a conference with your child's teacher, please call and schedule an appointment (336-5230).

CONGRATULATIONS, MRS. KAREN CICATIELLO

Karen Hurley, Aitken's school psychologist, recently got married! For the time being, she can still be reached at the same email, hurleyk@seekonkschools.org and will refer to herself as Karen Hurley-Cicatiello (pronounced Chick-a-tell-o), for the remainder of the school year, until everyone gets used to the change.

ART BEGINS

Our weekly music classes ended for students on January 29th and now art classes begin on February 1st at Aitken! Ms. Megan Walsh will return to Aitken and will be here through next January 2017. Classes for students in grades 1-5 will be held weekly following the same schedule as music.

AITKEN GRADE 5 BAND CONCERT

Monday, February 1st, will be the premiere of this year's Aitken School Band under the direction of our instrumental music teacher, Mr. Paul Anderson! The concert will be held in the gymnasium and will begin at 7:00 PM.

Dates to Remember

February 2016

1st	Aitken Gr. 5 Band Concert
2nd	Aitken School Council Meeting
11th	PTO
12th	No School
15th	No School
22nd	Reading week Kindergarten Screening
24th	Preschool Screening
29th	Kindergarten Screening

March 2016

1st	Boy's Puberty Night
2nd & 9th	Preschool Screening
7th	Kindergarten Screening Seekonk School Com. Meeting
8th	Used Books Swap Girl's Puberty Night
10th	Aitken PTO
11th	End of 2nd Trimester
14th	Morning K Play
16th	Full & PM K Play
18th	Family Bingo Night Discover Seekonk
21st	Seekonk School Com. Meeting
22nd	Aitken School Council Meeting
23rd	Report Cards Issued
25th & 28th	No School

A Message from the Principal

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DISCOVER SEEKONK - MARCH 18TH 6-8 PM

Mark this date on your calendar especially if you are not familiar with all this town has to offer your family! This joint effort by the Aitken School Council and Aitken PTO will acquaint you with many of the services and opportunities available to you. There will be numerous community, recreation, camp and business members present to help you DISCOVER SEEKONK!

Also, if you have an idea or would like to help plan the event, please give me a call or send an email.

STUDENT ABSENCES

Attendance at school is vital to student success. However, if your child is too ill to attend, please call by 9 AM to report his/her excused absence. If we do not receive a call from a parent or guardian, the absence is registered as an unexcused absence.

WINTER VACATION

The February break is almost upon us and, as you have previously been informed, is an extended weekend. There is no school on Friday, February 12 as well as no school on Monday, February 15. School resumes on Tuesday, February 16.

MATH FUN!

Look for fun ways to explore math at home! Counting money and making change is one of the strongest ways that a parent can reinforce the base 10 number system as well as strengthen computation, number sense and mental math. ATMs and credit/debit have decreased the amount of times that students are exposed to transactions involving coins and counting change. Investigating three-dimensional shapes, measuring and cooking, dividing wholes into fractions, practicing number facts and problem solving without using paper are just a few of the ways you can bring make math fun! Challenge your child to measure objects/rooms at home using rulers, yard sticks, meter sticks and liquid/dry measuring tools! At school we are continually seeking to make the math children are learning relevant to their world. Make math an everyday family event!

As always, please feel free to give me a call if you have any questions or concerns or suggestions! We welcome your input!



Yours truly,

Nancy Gagliardi

Principal

Music Notes



Greetings and Farewell!

On February 1st, I will make my sojourn to Martin School for the rest of the year and the beginning of next year. Ms. Walsh will return for art classes. It's been a great year!

We have been finishing the month with music dedicated to Dr. Martin Luther King, freedom, and peace. Still to come are lessons on meter: how beats are divided into groupings of 2, 3, 4, and 6.

The fifth grade has been discussing music as it relates to the science of sound. I have invited those who are interested to give in-class presentations and demonstrations of their band instruments (or others from home). Some students will give mini recitals for their classmates to enjoy.

See you in 2017!
Karen Roderick
Elementary Music

Notes from the School Nurse

A healthy school environment requires the cooperation and effort of us all working together. During this time of year we tend to see a higher incidence of strep throat, respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses. I would like to remind everyone that they can help to protect themselves and their families from many of these airborne illnesses. Follow the Habits for Good Health listed below recommended by the Center for Disease Control:

Habits for Good Health

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze—throw the tissue away after you use it. If you do not have a tissue, cover your mouth and nose with the inside of your elbow.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water especially after you cough or sneeze. If you are not near water, use an alcohol based hand cleaner.
- Stay away as much as you can from people who are sick.
- If you or your child gets the flu, stay home from work or school. Kids arriving to school and their first stop is to the nurse's office with a fever or upset stomach is an indication that they should have stayed home that day.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs often spread this way.
- Dress for the weather. Come to school dressed for the winter. Wear layers of loose fitting clothing. Wear mittens and gloves. Wear a hat. Remember, the air that is trapped inside your clothing, warmed by your body heat, is the best protection from the cold.

Winter has arrived- please keep warm!





Library News

Grade 1: We read James Marshall's Cinderella and Cindy Ellen: A Wild Western Cinderella by Susan Lowell and Jane Manning and determined the similarities and differences in each.

Grade 2: Students wrote their own story about something that has happened to them. They had to think of a subject and fill in the details of their story using a personal narrative organizer. We also read short pieces to determine the main idea and supporting details of the story.

Grade 3: Students used a biography book from the library to create a timeline of the life of an historical figure. They also used old magazines to find and cut out nonfiction text features.

Grade 4: Students watched and discussed a web strategies presentation and were then asked to view pre-selected web pages to determine their authenticity. They also watched a video

Grade 5: Students have begun a biography timeline project. They choose an historical figure to research and they will be creating an online timeline using the web site www.hstry.co. They will be choosing images and videos to support the relevant information in their timelines.

Have you checked out our **Awesome Box** yet? There is a link to it on my teacher web page. As students return books, they can choose to place their book in the **Awesome Box** if they want to recommend it. I then scan the barcode and it uploads to the link on my webpage. http://aes.seekonk.sharpschool.com/staff_directory/mrs__lamar This is a way of keeping track of the most popular books circulated at Aitken School! Right now, a few of the most frequently recommended books from grades one through five are:

Gingerbread Friends by Jan Brett

The Wimpy Kid Movie Diary by Jeff Kinney

Bowling Alley Bandit by Laurie Keller

Twisters and Other Terrible Storms by Will Osbourne

Timmy Failure: Mistakes Were Made by Stephan Pastis

Amulet: The Last Council by Kazu Kibuishi

Aitken Rockets

Safe, Respectful and

Responsible

By Tara Haggerty

Over the past couple of years, Aitken students have been recognized for their excellent behavior through our STAR student program. This positive behavior initiative has encouraged good choices among our students and has been well received amongst the children. However, I am excited to expand the aforementioned idea into a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program called the Aitken Rockets. This approach will teach and establish clear behavioral and academic expectations throughout the school setting in a positive manner. Students will continue to be recognized for positive behavior in much of the same way they were through the STAR student raffles.

One major difference between STAR student and Aitken Rockets is the language used to identify expectations adopted by our staff and students. It has been decided that the three expectations for our students and staff are: Safe, Respectful and Responsible. Teachers and staff throughout the school year will teach specific expectations required from the hallway, to the cafeteria, at recess as well as on the bus. By creating a common language and reinforcing expected behaviors, it is hopeful that we will continue to foster a supportive learning environment and positive school climate

PE News

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

MEANS MOVEMENT FUN FOR
EVERYONE

“SWEAT AND SMILES”

The students will participate in “Jump Rope For Heart” in February. It is fun for the students and each grade is able to participate in various stations that alternate different jump rope activities. They also learn fun facts about the heart. For example, did you know when attempting to locate your heart, most people place their hand on their left chest. Actually your heart is located in the center of your chest between your lungs. The bottom of the heart is tipped to the left, so you can feel more of your heart on your left side of your chest.



Helpful Hints For Reading With Your Child

from Reading Recovery Teachers
Lynn Owens and Joanna Rioux



Burr....it's cold outside! Why not stay inside with a good book! Below you will find some helpful tips to help get your child interested in reading.

You should let your child choose books to read. Visit the library often. Let your son or daughter look around and see what interests them. If they are interested in the book they will want to read it. Sometimes kids get interested in a certain series and want to read the whole collection. Other times they may want to read all they can about a certain topic or hobby. The library is a great place to find whatever it is that interests your child.

Many kids enjoy reading out loud. You can read to your child or they can read to you. You many even want to take turns reading.

Don't forget to talk about what you are reading. You can ask your child questions before you read. They can make predictions and answer questions while they read. Have them answer questions and make connections after they finish reading. By doing this you will help increase their reading comprehension skills.

You should keep books everywhere. Keep books in the house, in the car, bring them with you on vacation. Your child should have access to books everywhere they go.

It is also very important to show your child that you enjoy reading too. If they see you pick up a book and read they are likely to follow in your footsteps.

An Article Shared With You By The School Psychologist

Karen Hurley-Cicatiello

Dear Parents,

I wanted to let you know that I have recently made a change to my last name, which I am including here so that when reference is made to Karen Cicatiello (pronounced Chick-a-tell-o), you will know it is me. For the time being, I can still be reached at the same email, hurleyk@seekonkschools.org and will refer to myself as Karen Hurley-Cicatiello for the remainder of the school year, until everyone gets used to the change.

Thanks, Karen Hurley-Cicatiello

Six Skills to Build Through Play

Original Article can be found online at <http://www.sandbox-learning.com/Default.asp?Page=134>
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Whether building a tower, playing a board game, or participating in organized sports, children can learn a variety of skills through play. Below are six skills adults can integrate into virtually any play activity.

1. Following Rules and Directions: All games whether a basic game of tag or a complex board game offer invaluable opportunities for learning to understand and follow rules and directions. Consequences for not listening to and following the rules, such as disqualification for a false start in swimming or losing at crazy 8's by forgetting numbers and suits can follow other cards, are natural ways children learn the importance of rules and directions.

2. Patience: Games involve waiting and turn taking which can be very difficult for children. Be sure to take your turn and include other children in turn taking when playing games. Point out the importance of positions involving patience, such as mid-fielder in soccer or outfielder in baseball. Illustrate through plays and scenarios that even though those positions involve waiting they are critical. Most activities require practice to develop skills which can be frustrating for young children. Teach the importance of persevering and practicing. These skills will not only serve the child in their current situation, but also later in life.

3. Manners: Sharing, taking turns, being a gracious winner or loser, and other important social skills can be taught and practiced through games and play. These skills are important both for developing friendships and later in life for working with others. Teach children to shake opponents' hands, compliment others on good plays, and use polite words when someone is collaborating on a play activity. From: Using Nice Words

4. Academics: Games are a fun way to encourage children to read, count, sequence, add, or subtract. In games and activities there are a number of opportunities for adults to increase practice of these skills. Have children read the rules aloud or deal to practice counting. When tossing the ball in the backyard, count the number of times it is thrown back and forth or during a soccer game, have the child stand on the fourth line.

5. Problem Solving: Building blocks, board games, and sports all involve a level of problem solving. Give children an opportunity to try things on their own first, then provide assistance as needed. If a child is struggling in an area, problem-solve ways to improve their skills. For example, trying a new stance in baseball or thinking about where the other team is kicking the ball when they score a goal.

6. Conflict Resolution: Interpretation of rules, calls on plays, and opportunities for taking turns can all result in conflict. When children disagree during a game, practice skills for managing conflict. Teach children to take a deep breath, explain their understanding of the situation, listen to others, and then determine a way to resolve the conflict. When possible, try to prevent conflict by helping children review the rules in advance, determine who calls the plays, establish the order, etc.

Differentiation News

By Barbara Maniocas

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

It's not about teaching, it's about learning.... Differentiation is a philosophy not a program or a quick fix...it's a powerful, intentional way of teaching that allows students multiple paths of learning and demonstrating what they have learned based on their specific needs.

Vicki Bechard

A lot of differentiated learning and fun is happening Aitken School. In January, I analyzed the students' Galileo results. Using this information and teacher recommendations, new groups were formed.

Grade 3: This month, the students will be working on the third grade measurement and data standards. These include: graphing and analyzing data, area, and perimeter. Some of our activities include *Island Conquer*, *Pattern Block Perimeter*, *Class Garden* and *Area Mosaic*.

Grade 4: Our focus in fourth grade will be fractions with continued practice in multiplication and division strategies. One of our favorite websites is www.sheppardsoftware.com. There are a variety of math games at many different levels for students to play. We save this activity for Fun Fridays.

Grade 5: In grade 5, we will continue our work with fractions in addition to multiplication and division with larger numbers. Some activities we do in fifth grade include: *Fraction Task Cards* and *Powers of Ten Matching*.



PTO



Evening of Giving

Thursday, February 4th 6:30p.m.-8:00p.m.
Aitken School Cafeteria

A wonderful chance to make some Valentine's Day crafts to give to others! This is a family event. All craft supplies have been graciously donated by the Aitken PTO!

In the spirit of giving, we kindly request a donation of new socks to be given to homeless in our area.

Remember the Heritage Girls of Seekonk are still collecting new, unwanted toys you may have received from the holidays...and we will collect any that night to give to them!

Please join us at our next PTO meeting February 11th at 7pm in the library. If you would like to volunteer please check out and like our Facebook page, just search for Aitken School PTO.

