

# 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,

Happy 2016! May it be a safe, happy and healthy year for you and your family!

### KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Kindergarten registration for Aitken students turning 5 years of age by August 31, 2016 will be held beginning in January. You may register your child daily from 10 AM until 2 PM or in the evening on January 28th from 5:30-6:15. To register your child you will need:

- proof of residency
- your child's original birth certificate
- immunization record
- completed registration and home language survey documents

You may stop by the school at your convenience to pick up the necessary forms. Kindergarten screening will be held at Aitken School in late February and early March. Appointments will be made when you register your child.

### SEEKONK CHILD FIND

As part of the Child Find process, the Seekonk Public Schools will be conducting preschool screening for children who will be turning 3 or 4 years of age by August 31, 2016, and are residents of Seekonk.

A developmental, social skills, and speech and language screening will take approximately one hour and will be held in late February and early March at Aitken School. This screening serves two purposes. First, it identifies preschool age students who may be in need of special education services. Second, it allows children to be eligible to enter the lottery for available model spots in the Seekonk Public Schools Integrated Preschool Program. Please feel free to call Aitken School 508-336-5230 if you have any questions.

## Dates to Remember

### January 2016

4th	Welcome Back Kindergarten & Preschool Registration Begins
10th	RIF Challenge Begins
11th	Seekonk School Committee Meeting
12th	Free RIF / Aitken Blood Drive
13th	Aitken PTO
17th	RIF Challenge Ends
18th	NO School - MLK
19th	Aitken School Council Meeting
21st	Gr. 5 Events Parent Meeting 7pm
27th	Progress Reports
28th	Kindergarten & Preschool Evening Registration

### 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



# A Message from the Principal

Continued

## **SEEKONK CHILD FIND and PRE-SCHOOL SCREENING REGISTRATION**

The Seekonk Public Schools has an integrative integrated preschool program that 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 late winter. 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. Preschool screening registration for all Seekonk students turning 3 years of age by August 31, 2016 will be held beginning January 4, 2016. You may register your child daily from 10 AM until 2 PM or in the evening on January 28th from 5:30-6:15. Screening appointments will be made when you register your child and will be held on the first three Wednesdays in March. Registration packets are available at Aitken School beginning January 4th or may be downloaded from the Seekonk Public Schools' website. Please feel free to call Aitken School 508-336-5230 if you have any questions.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING**

As part of the Seekonk Child Find process, Developmental Screenings for children ages Birth to 3 years of age will be available by appointment on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, from 9:00am to 12:00pm at Mildred Aitken Elementary School. The Developmental Screenings will be completed by certified Early Intervention staff from the Associates for Human Services - Taunton Early Intervention. The screening takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please bring health insurance information to the screening appointment. If interested in having your child screened, please call Aitken School at 508-336-5230 to schedule an appointment.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

On occasion it may be necessary to release students prior to the end of the day if the road conditions become hazardous due to snow and ice. The announcements are sent out by the system the student's primary contact with the information that you provided. It is also broadcasted over local radio and television stations and is posted on the district's web site. If you have special instructions for the dismissal of your child on early release days and have not already informed the school, please send a note to your child's teacher as soon as possible. The school is unable to call parents individually due to the number of students. However, the all call alert system will send a group message by phone and email. If your child attends a child care center after school, please be sure to check with them to see if they remain open on early release days. Some close when the system releases students early due to hazardous conditions.

## **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.

## Music Notes



Happy New Year! I hope you had the opportunity to join us for our Holiday / Winter Concert last month. Our students worked diligently to prepare the program for you. To begin this month, we will watch, listen to, and discuss various instruments. Grades 3-5 will study the instruments of the orchestra. Grade 2 will compare modern brass instruments to ancient horns from around the world. Grade 1 will learn the four basic types of percussion instruments (Actually, five if we count our bodies!). We will all continue to strengthen our notation skills using a variety of activities. In addition, we will close out the month with music honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, African American songs of spirit (spirituals), and the science of sound.

Karen Roderick  
Music



## A Message from the Principal

Continued



### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

On Wednesday, January 27th, progress reports for the second trimester will be sent home with students in grades 1-5. Please call the school if you have any questions or would like to schedule a conference with your child's teacher.

### **NO SCHOOL - MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY**

There is no school on January 18th, in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

### **SCHOOL AND BUS RULES**

Please be reminded that all school rules apply to the bus as well. Please discuss and remind your student about the following rule:

Cell phones, electronic games, portable music players, toy weapons, etc. should not be brought to school. The school system is not responsible for any toys or personal brought to school. The use of cell phones during school and on the bus is prohibited.

### **MARK THIS DATE!**

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.

As always, please feel free to call or drop by if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours truly,

Nancy Gagliardi



## Library News

First Grade - Students have been working on sorting fiction and nonfiction books, playing a sight word matching game and using technology to complete an activities page to blend sounds together to create words.

Second Grade - We read and discussed several fables and attempted to determine the moral for each story, students completed a story sequencing cut and paste activity and using technology they created a character using an online game then wrote a paragraph about their character.

Third Grade - Students used the dictionary to find definitions, parts of speech and guide words, they also identified text features and described their purpose, and finally used the online public access catalog (OPAC) to locate information for an online scavenger hunt.

Fourth Grade - We discussed website evaluation and looked at several websites to determine whether they were authentic or not. Students identified the theme of several short stories. They also researched a topic using an online encyclopedia.

In technology, many class were able to participate in the "hour of code". This is a global movement to inspire students to become future computer programmers. With the help of Mrs. Keough, the technology integration specialist, students spent an hour learning to create programs using code. They received a certificate upon completion. I will continue with coding in technology class so if your child hasn't been introduced to it yet, they will!



## Joining A Group

By Tara Haggerty

The weather has been unseasonably warm this past month. Fortunately, students have been able to go outside for recess. For most kids, recess can be the best part of the day. Other students struggle with recess because they don't know how to effectively join a group.

According the Second Step program, there are three steps one needs to take in order to "join in":

1. Stand nearby, watch and listen to what the children are doing.
2. Start a conversation with the group by giving a compliment, asking a question about the activity, or offering to help.
3. Ask assertively to join in.

It may be helpful to role-play these strategies with your child so that they can develop confidence to use them at school. Encourage your child to use these steps during social events with friends and family. The more your child practices, the more effective they will become in joining a group.



## PE News

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AT AITKEN

MEANS MOVEMENT FUN FOR EVERYONE

by Mr. Queenan

### “SWEAT AND SMILES”

Grade 5 completed their first pretest of the Fitness Gram Pacer Test. This Pacer test assessment is an evaluation tool for cardiovascular endurance. Scoring is based on the Fitness gram Healthy Fitness Zones that represent minimum levels of fitness that offer protection against the diseases that result from sedentary living. The test is administered with a cd that controls the pace of running in 20-meter segments. The speed level increases as the test progresses. Peers mark the score sheets while their partners are running. The score sheet reflects number of laps completed. This creates a positive way for the students to motivate one another. The lap totals are matched to the healthy zones of the 5th grade level age group.

The students should bring in a pair of sneakers if snow boots or shoes are worn. Remember that it is important for all students to wear sneakers for physical education. It is not safe to have open toe wear or no ankle support while doing activities. The students in all grades are practicing how to demonstrate a vertical jump. The vertical jump is used in various games and activities such as track and field and basketball. The students are continuing the lesson progression in these areas as well as best effort and responsibility.

**I HOPE EVERYONE HAS A GREAT HOLIDAY SEASON!!!!**

## Reading Resolutions

from Reading Recovery Teachers

Lynn Owens and Joanna Rioux

When you are considering those New Year's Resolutions, think about a few reading resolutions for your family! Here are some ideas that might get you started:

- ✦ Designate a family reading time when everyone spends some time reading quietly, then share what you are reading with each other.
- ✦ Pick an interesting series with your child (Junie B. Jones, Magic Tree House, Harry Potter, etc) and try reading through it over the course of the year.
- ✦ Try a new genre such as poetry, non-fiction, mystery, or other area that you or your child haven't read before. Make a list of the various genres read over the year.
- ✦ Discover a new author and read some of their books over the course of a month.
- ✦ Find informational books about a topic of special interest and list facts you learn.
- ✦ Find a longer-than-usual book and take turns reading aloud to each other at times such as cooking dinner, riding in the car, bath time, etc.
- ✦ Make regular visits to the library.
- ✦ Keep track of minutes, hours, or days spent reading. See how many you can build up to in a week, a month, then for the year!
- ✦ Encourage reading when waiting, such as for a ride in the car, at the doctor's office, when a sibling has a practice or lesson, etc. Create a bag of books just for this purpose to keep in the car.

Small changes like these can make a giant difference in the life of a young reader.

Happy New Year!



## Notes from the School Nurse

Flu season is rapidly approaching. Sometimes it is hard to tell the difference between a bad cold and the flu. Below is a description of the flu and the symptoms you would experience (From an article written by the Centers for Disease Control and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health).

Influenza is an infection of the nose, throat and lungs caused by influenza viruses that are constantly changing. Flu causes illnesses, hospital stays and deaths in the United States each year.

Flu can vary from mild to severe. It can be very dangerous for young children and children of any age who have certain long term health conditions, including asthma, neurological conditions, chronic lung disease, heart disease, blood disorders, endocrine disorders (such as diabetes), and weakened immune systems due to diseases or medications. Children on long-term aspirin therapy can have more severe illness from the flu.

Flu viruses spread when people with the flu cough, sneeze or talk. It can also be spread if a person touches something that the flu virus has landed on and then touching their mouth, eyes or nose.

People with the flu may infect others from 1 day before getting sick to 5-7 days after. People with weakened immune systems can shed the virus for longer, and might be contagious past 7 days, especially if they still have symptoms.

People with the flu can have symptoms that include fever, dry and hacking cough, moderate to severe chest discomfort (call the doctor immediately if it becomes severe), sore throat, runny nose, moderate to severe body aches, headache, mild to moderate chills, moderate to severe fatigue and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea. Some people with flu will not have a fever. Symptoms tend to develop over several days with the seasonal flu but develop rapidly with H1N1 (usually within 3-6 hours).

To prevent the spread of flu, cough or sneeze into your elbow, wash your hands with soap and running water for a minimum of 15-20 seconds, avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth without washing your hands first and get your flu shot! In spite of what others tell you, you CANNOT get the flu from a flu shot. A flu shot takes several weeks to develop immunity, so the earlier you get it, the better protected you are.

For more information on the flu, go to [www.mass.gov/flu](http://www.mass.gov/flu), [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu), or [www.immunize.org](http://www.immunize.org).



# Differentiation News

By Barbara Maniocas

## Differentiation:

“Knowing that one size does not fit all...and finding the way to get to the right fit.”

-from Dear Teacher/Love Teacher

## MATH BOARD AND PROBLEM OF THE WEEK

In case your child hasn't mentioned it before, I want to let you know about our Math Board at Aitken. Each week, I post a problem of the week. This is a challenging, problem solving activity for students in grades 3, 4, and 5. This provides all students with an opportunity for enrichment beyond what is covered in the classroom. In addition, I have extra problem solving activities and/or games for students. These may include Sudoku, Number Boggle, Puzzles, or Brain Teasers.

Also, there is a monthly inspirational quote posted for the students and staff to reflect upon. I have just added a section for teachers, which includes interesting articles about math learning and instruction. The board is located near the cafeteria in the grades 4 and 5 wing. I hope you ask your child about the math problem of the week and encourage them to participate.

It is January and new differentiation groups are being formed. Please remember that the groups run for approximately 6-8 weeks. Also, I see groups of students in the regular classrooms as well as in the shared classroom. If you ever have any questions about differentiation, please do not hesitate to contact me at the school.



# PTO



December had lots of fun activities and events for the kids. We had a visit with Santa, the Holiday Shop, Christmas is for Kids toy drive and we had great results for the canned food drive.

As a result of so many fun and great activities we decided to postpone the Evening of Giving to February 4th.

The Feinsein canned food challenge was 1000 donations, we exceeded that goal by 468. Here are the results broken down by grade for what was contributed:

- PreK- 36
- Kindergarten- 85
- Grade 1- 233
- Grade 2- 186
- Grade 3- 244
- Grade 4- 150
- Grade 5- 534

This is a total of 1468 donated items!!  
Great job everyone.

This month we will be having another RIF challenge from the 10th to the 17th. There will be another RIF free book day on the 12th.

Please join us on the 13th at 7pm for our Monthly PTO. Also, be sure to check out our Facebook page for updates and volunteer opportunities, just search for and like: **Aitken School PTO**.