

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

May

- 05/09 Aitken School Council
3 p.m.
- 05/12 Mother's Day Plant
Sale
- 05/18 PTO Meeting 6:30 p.m.
- 05/23 Blood Drive 3-7 p.m.
- 05/24 Elementary Band
Concert - 7p.m.
- 05/25 Used Book Swap
- 05/29 No School
- 05/30 Polished Dental
- 05/31 Book Fair

June

- 06/01 Book Fair
- 06/02 Pre-K & K Field Day
- 06/06 Gr. 1 - 5 Field Day
- 06/09 Gr. 5 Promotion
Ceremony 9:30AM
- 06/16 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL
Early Release 12:45



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parent,

May is always an exciting and busy month for our school as you'll see when you are reading this newsletter! Enjoy!

Thank you, staff!

May 1-5 is Aitken Staff Appreciation Week and May 2nd is National Teacher Appreciation Day! It is a time to celebrate and honor the hard work and dedication of each staff member at Aitken School. Perhaps the best way to "thank a teacher" is to encourage your child to take a few minutes to write a thank you note(s) to someone who has made a difference in his/her school life.

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be distributed and sent home with students in grades 1-5 on Monday, May 1.

MCAS Spring Testing Schedule Reminder

Students in grades 3-5 will take the MCAS ELA and math tests on their Chrome Books. Grade 5 students will also take the paper/pencil MCAS Science & Technology tests. To find out more information, you may visit the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Please also feel free to give a call to your child's teacher or me if you have any questions.

MCAS Test Schedule - April 25-May 19

Grade 3 - May 2, 3, 4, 8 & 10

Grade 4 - April 28 and May 1, 4, 5, 15 & 16

Grade 5 - April 25 & 26 and May 2, 3, 9, 15 & 17

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL CONTINUED

Elementary Band Concert

The Aitken and Martin Grade 5 Elementary Band will be performing in the gymnasium of Martin School on Wednesday, May 24 th at 7 PM. If you thought that they were great in February, you will be absolutely amazed at the growth since then!

Gr. 5 Activities

The final months of elementary school for our fifth graders are here and plans for the end of the year activities are well underway.

The student tour of Hurley Middle School is scheduled for May 26 in the morning. The experience is always enjoyable and informative for our students. Prior to their visit, Dr. Whalen, the middle school principal, will be visiting with them at Aitken School on May 24. There will also be a 5th grade parent orientation on May 30 at 6 PM.

The Aitken and Martin PTOs have also planned an event for the students of both schools to get to know each other. The event will be held at the Seekonk Swim & Tennis Club on June 7. Information will be sent home with 5th graders so you may register for the event on-line.

Just a reminder – the promotion ceremony is scheduled for June 9 at 9:30 A.M. followed by activities planned in coordination with the PTO. You are invited to attend the ceremony. You may also volunteer to help with the activities by signing up on Volunteer Spot as long as you have a current CORI on file. Please call if you need a form or would like to check to see if your CORI check is current since it is only valid for two years.

Dress Requirements

As the hot weather approaches, please review the dress code with your child that is contained in the handbook. We have discussed this with the upper elementary students and reminded them that super short shorts, spaghetti straps and muscle shirts should not be worn to school. The dress code in the handbook states:

“Attire that is not acceptable is articles of clothing such as tank tops, halter tops, pants worn below the waist, etc. which are revealing in nature. Any student in violation may be sent home until more appropriately attired.”

Playground Safety, Sandals and Flip Flops

With the warm weather upon us, many students are wearing sandals and flip-flops. They are not always suitable for the types of sports and activities that they play at recess. Please consider sending in a pair of sneakers which are much better for climbing, kickball, jump rope, etc.

Cell Phones

Students are not allowed to use cell phones during school, on the school buses and on field trips. I am aware that some parents want their students to call them when they arrive home and, therefore, give their children cell phones to take to school. If this is the case, please let your child know that during school and on the bus, the cell phone must be turned off and kept in a backpack. Also, as with any electronic device or toy, the school is not responsible if it is lost or stolen.

Last Day of School

The last day of school is Friday, June 16. The last day is an early release day. Students in FDK – grade 5 will be dismissed at 12:45. There will be no afternoon kindergarten or preschool.

READING LINGO

By: Lynn Owens & Joanna Rioux

Parents hear many terms brought up by educators about reading development and progress. There's fluency, accuracy, and comprehension to name the "Big 3". But what do they actually mean?

The easiest to convey and determine, is accuracy. It means exactly what you might expect. How many words were correctly read in a given chunk of continuous text? This is often how we teach children and suggest to parents as a guide for choosing Just Right books. For example, if you open a book of interest to any page, you could use the 5 Finger Rule to help determine if it's an appropriate difficulty. Reading an entire page of text without having to figure out any words is considered easy text. In like fashion, reading a page and having to figure out 1-3 words would be considered just right. Children can learn from that work and progress their own reading by having an appropriate amount of challenge. The point where there is too much work, making the book too hard (frustrational) would be if there are 5 words or more that have to be solved in order to keep reading.

Another term we use is fluency. Most often this is thought of as the speed at which a text is read. While this is true, there is much more to fluency than simply the rate of reading. It also includes phrasing, rather than reading word by word. Likewise, ability to use punctuation appropriately is considered when teachers think about fluency. This includes pausing for periods and commas as well as changing our tone of voice for dialog, question marks, and exclamations. The ultimate goal in this area, is for the reading to sound conversational.

Then there's comprehension. Most often this is thought of as understanding what we've read. While that is partially true, there is so much more to comprehension than that. That understanding of what we've read is literal understanding. For example, who is the book about, what happens in the story, how does it end, etc. On a deeper level, comprehension includes making inferences about character motives as well as having theories about what personality a character has and allowing that theory to change as the story progresses. Comprehension also involves considering an author's purpose for writing and what we can take away from the reading such as a lesson, particular information, or broad understanding. Another big piece of comprehension is making connections to the text while we read. For example, does a character remind you of yourself, someone you know, or a character from another book or a show? Likewise, can you make such connections for events and settings?

Reading is the single most complex learning we engage in over the course of our lives. It is amazing that such a huge process begins so young. If parents and educators alike are using the same language to discuss this progress, our children will get the best start they can.

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

An Article of interest shared with you by Karen Cicatiello, the School Psychologist This month's article is a comprehensive guide to School Refusal and School Anxiety. Parents often ask what to do when their child routinely refuses to come to school. Anxiety can interfere with a child's every day functioning. When it does, it may be time to seek help or implement some strategies to help your child. The article is titled: "School Refusal and School Anxiety: tips for caregivers" Adapted from the SMCPSS School Psychologist Newsletter. You can access the article online by going to the Aitken to Know website at <http://blog.aitkentoknow.com/blog/>

IN THE LIBRARY WITH MRS. LAMAR

April lesson plan overview:

This month we read and wrote a lot of poetry for National Poetry Month. Fifth grade completed and presented their country research projects, and fourth grade started a state research project. Third grade spent the month of April reading and learning about the author Jon Scieszka.

Technology:

First grade has learned to log in to their Google accounts and create a Google Doc. Second grade learned about Google Sheets. Third, Fourth and Fifth completed a digital citizenship program created by Common Sense Media.

Please ask your fourth grade student to share the poem they wrote that was inspired by a poem by William Carlos Williams. They did an amazing job! Here is the poem:



The Red Wheelbarrow
by William Carlos Williams

so much depends
upon
a red wheel
barrow
glazed with rain
water
beside the white
chickens.

PE NEWS



“SWEAT AND SMILES” AT AITKEN MEANS MOVEMENT FUN FOR EVERYONE

by Mr. Queenan

Respect for others has been the social emphasis in all physical education classes and the students are asked to smile and work hard together. Basketball activities develop skills as well as the cardiovascular system. Teamwork and cooperation was emphasized during each basketball lesson. The students were able to identify and learn techniques of handling a basketball. The students demonstrated skill development of physical fitness, patience and cooperation during these activities and skills. The two handed bounce pass and chest pass were reviewed at all grade levels.

Remember sneakers are still important for class and make games and skills safer for students to participate. If any parents would like to donate a pair of used sneakers in good condition it would be appreciated. I'm hoping to get two of each child size so students that may not have them can participate.

MUSIC NOTES

Greetings! Spring is here, so we're gearing up to get moving! We are working on some basic movement/ dance formations and steps. Some of our activities involve line or box formations with partners. Others use circles and concentric circle formations. The music we use spans a wide variety of multicultural styles: Calypso, Spiritual, American Folk, British Folk, Irish Folk, and Andean Carnavalito, a blend of South American Indian and Spanish musical tradition.

We learned different ways to use our voices while speaking and making music. Third grade has performed vocal duets in front of their classmates. Fourth and fifth grades will explore some of the basic concepts of opera and operetta. We will also learn some of the nomenclature associated with opera/operetta as well as some of the fundamentals and training involved in performing them.

Fourth and fifth grade will look at the origins of American blues music and how it influenced such styles as Jazz, Dixieland Jazz, Bluegrass, and much popular music. Some artists we'll listen to are Huddie Ledbetter, Muddy Waters, B. B. King, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Swingle Singers, Eric Clapton, and more.

First and second grades experience duple and triple meters through listening, discussion, singing and movement. In addition, 2nd graders will create illustrated booklets describing various horns from around the world. I am looking forward to seeing them!

Happy Spring!
Karen Roderick

FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE



Cough drops in school

Allergy season is upon us.....for those of you who experience allergies during this time of the year, it can be awful! Recently multiple students have come to me with a bag of cough drops from home or requesting a cough drop for a scratchy throat or a slight cough. However, there was a change last year to the over the counter medication protocol form, approved by our school medical director. This form was sent home at the beginning of the school year. Parents signed the form giving permission to the school nurse to administer medications such as Motrin and Tylenol as needed, after a nursing assessment of the student has been completed. Cough drops were removed from the list of OTC items that I am able to administer to students.

Cough drops (which contain medication- Halls cough drops) are an over the counter item which does require a doctor's order in the school system. Many of the OTC cough drops do not contain medication. They are used as a throat soother much like a piece of candy. Examples of these types of "cough drops" are Luden's or Vitamin C drops. To be honest, when the students come to school with "cough drops" from home, they visit the nurse multiple times a day for a "cough drop". It is my responsibility to perform an assessment prior to the administration of any medication at school. The majority of the time, post assessment, there is no need for a cough drop. I have them hydrate with water and they tell me they feel much better.

The risk of choking on one of these "cough drops" is much higher therefore I do keep them in my office until the drop is gone, which is taking away from time in class. With all of this being said, I am asking that parents do not send "cough drops" into school with the students. If after assessment, I feel the need to notify a parent of a sore throat or cough that requires medical attention or medication, I will be sure to call home. I will make every attempt to provide the care and comfort to your students while they are in school. Any questions about this....please feel free to contact Laurie Soares, Aitken School Nurse @ 508-336- 5230 or soaresl@seekonkschools.org.



PTO NEWS



MOTHER'S DAY PLANT SALE:

The Annual Mother's Day Plant Sale will be held on Friday May 12th in the school Lobby. Students will have the opportunity to visit the sale during the day. There will be a great selection of plants to choose from.

AMAZON SMILE:

Next time you shop amazon.com shop through smile.amazon.com and support the Mildred H. Aitken School PTO.

RESTAURANT FUNDRAISER:

Come support the Aitken PTO by dining at Five Guys in Seekonk on Wednesday 5/17/17. You can show the flyer on your smartphone or bring in a copy of the flyer that will be sent home with students in early May. Thank you for your continued support of our restaurant fundraisers.

OUR NEXT PTO MEETING IS MAY 18, 2017 AT 6:30 PM.

Elections will be held at this meeting, please join us if you are interested in participating!

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO JOIN US!

DIFFERENTIATION NEWS

Mrs. Manickas

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.

Math and Reading

There are many books that have math themes. It is so fun to combine the relaxing and enjoyable activity of reading with mathematics.

- : Begin reading and then stop when you come to a math situation.
- : Ask a question about the math
- : Continue this way as long as your child stays interested and doesn't lose the storyline.

Below are some of my favorite books with a math theme. There is a more extensive list on my Aitken School webpage.

Spaghetti and Meatballs for All! A Mathematical Story by Marilyn Burns is one of my very favorite books.

Full House: An Invitation to Fractions by Dayle Ann Dodds is another one of my personal favorites.

The Grapes of Math by Greg Tang Children are introduced to problem solving through engaging math riddles.

Happy Reading and Calculating!!!!

CHAMPIONS

Greetings Aitken Families!!

The Aitken Champions Before and After school program currently has space in this years program and is also now enrolling for the Fall 17-18 school year. We offer, Homework support, fun and educational activities, great kids inspired clubs and much more!! You can enroll online at www.discoverchampions.com



STRATEGIES TO HELP YOUR CHILD DEAL WITH RUMORS

By Tara Haggerty

At Aitken School, we teach the children that they are either part of the problem or part of the solution in reducing bullying behavior. Spreading rumors is a common way in which children engage in bullying behavior with each other. Often times, students do not know how to respond when they hear a rumor or when they hear people talking about them. Here are some suggestions that may be helpful to your child in dealing with a rumor situation:

1. Your child can change the subject when someone approaches them with a rumor. Often times a child can say, "sounds like a rumor to me" and then change the subject. It is helpful to change the subject to something of high interest to the other person.
2. Your child could "throw the rumor away" and not spread it to someone else.
3. Your child can report rumors to an adult.
4. Your child can be assertive with the person and ask them to stop spreading rumors.
5. It is important to remind your child that they should go to a trusted adult and not a peer if they need advice about a conflict with their friends. (This is how a lot of rumors get started)
6. If the rumor is about your child, encourage them to use confident body language, not show a reaction to their classmates and tell an adult.
7. Encourage your child to brainstorm other solutions to handle rumors.

It is important to discuss and practice these strategies even if your child is not currently involved in a rumor situation so they can be prepared for any potential problem.

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

Did you know that **3:4 children** have access to a **smartphone** in the U.S.? How about that **43%** of children between the ages of **9-12 have a social media** profile, even though there are laws prohibiting children under 13 years of age to make a profile without a parent's consent. As parents and teachers we can never do enough to keep our kids safe and **protect their identity** online. Once something is online, it's there **FOREVER!** I am sure you have read somewhere about kids missing out on a college scholarship, missing out on that once in a lifetime job, or worse yet: kids that meet up with strangers because of something that was posted online!! Let's work together to protect them as much as possible. Here is a link to a website with very valuable information: [Protecting Children's Privacy](http://www.comparitech.com) (www.comparitech.com). There is also a link to this on my [blog](#). Even if you do not visit this website, here are some facts/tips for you to consider.

- Social Media is not just about Facebook anymore; Instagram, Vine, SnapChat, Twitter, Tumblr, kik, and others.
- Most social media sites have Privacy Settings. Learn how by clicking the link above or search "how to manage privacy settin
- AVOID quizzes and surveys! Especially on Facebook. They could be just phishing, scams, malware, or worse!!
- Yes, people can gain access to your webcam or phone camera!
- **SHUT OFF GEO-LOCATE/TAGGING!!** Do you really want people to know when you are not home, or if your kids are home alone, or where they are when they aren't home?
- Most Web Browsers have parental controls.
- If you can, post those vacation pics when you get home.

Mrs. Keough

<http://seekonktechintegration.weebly.com/>