

January

Scott M. Ellis Elementary

On behalf of the Elementary School faculty and staff, I wish all of our students and families a Happy Holiday Season. I hope 2012 brings continued good health and much happiness to everyone.

Thank you for the support you give to your children and to our school. I appreciate all you do to support your children's learning!

Happy New Year!



Elementary Holiday Concert

Congratulations to our students who performed in our Holiday Concert on Wednesday, December 21st. The fourth and fifth grade bands, under the direction of Ms Christine Wegrzyn, performed traditional as well as popular holiday selections. The fifth grade chorus under the direction of Miss Alicia Lewis, delighted the audience with their festive renditions of holiday classics. We congratulate all of our student performers for a job well done!

We also want to thank Mrs. Judy Spring and our art students for transforming the auditorium into a winter wonderland!

Reminder to Parents

With the winter weather upon us, please be sure to check for school delays and closings. If there is a school delay, children should arrive ten minutes prior to the beginning of school, as supervision is not provided by school personnel prior to this time.

In the event of heavy snow or other emergency conditions which cause the delay of opening or the closing of schools, G.C.S.D. will post emergency closing information on the following stations:

WGY Radio 810 AM WRGB TV Channel 6 WTEN TV Channel 10
WNYT TV Channel 13 FOX23 news Channel 23

In addition, a recorded message will be accessible on the district's phone system, describing any change of schedule due to weather (966-5070). Information is also posted on the GCS website: www.greenville.k12.ny.us

WRGB provides a free service for families to receive notification via text message if our school is closing. Parents may sign up for this service at: www.cbs6albany.com, mobile school watch link. www.WNYT.com and www.FOX23News.com also offer this service on their websites.

Kindergarten Registration

We are already planning for the group of children who will enter Kindergarten in the fall of 2012. Registration will be by appointment only, scheduled for the week of February 6th, and will be conducted in the elementary school library. Kindergarten registration provides us with information about enrollment projections for September. We rely on enrollment data to determine the number of Kindergarten classes we'll need, so this information will be crucial in planning our budget for 2012-2013.

Registration packets will be mailed to families who are listed on our current census. If you do not receive a packet, or know of a family who may have a child ready to enter kindergarten, please contact the Registrar's office at 966-5070 extension 305.

Remember, children must be five years of age on or before December 1, 2012 to attend Kindergarten in September.

Report from our trip to Nature's Classroom

Nature's Classroom has been a core activity in the fifth grade curriculum since 1978. We continue to see great value in this experience for our students and we are already making plans for our trip next year.

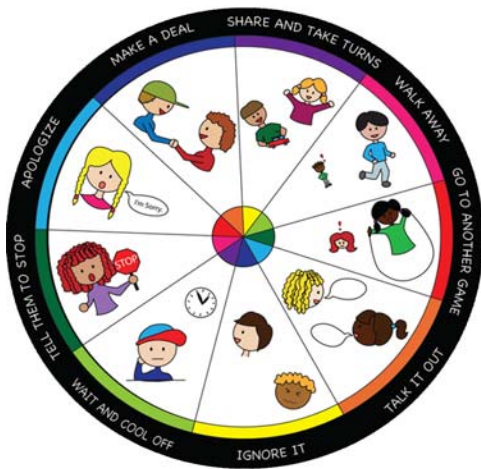
Our current fifth grade class attended Nature's Classroom from November 14th to the 18th. The week was, as always, a great success! The learning was exciting and enriched all areas of our core curriculum. Math, science, and humanity studies were presented through hands-on learning activities. Each morning our fifth grade students had the chance to work in small groups as part of a planned curriculum, but afternoons were scheduled to allow students the opportunity to explore topics that were of interest to them. Students studied the environment in morning field groups, and had the opportunity to take special interest classes in the afternoons.

Students came home exhilarated and exhausted. We also believe that they came home with a little more confidence in themselves and with a stronger sense of community. We are grateful to our teachers and chaperones who voluntarily give their time (and time away from their own families) to make this experience possible. Please extend your appreciation when you visit with our fifth grade teaching team.

Cold Weather Attire

Cold winter weather has arrived. Please be sure your child leaves in the morning dressed for the weather conditions. Boots, gloves, hats and snow pants should become part of their standard attire. Students will be going outside during recess as much as possible (weather permitting). Students who are properly dressed will be allowed to play in the snow. As always, please check all garments to make certain they are labeled with your child's name. If they are misplaced, we will help return them to your youngster.

SOLUTION CIRCLE



There are times in both a child's and adult's life where they may have difficulty with solving problems in different settings such as the playground, cafeteria, on the bus, etc.

There are two types of problems that are encountered most: "small" problems are ones that children are strong enough and smart enough to handle on their own, such as making noises when you're trying to work, cheating at four square, or calling you silly names. "Big" problems are the ones that adults need to solve, such as being pushed down by a bully, stealing from the teacher's desk, or misbehaving in the bathroom.

There are nine strategies that are used for conflict resolution when dealing with small problems:

1. Go to another game/activity—When there are too many small problems in one game or activity, it is time to switch games. You're not a quitter; it just means you are smart and want to have fun during recess!
2. Share and take turns—Many problems can be avoided by politely asking to use an item and waiting for your turn if several people need the item at one time.
3. Tell them to stop—When you really want someone to stop, tell them in a polite, assertive way. You need to look them in the eye and say in a quiet, but firm, voice, "Please stop."
4. Talk it out—Each person uses "I" Statements to explain his/her side while the other person listens.
5. Walk away—If someone is bothering you, just walk away. This doesn't mean you are "chicken"; it just means you are smart enough to walk off and that you are in control.
6. Ignore it—When people are getting teased or being called names, this is often a good strategy to try. When you first try to ignore someone or something, keep in mind that it might get worse before it gets better. When you ignore someone, it is important to stay calm and relax. Don't look or sound angry.
7. Apologize—Apologies have to be sincere and the other person has to be ready to forgive. This sometimes takes a day or two for the people to cool down. A true apology occurs when one person looks at the other person (eye contact) and says what they are sorry about.
8. Make a deal—Make a deal means that you lose a little, but gain a lot. It's like making a bargain or a compromise. For example, a brother and sister want to listen to different radio stations in the car. They will lose a little when making a deal because neither will get to listen to their music for the entire ride, but they will gain a lot because they won't fight and will be able to listen to their music for part of the ride.
9. Wait and cool off—If all else fails and a small problem has gotten you really upset, wait and cool off. Go to a quiet spot and think about how you are going to solve the problem. Some areas that might be good for cooling off are your bedroom, the hallway, the picnic table on the playground, etc.

Physical Education Students of the Month

Congratulations to:

Kaitlyn Drumma	Katriana Corbett	Austin Field
Danielle LoPresti	Kimber Marcello	Ryan Russell
Josephine O'Hare	Julia Slater	Emma Maxwell
Raymond Henderson	Acadia MacDonald	Riley Hempstead
Hudson Turon	Donald Ferry	Lucas Ballard
Kennedy Licata	Liam Bowden	Ella Cotter
Gabrielle Cox	Stanley Sarles	Baillie Kappel
SkyLAR Pettit	Nicole Bowden	John Biers
Clara de Long	Bryant Flensted	Joseph Cali



Elementary Art

Congratulations to the following students who have been recognized for their outstanding efforts in creativity during art class for the month of December:

- Kindergarten** - Aden Weiss, Kaleb Pettit, Lauryn Caro, Lucas Maile, Lily Lamoree, Joseph Davis, Nicholas West, Kimber Marcello, Caleb Motta, Acadia MacDonald, Madison Danaher, Courtney Taibi
- First grade** - Catherine Semaska, Andrew Hagan, Jason Rose, Ella Cotter, Hannah Stern, Samuel VanAuken, Chloe Ross, Julia Slater, Kaden Bensen, Victoria Maile, Christopher Price, Keilani Warren
- Second grade** - Cameron Stanger, Nathaniel Harper-Lewis, Emma Haller, Ambria Jackson, Benjamin Stewart, Christian Quick, Vincent Davis, Emma Schatzel, Jacob Waldron, Warisha Khan, Evan Cotter
- Third grade** - Tess Fitzmaurice, Miles Weiss, Dakota Storrs, Ciaran Black, Jozlyn Davis, Samuel Dederick, Logan Curless, Jenna Romanowski, Aryah Kargoe, Quinn Collins, Donald Ferry, Tristan Mason
- Fourth grade** - Kasey Pfliging, Frances Pilato, Emma Smith, Sean Travers, Rachel Shelburne, Sarah Fisher, Ryan Blair, Austin Wright, Natalie Krasney, Dalton Bashwinger, Walter Sutton, Vito Abate, Morgan Jennings, Joseph Nicosia, Hunter Pike, Danielle LoPresti
- Fifth grade** - Zakiyah Haque, Morgan Holznagel, Camryn Elwyn, Kaitlyn Wright, Holly Feit, Joseph Cali, Amelia Baumann, Caila Benning, Kennedy Licata, Daniel Garramone

All of the students have been busy creating wonderful decorations for the holiday concert. Ask your child about their contribution.

Jump Rope for Heart

Jump Rope for Heart is a national education and fundraising event sponsored by the American Heart Association and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD).

This event engages elementary students with jumping rope while empowering them to improve their own health and help other kids with heart-health issues.

Jump Rope for Heart help students grow. Kids learn the value of community service and become empowered to contribute to their community's welfare. Children join together in helping other kids with special hearts. Students learn how to develop heart-healthy habits while being physically active. Participants learn jump rope skills they can use for the rest of their lives and help the school earn gift certificates for free P. E. equipment.

Jump Rope for Heart will take place starting at noon on Friday, February 17th in the large gymnasium with students in grades 3-5 participating.



Success in School

Every parent wants his or her child to be a successful reader. Reading, after all, provides the foundation for a great education as well as a lifelong skill that brings not only knowledge, but pleasure.

Research on reading shows that there are things that can be done at home from an early age that help children become successful readers. Some suggestions include:

*Teaching young children to recognize the letters and sounds of the alphabet is a big boost to reading readiness. Letter and sound recognition establishes a critical foundation for learning to read and write.

*Reading to children helps them to understand about books and print. Children need to understand that print carries a meaningful message and that stories have a structure. By hearing many stories read to them, and by discussing those stories, children learn that a story has a beginning, a middle and an end; it has characters, setting, and plot.

*Talking with your child about a book or story helps strengthen and develop vocabulary skills.

*Reading about familiar subjects helps children relate to what is being read to them.

*Showing the relationship between writing and reading is another way to build reading skills. Helping children learn to write their name, compose notes to friends/family members and copy favorite words are all ways that parents can help children develop understanding and skills in writing that transfer to reading.

Tools for Parents

This year our Building Level Team members encouraged us, as a school, to provide additional resources that parents could use to help their children as readers. The elementary teachers created two items that can help parents support their children's reading.

The first tool is the collection of the leveled book lists given at parent/teacher conferences. The book lists provide guidance on how to help children pick "just right books" for their reading level. The lists include fiction and non-fiction titles. If you select a book from one of the lists and find that it is too advanced for your child to read, feel free to request that the elementary office send home a slightly less challenging book list. As always, the focus is to get our students reading everyday!

The second tool that we created was a "Reading Strategies" bookmark. This bookmark was created as a way to remind parents of the strategies we teach our readers at school, and to encourage students to use the same reading strategies when they are reading at home with their parents. The bookmark is a great reminder of how to help children decode text. Please keep an eye out for the bookmark in your child's homework folder.

We believe these tools are great reading supports, and using them frequently can make reading with your child even more enjoyable!

Recycling Program at the Ellis Café!

We have teamed up with the TerraCycle company to recycle foil juice pouches (like CapriSun) and empty glue bottles and glue sticks. The company will pay 2¢ for each container and pouch we send to them. All money collected will go towards equipment for recess.

Thank you to Mrs. Rosenberg's class for sharing this wonderful idea, and coordinating this recycling project!

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences were well attended at the end of our first trimester with over 90% of our families participating in fall conferences.

We appreciate that many parents re-arranged schedules or took time off from work to attend. This extremely high level of participation speaks highly of your interest in your child's education. We hope you left your conference with questions answered and a clear picture of how your child is progressing.

The best way to keep informed about your child's progress is through face-to-face discussions with your child's teacher. Please contact our faculty to discuss any aspect of your child's education, our teachers are always willing to make appointments.

Safety Reminder from the Transportation Department

All children should know their street address. This information is helpful when elementary students become middle-school age and increase their communication with our bus drivers. It is also essential if a student needs to make a telephone call to emergency services, such as 911. Parents can help by practicing the recall of this information with their children so that their address can be remembered, even under a stressful situation.

Bus Reminder

If your child is inviting a friend to your home after school, please plan on picking up the children at school that day. Most of our bus routes are at maximum capacity with the number of students regularly riding on that particular bus. Therefore, school buses cannot be used to transport children to play dates or after school appointments. Of course, we will honor emergency requests when a situation arises where a child would be left home alone. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Help Needed

At the fall PTA meetings, parents and teachers have begun planning for the After School Enrichment (A.S.E.) program. A.S.E. is an annual event that is scheduled for February 1, 8, 15, & 29. A.S.E. provides students an opportunity to register for a four-week course that is of interest to them. Classes are centered on topics such as "cooking without heat", sign language, and woodworking. These courses are taught by parent volunteers. Michelle Cotter and Jacquie Fitzmaurice will be coordinating the ASE program.

The PTA will provide all required materials, and can even suggest courses that have been of interest to students. Volunteers are still needed. If you are willing to lead a class for 10-12 students, or would like to help in any way, please call Michelle Cotter at 239-4296 or email her at cotterm@greenville.k12.ny.us.

Upcoming Events

Dec. 26-30, 2011 & Jan. 2, 2012 Winter Recess - School Closed

- Jan. 3 School Reopens
- Jan. 5 PTA meeting, 6:30 PM in the Elementary Library
- Jan. 9 Board of Education meeting, 7:00 PM in High School Library
- Jan. 16 **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - School Closed**
- Jan. 27 Student Activities Club Family Dinner & Movie night- 6:00 PM

- Feb. 2 PTA meeting, 6:30 PM in the Elementary Library
- Feb. 6-10 Kindergarten Registration
- Feb. 13 Board of Education meeting, 7:00 PM in High School Library
- Feb. 17 Jump Rope for Heart-12:00 in Elementary Auditorium

PTA After School Enrichment Dates: February 1, 8, 15, & 29