



Responsive Classroom at Scott M. Ellis

As a school community, our goal at Scott M. Ellis is to create an exciting and enriching environment where students can learn to their greatest potential. Based on recommendations from the Elementary School faculty and shared decision making team, the Responsive Classroom approach is being used to support the school community in achieving this goal. We are working to see that the Responsive Classroom approach becomes part of our school culture during the coming years. During the 2008-2009 school year, nine faculty members are implementing some Responsive Classroom elements into their daily instructional program.

The Responsive Classroom approach is not a scripted character education program, but a set of guiding principles and educational strategies that can be incorporated into classroom practice. It emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. The first Responsive Classroom practice that has been implemented in many of our classrooms at Scott M. Ellis is Morning Meeting. Morning Meeting is a great way to build community, set a positive tone, increase excitement about learning, and improve academic and social skills. During Morning Meeting every child is acknowledged by their peers and their teacher with a greeting. William Kiefer, third-fourth grade teacher, explains that the class then participates in an activity, a sharing experience and then finally discussion of a morning message which elicits an academic response in oral or written form. "In this and through all related aspects of Responsive Classroom the aim is for each child to feel a sense of significance, belonging, and to have fun" states Mr. Kiefer.



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High School Student Participates in Honor Band

Tom Monkell has been selected to participate in the High School New York State Honor Band in March 2009. Each year from hundreds of applicants, Honor Band members are chosen based upon their NYSSMA score from the previous spring. The ensemble rehearses and performs during the NYS Band Directors Annual Symposium held at the Syracuse Convention Center.

Selection to this prestigious ensemble demonstrates exceptional musicianship and is an outstanding accomplishment. Congratulations to Tom, and his music teacher, Mr. Michael Benedict.

Scott M. Ellis Students Collaborate Online

Students in the Elementary School Computer Club joined an online collaborative project exchanging holiday cards with students and teachers from across the country. Many students made their own cards on the computer and included maps of where they are located as well as a list of Internet links to allow others to learn about New York State and Greene County. Approximately twenty-five cards have been received and included photos and information. A display has been created outside the main office which indicates the location of each card. A KMZ file was also submitted to the project coordinator to enable students to use Google Earth to zoom into the various locations of origin from which the cards have been received. This has been a terrific experience and truly addresses 21st Century Learning Skills.



Volcanoes Erupt at GCS Middle School

Sixth grade students in Anne Marie Conroy's science class participated in a volcano unit with the culminating activity being the eruption of their own hand-made volcanoes. Students learned many aspects of the volcano including the three types of volcanoes, the types of lava and that volcanoes have vents. Students then designed their own volcano and experimented with household chemicals to make the volcanoes erupt. Once the volcanoes erupted students completed writing activities describing the success and/or difficulties with their experiment. The students were very excited by this project and learned a great deal about volcanoes and the experimental process.



Third and Fourth Graders Learn about Dutch History

As part of their Social Studies unit on Dutch History, students in grades three and four at Scott M. Ellis created Dutch houses, designed and created Dutch tiles, and made Snickerdoodles. The tiles were donated to GCS by Home Depot and students studied existing tiles to model their design. In December students and many parent volunteers made Snickerdoodles following an old Dutch recipe. Snickerdoodles were a favorite of America's cookie-loving Dutch colonists.

To further develop this unit, the Albany Visitor's Center provided students with several artifacts from this period. Students were asked to identify each object by name and use. Also provided were several Dutch paintings and students were asked to indicate what the painting illustrated; for example, life scenes, leisure activities and pets. Students enjoyed this hands-on activity and learned a great deal about Dutch history. When talking with students they were surprised by the clay marbles and how they were used for games as well as the clay pipe whose end was chipped off after each use.



Scripps National Spelling Bee

On Monday, December 16th, ten middle school students competed for the title of top speller of our school in the local level of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. Each student first won his/her classroom bee. Original participants included all GCS Middle School students in grades seven and eight. Brandon Maxwell is this year's winner and he will represent our school at the Regional competition in March. Other participating finalists included Abbey Duker, Chance Barger, Elizabeth Van Auken, Caitlyn Hopkins, Dominick Belarge, Grace Kudlack, Brett Lampman, Zoe Hutchins, and Chad Olmstead.

High School Challenge Students Visit Elliot House

On December 16th, ten Greenville High School students spent the morning at the Elliot House Thrift Shop in Norton Hill. The students were helping to close up the shop for the winter and other clothes were packed up and put in cars to be brought to thrift stores in Albany. Items were bagged up and stored in the garage and the shop was cleaned prior to its winter nap. This service trip was coordinated by Melissa Palmer, HS Challenge Teacher. Participating students were Makayla Warren, Alex Lawrence, Dylan Yeomans, Jenna Albers, Ariel Scirico, Diana Waldron, Sharon McKay, Laura Flynn, Robin Sweeney and Austin Gray. Another group of students will return in February to ready the shop for its spring season opening.

Middle School Students Win the Stock Market Game



2008-2009 is the first year of the eighth grade challenge course, The Stock Market, taught by Mrs. Jackie Moylan. Students learn about researching companies, amount of risk, how to trade on the Stock Market, and how the economy impacts Wall Street.

During the first session, students have used their knowledge to participate in The Stock Market Game, sponsored by the Times Union newspaper. Elizabeth Reidel, the regional coordinator, has informed our school that the Greenville eighth grade teams have placed first, second, and sixth. These placements are based on the thirteen middle schools who participated in the region. Also, our first place winners and Mrs. Moylan are ranked eight out of one hundred. This list includes high schools and colleges. The students on the winning team are Kate Kulas, Conor Drossel, and Courtney Heath. These winners will receive prizes and attend a dinner in the spring. Second place winners are Kevin and Mackenzie Kiefer. David Herbstritt, Marcel Dupris, and Logan O'Connor placed sixth.

GCS Music Department Promotes Music in the Community

The talented Greenville music staff are well regarded as educators, clinicians and conductors. This February High School Band Director Mr. Michael Benedict will direct the Columbia All-County Jazz Ensemble, at New Lebanon High School while Ms. Janine Martin will be conducting the Montgomery All-County Elementary Chorus. Our High School Choral director, Mr. Jonathan Meredith, has been sharing his talents and teaching expertise as the musical director for Cohoes Music Hall's C-R Kid's production of the musical "Rent" which will be performed two consecutive weekends, January 9-11 and January 16-18. Appearing in the cast of the show is Greenville student Sarah McNally. (Tickets are available by calling the box office at 237-5858).

Winter Athletics



Greenville's Junior Varsity and Varsity Basketball Spartans participated in two opportunities to play at Columbia Greene Community College against Cairo-Durham. Our student athletes enjoyed playing at a college venue in front of a large crowd of fans. The Junior Varsity and Varsity Cheerleaders performed an impressive halftime routine that was enjoyed by all. Greenville's Girls and Boys Varsity Basketball will have another chance to play at a college site January 24th at the Coaches vs. Cancer Tournament. Coaches vs. Cancer is a joint effort by the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches that empowers basketball coaches, their teams, and communities to help win the fight against cancer.