



Oak Tree Elementary School

The Monroe Public Schools, in collaboration with the members of the community, shall ensure that all students receive an exemplary education by well-trained, committed staff, in a safe and orderly environment.

Principal's Newsletter March 2021

Dear Oak Tree Families,

In the past, parents have frequently asked me how they can help their child learn at home. Little did we know the significance that question asked would have on our future as we continue to learn remotely in 2021. Whether your child is a hybrid student or full virtual, adjusting to a new learning routine can be challenging and stressful for parents and children. Here are some strategies that might provide some support to facilitate at home learning while staying connected to the school community.

- Create a schedule and a routine. Limit distractions from siblings, television, tablets and other devices. Everyone at home, including adults, should try to be as quiet as possible while the school day is going on.
- Review assignments and expectations from the school and the teacher. You may need to assist your child with turning devices on and off, reading instructions, and typing answers.
- Plan for flexibility in the schedule.
- Consider your child's individual learning needs. Some children may require increased structure and consistency of the learning routine. Consider spending some time at the end of the at-home learning day to talk about progress and the goals they reached that day.
- Some students may need frequent breaks. Sitting at a table or desk all day can be challenging. Consider alternatives such as a yoga ball, standing desk, or floor pillows.
- There are so many options for learning. Consider puzzles, painting, making things to supplement online learning activities, and that reduce screen time. Independent play can also be used as a reward.
- Practice handwriting and grammar by writing letters to friends and family members.

March continues our commitment to our ongoing school wide literacy goals. Read Across America will be celebrated beginning the week of March 1st through the 5th with a choice board of activities to choose to do. We look forward to seeing photos posted on our school padlet. Our second One Book, One School will take place on March 3 when I read ***Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed*** to the entire school, which directly ties to theme of Kindness and Empathy.

It is often said that March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. With all the activities planned, we are certainly demonstrating our energy and excitement and taking charge of our learning.

Kindest regards,

Patty Dinsmore

Patricia J. Dinsmore
Principal

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A WORD FROM MRS. AMENDOLA.....

In the beginning of the month we will celebrate our love of reading by participating in Read Across America. You can help us encourage our students, your children, to foster this love of reading by continuing to take time to read with them at home. Please visit our librarian's webpage on Oak Tree's school website to access resources and links to find some outstanding books.

This month we will focus our character education instruction on the value of **cooperation**. You can support our lessons at home by discussing the character values with your children, modeling the values, and reading books with your child.

March's character value is cooperation. Before reading some of the books listed below, have a conversation with your child about cooperation and what it means to work together. This will support the discussions and lessons we teach here at Oak Tree. Below are some books that you can read with your child, which have themes related to the character trait:

- **Teamwork Isn't My Thing, and I Don't Like to Share!** by Julia Cook
- **The Knight and the Dragon** by Tomie dePaola
- **Pinch and Dash Make Soup** by Michael J. Daley
- **Memoirs of a Goldfish** by Devin Scillian
- **The Enormous Potato** by Aubrey Davis
- **The Mitten** by Jan Brett
- **The Little Red Pen** by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel

Web Resources

There are so many wonderful educational websites and applications for mobile devices available for you to download and use. You may have some favorites that your children love to use, or maybe you are stuck with where to start. Below are some resources for you to try this month:

Language Arts

Read Me Stories – Children's Books – **For Android devices**

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/p/read-me-stories/9nblggh0dn9c?activetab=pivot%3Aoverviewtab>

- A new book every day develops your child's love for books and a daily reading habit.
- Free sample books

- Text highlights as read
- Touch the characters to explore further story lines

Sight Words List – Learn to Read Flash Cards & Games – For iOS devices

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sight-words-list-learn-to/id445708245?mt=8>

- Sight Words, also known as the Dolch List, are an integral part in learning how to read. This application allows you to:

- Add your own cards - you can add an unlimited number of new words and record your own voice
- Add new lists - you can add and group flash cards into customizable lists
- 5 game modes from easy to challenging
- Continuous looping feature so you can go through hundreds of flashcards automatically

Mathematics

Tick Tock – Tell the Time – For iOS devices

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/tick-tock-clock-learn-how-to-tell-time/id397925367>

- A simple app aimed at helping children learn, explore and practice telling the time.

Math Splat –

iOS: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/math-splat/id495477324?mt=8>

Android: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.squadtiming.splatmath&hl=en_US

- A simple number based app aimed at helping improve your mental math abilities. The object of the game is to splat the answers to all the questions as fast as possible. Each level consists of a +, -, x and ÷ game.

Number Pieces, by the Math Learning Center – For desktop or mobile devices

Desktop: <https://apps.mathlearningcenter.org/number-pieces/>

iOS: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/number-pieces-by-math-learning/id605433778?mt=8>

Android: <https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/number-pieces-by-the-math/fhpcnppigjdhghbohcbogmmhmfkobgbm?hl=en-US>

- Number Pieces helps students develop a deeper understanding of place value while building their computation skills with multi-digit numbers. Students use the number pieces to represent multi-digit numbers, regroup, add, subtract, multiply, and divide.

STEM

ScratchJr <http://www.scratchjr.org/>

- ScratchJr is an introductory programming language that enables young children (ages 5-7) to create their own interactive stories and games. Children snap together graphical programming blocks to make characters move, jump, dance, and sing.

SimpleRockets – For mobile devices iOS:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/simplerockets/id663068211?mt=8>

Google Play Store:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.jundroo.simplerockets&hl=en>

- Design your own rocket ships. Blast off into space. Explore the solar system. See if you have what it takes to be a rocket scientist.

General

IXL – Website and app <https://www.ixl.com/>

- IXL is appropriate for Pre-K through grade 12. Children earn simple online prize pictures for completing milestones. Each skill adjusts to your child's level – if you get enough problems right, it skips to the end, but if you get some wrong you have to do more.

Dance Mat Typing <https://primarygamesarena.com/Play/Dance-Mat-Typing-2012>

- Meet the gang and learn to type. Make your way through all 12 stages and you can be a top typist.

Sheppard Software <http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/>

- Hundreds of educational games, activities, quizzes, articles and more for kids.

Cookie <http://www.cookie.com/>

- While playing fun educational games, kids learn to read with phonics, build skills in math, language, social studies, science and much more.

Many of our teachers have wonderful web resources posted on their class webpages as well. Be sure to check out the webpage of your child's teacher!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR VISITORS TO OAK TREE SCHOOL

Our school district requires all visitors to identify themselves and state the purpose of their visit upon entering our buildings. Visitors are required to sign in at the office, show photo identification, and wear their visitor's badge in a prominent place on their person. Our staff has been instructed to question anyone who is not wearing a badge. Anyone wishing to sign out a child during school hours must be authorized to do so and must properly identify themselves with a picture ID, such as a driver's license.

REPORT CARDS

Parent access to second trimester reports cards will open on March 25th.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL NURSE, MRS. MC NUTT

March is National Poison awareness month with the third week in March representing Poison Awareness Week. The theme of this year's campaign is "Children Act Fast...So Do Poisons". Accidental poisonings are responsible for many emergency room visits and calls to the local Poison Control Centers. Over 50% of the calls to the poison control centers are for children younger than the age of 6. This month is a good time to check your house for any potential household item that may present a hazard to your child. Some household items that may present problems for children are:



- Batteries
- Household Cleaners including dishwashing soap, bleach, cleansers
- Medications not secured in a medication cabinet with child safety locks
- Personal Care Products such as nail polish remover, perfume, mouthwash, toothpaste, creams
- Plants
- Garage items such as antifreeze, gasoline, window cleaner, plant food
- Vitamins

It is important to call the NJ Poison Control Center Immediately if you think your child may have ingested a poisonous material. They can be reached at 1-800-222-1222 any time day or night for guidance. For further information on how to protect your family, please visit the New Jersey Poison Control Center Website at www.njpies.org.

Importance of Breakfast

Breakfast is so important for our children before they start their busy school day. Not only does it give them energy to start a new day, but breakfast is linked to many health benefits, including weight control and improved performance.

Studies show that eating a *healthy* breakfast (as opposed to the kind containing doughnuts) can help give you:

- A more nutritionally complete diet, higher in nutrients, vitamins and minerals
- Improved concentration and performance in the classroom
- More strength and endurance to engage in physical activity
- Lower cholesterol levels

Eating breakfast is important for everyone, but is especially so for children and adolescents. According to the American Dietetic Association, children who eat breakfast perform better in the classroom and on the playground, with better concentration, problem-solving skills, and eye-hand coordination. (WebMD).

Please make sure your children have something to eat before coming to school. Breakfast on the run can include: Granola bars, fruit, cereal bars, GoGurts, yogurt cups, packaged granola snacks or nuts, smoothies, dry cereal in a Ziploc bag, or peanut butter and jelly. You don't have to limit breakfast to traditional breakfast foods. Try 'thinking outside the breakfast box' with different foods for breakfast such as grilled cheese sandwiches, soup or dinner leftovers. Whatever your child chooses to eat for breakfast, please have them eat something healthy and substantial to help them have a successful day at school.

Laundry Pod Alert

Poison centers receive many calls each year about children getting into laundry detergent. Swallowing it often causes mild stomach upset, if there are any symptoms at all, but poison center experts say the new highly concentrated single-load liquid laundry detergent packets seem to be different.

Some children who have gotten the product in their mouths have had excessive vomiting, wheezing and gasping. Some get very sleepy. Some have had breathing problems serious enough to need a ventilator to help them breathe. There have also been reports of corneal abrasions (scratches to the eyes) when the detergent gets into a child's eyes.

Nationally, since the laundry pods have come onto the commercial market in 2013, Poison control centers have fielded over 9,000 calls each year for laundry pod poisonings. So far this year, there have already been 461 calls in January alone for Laundry pod poisonings.

These pods are colorful, soft and sweet smelling and many children are drawn to them for those reasons. Exposures can be as minor as touching the pod and experiencing some skin irritation to a full blown reaction if a pod is ingested. Please keep these pods locked and out of reach of your young children.

Classroom Snacks

Please send daily snacks for your children. All classes at Oak Tree have daily snack and all students should bring a snack to school daily.

JUMP ROPE FOR HEART- KIDS HEART CHALLENGE

On February 15th, Oak Tree Elementary School kicked off our annual Jump Rope for Heart-Kids Heart Challenge fundraiser. The event is a tradition at Oak Tree that proudly supports the American Heart Association.

We are off to an amazing start! Our students are doing a great job learning about heart health, the importance of fitness, and taking on the Kids Heart Challenge!

If your child is not registered for the event, but you would like to participate, you can still sign up at heart.org/khc. Once at heart.org/khc search for Oak Tree and click signup to create a username and password. The event will conclude on March 15th with a virtual celebration in the afternoon with Mr. Kendall and Mr. Boukema. All Oak Tree students are encouraged to join us for the fun filled celebration!



NEWS FROM OUR MEDIA SPECIALIST

Did you know we will soon have a "Little Library" in front of Oak Tree School? Our little library is officially registered too! Anytime of the day (even in the summer) you will be able to visit our little library to take a book, borrow a book, or donate a book. A book Mr. Gleason and his second grade classes read called, "Little Libraries, Big Heroes", inspired the little library. Our PTA purchased the little library through a very generous donation. If you would like to learn more, we have a website dedicated to it called "Narley's Little Library". There you can access photos and information about how to volunteer as a guest steward!

Narley's Little Library : <https://roadside4.wixsite.com/narley>

See the official little library website below if you are interested in starting your own in your neighborhood.

Official Little Library Website: <https://littlefreelibrary.org/>



DATES TO REMEMBER:

March

1-5	Read Across America
2	School Picture Day
4	Falcon Leadership Recognition Ceremony Pajama Day
5	School Picture Day
15	Jump Rope for Heart Celebration
18	Trimester 2 Ends
25	Report Card Access
26	Celebration Day



COUNSELORS CORNER

The value that we will be focusing on during the month of March is “Cooperation”. For our students, we define cooperation as, “working and playing together peacefully to achieve a goal”. Students will understand that cooperation includes compromise, sharing, taking turns, doing your part, and “talking it out”. These values will be practiced during our “cooperation” guidance lessons this month. Students will learn that cooperation is essential for maintaining harmony and getting things accomplished throughout their lives. You can encourage cooperation at home too. Have your children practice taking turns and sharing with family members and friends. Praise them when they display these behaviors. Discuss how your family cooperates in every-day life such as helping each other clean up, getting ready in the morning, talking out conflicts, playing games fairly, etc. Point out to your children that when everyone cooperates, it helps things run more smoothly. We cannot wait to see how proud our students feel when they show us how well they can cooperate with one another,



READ ACROSS AMERICA

Ask your children about all the wonderful activities that they may be participating in during our Read Across America celebration beginning March 1-5. What a great way to celebrate our love of reading at Oak Tree!



ATTENDANCE AND PLANNED EXTENDED ABSENCE POLICY

Regular attendance is a requisite for success in school. New Jersey law requires that students attend school regularly and it is the parent's responsibility to insure that their child attends school. Please stress the importance of daily school attendance to your child. There are times throughout the school year when families may find it necessary to take their children out of school for an extended period. Our Board Policy addresses the criteria that should be followed should this occur. If you will be taking your child out of school for an extended period of time (10 days or more), kindly provide a letter from the parent/guardian to the school addressing the number of days and dates the child will be missing school. Policy states the student will be dis-enrolled during this absence period. No homework or make-up tests will be provided. Upon returning to school, the parent/guardian will be responsible for re-registering the child. Please contact Cherie McCoy at 609-642-6128.

FALCON LEADERSHIP AWARD

The following students were nominated by their grade level teachers to receive the Falcon Leadership Award in February. Each student is being recognized for demonstrating responsible and respectful behavior. We are so proud of them!!!!

January

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| K | Shavi Prathap |
| 1 | Charvi Ravipati |
| 2 | Linga Nimalan |
| 3 | Beverly Zou |



NEWS FROM THE READING SPECIALIST



March is a month the Cat likes a lot!

***We celebrate Dr. Seuss, who put so much thought
Into his books for children to love.***

Reading them with your family feels like a big hug!

So many fun characters, who will you choose?

The Things, the Lorax, or a family of Whoo's?

So as you read, look left, look right.

Great books are all around you so don't lose sight,

Of the wonderful things you will learn along the way-

So for Read Across America day, give a big HIP HIP HOORAY!!!

You can find fun projects to make at home and fun games to play on the following site-
www.seussville.com

"The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." --Dr. Seuss, "I Can Read With My Eyes Shut"

Happy Reading,
Mrs. Kappus

A graphic for St. Patrick's Day. It features a green leprechaun hat with a black band and a gold buckle, with a small green shamrock on the side. To the right of the hat are two larger green shamrocks. Below these elements, the words 'Happy' and 'St. Patrick's Day' are written in a large, bold, green, sans-serif font. The word 'Happy' is on the top line, and 'St. Patrick's Day' is on the bottom line.

**Happy
St. Patrick's Day**

