



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 November 2020

Dear Oak Tree Families,

There is an important skill that you can help your child do well in every school subject and that is thinking! Consider these ideas for helping him or her think critically. Choose two objects in the room that do not appear to have anything in common (i.e. a shoe and a clock). Ask your child to find at least one thing that is similar about them. Critical thinkers can also look at situations through different lenses. Encourage your child to write a fairy tale from a different character's point of view. There are many fractured fairy tales in the library that you can use as an example. Games like chess, checkers, and Connect Four build thinking skills too. Play some of these together and share your thought processes: "If I move here, you'll probably move there and then I could capture your piece. But don't forget play boosts imagination and relieves stress for kids of all ages. Try to make sure your child has time each day that is free of structured activities.

We are very excited to welcome back our hybrid students on November 16th and have been planning to ensure all health and safety guidelines are being met. Letters will be sent home to those parents of students who are returning in person explaining our screening process and drop-off and pick-up procedures.

On behalf of the Oak Tree staff, I want to wish you a happy and healthy Thanksgiving holiday.

Kindest regards,

Patty Dinsmore

Patricia J. Dinsmore
Principal

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A WORD FROM MRS. AMENDOLA.....

November is a month of thanks and a time to reflect on the great qualities each person possesses. This month we will focus our character education instruction on the value of acceptance. You can support our lessons at home by discussing the character values with your children, modeling the values, and reading books with your child.

November's character value is acceptance. Below are some books that you can read with your child, which have themes related to the character trait:

- **Freckleface Strawberry** by Julianne Moore
- **Three Cheers for Tacky (Tacky the Penguin)** by Helen Lester
- **The Sneetches and Other Stories** by Dr. Seuss
- **Hooway for Wodney Wat** by Helen Lester
- **Thank You, Mr. Falker** by Patricia Polacco
- **Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon** by Patty Lovell
- **Whoever you are** by Mem Fox
- **Judy Moody** by Megan McDonald

Web Resources

There are many wonderful educational websites and mobile device applications for you to download and use. You may have some favorites that your children enjoy or perhaps you are stuck on where to begin your search. Listed below are some websites and applications that we either use at Oak Tree or are resources for use at home. Below are this month's resources:

- **StarFall– Used at Oak Tree**
<http://www.starfall.com/>
- Starfall.com teaches children to read with phonics and provides phonemic awareness practice.
- **Read Write Think– Used at Oak Tree**
<http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/>
- ReadWriteThink is a reading and language arts based website that provides a variety of resources for parents and teachers. This link has materials and ideas for writing, book suggestions, reading activities and much more.
- **Sushi Monster by Scholastic For mobile devices**
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sushi-monster/id512651258?mt=8>
-A game to practice, reinforce, and extend math fact fluency which is engaging and appropriately challenging. Players will strengthen reasoning strategies for whole number addition and multiplication by helping monsters make a target sum or product.
- **National Library of Math Manipulatives**
<http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html>
- This website can be used during homework completion as the library contains web-based virtual manipulatives for students in grades pre-kindergarten to

grade 12. Manipulation tools can be used to help students complete math tasks – examples include base-10 blocks, number lines, fraction bars, etc.

- **Funbrain**
<https://www.funbrain.com/about>
- Funbrain offers hundreds of games, books, comics, and videos that develop skills in math, reading, problem-solving and literacy.
- **Study Island– Used at Oak Tree**
<http://www.studyisland.com/>
- Study Island combines rigorous content that is highly customized to specific state standards in math, reading, writing, science, and social studies with interactive features and games that engage students and reinforce and reward learning achievement. **Also available on mobile devices**
- **Kid Weather**
<https://www.kidweatherapp.com/>
- A true weather app for kids power packed with real time weather conditions, forecasts, science and fun facts about the weather. It is interactive and includes math with S.T.E.M.
- **Move the Turtle For mobile devices**
<http://movetheturtle.com/>
- Move the turtle teaches children (ages 5+) the basics of programming.
- **PianoBall For mobile devices**
<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/pianoball-fun-learning-magic/id431494130>
- Play with sounds and explore popular tunes, colors, instruments... and turn your keyboard into a rainbow!
- **Chrome Music Lab**
<https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/Experiments>
- Chrome Music Lab is a website that makes learning music more accessible through fun, hands-on experiments.

Many of our teachers have wonderful web resources posted on their Google Classrooms.

MORNING DROPOFF

Please note that Oak Tree students cannot be dropped off **before 8:55 am each morning.** Staff is unavailable prior to that time to monitor the students in the foyer. Our school day begins at 8:55 am. Parents will be directed to a designated area on our driveway where students will be checked in and screened prior to entering the building. This will include temperatures being taken and verification of the daily check-in form.

SCHOOLS CLOSED/NJEA CONVENTION/VETERANS DAY

Schools will be closed on Tuesday, November 3rd for Election Day, Thursday and Friday, November 5th and 6th for the NJEA Convention and on November 11th for Full Day Teacher In-Service.

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

There will be a half day of school on Wednesday, November 25th and school will be closed on Thursday, November 26th and Friday, November 27th in observance of Thanksgiving.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

With winter approaching, the weather is quickly changing. Whenever possible, hybrid students will be going outside for gym. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for this activity, as the temperatures drop. Please be sure all jackets and outside apparel are marked clearly with their name. Thank you for your cooperation!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL NURSE, MRS. MC NUTT

As the winter cold and flu season is rapidly approaching, please remember to schedule your child's appointment for their flu vaccine. Although documentation of a flu vaccine is required only for preschool students in the State of New Jersey, it is still important to have your child vaccinated.

Proper hand washing is the single most important thing your family can do to stay healthy. Visit this fun website, www.scrubclub.org with your children for fun games and activities that help children learn about the importance of hand washing and staying healthy.

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.

Please refrain from sending any snacks for your children containing peanuts or tree nuts. Students returning to school for in person learning will be eating their snacks in the classroom and all snacks should be nut free. Thank you for helping to keep all of our students safe. Students will be washing their hands before and after snack.

SCHOOL LIBRARY

Did you know you can use Reading Eggs and Reading Eggspress at home? When you log in your child will have three main options. First option is the Reading Eggs program (ideal for K-1 grades), second option is Reading Eggspress (ideal for 2nd grade & 3rd grade), and last option is access to the online library of over 1,000 books. Within both of the programs there are incredible and interactive ways to practice reading, comprehending, phonics, grammar, spelling, and much more! Give it a try. If you need any assistance or have any questions related to the website please email me at john.gleason@monroe.k12.nj.us or ask your classroom teacher.



This year they have also added a Phonics section as well! I used it with my own daughter last month and she loved it.

If looking for additional awesomeness check out our OT MEDIA CENTER website:
<https://www.monroe.k12.nj.us/Domain/932>

-Mr. Gleason

DATES TO REMEMBER:

November	
3	School Closed/Election Day
5, 6,11	School closed
13	Falcon Leadership Recognition Ceremony
25	Four Hour Session
26 & 27	School closed



STUDENT COUNCIL



STUDENT COUNCIL NEWS

Oak Tree Student Council has been off to a great start this school year! Even with us being all virtual, we still were able to hold Student Council elections within the 3rd grade classes! Students who decided to run created a presentation explaining why they would make a great student council candidate, and then presented it to their class. Their classmates then voted on two representatives for each. I want to thank everyone for taking the time to run and put in the effort!

The winners are:

- Mrs. Dowe's Class: Abinaya J. and Abby O.A.
- Mrs. Ficarra's Class: Brooke D. and Siddhi M.
- Miss Guerrera's Class: Emilia M. and Saniya C.
- Mrs. Luberecki's Class: Aaria M. and Priyanshika (Priya) P.
- Mrs. McGarry's Class: Nikitha G. and Daniel C.
- Miss O'Larte's Class: Simran A. and Prathyush S.
- Miss Synarski's Class: Jillian J.M. and Viha P.
- Miss Kirner's Class: Matthew L. and Swanik B.
- Mrs. Hanlon's Class: Aativ A. and Rishaan
- Ms. Winther's Class: Avni N. and Rishaan M.

Congratulations to all! These students got started right away with creating fundraising posters and a video for our Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Hero Squad fundraiser. I am so impressed with how well these guys did!

A special thank you to everyone who donated to LLS this year! The fundraising link will remain open throughout the year, for those who still would like to donate to this amazing cause. Thank you for supporting LLS and Oak Tree Student Council! We will be running other fundraisers throughout the year, so be on the lookout!

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

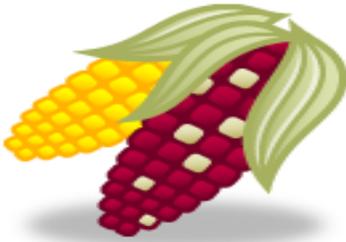
Our “word of the month” for November is “Acceptance”. For our young students we define acceptance as “We celebrate our differences and we are OK the way that we are”. During this month we will be focusing on accepting and appreciating the differences between us, how to use kind words when we see/experience something that we are not used to, understanding that people often have different needs, and learning about different cultures and celebrations. Parents can reinforce this value at home too. Point out to children that even though we may have differences among us, we all have some things in common like the wish to be happy and have fun. When children use terms like “weird” to describe something that is uncommon to them, we will emphasize the use of kind words such as, “different” or “special”, as well as encourage them to ask questions about things that are foreign to them. During our guidance lessons this month, we will certainly be having fun when we discuss and learn about the importance of “acceptance”. Additionally, Our Mindful Practice for November is “Body Scan”. We will practice ways to relax or energize our bodies depending on what we need in the moment. Have a happy and healthy November!



FALCON LEADERSHIP WINNERS

Demonstrating respect and outstanding citizenship, these four students were selected by their grade level teachers to win the Falcon Leadership Award. Each student received a certificate, a leadership medal, and a special gift. Congratulations to:

- K Nidhi Jukareddygari
- 1 Tyler Robinson
- 2 Samir Qureshi
- 3 Vaishanvi Kandalam



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 of time. 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. The registration process will take place at Central Registration with Cherie McCoy. The phone number is 609-642-6128. All the documentation presented when you initially registered your child for school will be required again.

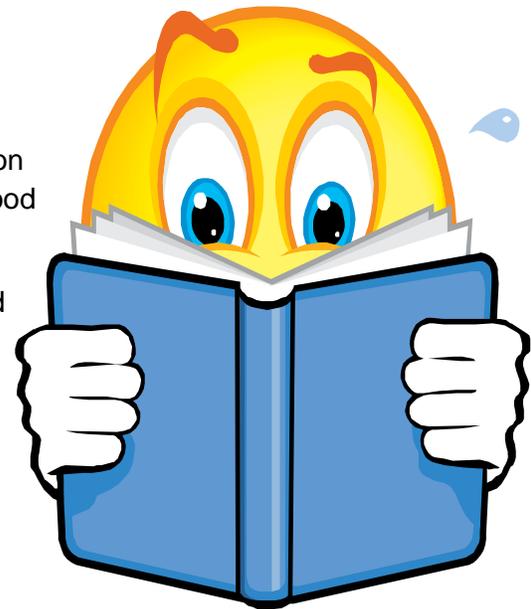


NEWS FROM THE READING SPECIALIST

Are you counting down the days till Thanksgiving when you can be thankful for some family time? November is a great month to focus on being grateful for all that we have---family, friends, a loving home, food to share...the list can go on and on.

When reading with your child, stop at natural breaks in the story and ask questions. Avoid questions with “yes” or “no” answers. Instead ask questions such as:

- What do you think will happen next?
- Which character did you like best and why?
- What was the setting of the story?
- Who was telling the story?
- What was the most exciting part of the story?
- Retell the story in your own words.



Here is a list of books that might inspire your family to talk about gratitude:

- The Blankful Heart by Mr. Meus
- An Awesome Book of Thanks by Dallas Clayton
- Small Blessings by Erica Becker
- Have you filled a bucket today? By Carol McCloud
- The Thankful Book by Todd Parr
- I'm Thankful Each Day by P.K. Hallinan

One way to get your child writing is to ask him/her to help you create lists. Here are a few ideas to try:

- Make a shopping list for your Thanksgiving dinner.

- Brainstorm a list of balloons that might appear in the Thanksgiving parade. When you watch it together your child can check off which balloons were actually there.
- “To Do” lists for upcoming holiday events.
- Make a wish list that could include activities as well as objects.

Be safe and enjoy the time you spend with family and friends.

Happy Reading,

Mrs. Kappus.

