



# 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 October 2020

Dear Oak Tree Families,

It was such a pleasure to see so many of you at our Back to School Nights on September 23rd and 30th. We truly appreciate you taking the time from your hectic schedules to discover more about our instructional programs and what a typical virtual day in your child's life in school is like. Your continued support contributes a great deal to our success.

So often I hear parents ask, "How can I get my child to read more?" The successful parent employs a variety of strategies to encourage a child to read and to keep on reading outside of school. Here are some techniques that you can try at home to encourage your child to read and teach them it is a valuable and enjoyable activity:

- Set a good example – let your children see you reading each day.
- Make reading fun – set aside time for you and your child to read together. Keep reading to them even when they can read on their own. Pick longer or more difficult stories.
- Keep lots of books, magazines, and newspapers around the house.
- Visit the library often. Let them apply for their own library card.
- Purchase a subscription in his or her name to an age appropriate magazine. This is also a terrific gift idea for others.
- Take turns reading to each other. Don't interrupt!
- Have conversations about what you have read. Ask questions about what is happening in the story or make predictions about what might happen next. Connect characters or events to your own life or to other books you have read.
- Talk with your child about favorite authors.
- Talk about the meaning of new words and ideas.

Most importantly, enjoy the special time that reading together allows. Don't worry too much if "*Captain Underpants*" is their favorite story right now. The important thing is that they are reading.

Kindest regards,

Patty Dinsmore  
Patricia J. Dinsmore  
Principal

### **A WORD FROM MRS. AMENDOLA.....**

We are off to a great start at Oak Tree this year! As we settle in to the school year, our students are becoming familiar with new routines and ways of learning. We are continuing our instruction of important character traits. This month we will focus our character education instruction on the

value of responsibility. You can support our lessons at home by discussing the character values with your children, modeling the values, and reading books with your child.

**October's character value is responsibility.** Below are some books that you can read with your child:

- **Chrysanthemum** by Kevin Henkes
- **Arthur's Pet Business** by Marc Brown
- **I Just Forgot!** by Mercer Mayer
- **It's Not My Fault!** by Nancy Carlson
- **Bartholomew and the Oobleck** by Dr. Seuss
- **Marvin Redpost: Alone in his Teacher's House** by Louis Sachar

### 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:

#### Language Arts

- **Into the Book** <http://reading.ecb.org/student/entry.html?login> - Go "into the book" to play games that practice reading strategies.
- **DOGO News** <https://www.dogonews.com/> - Kids news articles and current events (grade 3 and up).
- **Story Place** <https://www.storyplace.org/> - This site has stories read aloud and activities to accompany them (grades PreK-K).

#### Mathematics

- **Math Playground** <http://www.mathplayground.com/> - This site has many great games for a variety of math concepts. In addition, there are video tutorials that help kids with an assortment of math concepts. One feature is the interactive word problems. Students can complete a series of word problems, and the site will keep track of their right and wrong answers.
- **Math Chimp** <http://www.mathchimp.com/> - This website collects the best free online math games, videos & worksheets. Each math activity is aligned with the Common Core (grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>).

#### General

- **Highlights Kids** <http://www.highlightskids.com/> - Read, play games, and conduct cool science experiments!
- **Switcheroo Zoo** <http://www.switcheroozoo.com/> - Watch, listen and play games to learn all about amazing animals!
- **Cosmic Kids Yoga** <https://www.cosmickids.com/> - Guided yoga and mindfulness activities geared towards children but the whole family can join in on the fun! The YouTube videos are accessible without the paid app subscription to Cosmic Kids Yoga.

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

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL NURSE, MRS. MC NUTT**

### **Masks**

Our Oak Tree students will be required to wear masks at school. I wanted to share some fun suggestions for you as you encourage your children to wear their masks for longer periods of time. The masks can be uncomfortable for some children so making mask wearing fun can be a big help.

Allow your children to pick out fun masks to wear. Whether their masks have flowers, a soccer ball or a superhero, make it fun and something they would like to wear.

Model positive mask wearing practices.

Make mask wearing a game. Try and complete a puzzle, read a book or play a game outdoors or indoors while wearing your masks.

Have a variety of masks available that your child likes. Allow them to choose the mask for the day.

Build in positive reinforcements for wearing masks properly and for extended periods of time.

Incorporate mask wearing into different activities.

If your child is reluctant to wear the mask, go slowly with the mask as they adjust. Maybe they just hold it up to their face for a while, then put one ear loop on before covering their face entirely. Praise even small successes. Let your child dictate the progress.

I also wanted to take a moment to remind parents of our younger students to encourage independence when using the bathroom. Please practice handwashing, closing bathroom doors, buckling and unbuckling belts and buttoning and snapping pants at home. Please make sure your children can manage the clothing that they are wearing to school. Please call the health office with any questions you may have about your child's individual needs.

Please adhere to the following guidelines when your child is ill:

### **Fever**

Children should be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication such as Tylenol or Motrin. Fever free is a temperature below 100 F.

### **Vomiting and Diarrhea**

Children should have no vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.

Children should be able to eat and retain their meals after an episode of vomiting or diarrhea before returning to school.

### **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**

Children should be receiving antibiotic eye drops for 24 hours AND be free of redness, tearing and drainage of the affected eye before returning to school.

### **Strep Throat**

Children should be receiving antibiotics for 24 hours and be fever free before returning to school.

### **Varicella (Chicken Pox)**



Children should be free of any open, draining pox. All pox should be dried and scabbed. Children returning to school after chicken pox should come to the health office to be checked prior to entering the classroom.

### **Head Lice**

Children should be free of live lice and be treated with an approved shampoo prior to returning to school. All students returning to school after being treated for head lice should report to the health office prior to entering the classroom.

Keeping your child home when they are sick helps to protect the health and safety of all students and staff at Oak Tree Elementary School. Thank you for your cooperation in this very important matter. Please call the health office with any questions or concerns you may have.

Applying for New Jersey's Kid Friendly Programs is quick and easy. Please check out the Health Office Page on the Monroe Township District Website for information on New Jersey Family Care, Vaccines for Children Program and NJ Snap. Forms for free and reduced lunch must be completed each school year in order to qualify. Please contact the health office with questions.

### **MEDIA CENTER**

Check out BookFlix! BookFlix is an online literacy resource that pairs classic video storybooks with related nonfiction eBooks from Scholastic to build a love of reading and learning. The engaging way to link fact and fiction, BookFlix reinforces early reading skills and introduces children to a world of knowledge and exploration. Access BookFlix by going to

<http://auth.grolier.com/login/bookflix/login.php?bfs=N>

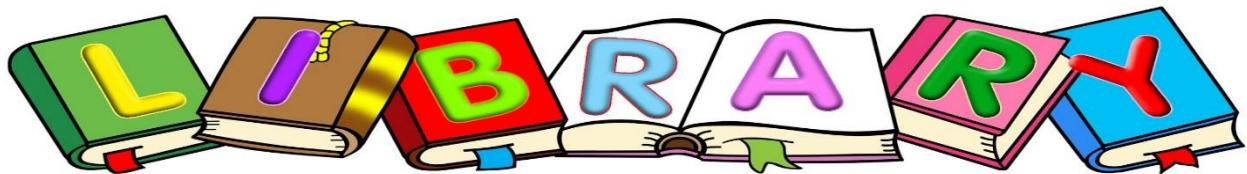
or use our new Media Center website and find it under the "useful websites" menu.

<https://www.monroe.k12.nj.us/Domain/932>

All students can use the following codes:

Username: oakflix

Password: flix



## **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

5-9	Week of Respect
8	Falcon Leadership Recognition Ceremony (Virtual)
12	School Closed/In-Service
21	Conferences/4 Hour Session
22	Conference/Evening/4 Hour Session
23	4 Hour Session



## **COUNSELOR'S CORNER**

Hi, Parents! Our “Word of the Month” for October is “Responsibility”. Responsibility can be defined in a number of ways, but to keep it simple for our young students, we define responsibility as “Doing what you need to do in order to be successful”. We will be focusing on how we are responsible for our words as well as our actions. Classroom guidance lessons will be focused on being responsible with our words by learning/remembering how to use “I” messages. “I” messages are ways that we can tell each other how we feel and what we want while still remaining respectful. Students and teachers use “I” messages often at school! Please see an example of how we teach this on the Guidance tab of Oak Tree’s home page. Parents can reinforce this value at home too. Giving children awareness as to the words and actions that they choose as well as providing age-appropriate responsibilities such as cleaning up after themselves, making their beds, preparing simple snacks, and picking out their clothes can help students learn this important value. Positively reinforce your children when they “choose” to act responsibly through praise and the recognition that making the right choice always makes us feel good. We will continue with Mindful Breathing for our Mindful Practice for October. Students are doing a wonderful job practicing this. Ask them what their favorite type of Mindful Breath is. Keep encouraging them to use this when we need it most (when we’re frustrated, scared, angry, etc.). We will also be celebrating NJ’s “Week of Respect” from October 5-9. Be on the lookout for a memo regarding the week’s dress-up days. Please see our “Guidance” tab on Oak Tree’s home page for more information on classroom guidance lessons, our “Rising Stars” school-wide positive behavior support plan, as well as other supportive services. Have a happy October!





### **FALCON LEADERSHIP AWARD**

This month three students who demonstrate respectful behavior each day at Oak Tree were selected by our teachers to win the Falcon Leadership Award. They are:

Grade 1	Aryan Ashok Kumar
Grade 2	Juliana Vives
Grade 3	Sahana Ramesh

Congratulations to each of them!

### **READING SPECIALIST CORNER**

As we enter into a new school year, it's important to find ways to incorporate reading time into your weekly routine. The more reading children do, the more quickly they will develop as readers.

During remote learning, it's important to find reading time that does not involve looking at a screen. Read familiar books you have in your house and have fun retelling them.

Build their reading stamina by challenging them to increase their reading time each week. You can start off small with 10 minutes of reading a day and then increase it to 12 minutes, 14 minutes and so on until they can read for 20 minutes each time.

Be sure to visit the Monroe Township Library Bookmobile site for information at <http://www.monroetwlibrary.org/services/bookmobile-2/>

You can even email the Bookmobile's coordinator at the link above with book titles you are requesting for a contactless delivery.

Happy Reading,

Mrs. Kappus



# Happy Halloween!

## October 31

