

Messages from Mittineague



News from Room 6:

Welcome back and happy New Year! We are approaching the halfway mark of our school year and I am very excited to keep moving along with the students.

You have all now received the first report card and I hope that this is giving you a clear look into how your child is performing at this time in grade 4. Please continue to help your child master their multiplication and division facts.

We are starting our unit on fractions and I am hopeful that your child is excited about this new unit. I would like to ask you to ask your child to show you how they can prove which of these two fractions is largest...

2/3 or 4/8...

Please send me a quick email that tells me how your child described to you how they knew which of those two fractions were the larger fraction. I will give your child a no homework pass if I hear your response.

In writing, we have begun our opinion unit. This is a type of writing where your child will form an opinion based on a question and try to come up with three solid reasons to back up this opinion. Ask your child what chapter book they are currently reading and just to tell you a little about it. Talk to them and ask questions such as "is this book like any other book that you've read so far this year; do the characters remind you of other characters in other books; is your character changing in any way in the book". The more excited we can get the students about reading, the more they will want to read.

Very soon, we will be starting our MCAS practice. The most difficult part of taking this test is having the stamina to stick with the reading, writing and the math. Most of the students have developed solid grade 4 working strategies and I am sure they will be fine when we begin this practice. I will be in contact with you if there is any additional work I feel that would benefit your child to do with you at home.

As always, thank you for your continued support and encouragement throughout the school year!

News from Room 2:

Happy New Year! As we enter the new school year we enter a time for meeting our resolutions. The second and third graders in our class have set goals for the New Year. These goals cross subject areas and school expectations. Students are working on respect, behavior, fact fluency, hand writing, and a list of other school and personal goals. We are all super motivated and excited about the open possibilities of the upcoming year.

In writing we are finishing our unit on informational writing. Students have created Google slides that include facts about an animal that interests them. We will be printing these slides and creating Animal Books to add to our classroom library. Our upcoming writing unit is Opinion Writing. In this unit we will practice the skill of reading two texts and writing to respond to them.

In reading, we have continued with our guided reading groups. These groups have been beneficial in allowing us to work on targeted skills at each student's individual level. Some groups are working on reading fluency, while others (especially in third grade) are working on reading responses. This week Mrs. LaBonte is going to start pulling just the third grade students in her reading group so that they can work on targeted MCAS reading and responding skills which they'll need for the test this Spring.

In math, students have continued to progress in grade level groups. Mrs. Berggrun and Mrs. Lancour have been taking turns rotating through the two grade levels. Right now the third graders are focused on division, and learning a multitude of strategies for solving division problems. The second graders have been focused on multi-digit addition and subtraction. We have continued to work on different strategies for solving these kinds of problems, most recently using the number line to jump either by a friendly number (like 10) or to a friendly number (a decade number). Both groups are working on reading and understanding word problems, especially for determining what operation they should be using.

In science we have been really lucky since starting the new year. Mrs. Bartolucci has opened her classroom to our third grade students, who are going every day at 2pm for a science lesson with the rest of the third grade. The second grade students have benefited from being in a smaller group with Mrs. Berggrun, and we are currently working on our life science unit examining how plants grow.

We have had a busy and happy start to the New Year!

For your
Calendar

January 8
School Banking

January 15
School Banking

January 15
After School
Chorus

January 15
PTO 5:00-6:00

January 16
Gr 4 & 5 to UMASS
Women's Basketball

January 21
No School



"Helping Parents Limit Their Child's Screen Time"

Screenagers' Filmmaker, Delaney Ruston, MD, shares her latest topic in a series of "TechTalks" in how to help you manage and decrease struggles around screen time. Her latest blog centers around helping parents set limits for screen/device time usage in your homes. Her article introduces the reader to several third party apps that you can use that will monitor and control your child's screen time. These tools range from those who do more extensive monitoring, to those that are designed to help your child learn to be aware and learn to self monitor their electronic habits. Although the article focuses on just a few, included is a large list of apps with descriptors of what they entail as well as a few examples that other parents have shared from their experiences in using them.

This is a topic that is pertinent to us all as learning to navigate and parent in a digital world; that continues to grow and change faster than our children, is now our normal. Please take the time to read and think about how this might work for you.

Dr. Ruston's tips are designed to help you step away from being the "digital police" and let the apps work for you.

In her words *"Roll up your sleeves and take a big breath. It is possible to make things go smoother in your home."*

<https://www.screenagersmovie.com/parenting-apps/>

<https://www.screenagersmovie.com/tech-talk-tuesdays/update-on-apples-screen-time>

How to start to Unplug:

1. Don't check your phone the first hour of the day.
2. Don't look at TV or the internet 90 minutes before bedtime.
3. Walk 30 minutes a day *without* your phone.
4. Take a "Digital Diet" day, once a week, where you unplug for the day.
5. Don't use or look at your phone during meals or when interacting with someone.

PTO 

The next PTO meeting of the year is scheduled for Tuesday, January 15, 2019, from 5:00-6:00. We hope to see you there!

Happy New Year 2019!



Word of the Week
cooperation (n)

Working together for a common purpose

QUOTE OF THE WEEK:

"Almost everything will work again, if you unplug it for a few minutes... *including you!*"



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