



PARENT NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 13, 2008

¡Hola a todos! It has been another busy and exciting week in third grade, including our first field trip yesterday, to the Highpoint Center for Printmaking. Students were very engaged in the activity of creating and carving their own designs, then using the carved block to create beautiful ink designs. Thank you to the Gitler Family for making this unique experience possible for our class!

As always, our class is trying new things and discovering better ways to increase our learning. In the spirit of this, I want to introduce a reading and math calendar for students, to keep track of ongoing work at home in these areas. Students should read at least 20 minutes 5 times per week. This can be done in English, Spanish or both languages, though I would encourage practice in both languages, perhaps alternating languages each reading day. As for math, students also need to complete at least one math activity 5 times per week. Students frequently receive math worksheets, as follow-ups from our lessons, though not every day. This may be considered one of the math activities for the calendar, however, to supplement this math work, I will also provide math fact sheets for students to take home and practice addition, subtraction, multiplication and eventually division. This may also occasionally include practice worksheets for the spring MCA tests, and would therefore be in English. Students can also use math games as part of their math calendar assignment. Look in each math unit letter to families for game ideas to practice at home. This math/reading calendar will be sent home each month and stay there until the end of the month, so please find a safe place for it! I am sending our first calendar home today, in the Thursday envelope. Students need to record their assignments and initial each activity. Parents should initial at the end of each week. I will collect calendars at the end of each month, to check for completion.

I also want to address our spelling work again, as it will be changing in some ways and solidifying in others. Sra. Boeser, the 4th/5th grade teacher recently received training on our Sitton Spelling Program and has informed us other teachers of what she has learned about the program. To use the program most effectively, each Monday, students will take a pre-test on the high-frequency spelling words for that unit. Any words they spell incorrectly will become their **individual** spelling list, so students WILL NOT have identical lists. Look for the Words for Study worksheet on Monday, for the words your child needs to practice. On Fridays, students will re-take the test, and any words spelled incorrectly on that test, as well as some new words, will go home on the Words to Learn sheet. Students should continue practicing all of the words that come home on these lists until mastering the words. These words will be recycled and retested through the year. Spanish spelling will be introduced on Wednesdays, as much as possible, and tested on the following Tuesday. Spanish spelling words will come from our readings, rather than a prescribed curriculum and will, thus, be somewhat more subject to change, regarding the day of introduction. However, you can generally look for the Palabras a Practicar for the Spanish spelling list, on Wednesdays.

In regards to other homework, I have sent home a couple of chunks of homework thus far, and have some other stacks waiting to come home. I have been attempting to correct all of students' homework, which is the reason it has taken a while for students to get it back. However, from now on, I will be looking for completion on ALL assignments, but only correcting selected assignments, and sending all of that work home. Assignments that I correct, will generally have circled areas that

are incorrect, or comments on the top of the page (“Muy bien,” for example). Assignments that I have not corrected may just have a star at the top to show that the student turned in that assignment. On these assignments, I would encourage you to occasionally help your child self-assess their work and correct any mistakes, though this is not a requirement.

I want to thank Kathryn Hoffman again, for setting up a fantastic Halloween party! From what I hear, students loved all of the activities that were provided for them. In order to fund these classroom parties, however, we need help from our families in order to purchase food, beverages, decorations and supplies for activities. ISLA classrooms each have their own party fund set up, requesting \$6 from each family, which will be managed by the individual teacher. We plan on having 2-3 classroom parties in third grade during the year (the first being Halloween), and will be able to use \$2-3 from each person toward one party. I have only received a small amount of these funds, however, so if you have not yet sent party money for your child, please send \$6 IN CASH, as the office cannot manage checks from several different classrooms. If you have questions, please let me know.

It’s that time again...for Scholastic Book Orders! I will be sending home 3 different order forms with various book options. Think about some great books that you might like to order just in time for winter break! Send orders back with a check made out to **Scholastic Books, along with the order form, by Thursday, December 11th**.

ISLA will also be starting a Toy Drive in conjunction with the Hopkins Minnetonka Family Resource Center. To live out our IB Learner Profiles, we wish to do our part as **caring** members of our community, in helping to provide for low-income families. Each classroom will be collecting toys until **December 12th**, when all of the toys will be transferred to the Family Resource Center. Included in the Thursday envelope is a flyer with more information about this toy drive.

Upcoming Events:

Saturday, November 15: ISLA Bookfair at the Minnetonka Barnes & Noble, from 10am to 9pm.

Tuesday, November 18: Late Start Day - school starts 2 hour later than normal.

Thursday, November 20: Día de los Muertos Family Night in the ISLA Gym from 6:00-8:00pm.

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