

# From the Principal's Desk

By: Sarah Lord



SANDS MONTESSORI

## The Eagle's Nest

As we begin the second semester, our staff is working hard to help students learn the character strength of perseverance. This is an important skill for students to develop to be successful in school and in life. Students have been learning about growth mindset and how they can continually build new connections in the brain by working hard to learn new things and achieve their goals.

This afternoon, students learned about perseverance during our school wide assembly. Our sixth grade leaders shared a story and guided wonderful conversations about perseverance. Students learned the importance of

never giving up in various scenarios including home, school, sports, and life challenges.

One way that families can help students develop perseverance at home is through participation in the second annual Sands Montessori Read-a-Thon. Students will strengthen their literacy skills while participating in SMPO's largest fundraiser. Students can set goals for the number of minutes they will read each day for the fifteen days of the Read-a-Thon spanning from February 3rd thru February 17th, 2017. Families can help students stick to their plan and meet their daily goals. In our schoolwide effort to get our little scholars excited about

reading, students starting collecting pledges on January 27th.

Students can collect pledges where friends and family can sponsor students' reading at a "flat rate" or "per minute" pledge. Our school goal is to raise \$12,000 through student pledges. All of the funds raised will enable the SMPO to sponsor field trip busses, special classroom presenters, and classroom resources such as additional literacy materials. We appreciate your support and know that together, we can persevere to achieve this goal.

For more information, please visit the SMPO website at [sandsparents.org](http://sandsparents.org) or contact the SMPO at [smporeadathon@gmail.com](mailto:smporeadathon@gmail.com)

### JOIN US FOR FAMILY READING NIGHT

**Family Reading Night begins on Thursday, February 2nd at school from 5-7pm.**

ever book swap! *Bring your gently loved books for all reading levels and browse selections for some new-to-you reading.*

Family Reading Night will feature fun literacy-based activities for kids of all ages, including story reading with this year's Caldecott award winners, a Breakout Challenge and our first-

**Reading officially begins on Friday, February 3rd.** Students have fifteen days to read as many minutes as they can. Prizes will be



awarded for fundraising efforts as well as minutes read.

**Return your Reading Record Sheet, your Sponsorship Form, and your collected money to school in the provided envelope February 21– February 28.** Checks should be made out to "SMPO." Please hold all money until all pledges are collected. Send in one envelope per child.

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## NEWS FROM THE ART DEPARTMENT

As we finished up the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, the artists in the art room are well on their way to learning and creating art techniques, skills, and appreciation. We are thoroughly impressed with our students' learning abilities and love of art.



We also finished up 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter with a service project with an art focus. One of our school rules is to be kind to others. What better way to show our kindness to others than to give to others.

We collected new socks for local homeless shelters through the month of December. During the

collection time all the art students worked on tags to tie to individual pairs of socks. They were asked to write an encouraging message on one side and to draw a picture on the other side. Our creative artists were happy to dive right in. Their eyes lit up when they knew they were making art to give to another person in need. We had so much fun during this project.

Our Sands families' generosity has overwhelmed us with the amount of socks we ended up with...over 1300! Wow! We were not expecting such a wonderful



turnout. We thank you and so do the people that received the socks. Half were taken to Shelter House on Gest St. and the other half were taken to Interparish Ministries in Newtown. - Erin Dean & Kat Winslow

## 6-9 LEVEL FOCUS

Each quarter, grades 3-12 have a literary theme to explore through various types of texts and genres. Students are exposed to and given the opportunity to explore multiple texts, both fiction and non-fiction that correlate to the theme for that quarter. As we embark on third quarter, we are studying texts that help the students to explore the theme of 'Independence' and answer the question, "How does an individual develop independence?"

In order to explore this theme, the 6-9 classrooms are engaging in various literary texts and areas of study. Students are working hard on writing pieces such as personal narratives, opinion pieces, and informative essays. Some examples of texts that are being read in the 6-9 classrooms either as novel studies

or as read aloud include

Littsie on the Underground Railroad by Jinny Powers Berten,

Littsie of Cincinnati also by Jinny Powers Berten,

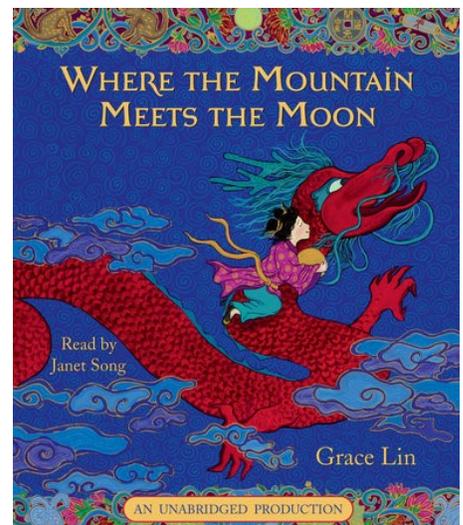
My Father's Dragon by Ruth Stiles Gannett,

Mr. Popper's Penguins by Richard and Florence Atwater, and

Where the Mountain Meets the Moon by Grace Lin. These books, along with others being read, explore the various aspects of independence of their characters.

Through deep character exploration, students will be able to answer the quarterly culminating question and determine the characteristics that help each character to develop

independence. Along the way, students will explore their own characteristics that help define their independence.



## Maria Montessori: Peace Education

Maria Montessori is one of the pioneer educators who brought the idea of achieving world peace thru education. She believed that education's real purpose was to prepare the child for life. As parents and teachers we can agree that we want our children to live peaceful lives. But what does teaching peace look like? How do you do teach peace? How do you know you are being successful?

As Montessori teachers we are trained to give not only math, reading, science and social study lessons but what is called "Grace and Courtesy" lessons. We are taught that children need clear step by step lessons on how to greet a person respectfully, how to cough without spreading germs, how to say "pardon me or excuse me", how to close a door quietly, how to push a chair and walk around a work without disturbing it. These are some of the grace and courtesy lessons that begin when the child is 3 years old in a Montessori classroom. These are some of the lessons that begin as soon as a child can speak at home.

Different from a single number addition lesson which is typically given to a kindergarten or to first grade level student, grace and courtesy lessons are age less. These lessons never stop. Just when you think your child has mastered these lessons.... the teenage years hit your home and there go the lessons! Gone! As if you never taught your thirteen year old how to cover his or her mouth when she coughs or how to close the door quietly even when he or she is angry. For those parents who have not experienced these years yet, get ready because they will come sooner than you expect.

But there is great hope that your child's future will be better than our present. You have begun your child's academic journey by choosing the best school in the nation- Sands Montessori.

At Sands, the teachers invest a great deal of time teaching grace and courtesy lessons. The examples above are just

some of the simple and important lessons but of course it is not all. Does grace and courtesy have an end? Not that I know of, because as long as we continue to be human beings, we will have negative emotions which alter our thinking and alter our ability to recall what is appropriate to do or to say. This is when Peace education gives us hope for a better future. At Sands, teachers help students learn positive ways to identify negative emotions and deal with them. We teach children to use their words to



solve their problems, we teach children to take care of themselves first and give respectful "I" messages to students who hurt their feelings. Some teachers call it peer mediation techniques or positive discipline. We invest our time in changing our re-directing messages from negative statements such as "stop running!" to "Please walk" "Don't yell!" to "Please use your insight words".

Some classrooms have a designated Peace space. Some teachers call these spaces; Peace Table, Peace Corner, Peace Circle or Peace Chair. There may be more names that I am not aware of... These spaces are for students to solve their conflicts or for students to settle down and regain composure to return to their main responsibility of peaceful work. These spaces are for students to

BREATHE. These spaces may have one or all of the following items to help children deal with their emotions. Emotion cards, mirror, peace books, yoga cards, lavender spray or herbs, back scratchers, timers, labyrinths, Zen gardens and sea shells, crystals and so much more. Any article that may have the possibility to help reduce a child's stress, solve a conflict and love him or herself and others may find its way to a Montessori classroom.

Celebrations such as Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, Gandhi and Mother Teresa life accomplishments give us opportunities to share the amazing human being contributors to the meaningful work of creating peace. Teaching about their lives give our children a chance to understand the past history of Peace education. It gives them faces to engrave in their memory of Peace role models.

Our job as Montessori teachers and Montessori parents is not easy. Sometimes it seems an overwhelming responsibility. Perhaps we can start with the small step of asking our children to forgive our mistakes. Teaching a child to say sorry is an important grace and courtesy lesson. Saying sorry to our children when we lose our patience and raise our voice, teaches them that even the people that they admire the most are not perfect. It teaches them forgiveness, compassion and humbleness. Another small step is creating your own peace space at home where anyone in the family can go to and reflect, think, meditate or simply and most importantly breathe. So how do we know if we are successful teaching peace to our children? It is an ongoing life long process but every time that your child says "Thank you" "pardon me", "I'm sorry", "can I help you?", "I need some time for myself" or "mom, dad, Teacher's name- do you need to breathe?" You know that your child is on his /her way to becoming a happier and more peaceful human being.



The January SMPO Meeting will be Tuesday, February 21st, at 7 p.m. in the Media Center.

Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend!!

# Character Strengths: Gratitude, Love and Mindfulness

Mindfulness Strength Practice—  
From Beech Acres

You are the BIGGEST influence on your child! *In school, kids are experiencing the power of mindfulness and their character-strengths are being spotted and nurtured. Consistency is key, try one of these at home.*



## Pre-Kindergarten-3rd Grade

- Make a kind wish for yourself, someone you care about, someone you don't know well, and one for someone who made you mad recently.
- Look around the room and find

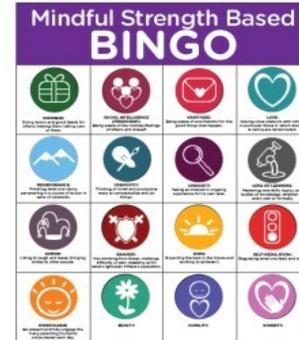
every color of the rainbow.

- At dinnertime have each member of the family share one thing from that day that they were grateful for.
- Think of something you are grateful for. Repeat why you are grateful for it three times. How do you feel?

## All Grade Levels

- Play your favorite song. Focus on just one instrument on the track and listen to only that.
- Ask your child to think about the thought behind gift giving.
- Look around the room. Notice the space around objects and the shape of the space between them.
- Try sitting quietly and stilling the mind for 2 minutes. Breathe through your nose like you are smelling a mug of hot chocolate. Exhale through your mouth like you're blowing off the steam.

## Mark your Calendars Family Dinner & Bingo Night



Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>

6:30-7:30 pm

No letters and numbers here...just character strengths, like Humor, Perseverance & Zest for life!

Take the complimentary survey at [viacharacter.org](http://viacharacter.org) (one for adults & one for kids to **uncover your strengths and your child's before our night together**.....that's the real win!

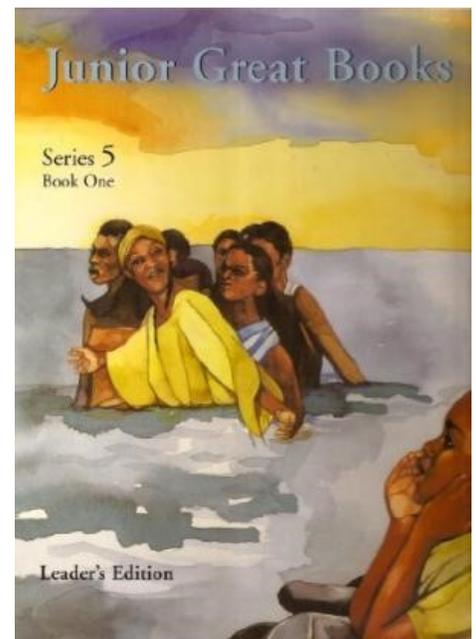
## 9-12 student activities

The 9-12 students participated in the school-wide Spelling Bee on January 6th. Congratulations to our winner, Nola Stowe! She will take an online test to see if she qualifies for the next step. Good luck, Nola!

Our 4th and 5th grade classrooms continue to be exposed to great literature through independent reading, guided reading and read-alouds. Mrs. Bowden's class recently finished *Esperanza Rising* and Ms. Tracie's class read *Wonder*. Ms. Newberry's class loved *Crenshaw*. Ms. Tiffany's class is working on theme by writing new endings to *The Three Little Pigs*. Ms. Jill's class is studying text structures and text

features. Soon, they will write their own magazine articles. And, Mrs. Stevens' class is the first to delve into our new set of Junior Great Books. The 9-12 Team is thrilled to have this new resource. Junior Great Books uses the Shared Inquiry Method and quality literature to help students build their critical thinking skills. Stories in the Junior Great Books include authors like Lois Lowry, Richard Peck, and Langston Hughes.

The 4th and 5th graders will attend a trip to the Freedom Center on February 14th. Students will enjoy a guided tour, a film, and will have plenty of opportunities to ask questions.



# Intervention Team News

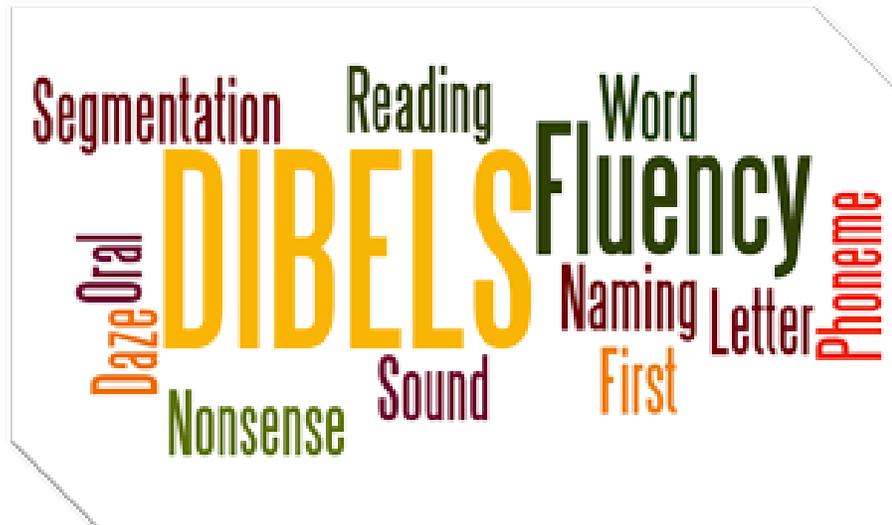
The intervention team recently completed administering and scoring the winter benchmark assessment for the Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) for all students in grades K through 3. Students in grades 4 through 6 who

collaborate with teachers as we work to support the primary teams in preparing students for academic promotion after third grade.

As the winter months unfold and keep us tucked inside where it's

- vocabulary acquisition
- social communication skills
- literacy/school success
- focus/motivation
- self-esteem
- Curiosity

Even intermediate students benefit from hearing you read aloud, despite being fluent readers themselves. It models intonation and prosody (rise and fall of your voice/rhythm), speed, volume and emotion, further bringing characters and content to life. All of these components can increase comprehension which is vital for mastering content in every subject area, not just language arts. Fluent readers are successful students across the curriculum and are more likely to graduate. Together, we can provide a strong foundation for all learners and develop confidence and reading proficiency. Our teachers are full of great ideas and have access to many resources for supporting these skills. Reach out and build the connection between parent, teacher and child!



showed a need for support will complete their DIBELS benchmark assessment in the weeks to come. This data is used to inform teachers of adequate progress and potential need for increased instruction in specific areas aligned to reading proficiency. We continually

warm, remember to take some time to read together as a family. Research proves that reading to your child, especially from infancy, promotes:

- early brain development

## Events Volunteers Needed

The SMPO is always in need of members of the school community to volunteer their time and talents. Our parent volunteers offer a huge resource and support base for the school community while showing our students the importance of participating in the larger community.

If you have specific goods, services or talents you can provide through professional or personal connections, contact our coordinator. The SMPO appreciates your help and support! If you have any questions, please contact SMPO volunteer coordinator, Paula Houston, at [phouston35558@gmail.com](mailto:phouston35558@gmail.com).

## Sands & Fairview ROCKS

Join us for the Second Annual Sands & Fairview ROCK! Concert on Friday, February 3 from 6-11pm at the Woodward Theater, to benefit the parent organizations at Sands Montessori and Fairview-Clifton German Language School! This adult-only night is one you don't want to miss! A lineup of bands featuring families at Sands and Fairview is sure to entertain all night long. The lineup for the night includes: *The Stories and Jake Speed and the Freddie's*

The Woodward Theater is our partner again this year and will have the bar open for a fun night out with other friends of Sands and Fairview.

**Tickets are \$15 each in advance and \$20 at the door and can be purchased from Fairview-Clifton German Language School parent organization's online store: <https://squareup.com/store/gebas-fairview-pt>**



# THE SANDS BOX

*A children's consignment sale benefiting Sands Montessori*



## SANDS MONTESSORI

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*Preparing Students  
For Life*

Visit our new website:

<http://sandsmontessori.cps-k12.org/>

**March 18, 2017- 9 a.m.-1 p.m.**  
**Sands Montessori - 6421 Corbly Rd.**

- Gently used spring and summer children's items, including clothes, toys and gear
- Line forms at 7 a.m., with a raffle for a chance for early entry
- Admission: \$1 (cash only, please)

The SandsBox Sale is a children's consignment sale benefiting the students of Sands Montessori. Sands Montessori parents will be selling gently used children's gear, spring and summer clothing (size newborn-teen), toys, books and more! All proceeds go directly to Sands Montessori to support our classrooms, staff and students. To become a seller please email [thesandsboxsale@gmail.com](mailto:thesandsboxsale@gmail.com).

## **Handwashing is SO important!**

Handwashing is like a "do-it-yourself" vaccine—it involves five simple and effective steps (Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse, Dry) you can take to reduce the spread of diarrheal and respiratory illness so you can stay healthy. Regular handwashing, particularly before and after certain activities, is one of the best ways to remove germs, avoid getting sick, and prevent the spread of germs to others. It's quick, it's simple, and it can keep us all from getting sick. Handwashing is a win for everyone, except the germs!

### **Did you know?**

- Virus can be transferred from dry smooth surface up to 20 minutes after being contaminated.
- Some viruses can travel on droplets through the air.
- *E. coli*, *salmonella* and other

bacteria can live up to two hours on surfaces like doorknobs, keyboards, and tables.

- Bacteria doubles every 20 minutes.
- Microorganisms can build up resistance to drugs (antibiotic resistance) intended to kill them.

### **Five common ways germs are spread:**

#### Nose, mouth, or eyes to hands to others:

Germs can spread to the hands by sneezing, coughing, or rubbing the eyes and then can be transferred to other people. Simply washing your hands can help prevent such illnesses as the common cold or eye infections.

#### Hands to food:

Usually germs are transmitted from unclean hands to food by an infected food preparer who didn't wash his or

her hands after using the toilet. The germs are then passed to those who eat the food. This is easily prevented by always washing your hands.

#### Food to hands to food:

Germs are transmitted from raw foods, such as chicken, to hands while preparing a meal. The germs on the hands are then transferred to other uncooked foods, such as salad. Cooking the raw food kills the initial germs, but the salad remains contaminated.

#### Infected child to hands to other children:

Germs are passed from a child with diarrhea to the hands of the parent during diaper changing. If the parent doesn't immediately wash his or her hands, the germs that cause diarrhea are then passed to others.

#### Animals to people:

Wash your hands after petting animals or touching any surfaces they come into contact with.