

Federal Street School Newsletter

February/March Newsletter

Federal Street School
125 Federal St., Greenfield MA 01301

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Elementary Principal



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Upcoming Events

- ◆ March 3 PTO Meeting 5:30 p.m.
- ◆ March 12 p.m. Kindergarten Registration
- ◆ March 22 - April 12 MCAS Gr.3, 4
- ◆ March 23 Gr.4 Long Composition

Principal's News

Dear Federal Street Families,

Warm wishes from your neighborhood school! Each morning I come to school and see our staff members outside in the frigid temperatures welcoming the children arriving in cars out front, helping them eat their universal free breakfast, meeting them in school buses at the back of the school, and guiding them in cooperative play on the playground. Please join me in thanking the staff who make the day's start a pleasant one for children and families. It is cold out there! So, thank you!

Next week is the Winter Break. **Please read about our Reading Challenge on page 3 and help your child participate.**

Reading for fun and pleasure is a great way to practice reading skills. Read to your children often. It is quality time well spent. Sometimes a parent reads the whole story or article to the child. Sometimes a parent and child take turns reading to each other. It is a fun and valuable learning experience. Make it a family tradition.

Parent Conferences

Thursday and Friday, March 11 and 12, 2010, are half days at school so we can have parent conferences each afternoon. Evening parent conferences will occur on March 4th. Please come in to talk to your teacher about your child's progress. If transportation is a problem we also offer telephone conferences. We will try to accommodate your needs, whatever they are. At Federal Street School we consider our parents our partners in education. Your efforts to help your child with homework and other learning experiences really help. So, thank you.

Kindergarten News

"Gung Hay Fat Choy" from Mrs. Bell's Kindergarten class

To find out what is going on in a Kindergarten classroom, watch the children practice their new skills in the dramatic play area.

Our emergency room has become the Chinese Tea House. At the end of our two week study of China, our families will join us for the Chinese New Year celebration on Feb. 12.

Following vacation, the Tea House transforms into our class Post Office while we study the presidents.

March brings us many different kinds of days and so it is the perfect month to study weather. We will also begin our month long "moon watch" which will conclude with a field trip to the Deerfield Academy Planetarium. Please visit our class website - <http://paubel1.myclassupdates.com/> and follow our journey throughout the year.

Kindergarten News

Kindergarten registration occurs from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. on the afternoon of Friday, March 12th. If you or your friends and neighbors have incoming kindergartners please join us. Bring all immunization forms and an original birth certificate. During the afternoon you will complete all registration forms, take a tour of the school, visit kindergarten classrooms, and meet the kindergarten teachers, the principal, PTO members, and many staff members. It will be a fun and productive afternoon. Welcome to our school. See you there!



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**The Federal Street
School Pledge to
Learning**

**At Federal Street School
We think and read and
want to succeed.
We learn and grow and
show what we know.
Let's go for the green.
Let's go, go, go!**

Kindergarten News

Kindergarten News from Mrs. Isles class

During the month of March Kindergarten children will be learning how to write their last names. They will continue using decoding skills to read words and become more independent when writing in their journals. These literacy skills are ongoing throughout the year.

In Math our focus will be on money. (Recognizing coins/counting amounts.)

Please continue working with your child on recognizing and writing numbers to 30.

An exciting field trip that will be happening in March is to the Planetarium in Deerfield. To get us ready for this field trip the children will be learning about the phases of the moon. Information will be sent home.

Parent teacher conferences will be held in March. I look forward to meeting with all parents.

First Grade and Second Grade News

First and second grade teams have been working hard to build a community in our school. We began in December by gathering together with multi-age groups to do hands-on standard based activities. We have created a beautiful winter-themed display in the second floor hallway. Science, E. L. A., and Math standards were woven throughout four classrooms. After our return from December break our teams met again to create a second display which focused on seasonal changes. Students were engaged in activities related to habitat and winter recreation.

This month (Thursday, February 11, 2010) we will be coming together to celebrate the friendships that we have formed throughout the past few months. In addition to friendship, we will be learning about Presidents and inventions (past to present) as well as creating and representing our learning on timelines. Watch for this wonderful display coming after February vacation!

Third Grade News

For the month of March third grade will be introducing the Geometry and measurement chapter in math. Children should continue to practice their math facts, all four operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division). This will benefit their continued success in their class work and build their confidence for the math MCAS test in the spring.

We're looking at an overview of American History starting with the Pilgrims in the year 1620 through the Revolutionary war.

Our spring conferences are around the corner. We're looking forward to sitting down together and discussing your children's progress.

Fourth Grade News

Fourth grade will begin a science unit on fish with a focus on the Atlantic salmon; including its adaptations, its habitat, and its life cycle. Then the fourth graders will do a culminating research project on animal classification. This project allows the students to build upon learning they did in earlier grades., mammals in grade one, amphibians in grade two, and birds in grade three

Reading Challenge

News from Title 1

This February, Title 1 will once again be sponsoring a February Vacation Reading Challenge for the students at Federal Street School. Every student is being encouraged to keep track of the number of pages he or she reads in books, magazines, newspapers, etc. during the week of

vacation. For pre-readers, the pages that a parent reads to a child can count toward the total. Students who return their record sheets with a parent signature by **Friday, February 26** will receive an award.

Remember reading is important, so please make sure reading is a part of your child's February vacation!

Math News

Problem of the Day Math Program

This fall, Nancy Putnam, our Title I math coordinator, and third and fourth grade teachers introduced a Problem of the Day project to help their students think their way through math word problems.

Students are presented with a Problem of the Day and they must solve the problem in writing following the format used for the MCAS open response questions:

- identify the important information
- show your work to solve the problem
- write the answer in a complete sentence

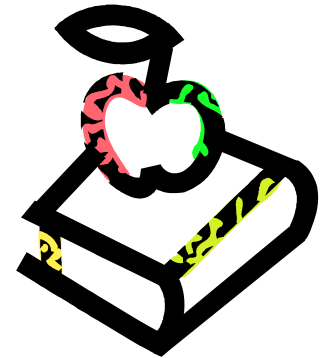
To teach students to use all these steps, we created an 8-point rubric:

- Put your name and date on the paper
- Underline once the information you need to know in the math problem
- Underline the question twice
- Make your work neat and readable (legible)
- Clearly label your work
- Show all your work
- Answer in a complete sentence
- Give a correct answer

On a daily basis, third and fourth grade students apply the rubrics to their Problem of the Day and teachers regularly review the rubrics with students. Once a month an "assessment team" consisting of the math coordinator and staff trained to assist her score a selected Problem of the Day.

In January 2010, the first and second graders began using a similar Problem of the Day rubric. At Team Time teachers collaborate on how to improve student performance through use of these rubrics and how to improve small group instruction by using the rubrics to identify areas of student need.

We believe that by practicing this approach to math problems throughout the early grades our students will automatically apply this logical approach when it comes time to take the MCAS math assessment in third and fourth grades.



Federal Street
School
Instructional
Focus

A coordinated school-wide effort to have all Federal Street School students demonstrate growth in their ability to read, comprehend, and respond effectively in a variety of ways to informational materials in all academic areas.

Students will use relevant information and details to support their responses and show their thinking.

PTO News

NEXT PTO MEETING

MARCH 3

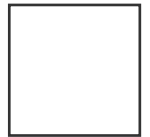
5:30 P.M. TO 7 P.M.

IN THE SCHOOL
LIBRARY

The week of March 1 - 5 will be a celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday and Read Across America. Stay tuned for activities at our school.

- Thank you to families who supported our last PTO Craft Making event. Valentines created were delivered to the hospital, police department, and fire department. In addition, some were sent to a Veteran's Hospital.
- The Federal Street community really enjoyed the Tanglewood Marionette show sponsored by the PTO.
- Please register your Big Y and Stop and Shop shopping cards either at the store or on their websites. Points accumulated by purchases are donated to Federal Street School if you identify us as your neighborhood school.
- Don't forget to clip your boxtops on General Mills products and turn them in at the PTO bulletin board.

School Name
Street Address
Address 2
City, ST ZIP Code



RECIPIENT NAME
STREET ADDRESS
ADDRESS 2
CITY, ST ZIP CODE