



## A Word From Our Principals

Greetings Parents!

We hope everyone had an awesome Thanksgiving! We want to thank all of our volunteers and donors for making our Turkey Drive a success, as a result, we were able to give away 38 turkeys for the Thanksgiving Holiday. We also want to thank all of our families for joining us at our Family Skate Night on Thursday, November 17th. This was another successful fundraiser of our SCC Committee!!!

Hopefully you were able to reconnect and celebrate the holiday with family and friends and reflect on the things that matter the most in your lives. We are a family here at Propel Homestead and it is truly a blessing to work with your child on a daily basis.

By now hopefully you have had a conference with your child's teacher. It is our hope that you found this meeting rewarding and beneficial. Keeping open lines of communication between you and your child's teacher is essential to your child's academic success. If you have any questions for either principal please let us know. We would love to set up a meeting with you! Remember that "it truly takes a village to raise a child."

During our winter break please encourage your child to do some reading and math work to keep their brain stimulated. We know that this is an exciting time for students and parents, but we do not want students to forget what they have learned during the first four months of school. Thank you for an amazing first half of the school year. We know the second half is only going to get better. See you in the New Year! Happy Holidays!

Mr. Robert Bischoff - Principal  
[rbischoff@propelschools.org](mailto:rbischoff@propelschools.org)

Dr. Exley Horton Warren – Associate Principal  
[ewarren@propelschools.org](mailto:ewarren@propelschools.org)

### Dates to Remember:

SCC Meeting

Tuesday, Dec. 13th

5:45pm—7:00pm

Winter Fest RSVP DUE

Thursday, Dec. 8th

Make-up Picture Day

Wednesday, Dec. 14th

1st Annual Winter Fest

Thursday, Dec. 22nd

10:30 am—1:00pm

Winter Holiday Break

Dec. 23rd—Jan .2nd

Market Day Pick-up

Tuesday, Jan. 3rd

Celebration of Learning

Wednesday, Jan. 11th

Martin Luther King Holiday

Monday, Jan. 16th (No School)

# HAPPY NEW YEAR

## Make a Minute for Math

Hello families-

Happy Holidays! I hope everyone gets to spend some quality time with each other over the winter break and that our students are ready to come back ready to roll in January. We will have 4sight testing again in January and in February leading up to our PSSA's in March (they will be here before we know it!) Math is so much fun, especially around the holidays. I hope you enjoy the resources below!

-Ms. Mahon

Propel Homestead Math Coach

**Fun WINTER math computer sites to play at home:**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/starship/maths/placethepenguin.shtml>

[http://www.harcourtschool.com/activity/operation\\_snowman/](http://www.harcourtschool.com/activity/operation_snowman/)

**Math book to check out this Month:**

**Press Here** by Herve Tullet

**Holiday math activities to do at home**

Gingerbread Houses are a great and yummy way to practice 2-d and 3-d geometry! Pick up some graham crackers, icing and candy at the grocery store (have your child add up the total while you are there, then have them figure out how much change you should get back!). When you get home help them construct the house. Talk to them about the types of shapes they are making with the graham crackers (cube, rectangular prism, triangular prism).

Baking cookies lends itself to all kinds of measurement math as well! Have your child help you measure the ingredients you need to make the dough. You can practice multiplication facts by asking them to figure out how many cookies are in 1 dozen, 2 dozen, etc. as well as division facts by having them put the total number of cookies into a certain number of bags evenly.



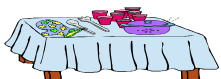
## Market Day

Market day online orders are due December 28th. Order forms are due back to school by December 22nd. Sale pick up is on Tuesday, January 3, 2012 from 3:30-4:30 in the dining hall



### 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Propel Homestead Winter Fest

We would like to invite you to our First Annual Winter Fest here at Propel Homestead! On Thursday, December 22, 2011 from 10:30am-1:00pm, join your student for a homemade pasta lunch, served to you by our coaches and administration. Lunch will be served with rolls, salad, drinks, and cookies for dessert. Our show choir will provide the entertainment and our Art classes will make the decorations. When you are not at lunch with your student, we ask you to join them in the classroom, where you can participate in a variety of different holiday activities, such as games, projects, and story time. Please see this week's Thursday Folder information for your Winter Fest invitation. RSVP's are due back to your student's homeroom teacher by Thursday, December 8. Each student is allowed to bring a maximum of two family members with them.



## Ridiculously Rad Reading Corner



Happy Holidays!

It was great to see so many of you come at Parent Teacher Conferences a few weeks ago! Thank you so much for coming- I hope you and your child are enjoying all of the books we were giving away! We finished our Reading 4sight test the first week of November- be sure to ask your child if they made the 80% club.

### Ridiculously Rad Readers for the month of November:

**100 Step Challengers** (25 Hours of Reading): Marcel Banks, Jaylen Dukes, Dominique Hopkins

**200 Step Challengers** (50 Hours of Reading): Armani Bates, DoRon Dorsey, Jamaar Grace, Aariah Wahid, Taylor Watts

**400 Step Challengers** (75 Hours of Reading): Jaumir Garland

**400 Step Challengers** (100 Hours of Reading): Jaumir Garland

Jaumir earned a jeans day pass for hitting the 300 step milestone and a dress down day when he reached 400 steps!

Great job, everyone and keep on reading!



!Mrs. Frazier, Literacy Coach

## Counselors Corner



### Put Behavior in Perspective

*During this time of year, we often hear frustration from parents regarding behaviors in school as well as at home. Knowing what is "normal" for children can help keep frustrations in check. Their push towards independence and their growing knowledge of words may lead to unacceptable behavior, like back talk. It's often helpful when you respond, to show how you would like your child to act. For instance, instead of shouting at him, let him know in a calm voice that he hurt your feelings or you didn't like the decisions they made.*

### Boys & Girls Club Upcoming Event

*The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade student will be having a "White Elephant" winter party on Thursday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> during the school day. If your son or daughter is participating, we will need them to bring a \$10 wrapped gift along with their permission slip to the Guidance office by Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>. The students will need to have an average of 80 behavior points to participate in this event. Any questions feel free to contact the Guidance office at 412-464-2604.*

*During this holiday season, take time to relax and spend quality time with your family.*

*Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season and happy, healthy New Year!*

*Propel Homestead Guidance Office*

*Miss Cerrone & Mrs. Love*

## CreativeArts Program

This Trimester the Creative Arts Program would like to welcome the following Teaching Artists:

Photography

Stage Right—Theater

Saturday Light Brigade—Broadcasting/Journalism



**SAVE THE DATE—The next Celebration of Learning will be held on Wednesday, January 11th Details to follow in the December's Thursday Red Folder**

Kindergarten

# Seasons Greetings

Kindergarten enjoyed learning about The First Thanksgiving and making turkeys in lots of different ways! Practicing counting and identifying numbers and shapes has been so much fun.

As the season changes from fall to winter, Kindergarten has been watching the trees change, too. So many different shapes and colors!

We are looking forward to walking to the Carnegie Library of Homestead for a story and a craft activity. How cool to see so many books in one place!

A trip to the nearby Fire Station will be an exciting adventure. We are excited to learn about fire engines and fire fighters. As it gets colder, we are looking forward to cold and snow, hats, mittens and boots!

Wishes for a fun winter break.

Giant Eagle



Apples for Students

Please be sure to register your Giant Eagle Advantage Card to Propel Homestead. Every time you use your card Propel Homestead will receive points toward purchases for our children.

To help us achieve our goal, please register your advantage card at [www.gianteagle.com](http://www.gianteagle.com) or by calling 1-800-474-4777.

Our school ID number is: 5271.

## 1st Grade

First graders have been busy learning about the "r" controlled vowels and story elements in Reading. In Writing, we have been learning to focus all of our sentences around one topic as well as mastering the art of contractions. In Math, we have continued to focus on subtraction and practicing various strategies to help solve subtraction story problems. In Science, we finished up learning about solids, liquids, and gases and then learn about Thanksgiving! As you can see, first graders have been hard at work! Please continue to read with your child each night as it fosters a love for learning in them. We hope to see you all for Winterfest!

Mrs. Jocelyn Artinger &  
Mrs. Brittany Bartosh



## 2nd Grade

Thank you for helping us to make this first trimester a great success! Through progress monitoring and classroom instruction, we are seeing that all students are showing growth! If you have any questions that were not answered in parent-teacher conferences, please do not hesitate to call or email your student's teacher.

Our field trip to the Children's Museum was an excellent learning experience for all students. They were able to apply their knowledge from our Science unit on Solids, Liquids, and Gasses. They engaged in hands on learning experiences throughout the museum. We hope they shared details from this great experience with you. We are currently working on uploading photographs from the event to our website.

[www.wix.com/skoschi9/secondgrade](http://www.wix.com/skoschi9/secondgrade)

We wish you a safe and happy holiday season!

Mrs. Breisinger and Ms. Koschik



## 3rd Grade

We celebrated our First Thanksgiving this past Friday. Students in Mrs. Morris's class were Pilgrims and students in Miss Fritzius's class were Indians. We sat together along with 4<sup>th</sup> grade and ate our Thanksgiving Feast just like the Pilgrims and Indians that we learned all about in Humanities. We recently took our 4sights and are making adequate progress for this point in the year in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. We are so excited everyone is gaining percentage points! We are starting our new science unit on sound in the month of December. We look forward to seeing you at our Winter Festival!

Mrs. Morris and Miss Fritzius



## Parents

Please Remember to check your child's Thursday Red Folders for weekly communication



#### 4th Grade

Greetings from the 4th grade! We've been learning about the history of Native Americans in Pennsylvania, and we saw this learning come alive on our field trip to Meadowcroft's Native American Village. On the trip, our students learned how Native Americans in our area survived over 500 years ago: hunting, gardening and growing crops, making tools, clothing and jewelry, and many other fascinating facts. The students were able to connect the real-life demonstrations with content we have learned in class, which was great to see! Finally, I'd like to give a shout out to both our students and you, parents, because the director of Meadowcroft remarked that our kids were one of the most knowledgeable and best behaved groups they've ever had!  
Go 4th grade!!!

Mr. Benjamin Laughton & Mrs. Lauren Wilson



#### 5th Grade

Dear 5th Grade Parents/Guardians,

It was great seeing all of you at conferences. We continue to appreciate your support in making your student's education a priority.

In December, 5th grade math students will be learning about fractions. Students will review the meaning of fractions and learn how to add and subtract fractions with unlike denominators. We will begin the new year studying algebra and are looking forward to adding more proficient students on the next 4sight! In science, students are beginning their study of the human body. Learning will focus on the systems of the body. Students will learn about the function of the body's many organs, especially focusing on the circulatory and digestive systems.

In reading, we will be finishing up the novel *Holes* by Louis Sachar and moving on to our next novel *The Watsons Go to Birmingham*. We will be ending our informational essay unit and beginning the use of our persuasive skills in writing. We have been writing three body paragraph essays since November, and will soon learn how to create an interesting hook to grab our readers' interest. In social studies, we continue our daily geography warm-up to sharpen our skills and will be learning about early colonization in America.

We hope you and your families have a very safe, warm, and joyful holiday season and a happy, healthy start to 2012! Please let us know if there is anything we can do to further assist you in your child's education.

In Propel,  
Ms. Brieta Brill and Mrs. Laura Soeder

#### 6th Grade

6th grade Math has entered into the world of INTEGERS. We are exploring with positive and negative numbers; profit and loss; elevations and sea level, absolute values, and opposites. Students have been learning how to add/subtract, multiply, and divide while watching their signs. Ask your 6th grader about when to use Keep-Change-Change and how to balance checkbooks based on income and expenses. You never know when a future banker or accountant may be in the works!

In Science we are working on buoyancy and forces in our Floating and Sinking Units. Ask your wizard about Archimedes and his Principle of Buoyancy and Displacement. The next time you take a bath, have your scientist calculate the amount of water that is displaced by each person's mass and weight. We have also been learning about the Titanic and Lincoln's discoveries. Consult your 6th grade physicist to learn about these concepts.

Two of our students, Milligan Garth and Montia Johnson, were chosen to represent Propel Homestead during a Science Exhibition at Asset, our science curriculum provider. The Open House and Investing in Innovation (i3) Grant update was held on October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at ASSET's Headquarters on Pittsburgh's Southside. The students participated in the *Showcase of Student Learning* section of the Open House program. During the event, students actively engaged with the attendees of the ASSET Open House through science investigations from a module that highlights important science concepts sparked by hands-on, inquiry-based learning. We are very proud to honor our students for their hardwork and efforts both in and outside the classroom. The representatives were

## **7th & 8th Grade**

**Math** - 7th grade is finishing up their road trip project where they had to calculate and find various distances and costs using proportions, graphs, and equations.

8th grade is continuing to work on algebraic equations and expressions and will begin a 3D house project after thanksgiving break

**Science** - In 7th grade science we are starting our google earth project to research the different types of volcanoes. Then we will leave earth and study the far out space places before wrapping up calendar year 2011. The wonderful world of chemistry begins January 2012!

8th grade science we are diving deep into the realm of DNA and studying genetics. We'll be discussing the reason why we look the way we do and act the way we act. We will begin 2012 learning about tiny, micro-organisms using microscopes!

**Humanities** In 7th grade Humanities, we are beginning our Islamic studies unit. This is a great opportunity for us to learn about a culture outside of our own and develop a greater understanding of the world around us. In Language Arts, we are reading *The Breadwinner* about a young girl living in Afghanistan under Taliban rule who must provide for her family despite the limited privileges given to women. To go along with this, we are learning the ancient history of the Muslim world, from the teachings of Muhammad to the modern day controversy and disputes taking place in Arab countries. Ask your student what they're learning about the past and present in the Middle East, and as a family, keep an eye out on the evening news for current events situations in the region we are studying.

The students have finished reading *Flowers for Algernon* and have a choice of completing 1 of 3 writing assignments. The choices include writing an alternative ending to the novel, a eulogy for Algernon, or persuasive letter to a newspaper editor. After Thanksgiving students will complete geography research project and start studying poetry.

## **NURSE'S CORNER**

### **FLU SEASON UPDATE:**

Now is time to get your (and your child's) seasonal flu vaccine.

Seasonal Flu vaccines are now available at most doctors offices, Target, CVS, Walgreens as well as some Wal-Mart and Giant Eagle locations.

### **SCREENING RESULTS UPDATE:**

All screening results will be hand delivered to guardians at your parent/ teacher conferences at the end of November. If you cannot make it to school the results letter will be mailed to your home. Please do not hesitate to call me with any concerns.

Cough and Flu season will be upon us quickly-please remember:

The Allegheny County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have provided the following guidelines:

- *Your child should not be sent to school hoping that he or she will feel better after arriving.*
- *Your child should be kept home following a night time bout of nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea and watched for further symptoms.*
- *Your child should remain home if he/she has had a temperature of 100 degrees or higher. A child should have a normal temperature for 24 hours without fever reducing medicines before returning to school.*

Healthy Tip of the Week ..... Smoothie Time!

For a great healthy snack-toss a few ice cubes, yogurt and juice in to the blender-let your kids help. Try these combinations:

Red & White: 4 strawberries, 1 banana, 1 container low fat yogurt, 1 cup orange juice

Cool Blue: 1½ cups fresh or frozen blueberries, low fat yogurt, 1 cup grape juice

Just Peachy: 1 cut up peach or 1 cup frozen peaches, low fat peach yogurt, ¾ cup orange juice.

Mrs. Victoria Myser, RN  
School Nurse