



Homestead Holler



FEBRUARY 2012

A Word From Our Principals



Greetings Parents!



For the month of December, we raised \$39.40 in Box Tops For Education. Please continue to cut out the Box Tops and send them in with your child.

If you would like to volunteer to assist with tallying the monthly Box Tops, please contact Mrs. Lucas at 412-464-2604 Ext. 362

Happy New Year! We hope this newsletter finds you in great spirits. We have officially begun our countdown to the PSSA! You will be happy to know that we are putting practices and opportunities in place to make sure your children are prepared to do their best on the test. For example, Saturday School tutoring is available to students in grades 3 through 8 to help prepare them for the PSSAs. You will receive more information in your child's Thursday folder. Our teachers are dedicated and focused on making sure your child is proficient in all academic areas. However, we still cannot do this without your support. Please check homework and review skills with your child on a weekly basis.

Progress reports were sent home 2 weeks ago. Hopefully you have had time to review your child's progress report. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's grades please do not hesitate to schedule a conference with your child's teacher. We have high expectations for your child, that is why we (Homestead and Parents) must communicate and work together so that your child maximizes his or her learning capabilities.

Kudos to our students who participated in the Future City Competition: *TaeAjah Cannon, Tiger Weaver, Nepheir Valentino, Chet Harrison, Breeonia Prioleau, Deja Russell, Tyra Geletko, and Steven Robinson.* Mr. Hengelbrok and his team won "**Best Indoor Environment**" out of 20 schools. We are so proud of them!!

Important Updates:

- Remember to check the news and listen for phone alerts with inclement weather updates regarding school closings/delays. Please make sure that your current contact information is up to date.
- Homestead Hoops will start on *February 4th for boys in grades 4th – 8th*
- Support our SCC flower sale fundraiser for Valentine's Day. Flowers will be sold for \$1.00. Please look for additional information in the Thursday Red Folders.

Warm Regards,
Mr. Robert Bischoff - Principal
rbischoff@propelschools.org

Dr. Exley Horton Warren – Associate Principal
ewarren@propelschools.org

Make a Minute for Math

I hope you had a wonderful holiday. The 100th day of school was January 31st. Your students celebrated in class with their classmates, but below you can find ways to talk about the 100th day of school at home! Now that we are into February, we are gearing up for the PSSAs that will be in March! We will have one more 4sight test before the PSSA, held on Feb 21st and 22nd. Please make sure that your child is here both of those days on time, as we start testing at 8:45am. We will be having a PSSA information session at the February SCC meeting. We will provide information to parents about what your child can expect for the testing week, as well as what you can do to prepare your child for that week. Thanks for all that you do — we couldn't do this without you!

-Ms. Mahon, Propel Homestead Math Coach

Fun math computer sites to play at home:
<http://www.primarygames.com/math.htm>
<http://www.sumdog.com/>

Math book to check out this Month:
(K-3) Fancy Nancy: The 100th Day of School (I Can Read Book 1) by: Jane O'Connor
(4-8) G Is for Googol: A Math Alphabet Book by: David M. Schwartz

Math activities to do at home
Race for \$1.00 Game: (K-3)

You will need: 30 pennies, 20 dimes, 1 quarter, 1 dollar, 2 dice and a partner. Take turns rolling. The sum of the dice is the number of pennies you take. When you have 5 pennies, trade them in for a nickel. When you have 2 nickels, trade them in for a dime, etc. The first person to \$1.00 wins the game!

Junk Mail project: (k-8)

Have your child sort your mail into 'junk' mail and regular mail (decide if magazines, coupons, etc. count as 'junk'). Every day for a week have your child put the junk mail in a pile and record the total with tallies, a chart or a graph. Ask questions about the mail like: "Is there more junk mail or regular mail today? How much more?" "How many pieces of mail did we get in all today, this week? For older students, ask questions like: "If we get the same amount of junk mail each week, how much will we have in a month? A year?" "What fraction of the mail is junk mail? Is it more than half?" Enjoy spending time together!



Dates to Remember:

Carnegie Museum Fieldtrip
Thursday, Feb. 2nd

Homestead Hoops
Saturday, Feb. 4th
12:00—2:00pm

Flower Sale Fundraiser
Feb. 6th thru Feb. 10th

Boys and Girls Club
7th & 8th Grades

Valentine Formal Dance
Friday, February 10th
5:30 —8:00 pm

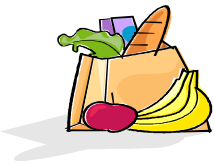
In-Service Day—No School
Monday, Feb. 20th

SCC Meeting
Tuesday, Feb. 21st
5:45pm—7:00pm

Celebration of Learning
Wednesday, February 29th
9:00 am

Market Day

Our next Market Day order will be available in March. Please check your child's Thursday Red Folder for the next order form or visit our website at www.propelschools.org for additional information.



Parent Cheerleaders Needed !!!!



Propel Homestead is looking for parents who are interested in becoming a Parent Cheerleader for the first Parent vs. Staff Basketball game.

Please contact Ms. Corin-aldi at 412-464-2604 Ext. 100 with any questions that you may have regarding becoming a Parent Cheerleader. Additional information will also be available at the next SCC Meeting on Tuesday, February 21st at 5:45pm—7:00pm.

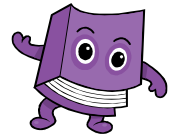


Ridiculously Rad Reading Corner

It was great to see so many in attendance at our 1st Annual Winter Fest back in December! Thank you so much for your contributions to making the day a success; your participation and donations were greatly appreciated! We took our third set of 4sights the second week of January and our scores continue to improve, showing the growth and hard work that your children are putting forth. Be sure to ask your child if he or she made the 80% club.

Ridiculously Rad Readers for the month of January:

- 100 Step Challengers (*25 Hours of Reading*): Stormy Stackhouse, DeAndre Freeman Johnson, Braelon Williams
- 200 Step Challengers (*50 Hours of Reading*): Elgin Oliver, Jaishon Hawkins, Isaiah Richards
- 300 Step Challengers (*75 Hours of Reading*): Jaishon Hawkins, DoRon Dorsey, Armani Bates
- 400 Step Challengers (*100 Hours of Reading*): Taylor Watts
- 500 Step Challengers (*125 Hours of Reading*):
- 600 Step Challengers (*150 Hours of Reading*):
- 700 Step Challengers (*175 Hours of Reading*): Jaumair Garland



All students will earn a jeans day pass for reaching the 300 step milestone, a dress down day pass for reaching 400, and an ice cream sundae for reaching the 500th reading step.

Great job everyone and keep on reading!

Mrs. Frazier, Reading Coach

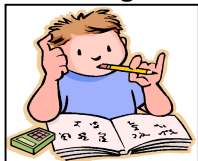
Counselor's Corner

With the PSSA tests quickly approaching, here are a few helpful hints to encourage your child to develop effective study habits in order to become a lifelong learner.

10 Ways to Help Build Your Child's Study Skills

1. Set up a regular study time in a quiet, comfortable place where your child won't have distractions.
2. Encourage daily study, even if there's no homework. Reading and reviewing lessons will get your child in the habit of studying every day.
3. Make sure your child keeps track of assignments and has all the study tools needed for homework (i.e. pencils, scissors, lined paper, calculator, etc.).
4. Allow study breaks every 20 minutes or so, and offer nutritious snacks (such as fruits and vegetables).
5. Help your child break large tasks into several smaller ones in order to study more efficiently (example: instead of reading all at once, switch it up and do some math problems in between).
6. Have your child set goals before each assignment and organize study priorities to reach them.
7. Teach your child the value of being organized and keeping homework together.
8. Use study aides, such as quizzes, flash cards, and reading out loud to you. You can see your child's progress throughout the week by doing this.
9. Let your child know it's OK to ask teachers for help and that you're available, too.
10. Consider having your child study with a partner if it helps both of them to do better.

REMEMBER: Always reward your child's efforts to build study skills, not necessarily with material goods; praise goes a long way!



Kindergarten

Greetings from Kindergarten!

We have been very busy learning our letter names and sounds. We have also started reading and writing our **red words**! **Red words** are sight words that we sound out on our arms. When reading with your child for Hundred Book Challenge, have your child point out the **red words** that he or she knows! (Example: **the, and, to.**) Kindergarten also spent a week learning about penguins and made many connections through fiction and non-fiction books. We celebrated National Penguin Awareness Day (January 20th) by reading a non-fiction book about penguins and watching the movie "Happy Feet." Did you know that penguins can swim about 15 miles per hour?



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 or by calling 1-800-474-4777.

Our school ID number is: 5271.

1st Grade

Happy New Year! First grade started 2012 with a bang! In reading, we began to explore long vowels and the mean bully "bossy e". We learned a lot about penguins while studying fact and opinion and continue to discuss story elements. For writing, students are drafting an informational paragraph about penguins!



In math, we learned how to tell time to the hour and half hour as well as started to learn about place value using tens and ones. In science, we discovered how to measure weight using a balance and a scale. We also learned about the life and dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in social studies. Please continue to read each night with your child for at least 15 minutes. This will not only improve his or her reading ability but will also nurture a love for reading that all children should have!



2nd Grade

2011 was a wonderful year in second grade and great happenings are taking place in 2012 already!!! All of the students did an amazing job on their Holidays Around The World research! They worked hard on becoming experts of their location and holiday celebration! The students' growth in all subject areas has been outstanding! Please continue to work with them throughout the remainder of the school year. Also, please be on the look-out for conference sign up forms. We cannot wait to meet with you in March.

3rd Grade

2012 has started off well! Thank you to all who attended our first annual Winter Fest. Our students enjoyed having their families in the classroom. A special "Shout Out" to all the students who completed their Winter Break homework on time! Our students have completed the third round of 4Sight tests and are busy preparing for the next round of 4Sights which will take place on February 21st and 22nd.



This is the final 4 Sight before the PSSAs. In Humanities, we have been studying Martin Luther King's life and contributions to America. We continue to focus on skills and strategies in reading. In math, we are currently working on money and will be starting measurement soon. Please continue to make sure students are completing their nightly homework assignments.

As Winter continues and cold season is upon us, any donations of hand sanitizer and Kleenex would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,
Miss Fritzius and Mrs. Morris



SCC Flower Sale

The SCC will sponsor a Valentine's Day Flower Sale Fundraiser from Monday, February 6th thru Friday, February 10th. Carnations will be sold for \$1 and distributed along with a personalized note on Tuesday, February 14th. All proceeds will go towards the SCC Committee.

4th Grade

During the second six weeks of this trimester, 4th grade students have the opportunity to be involved in health class. Through this class, students will define health and how to apply it to their lives. Students will also learn a strategy regarding how to make good decisions, going through a process where in they analyze different choices and outcomes of situations that they may encounter in their day-to-day lives. Finally, the 4th graders will learn about safety, which includes fire safety, how to handle inclement weather situations, as well as other situations where developing good, safe habits can positively affect their lives. 4B will participate in this class from Jan. 17-Feb.3. 4A will follow up with the class from Feb. 6-Feb.17. Please look for and sign the permission slip for this beneficial class. If you have any questions about the class, please contact Mr. Davidson via email at bdavidson@propelschools.org.

Also, the final round of 4Sight testing will take place this month. The 4th graders have done an excellent job growing on all these tests throughout the year! We want to thank all the parents and guardians for working with us as a team to continuously encourage all of our students to do their very best every day! Parent conferences will be held in early March. Please look for a sign-up sheet to come home around the middle of February.

We look forward to seeing all of you soon!

Mr. Laughton and Mrs. Wilson



5th Grade

Dear 5th Grade Parents/Guardians,

Happy Thursday! We hope that you are having a great end to your week. As you are aware, there is a lot of learning taking place in the 5th grade classrooms.

In 5th grade math, students are continuing the study of geometry. By the end of the chapter, students will be able to identify many geometric figures and transform them in the coordinate plane. In the coming month, we will begin our study of measurement. In order to increase proficiency in this area, I encourage you to have your child measure items at home using a ruler, measuring cup or other measuring tool. The extra practice will help them a great deal! In science, students are continuing their study of the human body. Over the next few weeks, we will be spending ample time learning about the digestive and circulatory systems.

In reading, we are reading our third novel *The Watsons Go to Birmingham* while learning about the Civil Rights Movement. We ended our informational essay unit in writing, and are now working on strengthening our persuasive skills. We have been writing three body paragraph essays since November, and are learning 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 settlements and development in America.

We hope you and your families had a very safe, warm, and joyful holiday season and are off to 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
bbrill@propelschools.org lsoeder@propelschools.org

6th grade

6th grade math is busy sharpening our skill of fractions. We are also adding and subtracting mixed numbers and becoming wizards as we begin to borrow from mixed numbers and represent different forms of numerical figures. Soon we will be visiting the Land of Angles, Sides, and Surfaces. Geometry is up NEXT! Geometry is all about shapes and their properties. If you like playing with objects, or like drawing, then geometry is for you! Plane geometry is about flat shapes like lines, circles, and triangles ... shapes that can be drawn on a piece of paper. Solid geometry is about 3-dimensional objects like cubes, prisms, and pyramids. We will explore degrees of various polygons and solve missing angles, including complementary, supplementary, vertical and the almighty transversal.

In science, we are learning about Energy, Machines, and Motion. We have constructed a battery out of zinc, copper, a grain of wheat, a light bulb, and cupric sulfate. We also discovered how a chemical reaction took place with the copper and the cupric sulfate. Finally, we are remembering to turn off all lights and unplug electrical cords when not in use. Our Energy Techs are watching ... we are checking classrooms daily to ensure proper usage of energy. You can take the same energy saving actions at home!



7th & 8th Grade

Math - Polygons and geometry have been the main focus in our 8th grade lessons. Students have been working with different angles and line measurements to determine their relationship to one another. This week we will work with a discovery lesson to identify different polygons, interior angles, and measurements. Keep up the great work, 8th grade.

Science—"What's a Matter?" in science class. Seventh graders are exploring the answer to this question. Students have recently started their new unit called "Properties of Matter" in which they will learn how much they "Heart Density!" Ask your seventh grader what that means! Meanwhile, eighth graders have been working with microscopes in their new unit entitled, "Organisms, From Macro to Micro." They are looking at parasitic wasps and California Black Worms under the microscope. Come mid-February eighth graders will be raising and studying Fast Plants and Cabbage White Butterflies.

Humanities 7th Grade— In 7th grade humanities class, students are finishing a poetry unit where they focused on appreciating, analyzing, and writing poetry. Our next stop is an African studies unit where we will study the development of cultures and economics in West Africa. Along with this unit, we will read a novel by Walter Dean Meyers called "The Glory Field," which centers around a family during the Civil War who find strength and guidance in the stories of their ancestors.

Humanities 8th Grade—For this month, in 8th grade humanities, we are working through our unit on WWII. The unit has been divided into four sections. The sections are separated into the causes of WWII, Axis aggression during the beginning phase of the war, the Allied response to the Axis aggression, and finally the conclusion of the war. We take notes for each section on Monday of each week. Then, the class works through activities for the rest of the week covering key information/battles/etc. that were introduced in the PowerPoint. The literary aspect of this unit will require students to complete a persuasive essay to President Truman taking a side as to whether the U.S. should or should not drop the atomic bomb.

NURSE'S CORNER

Happy February!

Thank you to all those who donated to our Mitten Tree. Many of our "Courageous Pacers" are much warmer during their walks at lunch because of your generosity.



February is National Children's Dental Health Month.

National Children's Dental Health Month is sponsored by the American Dental Association (ADA) to raise awareness about the importance of good dental hygiene. It is vital that students adopt good habits at a young age to ensure a lifetime of excellent oral health.

Regular brushing, flossing, and visits to the dentist are the keystones of healthy teeth and gums. There are many resources online where you can find fun, dental activities.

[LearntobeHealthy.org](http://www.learntobehealthy.org) has interactive games in the *Decay? No Way!* kit, with Sheriff Tuffy Tooth. The ADA has coloring pages, word searches, mazes and puzzles. Additionally, the National Museum of Dentistry created Mouth Power, where students can "discover the power of a healthy smile."

Please visit

<http://www.ada.org/prof/events/featured/ncdh> to access the FREE downloadable resources.

Just a reminder- the PA Department of Health has mandated that children in KDG, 3rd and 7th grade have a dental exam. If your child has had an exam recently, please provide the school with a report as soon as you can. We have extra private dental exam forms in the school office. We will be scheduling school dental exams shortly. Please look for letters to come home regarding school physical and dental exams.

**Mrs. Victoria Myser, RN
School Nurse**

