



Penguin Times

NEWS FROM THE STEAM MAGNET SCHOOL

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March 2020

March Events



- 3/3 Pre-K Family Workshop: "Recognizing & Expressing Feelings at Home & School", 2:45-3:45 PM
- 3/5 Book Fair
Early Dismissal, 11:20-11:35 AM
Parent Teacher Conferences, 12:30-2:30 PM, & 4:30-7:30 PM
- 3/6 Book Fair
Kindergarten Reading Celebration with Families, 8:30-9:00 AM
- 3/9 Book Fair
- 3/10 Book Fair
- 3/11 Book Fair
PTA Meeting, 8:20-8:50 AM
- 3/12 Book Fair
- 3/17 Pre-K Non-Attendance Day
- 3/25 Grade 3-5 NYS ELA Exam
- 3/26 Grade 3-5 NYS ELA Exam
- 3/27 Grade 3-5 NYS ELA Exam
- 3/31 SLT Meeting, 4:00 PM

Changing Our Views on Mathematics

by Ms. Gezlev, *Instructional Coach*

Mathematics instruction is ever evolving, leading to various recommendations about how to best help children with math. Most recently, we stress the importance of showing clear understanding of concepts, or building conceptual knowledge, as more important than solving problems.

The reality of it is that mathematics has not changed, but our beliefs in how children need to show their understanding of mathematics has. Additionally, the way we, as parents, learned to prove we 'get the math' is very different than the way our children are asked to prove their mathematical knowledge. This often leads to math frustration for parents (and students). Erin Anderson, a sociologist at Washington College, states "I think math is something that's always kind of parceled out—that you're either good at math or not good at math." This feeling is especially true with today's expectations of math! But the reality of it is, since we didn't do it this way, proving it the way we expect children to prove it is very different than the way we are most comfortable with. However, numerous studies have shown that if we express to children that we believe in them and that we are invested in the math they are doing, the more successful they will be!

When in doubt, visit online websites, such as enVision Math, for tutorials or contact your child's teacher, explain what was challenging. There are also so many other ways that you can help your child grasp simple math concepts. Here are some suggestions:

- For preschoolers, simply playing a board game with dice or sorting toys by different rules builds early math understanding
- Take time to find math in the world around you, ask questions such as:
 - o How many windows do you think there are in this building?
 - o Count a few, look for patterns, figure out how you would decide how many there are.
 - o Look at a bookshelf and ask, "How many of those smaller books do you think would fit on that shelf, compared to the larger books below it?"
 - o Engage in really straightforward activities that get children thinking about how they see mathematics in everything around them and get them into the habit of looking at the world through a mathematical lens (tiles and patterns, area rugs, bottles on shelves etc)
- Encourage children to communicate by explaining their thinking as they interact with important mathematics...
 - o What makes you think that?
 - o What if there were....instead of?
 - o How did you solve that?
 - o Can you show me another way?
 - o Can you show me with a drawing?
 - o Can you show me with parts/objects?

Remember, the math has stayed the same, it's all about how we get there and explain it.

A Note from Dean Cruz

Hello PS 201 Family,
I hope this newsletter finds everyone staying warm and enjoying winter activities. The end of the second marking period has come to a close and you and your child will be able to participate in Parent Teacher Conferences. This is a great time to sit down and praise student accomplishments and set goals as they move into the second half of the school year. I encourage parents to meet with and contact teachers if you have any questions or concerns.

S.E.L / Attendance News

Getting your child to school

Does your child give you a hard time about coming to school? Does your child say, "I don't want to go to school" or take too long getting ready in the morning? It's a common problem! Here are some tips to help curb the bad habit before it turns into a serious concern.

- First, make sure you understand the importance of your child being at school on time every day. Even a few tardies really add up! Say your child is only 10 minutes late each school day. Not a big deal, right? Well, that adds up to 1,750 minutes = almost 30 hours of school missed in one year! THAT IS A BIG DEAL!
- Determine any school or home barriers that are preventing your child from coming to school. Are they prepared? Do they connect with their teacher? Do they feel happy at school? Do they have a routine for bedtime and morning at home?

- Communicate with your child's teacher, school counselor, or principal to help your child feel better about coming to school. Once any simple barriers are removed, make it a priority to get them to school on time. Do not make or accept any excuses!
- Routines are key. Bedtime should be consistent to assure enough rest. Most elementary-aged children need between 8-10 hours. Adults should set the bedtime.
- Develop a morning routine that works. If you or your child is constantly rushing to get out the door, everyone needs to get up at least 15 minutes earlier. Rushing is not a good way to start the day.

Regards,
Mr. Cruz

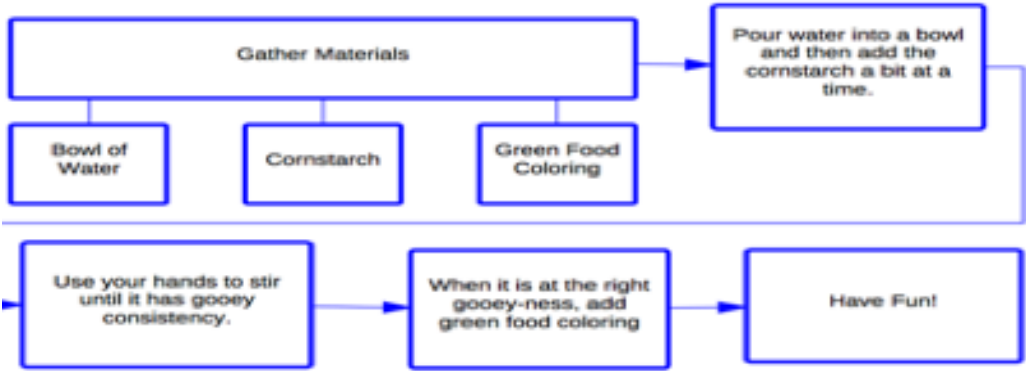


STEAM Success

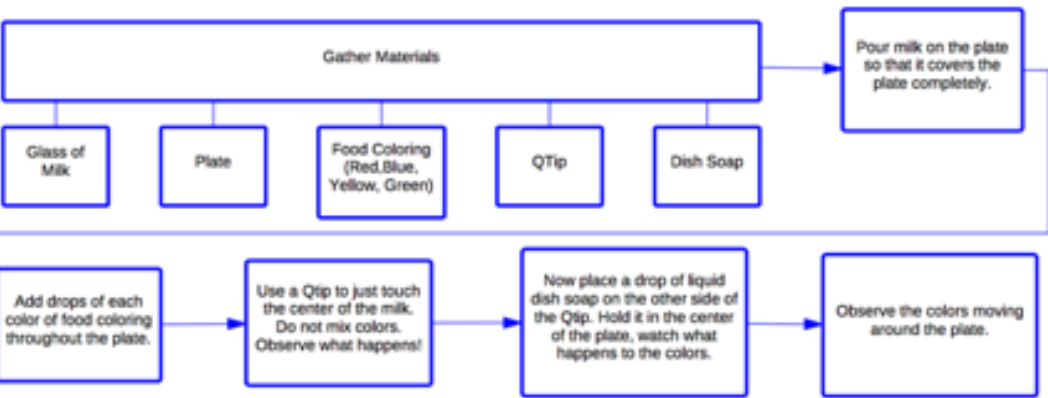
by Mrs. Gehebe, STEAM Teacher

Happy Birthday Dr. Suess! In honor of Dr. Suess, here are some fun and creative STEM ways to celebrate:

1. Read Bartholomew and the Ooblek. Students will get messy with this fun and exciting project. Students can make their own Ooblek. Here are the steps to making Ooblek:



2. Read One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish. After reading, have fun mixing colors and milk. Here are the steps to this fun and easy hands-on activity:

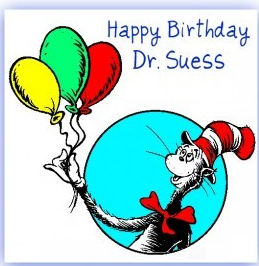


If you have any questions about any of these activities, or want to learn more activities for STEM at home, please do not hesitate to visit me in the STEAM lab on Tuesdays during parent engagement time! Looking forward to seeing you all at parent teacher conferences!

Counselor's Corner

by Ms. Malcolm, Guidance Counselor

This month’s SEL Virtue is Perseverance. Having perseverance means that when you are facing a challenge, you use your mind and your body to overcome it. Perseverance means you are able to wait and work through difficulties, whether they have to do with your mind, your body, or your emotions. This time of year, our students have a lot on their plates. As teachers are preparing our 3rd to 5th graders for the NYS testing, it could be stressful for them. In the past, we at P.S. 201 have introduced our students to the art of Mindfulness. Mindfulness simply means to be present in the moment and have a sense of inner peace. Mindfulness can be an effective technique that can help our students develop a deeper sense of self-awareness, better control of their emotions and improved concentration. Within the past few weeks, I have practiced the “art” of just breathing. Control and purposeful breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Our students have had different responses. Some were able to “just breathe”, sit still and listen to the sounds of water waves in the ocean. While others had some challenges with the exercise. Having thoughts of what assignment they had coming up, waiting for school to end or the snack that they had waiting in their lunchboxes. As I explained to the students, it takes some practice to just sit still and stay focused on an object or just close your eyes. Mindfulness is a gift to oneself. It is a way to be able to unplug, clear your mind and just be at peace in your mind for as little as 60 seconds. I have suggested to our students that they can find one minute during the day to just practice purposeful breathing and giving their brain a break. Research have proved that over time, Mindfulness will make a big difference in the way our students regulate their emotions as well as their behavior. Once the behavior is regulated, the attitudes will shift to a more positive one and the academics will improve significantly. This method is not an automatic “fix-it” for everyone, however, it helps our students recognize the need to just be still and be in the moment.



In the Gym

By Mr. Degia,
Physical Education Teacher

As the month of February wraps up, we are beginning a new unit of basketball and continuing through the first few weeks of March. This unit focuses on individual skills, as well as how to work as a team. This unit teaches students on how to manipulate an object (a basketball), while practicing the basic skills of the game (dribbling, passing, and shooting.

Students will continue to develop their hand-eye coordination, spatial awareness, and body control by applying it to different activities and games. Upper grade students will work on advanced skills that include moving in various pathways and speeds with the basketball ball while under control. Students will also learn different variations of passing, proper footwork, and shooting from various distances. Students will develop their object manipulation skills by maintaining control of their body and ball, which will result in precision and accuracy at each skill.



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