

Parkside Penguin Press

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Thoughts from the principal

Hello Parkside Families,

As I write this on our second snow day this week, I'm trying to think of the positives of this weather. This is what I've come up with; it's a great time to curl up with a great book and read!

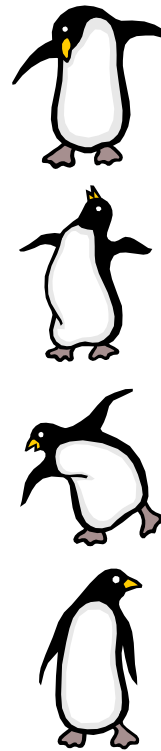
We've kicked off not 1, but 2 new reading incentives for the children. I hope you have heard about and seen the paperwork for both. We are continuing our work on the 7 keys to comprehension with more opportunities for the children to practice them. I can't say enough how important those strategies are to becoming a top notch reader. The children know that to earn the movie, those activities

MUST be done at home and turned in by April 30 to attend the movie. Now is the time to hit it hard.

The second incentive involves any kind of reading for pleasure. Students must complete 6 hours a month and write in their minutes on the calendar they will receive. Each month they will receive a block of ice to put in their class igloo. Of course, reading more than 6 hours is even better. Top readers at each grade level will get a gift card to Barnes and Noble at the end of the contest.

So, stay warm, find a good book, and enjoy!

Mrs. Shelly Erickson



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- **Feb. 2: PTO meeting, 6:30 p.m., multipurpose room.**
- **Feb. 5: 4th, 5th Winter music program, 6:30 p.m. in the gym.**
- **Feb. 6: Scrip orders due.**
- **Feb. 9: Noodles & Co. fundraiser.**
- **Feb. 13: Class parties start at 2:15 p.m.**
- **Feb. 16: No school, President's Day.**

School transitions

It can be tough for any student to return to the school schedule, especially after a long winter break.

We are seeing some students having a bit of anxiety as they adjust back to their school day routine.

To help in this process,

make dropping off your child as smooth as possible by putting them on the bus, and dropping them off at the sidewalk of the car lanes.

If you are running late, please bring your student to the office and sign them in. We ask that you do not walk

them to class; this makes saying good-bye more difficult for your child, and can upset children who are already in class making the transition into calendar time and their daily work.

Quick transitions help to start the day off right.

24-HOUR CALL IN LINE

- **For your convenience we have a 24-hour absence call-in line. Just dial (309) 862-5015 to report an absence.**

School Improvement for 2008-2009

As we head into February, this really is the prime time for learning. Students have received nine to ten weeks of direct guided reading instruction at their level. Many teachers assessed students before we left for winter break.

When we assess students using the Reading A-Z benchmark books, it's a two part process. Students first must be able to decode with very few errors. Then, after they read the book,

they are asked questions. This is done in an oral format, and the students are not given choices. The questions range from direct recall to inferential. Students are NOT allowed to look back at the book, but must remember what they've read.

This probably explains why some students are not testing as high as they may have on other tests. In real life, of course students can look back at information. However, remembering

what one has read is an important skill. It's more efficient to remember what you've read rather than having to go back and reread. As our students grow and they have increasing demands placed on them, remembering what they've read will be increasingly important.

After all, reading is not just calling words, it's THINKING. Our goal at Parkside continues to focus on this important skill.

PBIS Update

Responsibility, respect and safety; these are the linchpins of PBIS at Parkside. Last month I asked you to review the rules with your children, as we do on a regular basis here at school.

This month I would appreciate you talking about hallway behavior with them.

As we continue to be inside for recess, we have many children moving through the halls at the same time. As you can visualize,

it gets very

Schools that fully implement PBIS have a higher rate of academic success!

crowded. When children run in the hallways, it makes for a VERY unsafe situation. Please stress with your children that they need to walk at all times, not just when an adult is watching them. Our halls are often wet from snow and boots, so slipping is a very real possibility, as is running into someone. Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment for all!

Thank You!

In December I asked for volunteers to help us level classroom libraries. Mr. LerBlance really came through for us! He spent several days in our teacher workroom at the computer.

We cannot thank him enough. We do still have more books that need to be leveled, so we'll happily take any other parents willing to give their time. It's a huge help!

Parking Lot Reminder

During snowy or rainy times, we experience something my husband calls "bad weather parking." We're seeing it here. People are back to blocking the entryway by parking to wait to pull up and get their child.

Please, please, please do NOT do this! If you get to school and all of the parking is taken in front of the

building, you *must* pull into the lot and park your vehicle. When you block the entrance, it creates an unsafe situation for others. Cars cannot safely enter our driveway at all. Or, they go around and drive in the Out lane. I am amazed we have not had a bad accident.

Let's not wait for that to happen. Please follow the guidelines for the safety of all, but especially our children.

PTO News

From our PTO Board

Our next PTO meeting is Monday, Feb. 2, at 6:30 p.m., in the multi-purpose room. Child-care is provided at no cost.

We would like to encourage all Family Fun Night committee members to attend.

FFN will be here soon

and we would like to be sure that everyone's plans are moving along smoothly.

Our next Noodles & Co. fundraiser is Monday, Feb. 9. Just eat at the Normal location that day between 4 and 9 p.m., and a portion of the sales will be donated to Parkside

PTO. Please be sure to put this date on your calendar so that Parkside can benefit.

Another great way to support your PTO and show your Parkside Penguin Pride is to purchase a Parkside car magnet. They are only \$5 each and are available by sending a note to school with

your child along with your payment. You can also purchase a magnet by contacting Melissa Traum at 451-3224. If you would

like to learn more about your PTO and PTO volunteer opportunities, please contact one of the PTO officers. We look forward

to hearing from you. Please remember the Parkside Challenge this year....donate at least one hour of your time to our school!

PTO Board members

Co-presidents: Jenny Demosthenes, 828-4662, and Elizabeth Tomera, 454-8349

Treasurer: Melissa Traum, 451-3224

Secretary: Jennifer Barlow, 888-9777

Did you happen to take digital photos during Christmas class parties? We would love to add them to the yearbook.

Please feel free to send your photos to:

pspix2007@gmail.com



NEWS FROM OUR NURSE

Important....

Public Act 93-946 requires all Illinois children in kindergarten, second and sixth grade to have an oral health exam. Each child shall present proof of exam by a dentist prior to May 15 of the school year.

Note: **CHANGE OF POLICY**

Beginning next school year, 2009-2010, a new **state mandate** requires kindergarten, sixth and ninth grade students to have proof of current immunizations before the first day of school. An appointment after school begins to have the shots

done is not sufficient. Students without proof of immunizations will not be allowed to start school.

Please call me with any questions at 452-8031 or e-mail me at

Birsapj@uni5.org

Thank you,

Paula Birsa BSN, RN

Upcoming Important Dates

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Feb. 5 — 4th and 5th winter music program, 6:30 p.m. in the gym

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Feb. 16 — No school, President's Day.

We have three pair of prescription glasses in the office. Do they belong to your child?

Meal Card System....

Our new card system has been in place for a while now and seems to be running smoothly.

When adding money to your student's account, you can send in cash in an envelope with your child's name on it, a check made to Unit 5 Food Service, or make a credit card

payment through your online Skyward account.

For students who eat breakfast, the charge remains \$1 for the meal, and that amount is subtracted from your meal card account. Students are no longer required to bring in \$1 each day; the money comes out of the same account.

If you need your Skyward account login and password, please contact us in the office at 862-5014 for that information.

Your Skyward account lets you see your meal account as well as grade and attendance information on your children.