

Principal's Update

December 3, 2010

Older Updates Can Be Found on the *For Parents Page*

Dear Clifton Families,

Our staff members truly appreciate the high level of parental support we receive at Clifton ES! It is wonderful to see parents working alongside teachers and students throughout our building, and we feel very fortunate to have this high level of parental involvement. Thank you for your support!

Class Interruptions

Teachers have asked me to protect their instructional time by reducing the number of disruptions during the school day. Classes have been interrupted by "surprise" visits from well-intentioned parents who just want to see their child or have a few words with the teacher; calls from the office for forgotten items such as lunches, homework, or band or strings instruments; or non-emergency phone calls immediately prior to instruction. When there is an interruption, it takes precious time for the teacher and students to refocus their attention on the learning activity. Sometimes students are testing or presenting an oral report, and it is disruptive for them when someone else enters the room or a call comes over the intercom for a forgotten item, birthday treat, or early dismissal. For these reasons, please let the teacher know in advance if you would like to help in the classroom or speak to the teacher. The teacher will let you know the best time for a visit. Also, if your child has forgotten something at home, the office staff will put a note in the teacher's box. Students may check in the office at lunch for lunches or birthday treats or before band or strings for instruments that parents have brought. Homework will be placed in teachers' boxes, and it will be considered late. Finally, if your child will be dismissed early, please send a note to the teacher so that the teacher is aware of the change in plans. Thanks so much for your assistance in these matters.

Finalists from Clifton in Washington Post Contest

Two Clifton students, Elena (Clifton ES) and Delaney (Willow Springs ES) are finalists in the Washington Post Annual Wrapping Paper Contest! You can vote for their designs at <http://postfun.washingtonpost.com/node/587>. Elena is #11, and Delaney is #8. Congratulations to Elena and Delaney!

Innovation and Invention Fair--February 15-16

Clifton students have an exciting opportunity to innovate an existing product or invent a new one by using a creative problem solving process employed by many innovative companies and inventors. A parent overview will be held December 9 at 7 p.m. Students will get started at the student workshop on December 16. They will also have workbooks to help them work through the creative problem solving process. Students in grades 4-6 who earn a gold standard may participate in a field trip to present their projects during the Kids Inquiry Conference (KIC) later in the spring. Information will be sent home in Tuesday folders next week. Check out <http://www.cliftonpta.org/> for resources and more information. There's also a cool video at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xfes9sNwHMc>.

Many thanks to Battelle Memorial Institute for a generous contribution of \$2,500 in support of the Innovation and Invention Fair! Battelle is the world's largest non-profit research and development organization and is supporting the stimulation of STEM education initiatives.

Book Fair

Kudos to our librarian, Brandi Gragg, and her team of parent volunteers for organizing and managing another very successful book fair at Clifton Elementary School. Thanks to all of the students and parents who supported the fair by purchasing items and participating in our family night event.

Volunteers Needed for Grandparents' Breakfast

The PTA is looking for volunteers to help with this year's Grandparents' Breakfast, scheduled for Dec. 22nd. Help with shopping, decorating, or hosting would all be appreciated. Please contact Deborah Forbes at deb_forbes@hotmail.com.

Something Missing?

There are many crock pots, casserole dishes, large platters, and serving pieces that have been left from the PTA soup and salad lunch and various grade level activities. Please pick up your kitchen items. Items that are still at school by January 5 will be donated.

It's Cold Outside!

As winter approaches, it is important to ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Please make sure your child is wearing long pants and a coat or warm jacket on cold days. Thanks!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- 12/2-12/9-Hanukah
- 12/9-Innovation and Invention Fair Parent Overview, Clifton ES, 7 p.m.
- 12/10-6th Grade Band & Strings Field Trip to Robinson
- 12/13-PTA MEETING CANCELED
- 12/14-Interims for 2nd quarter go home in Tuesday folders
- 12/15-Grade 1 Winter Celebration at 1:15, Pod 1
- 12/16-Kindergarten Winter Celebrations, 11:15 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
- 12/16-Strolling Concert Band, 1 p.m.
- 12/16-Innovation and Invention Fair Student Kick-off Workshop, 3:45-5 p.m.
- 12/17-Grade 5 Winter Celebration, 9:30 a.m., Pods 1 & 2
- 12/17-Grade 2 Winter Celebration, 12:00 p.m., Pod 1
- 12/17-Grade 4 Winter Celebration, 12:30 p.m., Pod 2
- 12/21-Grade 3 Winter Celebration, 12:30 p.m., Pod 2
- 12/22-Grandparents' Breakfast
- 12/22-Early dismissal at 1:45 p.m., AM & PM K on Monday schedule
- 12/23 through 1/2-Winter Vacation
- 1/3-School Resumes
- 2/15-Innovation and Invention Fair Judging
- 2/16-Innovation and Invention Fair Open House, 7 p.m.
- 2/22-23-Snow Dates for Innovation and Invention Fair
- 5/13-PTA Basketball Game vs. Oakview PTA @ Robinson

Warm wishes for a fabulous weekend!

Renee C. Miller
Principal