

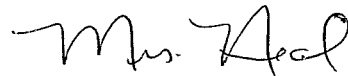
Lion's Den Newsletter

January 2015

NORDSTROM ELEMENTARY 1425 E. DUNNE AVENUE 408-201-6440

The holidays are often perfectly imperfect. Just accept that fact. Decide what are the one or two things you want out of the holidays then organize your events around your core values. If we can forget all the high expectations and live in the moment, it's often the small things that will be the most memorable.

All of us at Nordstrom wish you and your family the most memorable of holidays yet. See you in 2015!!



The Great Kindness Challenge

Nordstrom's upper grade students who are part of the Expect Respect program from Project Cornerstone will be promoting "The Great Kindness Challenge" in January. For more information, please check out the website at: greatkindnesschallenge.org. The students will be encouraging all of Nordstrom to participate in our week of kindness on January 26-30.

Responsibility Project

How do we help our children to learn the value of responsibility and become contributing members of society? One way to encourage responsible thought is to discuss things that are happening in the news, on the internet, in the community and talk about their influence on the choices people make.

A website developed by the insurance company Liberty Mutual is devoted to discussing the virtue of responsibility. It is called The Responsibility Project (www.responsibilityproject.com). For parents there is a section devoted to issues relevant to kids and family. Such issues include proposed laws like banning school bake sales, cheating in school, green living and other topics of political or cultural interest.

Readers have the opportunity to share the site motto: "Explore what it means to do the right thing." The topics are meant to help you clarify your own thoughts on responsible living and inspire you to have rewarding conversations with your children. As you and your children talk through the website issues you may become attuned to new developments in our own community and foster deeper discussions in your family.

As our students become further immersed in common core, one of the most important concepts is critical thinking and the ability to communicate. Putting these two pieces together is a skill that you can help your child to master. Whether you use sites like The Responsibility Project or just issues you and your children have an interest in, creating these conversations will improve your child's common core skills and build everlasting memories for you both.

Principal's Coffee Meeting

We will only have a few days back after the break until our next Principal's Coffee Meeting so we wanted to put short reminder in the newsletter so you can mark it early on your calendar. We will put out a flyer that first Monday of our return too.

Principal's Coffee - Wednesday Jan. 7th - 7:50 AM - 5th grade focus

Let Started on Reading to your Children

Reading to your children should start early, really early. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends starting as soon as your children are born. Reading stimulates brain development and language skills. It also fosters a closer emotional bond between parents and children. Follow these tips:

Read Widely - Infants respond to voices around them, so start out by reading anything that's handy, sports pages or cookbooks will even do.

Ask Questions - Even at the toddler age, get him or her involved. Ask what he or she thinks will happen next or why a character behaved that way. You'll start teaching some basic critical thinking skills and you'll make the reading experience more enjoyable.

Read Everyday - Make reading a regular activity. Don't just limit it to bedtime. Bring a book with you to the doctor's office or when waiting for older brother's or sister's games or activities to end.

The Common Core State Standards and Parents and Guardians

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) provide a practical way to prepare children for the challenges of a constantly changing world - by learning step-by-step the real-world skills they need for career and college. California's children will receive a world-class education that's consistent from school to school, and graduate ready to contribute to the future of our state and our country.

California is putting these standards to work, using them as the foundation for remodeling our education system. The standards keep the best of what we have, but replace outdated ways of learning with a clear focus on the key knowledge and skills students need, and provide teachers the time to teach them well.

Like an orchestra learning a challenging new symphony, bringing these standards to life in our schools will take time and energy. These standards provide every part of our education system the same sheet music - with the clear goals of career and college readiness for all.

California is a member of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). The consortium is developing new tests that will measure student progress. You may learn more about the new tests at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/smarterbalanced.asp>

Here are two websites that are helpful to parents about CCSS:

Achieve the Core : <http://achievethecore.org/common-core-intro-for-parents>

Engage New York: www.engage.org/parent-and-family-resources

January Events:

1-5 School Resumes
 1-7 Principal's Coffee - 5th Grade 7:50 AM
 1-9 HSC Meeting - 8:00 AM
 1-12 ELAC - 2:15 PM
 1-19 MLK Holiday - No School
 1-26 School Site Council - 2:15 PM

February Events:

2-6 6th Grade Panoramic Picture
 2-6 HSC Meeting - 8:00 AM
 2-9 thru 2-13 6th Grade Science Camp
 2-9 ELAC - 6:00 PM
 2-16 thru 2-20 President's Week, No School
 2-23 School Site Council - 2:15 PM