



Lion's Den Newsletter

December 2015 / January 2016

Principal's Message

Happy Holidays from Nordstrom Lion's Staff! The holiday season is upon us and the hustle and bustle is beginning. As the holiday rush begins, our busy schedules can take over. Our wish is that we can take the time to pause and enjoy the season with our loved ones. Reading those favorite holiday books, a reconnection with friends, or just a fun evening of games with the family are gifts that are treasured and remembered.

Nordstrom Launches CS First

CS First is a free program that increases student access and exposure to computer science (CS) education through an after-school program. All clubs are run by teachers and/or community volunteers.

Our materials:

- Are completely free and available online
- Are targeted at students in grades 3rd-6th (ages 8-12)
- Involve block-based coding using Scratch and are themed to attract students with varied interests

Our first club will start in January with Mrs. DeVillez as the teacher leader for 3rd and 4th graders. The club will be a storytelling club where student will use the computer to design their own stories, create and share their own animations, and learn how technology is used in the film and media industry. In this afterschool club students will bring their stories to life on the computer and share them with others. They will develop characters and dialogue, build intriguing plots, and use computer-generated effects to add excitement, mystery, and interactivity to their stories. Club members will combine classic elements of storytelling, like characterization, premise, dialogue, and setting, with computer programming. The audience won't just read these stories – they'll experience them. Space is limited to 25 students. If more than 25 students sign up by the deadline we will use a lottery system to select students.

Look for the information flyer in your Friday folders. I have attached a link to a video about CS First. It is based on a middle school experience, but it will still give you an overview of the program.

<http://storage.googleapis.com/files.cs-first.com/promo.mp4>

Instructional Rounds

December 10th our school will be observed by three other schools in our district. The purpose of the observation is for teachers and administrators to grow in our profession so that we can serve the needs of our students here at Nordstrom. The staff has chosen our focus area to be: **Effective communication and oral expression using appropriate academic vocabulary**. Using a high academic register, it is one of the strongest indicators of how well the students are internalizing the content. Further, students will become more empowered to communicate about their learning, be stronger critical thinkers and problem solvers, and we will strengthen our learning community school wide with a centralized focus. We are very excited to share our learning and our growth by both the teachers and the students at Nordstrom.

Attendance

A missed school day is a lost opportunity for students to learn. Chronic student absence reduces even the best teacher's ability to provide learning opportunities. Students who attend school regularly have been shown to achieve at higher levels than students who do not have regular attendance. This relationship between attendance and achievement may appear early in a child's school career. A recent study looking at young children found that absenteeism in kindergarten was associated with negative first grade outcomes such as greater absenteeism in subsequent years and lower achievement in reading, math, and general knowledge.

Please be our partners by having your students attend school regularly and on time.

Student drop off and pick up: Luckily the construction is over on Dunne Ave.! We are still experiencing difficulties though with the drive through. Unfortunately, the drive through is not a place to park and wait for your students. This is causing terrific back-ups in the mornings and afternoons. If your child is not ready for pick-up or needs assistance, please park and come to the school rather than snarl the flow of traffic.

Upcoming Events

December

- 1 - 4 Book Fair
- 4 Home & School Club Meeting, MPR, 8:00am
- 7 School Site Council, 2:15pm, RC
- 18 Lion's Den,
Spirit Day - Pajama Day

21 - 31 No School, Holiday Break

January

- 1 **No School, Happy New Year!**
 - 4 Welcome Back to School
(First day back from Holiday)
 - 8 Lion's Den
 - 8 Home & School Club Meeting, MPR, 8:00am
-

Home and School News

Thanks to our incredibly generous and dedicated Nordstrom community, the Nordstrom Home & School Club has already achieved much this year. We have raised funds needed to send our 6th graders to Science Camp, raised \$34,000 through our Pumpkin Run event, purchased three new Smartboards, installed Chrome Boxes in 1-3rd grade classrooms, sent classes on several field trips, and hosted assemblies and author visits. Our students have participated in dynamic art education and learned anti-bullying strategies through the Project Cornerstone program. All of this would not have been possible without all of you. Thank you!



Donations please! Six Nordstrom families need a computer at home to be able to participate in our new computerized classroom environment. Homework is increasingly being assigned online and classwork is being done using the Internet. Use of a computer at home is a key tool to success in class. Small, lightweight Chromebooks are preferred. If you don't have one, Ebay.com lists 11.6-inch Samsung Chromebooks, ModelXE303C12 - A01US, for around \$110 delivered. Machines 5 years or

newer only. **Group donations are encouraged.** Thank you!



Food Baskets

It is especially appropriate at this time of the year to think of someone other than ourselves. MHUSD, MH Kiwanis Club, and the Community Christian church sponsor a program that gives food baskets to the needy. It is well organized and the baskets are distributed to those who are truly in need. If you would like to send food items (preferably canned goods) for the baskets, please send the item with your child or drop them off in the school office any time before December 16.