

W.L. MORSE December Newsletter



Message from Mrs. Fitzgerald



November was a most exciting month at Morse. We had much to celebrate and all of our celebrations focused on our Morse Code value, Love of Learning. On Friday, November 6th, classrooms across the building welcomed family and friends to share stories read and written by our students. Just last week, we were lucky to have many guests gather in classrooms and join us for our Thanksgiving assembly. During this special assembly, students, staff and guests gave thanks for all that we have learned. Students shared what they do to show that they love to learn and everyone left with new ideas about how to develop this value even more. Next time you are at Morse, please visit the Learning Cornucopia that was created by staff and students to commemorate this event.

We will be spending December reviewing our first two values: Respect and Love of Learning. We will start our next two values when we return from winter break.



To help families understand our new values program, here are answers to a few F.A.Q.s:

Q: What if a student is sad that he or she hasn't yet earned the bracelet?

A: Please know that you can encourage him or her to use the calendar (see attached) to find ways to earn the current bracelet. Please also reach out to your child's teacher or Mrs. Fitzgerald so that we can help him or her reach that goal.

Q: How do students earn a love of learning bracelet after the month is over?

A: Students can earn the bracelets anytime. Students continue to earn the red RESPECT and yellow LOVE OF LEARNING bracelets, even though we will focus on Empathy in December.

Q: What if students who have bracelets make others who don't feel badly?

A: Sadly, this may happen. However, the staff can turn that into a teachable moment whenever we are aware that it is happening. Please encourage your child to let teachers or Mrs. Fitzgerald know if this is happening to him or her. He or she can also use the anonymous suggestion box and it will be discussed at classroom meeting—the perfect place to surface and help students learn from this kind of poor choice.

Building Bridges PotLuck Suppers

It was wonderful to see so many families come together on Friday, November 20th for a 2nd Grade PotLuck Supper. Families who attended enjoyed the chance to get to know other families in their child's classroom and eat a wide range of delicious foods. Special thanks to Mary Fox and Vanessa Mendez for their leadership and to the many other parents who supported both this event and the spirit behind it! We look forward to Grade 3's event on January 8th!

Holiday Celebrations

Grades 2 and 3 plan a variety of special activities in the classroom to celebrate the winter holidays before we break for our vacation. Please note that each class will send home details with your children during the week of December 7th. Grade 3 families, please save the evening of Thursday, December 17th for the Grade 3 Winter Concert. Students will need to arrive at Morse at 6pm and the concert will begin at 6:30pm. We hope you all can join in this special night!

Jacob Burns

Grade 3 classes are working closely with the *Jacob Burns Film Center* in Pleasantville, NY. This grant-funded project offers students the chance to plan, develop and create original films. This unique, hands-on experience has a lasting impact on student writing in all areas. We look forward to seeing what our third graders create!

Volunteer Opportunity: Literature Circles

Thank you to all of the parents who expressed a desire to volunteer for literature

circles. Literature Circles will start to meet in January 2010. To prepare, we will conduct a training session for volunteers in the afternoon on Friday, December 11th at 1pm. If you are interested and cannot make that training, please email or call Mrs. Fitzgerald.

- Friday, Dec. 11: Lit. Circle Leader Training (1-2pm)
- Monday, Dec. 14: Principal's Chat, 8:30am
- Thursday, Dec. 17: Grade 3 Concert, 6:30pm
- Wednesday, Dec. 23: No School for Students

Key December Dates:



Please remember that we are collecting mittens, scarves, hats, gloves and winter coats. Donations can be brought to the lobby. Thank you to Virginia Lustyik for coordinating this effort!