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The Findley Focus

Findley Elementary School's Monthly Newsletter

October, 2013

Volume 3, Issue 2

Listen! The wind is rising, and the air is wild with leaves, We have had our summer evenings, now for October eyes. — Humbert Wolfe

◆ Mark your calendar...

- Monday, October 14th — Findley t-shirt forms due
- Wednesday, October 16th and 23rd — Parent-Teacher Conferences, 3:00-8:00 PM
- Friday, October 25th — NO SCHOOL
- PTO Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM



Arts Integration Update

As part of Findley's continuing work with the Turnaround Arts Initiative through the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, students and staff have been hard at work using art, music, drama, and dance in learning. Some of the highlights include...

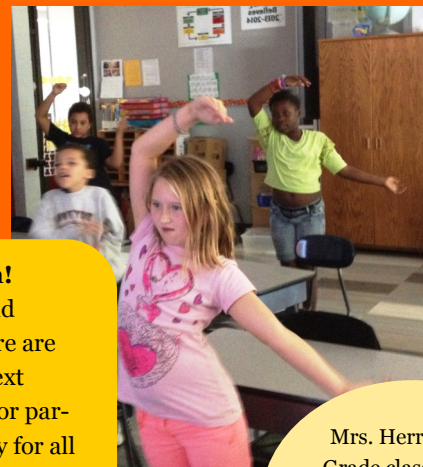


- ◆ A welcome letter and video from our mentor artist Forest Whitaker (pictured above). His message to Findley students and families is one of hope and hard work: The arts have changed his life, and they can change yours too! He is planning another visit to inspire us again this year.
- ◆ Although we have visual arts and music teachers and we have been using drama and tableau in the classroom, we haven't learned a lot about the fourth artistic discipline: DANCE! This year students will be learning dance from resident artists and incorporating movement into everything from reading to math.
- ◆ Findley's famous Drama Club is up and running again this year under the direction of Ali Hassan and Violet Saylor. Supported by several Findley staff members, the club is more than 80 students strong! They are preparing for new productions each Thursday afternoon by practicing all of the tools in the Actor's Toolbox: control of body, voice, imagination, focus, and cooperation.
- ◆ Over the course of the year, students will have opportunities to experience the arts in our community by attending performances at the Des Moines Playhouse, the Civic Center. We'll also be visiting the Des Moines Arts Center and Pappajohn Sculpture garden to take advantage of the unique arts happening right here in Des Moines.

Keeping Findley Safe

I want to thank all of our parents for adjusting to all of the new safety procedures this year at Findley. We ask that all guests sign in at the office and wear a visitor's badge while in the building. Our doors are locked from 8:35-3:20. Anyone who would like to enter between these times will buzz into the office. Thank you for taking these extra steps helping Findley students to be safe at all times.

Lockdown drills have become a monthly expectation from the district along with our monthly fire drills. This is a common practice that is taking place in many schools across the country. Allowing our students the time to practice their actions in the case of a fire or a stranger in or outside of the building helps everyone to be better prepared. Please call me if you have any other questions about our emergency monthly drills. Thanks for your continued support in making Findley an amazing place for your child's education!



Mrs. Herrin's 4th Grade class takes a "Brain Break" by mixing movement and spelling!

Join the Findley Parent Teacher Organization!

The Findley Parent Teacher Organization invites you to attend monthly meetings. All Findley families are members and there are no dues. PTO meets the first Thursday of each month. The next meeting is November 7th at 6:00 pm. Childcare is provided for parents attending the meetings. The PTO is invaluable to Findley for all the support they provide to teachers and students. New members will have a great time finding out the many things available to them.



Findley's Mission: Creating big dreamers and high achievers!

Conversation Corner

In this part of our newsletter, you'll find some questions and conversation starters for families to use when talking to their children about what is happening at school.

Fifth grade classes have been studying the human body during the month of September. The classes have been working to creating tableaus to demonstrate their understanding of muscles, joints, and coordination.

Second Grade: Please remind your children to continue picking i-pick books and to read 15 to 20 minutes nightly. When your child is done reading take the time to ask some questions about what they read.

Questions: Who were the characters in the story? Where did the story take place? What happened in the beginning, middle and end of the story?

First grade students are using graphic organizers to learn about characters, setting, sequence of events, as well as main idea and details. In social studies we are talking about families and communities. In art, 1st Graders spent the month of September learning all about Shape, Line, and Color in Art with Miss Jorgensen. What kind of lines and shapes does your student(s) find around your home?

Kindergarten and Autism will be going on their annual field trip to the apple orchard and pumpkin patch on Thursday, Oct 24th. We are learning about the life cycle of the apples and will take a tour of the apple production on our trip.

Please ask your **third grader** to explain the two addition and the two subtraction strategies that we are using in our classroom. The addition strategies are called New Groups Below and the All Totals Method. The subtraction strategies are called Subtracting Across the Zeros - Add 1 - Subtract 1 and Expanded Notation Method. They should be able to walk you through all 4 strategies.

Miss Aimee and Miss Sarah's class are reading books about pumpkins and apples in preparation for our trip to Center Grove Apple Orchard on October 24th. Parents can spend some time asking their children what they know about apples and pumpkins at home.



Halloween time will be here soon, and little ghosts and goblins will be out on the streets for tricks or treats. Children have fun at Halloween, however, it can be an unsafe time. Here are some tips to help remind students how they can remain safe.

- (1) Trick or Treat in a group.
- (2) Cross streets at intersections and crosswalks.
- (3) Stop and look left, right and left again before crossing the street.
- (4) Paint your face or wear masks with wide eye holes.
- (5) Attach reflective stickers to your costume.

Make it a fun AND safe Halloween!

-Nurse Cynthia

We are a PBIS school!

Positive Behavior
Intervention and Supports

RESPECT Self

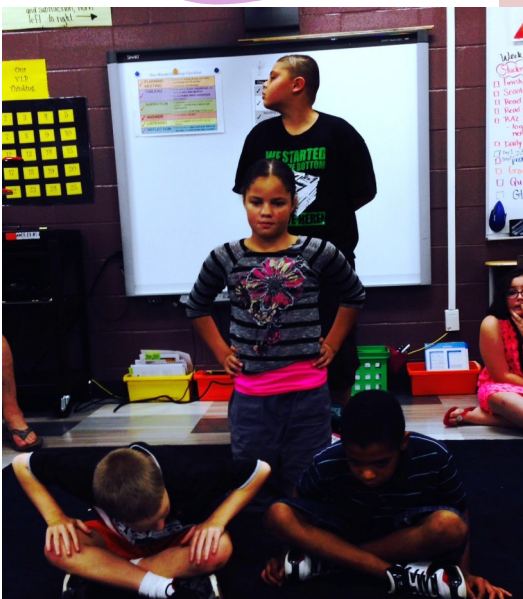
RESPECT Others

RESPECT Property

RESPECT Learning

Findley Welcomes New Counselor and ELL Teacher

In addition to several other new faces in the building this year, Findley Elementary is happy to add a new counselor and new K-2 ELL teacher to our staff. **Damon Holland**, our new counselor, comes to us from Brubaker Elementary and has already started the year off working with classes in the essentials rotation, as well as small groups. **Jennifer Varghese** is joining the Findley family after teaching at Lovejoy Elementary. New just this month to the building, Ms. Varghese is getting to know her new students and settling into the new building.



Fifth graders explore systems in the human body through the drama technique TABLEAU. Findley is on year two of integrating the arts, including drama, into all areas of learning. Ask your students about the Actor's Toolbox!

