

Blackrock Elementary School Phone, (401) 822-9450 Fax, (401) 822-9452 Website, <http://schools.coventryschools.net/Blackrock/>

Upcoming Events

Monday, March 1st- Reading Program Workshop 6:00 p.m. in the cafeteria

Tuesday, March 2nd- Spring Pictures

Thursday, March 4th - SIT Meeting at 7:30 a.m. in the library

Wednesday, March 10th- PTA Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the library

Thursday, March 11th- PBIS Meeting at 7:30 a.m. in the library

Sunday, March 14th- Spring Ahead!

Tuesday, March 16th- Math Master's Ceremony at 2:10 p.m. in the gym

Friday, March 19th- Trimester 2 Report Cards go home

Monday, March 22nd- Officer Phil assembly for grades 1 and 2 at 12:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 23rd- Kindergarten Conferences, Day 1 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 25th- Parent Teacher Conferences 2:00-8:30 p.m. & Kindergarten Registration 2:30-7:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 27th- Gentlemen's Choice PTA event at the Harlem Globetrotters

Monday, March 29th- Marionette Show performances for Reading Week at 9:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 31st- Guest Reader Day

The Principal's Buzz



Spring is on its way! This past weekend, we got a glimpse of the season to come. Students are happy to get outside to play!

March also means our Pennies for Patients fundraiser is underway to raise money for children with blood cancer. All of our proceeds go directly to the Rhode Island Leukemia and Lymphoma Foundation. Last year we raised over \$2000.00, and as a result, our Behavior Specialist, Ms. Pelletier did a slip and slide into chocolate pudding! In addition, I got to

be human art where over 30 students threw paint drenched sponges at me. This year we would like to raise even more!

We do understand and recognize that many families are feeling the economic crunch, but anything that can be spared for the cause would be greatly appreciated.

Please note too that we'll take any monetary denomination that comes in. It's not just about pennies! We'll gladly

accept nickels, dimes, quarters, and DOLLARS!

I also remind you to plan ahead for Spring Parent/Teacher conferences on March 25th. There will be no school for students on that day.

Have a great month!

Mrs. Alicia Reniere-Castle ©
Principal

A word from the Nurse's Hive

Greetings from the health office!

Rhode Island State Law requires proof of a yearly Dental Exam for students in Grades K – 5. Please return the signed yellow dental card during the 2009 – 2010 school year after your child has seen the dentist. School Dental Exams are provided by the School Dentist each school year for students that do not see a dentist on a regular basis. The School Dentist, Doctor Gordon will be here on March 26, 2010.

Spring is just around the corner! Weather permitting all children will be going outside for recess. So, please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather at school. A jacket, sweater, shoes, or sneakers would be appropriate.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Mrs. Beth Paretta, R.N.
School/Nurse Teacher

**KINDERGARTEN
REGISTRATION FOR 2010-
2011 will be held March
25th from 2:30-7:30 p.m. in
the school foyer. For
your application to be
complete, you must
bring:**

- 1. Copy of birth certificate**
- 2. Proof of residency**
- 3. Proof of immunizations**



“The life of a man consists not in seeing visions and in dreaming dreams, but in active charity and in willing service.”

- Henry
Wadsworth
Longfellow

Kindergarten

Journal writing is a very complicated process and we are proud of the hard work kindergarten students are doing. Most students are writing sentences of four or five words. At conferences, we will share with you your child's journal and the writing expectations for excited kindergartens.

Students write in small groups where they support each other's progress. Each student begins the process by thinking about what he/she wishes to write about or thinking about a sentence that incorporates the given word (a word from the bank of sight words kindergarten

students need to know before entering first grade). Students then begin the complicated process of "sounding out" or isolating specific sounds in a word and recording the letters they know match those sounds. Some students are only able to isolate the beginning sound while others can hear the vowel and the ending sound.

Many students record the middle sound of a word with more than four letters and are beginning to understand that there needs to be a letter for each sound.

Emphasis has been on proper spacing to delineate words and the use of lower case letters. Although children usually learn how to write upper case letters

first because they are mostly made of straight lines and are therefore easier to form, most of the words they read are written in lower case form. To help them recognize written text they should be using those same letterforms regularly. If your child asks you to spell for her/him during an activity, stress the correct formation of the lower case letters to form those words.

You can encourage your child to read and write for meaningful purposes at home. All writing is not narrative (telling a story). Writing can include notes, lists, messages, cards, etc. If you are making a short list for the store, have your child help write the item names.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to seeing you at conferences!

Mrs. Linda Cersosimo and Mrs. Jan Talbot

Grade 1

We all are looking forward to Spring, as we get closer to the end of our second trimester. You will be receiving your child progress report on March 19th, and Parent Teacher Conferences will be held on March 25th, look for the sign-up request. During this conference time we will be discussing your child's progress and welcome any questions you may have.

We are sure you have noticed tremendous academic growth since the beginning of the year. All of those evenings of listening to your child read, and helping them with math homework is

really having a positive impact on their overall development. This is a truly productive time of year for students, especially first graders.

Please continue supporting your child's efforts in reading, encouraging the use of all their strategies. The Friday spelling tests have helped students not only to learn the words but feel more confident in using them in their journal writing. Thank you for supporting them as they practice spelling at home. Math skills continue to develop as we explore number comparisons, place value,

patterns, money, time, and geometry.

Finally as we all try to stay healthy encourage good health habits such as, good sleep routines, healthy eating habits, and a good dose of play time outside. Please keep in mind that we do try to get outside for recess so dress your child appropriately. As always thank you for being our partners in your child's education.

Mr. Jeff Stevens, Mrs. Mary Leyden, & Mrs. Mary Vandervelde

Pre-School

During the month of March we will be focusing on the following letters: K, P, M, and R. Some of the projects we will be working on include; rainbows, kites, shamrocks, and pots of gold. While completing these projects we will be focusing on fine motor skills, including; cutting, coloring, and gluing. We will also be

celebrating Dr. Suess' birthday! Students will enjoy listening to his rhyming books all month long! On March 25th, Parent/Teacher Conferences will be taking place. A sign-up sheet will be sent home soon with more information and times.

Mrs. Jen Cohn & Ms. Tara Renfrew

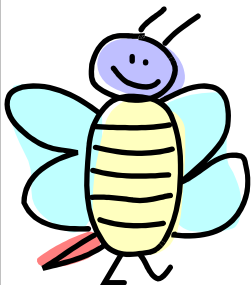
Have a terrific month!

Grade 2

Second graders are continuing their hard work. We have been reading and writing about Presidents Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. Ask your child to share some information they have learned. We will soon begin a new reading unit called In the Night Sky where we explore animals that are active at night as well as stars and planets of our solar system. We continue to practice retells of our stories as a whole class, in guided reading groups, and in some cases individually. This is a skill that requires much modeling and practice in choosing the important details of stories. Retelling can be practiced at home as you read stories together.

In science we continue to study rocks, pebbles, and silt. The children have been "geologists" as they sharpen their observation skills and perform experiments. Continue to practice math skills at home especially facts, coins, and telling time on an analog clock. We look forward to meeting with you on Parent/Teacher Conference Day on Thursday, March 25. As always, call or write with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your continued support and donations of much needed Kleenex and sanitizing wipes.

Mrs. Patricia Palmieri, Mrs. Jill Pare, Mrs. Valerie Bishop, & Mrs. Lori Romano



Grade 4

The fourth grade teachers hope that everyone enjoyed their February break. Now that we are back from the winter recess, we look forward to the sharing of the student's book jacket projects!

During the month of February, which celebrates Black History Month, the fourth grade learned about the Civil Rights movement, segregation/integration, boycotts, and how our country has overcome some of the obstacles we have faced throughout our history. We celebrated with the movie Remember the Titans, which details the conflicts between black and white. The children made a connection with the characters in the movie and had a better understanding of racial hardships.

We have begun work on our

Electric Circuits science kit and our hope is that students are sharing their excitement with you regarding their hands-on activities. Students will continue to use their Science Notebook to record their predictions, observations, and findings.

Finally, it is very important that your child attains mastery of their math facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. As we move ahead to more complex mathematics, such as multiplication and division of greater numbers, it is VERY essential to have mastery of the basic facts. Keep studying at home each night; using flashcards can be helpful.

Be sure that your child brings only necessary items to school.

Anything that can be 'toy-like' should be left at home, i.e. ...fancy pens, pencils, grippers, erasers and the like because they cause a distraction. Let's keep up the best focus possible!!!

Mrs. Anne Barter, Mr. Ray Raboin, & Mrs. Christyna Bousquet

Grade 3



Water, water, everywhere! Third graders are currently immersed in studying concepts of water such as surface tension, density and evaporation. They are being asked to make careful observations during investigations and record claims and evidence to show their learning. Upon conclusion of this science unit, we will resume our study of "community" with a focus on economics. Family traditions narratives have been completed and have been sent to the publisher, Student Treasures. We are expecting the arrival of our books by the end of April. At that time, we will plan a small student celebration across our grade level. In math, we are currently in our unit on measurement. Students are expected to master; measuring to the nearest ½ inch, whole centimeter and meter, telling time to the 5 minute interval, problems of elapsed and accrued time as well as conversions between various units of measurement; perimeter and area of figures. These are very difficult concepts for children to master so any additional reinforcement that you can provide at home is greatly appreciated. Reading continues with a focus on strategies for understanding both fiction and expository text. Please help your child fulfill the requirements of their monthly reading logs. We view from now until April vacation as prime learning time! Please make every effort to keep your child focused on learning and school. Thanks, as always, for your support.

Mrs. Kerry Bruno, Mrs. Jen Graham, & Mrs. Lynn Sisson

Grade 5

February was a busy month with some of the Fifth Graders being tested in Reading using the DRA's. All of the 5th Graders will be tested again in the late Spring.

On Wednesday, February 11th, many of the students participated in a Science Demonstration by Dr. Hebb for Tar Wars. The students learned about Health and Safety and will enter a contest for this program after February vacation. This ties in directly with Mrs. Paretta's Health Classes that she has been teaching in the Fifth Grade Classes on a weekly basis.

With the end of the second trimester quickly approaching, the next deadline for Book Blurbs is March 10th. By that date, the Fifth Graders should have 16 Book Blurbs completed. The students also completed their letters to invite

Guest Readers to share in Reading Week. They wrote Friendly Letters to a variety of professionals in the community to come celebrate Guest Reader Day on Wednesday, March 31st. We eagerly await their responses on or before March 19th.

In Science, we have completed the third kit-Biomes. Now we will be investigating the Populations and Ecosystem's kit. The main point of this topic is to learn how each organism is an ecosystem that has its own special habitat. An ecosystem is made up of both living and non-living things in an environment.

Thank you – Ms. Michaela Wells, Mrs. Linda Cohen, & Mrs. Jayne Bailey



The Reading Nook

What are some great tips for choosing reading software?

Vary your purchases - different types of software encourage and reinforce different literacy skills. Beside phonics programs, consider interactive stories and story-writing software.

Select interactive stories the way you choose books: Let the appeal of the story and the artwork be your guide.

Be choosy. Not all interactive stories are worthwhile. Some don't add anything special enough to justify their hefty price. Others are so TV-like that children become passive viewers, not involved readers.

Don't underestimate geography, history, or mystery software for reading practice. When kids get involved, they really push themselves to master skills - like reading.

As your child becomes a more accomplished reader, look for software that gives you the option of "turning off" the read-aloud feature so they can practice reading on their own.

Mrs. Janet LaBranche & Mrs. Ann Blennerhassett

ULSS (Unified Learning & Support Services)

Welcome back. We hope you and your family had a nice and relaxing vacation. Last month we gave you a few fun math games for your child in grades K-2 to help build math skills and concepts. This month we would like to share a few fun and easy math games to try with your child in grades 3-5.

What are the Coins? You will need some coins for this

game. Ask your child the following questions. I have 3 coins in my pocket which are worth 7 cents. What do I have? You can change the amount of coins in your pocket as well as the amount the coins are worth based upon the grade or level in which your child is at. Your child can use actual coins to help figure out the answers. Remember real money is always better than play money.

License Plate Special This is a great game when your are traveling a long distance by car. You will need license plates, paper and a pencil. Copy down a license plate while you are traveling. Read the license plate as a number excluding the letters. For example, if the license plate were 663M218, the number would be six hundred and sixty-three thousand two hundred and eighteen. Your child could then find another

license plate and follow the same step. You could then ask your child if your number greater than, less than or equal to yours. Estimate the difference between numbers. Is it 10, 100, 1,000, or 10,000? You could add the numbers together on each license plate and compare the sums. If your child is older they could also try to multiply the numbers as well.

Mrs. Carrie Baris, Mrs. Cara Capalbo, Mrs. Sharon Eagleson, & Mr. Jason Parker
Unified Learning

The Arts (Art and Music News)

ART

Art classes have worked diligently to finish creations for the "Original Works" fundraiser projects. Both Ms. Hebert's classes and Mrs. Gauthier's classes have completed pieces for the fundraiser. Envelopes have been sent home for ordering. Even if you don't order, you can see what beautiful work your child created.

Spring temperatures are coming! Listen for the birds in the morning, grab a sketch book, and capture a spring scene on paper!

Mrs. Michaele Gauthier &
Mrs. Meghann Smith

MUSIC

The coming of spring brings a busy time in Music Land during the month of March. Students in grade 5, rooms 3 and 4 will have their unit test on Beethoven during the first week of March. This will be the last major grade of trimester 2.

Final assessments in all grades either have been done or will be done by this time as well.

There will also be a chorus field trip to Coventry High School on March 24 for the purpose of watching and listening to vocal ensembles from both the high school and middle school. Only those students who are caught up on all of their school work will be allowed to attend.

Look for order forms to be sent home with chorus students for our upcoming performance at the Dunkin Donuts Center prior to a Providence Bruins game on April 2.

Mr. Nick Zammerelli & Mrs. Virginia Jacobs



Do you have a question for our Reading Specialists that could also be used in the Reading Nook section of the monthly newsletter? If so, please email it to:

castlealicia@coventryschools.net

Physical Education and Library/Media

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Jump Rope for Heart was a huge success this year! As a school we raised \$4,642 which will go to the American Heart Association to help fight Heart Disease. Every student did a great job participating and jumping in honor of those that have/had Heart Disease. Our top jumping class this year was Room 3 (5th Grade) with 22,896 jumps!

This month is the start of our floor hockey unit for all grades. We will focus on the basic skills of hockey such as dribbling, passing, and shooting and stick safety and incorporate them into fun activities that every student can do well at regardless of their skill level. These activities

are "The Minefield", "Police Hockey", "Hockey Mania" and "Hockey Battleship".

The first week of March, fitness journals are due for grades 4 and 5. Activities from December, January and February should be included. Any questions please don't hesitate to come see me

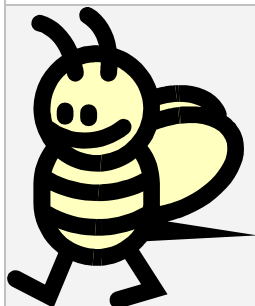
Mr. Derek Hitte

LIBRARY/MEDIA

The fifth grade is working on research skills as well as working on a PowerPoint presentation about their Native American Tribe or one of the Biomes studied in Science.

The fourth grade has been working with the Thesaurus and learning synonyms for common words. First grade through third grade has been working on author studies and vocabulary as well as research skills.

Mrs. Colleen Green and Ms. Esther Wolk, Library Media Specialists



“Charity begins at home, but should not end there.”

-Proverb

PBIS (Positive “Bee-”havioral Interventions & Supports)

As the end of the second trimester approaches, students will be gearing up for their PBIS end-of-trimester reward. This is a special recognition for all students who have not received any office referrals over the last couple of months.

Remember that PBIS is the system that we use for creating a school culture of high behavioral expectations. We teach students how they are expected to behave in all

situations, including those that may arise at home.

Students who meet and exceed the expectations always have the opportunity for rewards.

Conversely, students who have difficulty with the expectations may receive office referral forms and a consequence for their behavior. All consequences are age-appropriate and discussed at great length between the Principal and Behavior Specialist. All office

referrals are considered our “parental contact,” unless the severity of the behavior warrants a phone call. Those referral forms should be sent back to school the following day with a signature. The parent signature is not necessarily admission of responsibility, but it is confirmation of receipt. If you receive a referral form from your students, we thank you for your cooperating in adhering to this policy.

The Blackrock PBIS Team

PTA News

The next PTA meeting is on Wednesday, March 10th at 7pm in the library.

Looking ahead to March/April, we have the Spring Book Fair, Gentleman's Choice, Ladies Choice, and Grandmother, Mother, & Daughter Tea events coming up.

The Gentleman's Choice event with the Harlem Globetrotters is March 27th. Order forms will be coming home soon

While we will be utilizing the new listserv to send out PTA information, there may still be times that we use a paper system.

Please check your e-mail and child's backpack regularly for PTA event information!

Fundraising Information

Don't forget about these fundraisers!

Team Tolerance is currently raising money for the Autism Project again this year. Last year, the district raised enough money to send 30 teachers and staff to Autism training. We would like to achieve this goal again. Team Tolerance (Coventry's team name) from

Blackrock will be holding a few fundraisers in the upcoming months. If you are interested in making your own contribution or inquiring about how much money has been raised thus far, the website is www.firstgiving.com/teamtolerance.

We are also currently accepting beverage tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. These

tabs are recycled and the money goes to help the families of hospitalized children. Donations will be accepted until the end of the year.

Wellness Policy

On March 2, 2010, the School Committee voted unanimously to pass a Health and Wellness Policy for all Coventry Students based on mandates in the Rhode Island General Law.

This policy creates standards around Parent/Student & Staff Nutrition Education, Physical Activity Education, Nutrition Standards, Other School-Based Activities to Promote Student Wellness, and Measurement and Evaluation.

The Coventry Health and Wellness Policy outlines many Physical Education and Nutrition Education guidelines, but perhaps the most important information for families are the following:

*Only milk, water, and beverages containing 100% fruit juice may be sold on the school grounds prior to and during the instructional day. This includes vending machines.

*All fundraising projects that include the sale of food items will be outside the instructional day.

*Classroom snacks provided for students by the school must comply with RI Nutrition guidelines unless documented in an IEP or 504 Plan.

*Celebrations are decided by each school principal.

Non-food celebrations at Blackrock will be encouraged. In the event that there is a celebration with food, there will be healthy choices available (including cultural events) to all students that follow the RI Nutrition guidelines.

*Birthday parties or recognition is **NOT** allowed. Students may not bring in cakes, cupcakes, brownies, candy bags, donuts, or other treats that are not on the approved product list. If families want to recognize their child's birthday, they can send in a pencil or other non-food treat. Blackrock prefers that you send in nothing. Most teachers will recognize your child's birthday on their big day. Treats sent in will be sent home.

*The use of food as a reward or incentive in school is no longer allowed. We'll think of creative ways to motivate our students!

*Healthy snacks include:

*fresh fruits & vegetables

*100% fruit and vegetable juice

*low-fat milk

*pretzels/light popcorn

*low-fat or non-fat yogurt

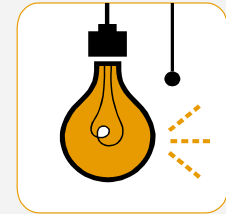
*animal crackers

*low-fat granola bars

*light string cheese

*Physical activity for students is aligned with the RI Education Frameworks and provides students with the knowledge and skills to lead a physically active lifestyle.

The Blackrock Faculty, Staff, and PTA thank you for your support of this new policy. Brochures will be forthcoming.



Walking each day as a family is a GREAT way to promote Health & Wellness!

