



JM Hill In The News!

Kindergarten- Kindergarten had great fun learning about the arrival of winter and its many holidays and traditions. We talked about the different traditions each family has. We read many stories about Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Christmas. We have been working hard to learn our letter sounds and hear the first sounds in words. We are excited to be working on our numbers which we will do throughout the next few weeks.

First Grade- Happy New Year! Reflecting back on the month of December, first grade learned about celebrations around the world as part of our Social Studies Unit: Families. We shared different traditions from our own families and learned about different cultures. Our math skills are increasing. We learned about shapes in geometry and have been making patterns. We are also continuing to practice our addition math facts.

Second Grade- Wow! The month of December roared by with a flurry of activity! The students enjoyed participating in many special school wide events including a holiday door decorating contest and the Polar Express Day. The students exhibited polite, concert manners while watching the wonderful holiday chorus and band concert!

In academics, second graders continue to increase their speed and accuracy of their basic math facts and are beginning to master two- digit addition with regrouping. Please try to reinforce continued practice of money and time while at home. We completed Unit 2 in Reading, titled "Zoom In" and took our Unit 2 Skills Test. In January we will begin Unit 3 "Side by Side" in which students will read stories about people working together to achieve a positive outcome. The boys and girls are becoming young scientists as we venture into the Animal and Plant Kingdom!!

We wish you all a Happy, Healthy New Year as we begin 2012 and thank you for your continued support!

Fourth Grade- December was a very busy month for fourth grade! Some of the reading skills that students focused on included cause and effect, comparing and contrasting, identifying different types of genre, making judgements about characters, and identifying the theme of a story. Math skills that were covered included working with decimals, measuring to the nearest centimeter, locating points on a coordinate grid, and working with bar graphs and pictographs. Each student took a survey and then created his/her own graph.



Each class worked together for the door decorating contest and enjoyed the Polar Express Day wearing pajamas!

Fifth Grade- Fifth grade spent December working on a variety of novels that included: *My Side of the Mountain*, *George Washington's Socks*, and *The Enormous Egg*. Through these novels we focused on and applied the December Communication Arts skills and concepts. Our students participated in writing narrative pieces, persuasive pieces, and poetry.

In science we studied the life of Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley. We listened to the story of his life and learned about his study of snowflakes. We then applied what we learned about snowflakes and used the Swiss art form of SCHERENSCHNITTE, intricate paper cutting, to create our own snowflakes.

December's math focused on order of operations, integers, inequalities on a number line, basic algebra, and multi-digit multiplication and division. We have also been defining and applying math vocabulary.

We recycled newspaper by creating beautiful winter wreaths for our families to enjoy for years to come.

Ms. R. Miller- In December, Miss Miller's Class discussed holidays around the world. We did some Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, and Christmas Activities. We made mats, driedels, wreaths, trees, and some other holiday activities. We talked about the month of December and the end of a year. We discussed a new year.

We continue to learn new sight words and color words. We practice writing our names and counting every day. We also practice learning to write and dial our phone numbers.

We continue to practice unpacking and packing up independently, sitting in our seats quietly, and raising our hands. We continue to practice taking turns and playing nicely with our friends.

Music- During the month of December, all the music classes learned about and sang songs that had to do with winter holidays and cultural celebrations. At the end of the month, we then gathered around the Christmas tree in the lobby and sang a lot of the songs that we learned. Our song of the month was "Deck the Hall".

The Winter Chorus and Band Concert was held at JTL on Thursday, December 8, 2011. The chorus children did a fantastic job! Some of their favorite songs they sang were "No School Tomorrow", "Will You be Here This December", and "Rock Around the Jingle Bells". The chorus is taking a break from rehearsals and will begin to prepare for their spring concert sometime in mid-February.

The chorus also sang some Christmas carols and some of their concert pieces at the J.M. Hill Holiday Fest.



The K-Kids Club worked at the Holiday Fest by wrapping presents that children purchased in the holiday shop. They are now working on sponsoring a Talent Show that will be held on Thursday, January 26, 2012.

Art- We are currently working on art projects from early civilizations: Kindergarten: Cave art, 1st, Native American rock art, 2nd, castles from the middle ages, 3rd, mosaics from ancient Rome, 4th, ancient Egyptian scratch art mummy cases, and 5th, Native American story necklaces.

Reading/RtII- RtII and our Reading Department continue to strive to help our youngsters become good readers. In November, we met with grade level teams again to see how students were doing on their reading assessments, and made changes as indicated.

In some instances, students who needed more or other assistance were scheduled for either a smaller group for their EI time, or additional time was added for them to receive additional help. This is considered as Tier 3 services in RtII.

In December, the Reading Department and RtII coordinator hosted a parent session at night to share information about our RtII process and Reading interventions here at JM Hill. A presentation, pamphlets and flyers were available for all parents of our school. If you would like any information about Reading and RtII at JM Hill, please give us a call! (424-8073)

A computer-based program called Earobics was begun with some of our kindergarten students as extra help for developing phonological skills. The students are learning to listen for and count/ repeat sounds. Another computer-based program we will be using for some of our students is Fast ForWord, which is intended to help with a variety of reading skills as well, and will be used with some of our 3rd- 5th graders.

As was done at the beginning of the year, all students at mid-year are assessed with our Dibels assessments. We have begun this assessment, which is individually administered to students. Once we are finished assessing students, grade levels will meet and see how students are doing with certain reading skills. We will also look at scores from end-of-month literacy assessments, and other scores/ grades and determine if we need to move students to other groups or change their skill focus.

Homework Club continues to meet. We meet right after school on Mondays for grade 2-3, and right after school on Thursdays for grade 4-5. Students may be referred to Homework Club by the teacher if homework is not getting handed in/done or if students are having trouble with it. If you have any questions about RtII, our Reading Program or Homework Club please feel free to call Mrs. Lehmann-Deming (Mrs. L-D) or the Reading Department at school.



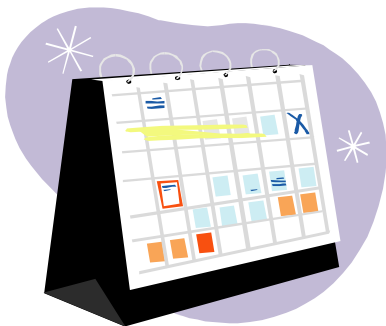
A note from Mrs. Arnold...

Our MAPS testing for grades 2-5 will begin this month for Reading and Math. Things you can do to help your children are making sure he/she gets a good night's sleep, eat a good breakfast, and be sure your child is on time for school!

The word of the month is "Inspirational". Please take a moment to talk to your child about things that inspire them!

Remember, if your child is not in school, he/she cannot learn. Please be sure your child attends regularly.

So far we have been lucky to have no snow days, so our instruction has not been interrupted!



Upcoming Events...

1/12-Budget meeting

1/16-School is closed to honor
Martin Luther King

1/17-MAPS testing begins

1/23-School Board
appreciation/meeting

1/27-End of 2nd marking period

2/2-PTO meeting

2/3-Parent-Teacher conferences-
no school