



Raccoon Dispatch

John H. Russell Elementary School
3301 Purvis Road
Quantico, VA 22134



Volume 1 Number 5

December 2008

PARENT NEWSLETTER

Math Matters at Russell Elementary School

Principal's Corner

Even though the holiday season can be fun and exciting, it can also be a very stressful time of the year. Please take time for yourself and your children. There is not a better gift for a child than the gift of time. Schedule special time with your child (ren) rather than counting on having time when everything is done. Get your child (ren) to help you with chores so you are working together. Read, laugh and have fun together.

On behalf of the faculty and staff at Russell Elementary School, we wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season.

Donna O. Kacmarski



Important Dates



December

- 11—RES Winter Program—9:00 AM & 7:00 PM
- 11—School Newsletter Goes Home
- 12—Principal's Coffee—2:00 PM
- 18—Important Dates Flyer Sent Home
- 19—Staff Holiday Assembly—9:00 AM
- 12/22-1/2/09—Winter Break—No School

January

- 5—School Resumes
- 8—School Newsletter Goes Home
- 9—Word of the Month Assembly—9:00 AM
- 14—Clubs and Candid Pictures Taken
- 15—End of Grading Period
- 16—Teacher Workday—No school for students
- 19—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—No school
- 23—"Books-The Magic is Real" Assembly—9:00 AM
- 29—Important Dates Flyer Sent Home

RES MISSION STATEMENT

Our school community provides quality opportunities and experiences that inspire the children of our military families to become creative problem solvers, life-long learners and productive members of a diverse technological world.

RES WORD OF THE MONTH

CARING

This month we are focusing on the meaning of CARING. Caring is considering and understanding the needs and feelings of others. Compassion is showing that you care by doing something. Please take time to talk with your child about the meaning of caring. Ask your child to tell of a time that they were caring. Praise your child when you see they are showing that they care about another child or family member. Children learn to care *not* by what they are told but by what they see and experience. Give your child the chance to see caring in action.

School Improvement—Goal #1

Our researched writing intervention to support Goal #1 is “6 +1 Traits of Learning”. This is a comprehensive program that incorporates certain key qualities of good writing. This month we are concentrating on the first two traits which are ideas and organization. The approach and depth of instruction will vary due to grade level and developmental expectations.

“Ideas” involves the meaning and development of the message of the written piece. It means that we try to narrow and focus on the subject using fresh and unique ideas and well-chosen details that elaborate on the main ideas.

“Organization” involves the logical internal structure of the piece. It means that we try to have a logical sequence of ideas with an inviting lead, smooth transitions and a strong conclusion.

We have attached a rubric that we use to score the writing samples for all grade levels. It is our hope that this might be a helpful tool when looking at writing samples that your child brings home.

INDEX

Principal’s Corner	1
Important Dates	1
RES Mission Statement	1
Word of the Month	2
School Improvement	2
CSS	2
From Our Cafeteria	3
Just A Reminder	3
Office Information	3
Check This Out	3
Counselor’s Corner	4
Canned Food Drive	4
Healthy Choice	4
Toys For Tots	5
Nurse’s News	5
Suggestion Box	5

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is currently administering its biennial Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS). This survey will continue through February 28, 2009. The CSS provides valuable feedback to DoDEA from its most important customers, parents and students, about the quality of education it provides and the areas needing improvement. All sponsors, with students enrolled in DoD schools from Pre-K through 12th grade, may participate by completing a survey for each school in which they have students enrolled. The survey takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. Please go to www.dodea.edu and click on the CSS graphic link. As of December 10, 2008, only 8 (3%) of our parents have taken the survey. Our goal is to have 100% of our parents complete the survey by February 28th. Thank you!

From our Cafeteria Manager



Parents, are you tired of being home alone while your kids are at school? Well, we have an offer for you! The cafeterias at the Quantico schools have immediate openings for cooks and bakers, as well as food service workers and on call personnel.

The hours are perfect-from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM with a half Hour break and free lunch. There is no weekend and no holiday work, but you receive holiday pay.

One advantage of working in school is that you leave home after your children, and you return home before they do. When your children are out of school, so are you.

If you are interested, apply at Food Services located on the second floor of Burrows Elementary School. Please contact the Child Nutritionist office, room 200A, or call Paul Tillema at 703-640-9431.

The starting salary for cooks and bakers is **\$11.53** an hour. The starting salary for food service workers and on call workers is **\$8.30** an hour.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

If you are unable to complete the DoDEA Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) at home, please stop by Russell Elementary School on Wednesday, December 17th. We will have computers available for you to use. The survey takes approximately 20 minutes. Thank you for your support!

Just a Reminder

The arrival time is 8:20-8:30 AM for students who are driven to school in private vehicles or who walk with their parents. **There is no supervision prior to 8:20 AM.** Breakfast is served from 8:20-8:45 each morning. Late arrivals require a tardy slip and must be signed in by a parent in the school office. Early departures for appointments, etc., require children to be signed out by a parent as well.

Office Information

Please continue to update your records during the year, i.e., new telephone numbers (home, duty, cell phone and emergency contact), email address and new mailing address. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT in order to ensure the parent/emergency contact is notified in a timely manner in the event your child is sick or injured. Your help in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Check This Out

Please check out the Russell website for information about the Armed Services YMCA 2009 Art Contest, "My Military Family," and Essay Contest "My Military Hero." Our website has the link that will lead you to the information needed for the contests. The deadlines are in February and March.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

The Joy of Learning

The most important influence on a child's school success is the parent. Being an active and involved participant helps to show your child the importance and joy found in school and learning.

*Set aside a few minutes each day to ask specific questions about school.
Example: Who was your favorite character in the book you are reading?

*When reviewing your child's paper point out the specific, positive things you see.
Example: I like the describing words you used in your sentences.

*Help, support, and encourage your child's efforts. New tasks or skills take time to learn.
Example: Addition with regrouping can be tough, keep trying one step at a time.

*Praise those successes when the hard work has paid off.
Example: Your book report took a lot of time and effort but it looks fantastic!

CANNED FOOD DRIVE

Give the gift of food by donating canned and non-perishable foods to our collection boxes in the school lobby through December 12th.

HEALTHY CHOICE OF THE MONTH AT RUSSELL

“Wash your hands!”

Practice your hand washing every day...

Wash for 15-20 seconds with soap and water EVERY time

Wash before eating

Wash after using the restroom

Wash before preparing food

Wash after sneezing/coughing/blowing your nose

Wash after playing outside

Wash whenever your hands are dirty

Tami Streib, RN, School Nurse

TOYS FOR TOTS

Another opportunity to show CARING for the month of December. Please donate new un-wrapped toys to the Toys for Tots program. Collection bins are located in our school lobby. We are accepting donations through December 17th. Thank you.

Nurse's News

Give the gift of health and safety to yourself and others this holiday season by following these tips:

1. Wash hands often to keep yourself from spreading germs and getting sick.
2. Bundle up and stay dry to keep warm.
3. Manage stress. Keep a check on over-commitment and over-spending.
4. Don't drink and drive. Don't let anyone else drink and drive.
5. Be smoke-free. Avoid smoking and breathing other people's smoke.
6. Fasten seat belts while driving or riding in a motor vehicle. Always buckle your child in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt according to the child's height, weight, and age.
7. Get exams and screenings. Ask your health care provider what exams and tests you need and when to get them.
8. Get your vaccinations. Vaccinations help prevent diseases and save lives.
9. Monitor the children. Keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items, and other objects out of kids' reach. Make sure toys are used properly.
10. Practice fire safety. Most residential fires occur during the winter months. Never leave fireplaces, stoves, or candles unattended. Have an emergency plan.
11. Prepare food safely. Remember four simple steps: wash hands and surfaces often, avoid cross-contamination, cook foods to proper temperatures and refrigerate promptly.
12. Eat healthy, and get moving. Limit your portion sizes and foods high in fat and sugar. Be active for at least 2 1/2 hours a week. Help kids and teens be active for at least 1 hour a day.

<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/HealthyTips/>

Tami L. Streib, RN

RUSSELL'S SUGGESTION BOX

As Russell Elementary School continues to focus on our educational program, we again invite you to submit your ideas, concerns and suggestions to the "Suggestion Box" by the school office or to silt.russell@am.dodea.edu. We will be responding to recommendations and concerns in the next school newsletter. Thank you.