 1/20/15

Dear NVA Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back! This semester is already off and running, but let us see if we can’t rein it in a little bit. Straight out the gate I must…

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**THANK YOU!!!:** Seriously, I need to send out a note of my appreciation for all the generous gifts I received right before (and even after!) Winter Break. Between you and my students there was *NOT* one thoughtless present in the bunch. I so appreciate it.



**Our First Field Trip:** It’s been a long time a comin’ I know, but after much deliberation, the entire second grade, and yes, even the entire third grade, will be treated to an in-school field trip for FREE this ***Thursday, January 22nd from 9 am-10 am in the Center for the Arts!*** ***Ms. McConnell has graciously found in our school budget the funds ($750) to pay for this*** national touring troupe to come to our school. And let me tell you, the show is nothing short of awesome! We attended it last year as a grade level at UNM, and I was simply astounded. It’s an entirely Health & Wellness-based program focusing on nutrition and exercise, and it’s in 3-D. There’s songs, skits, dance, and a plethora of information to inspire a long, healthy life for your children. Can you tell I’m excited?! Seeing as how it is *now* free, I highly encourage you to donate what you can to our school. Tickets to this show are normally $7.50 per student!

 Letter continued on back…

**Student Read-Alouds:** Between now and the end of the school year, ***every Thursday at 2 pm*** in our classroom, individual students will be reading a book of their choosing aloud to the class. This is a *purely volunteer activity* so there are students who have chosen not to sign up, which is completely okay, as this is not a graded activity. Students who *do* sign-up are expected to practice their books (in school and/or at home) so that they are fluent when reading in front of the entire class. Prior to their reading aloud, I have each student read their book to me first to ensure they are ready. See the attached schedule of student readers at the end of this letter.

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**DIBELS Testing:** I am in the midst of testing students one-on-one to evaluate their Reading progress. The test assesses fluency, accuracy, and retell, as well as vocabulary. This is test #2. We will have just one more test before the end of the year. Look for your child’s results in the coming weeks.

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**Student Pick-Up:** It’s no secret that our afternoon school release can be a little chaotic, and that’s putting it lightly. Although, I’ve always encouraged my students to let me know when they are getting picked up so that I can see with whom they are going, they inevitably forget on occasion (hey, they’re only 2nd graders). To better ensure that I know who my students are going home with, I am counting on you the parents/guardians to help out. As a courtesy to me, as well as to ensure your child’s safe return, please let me know as you pick them up. Many of you do this already with a wave, a head nod, eye contact, etc. ***Just make sure that I am aware you are leaving with your child.*** Yes, it may take a minute longer, but this will be a big help for me in such a busy area so that I know your child has gone home safely with you. And if someone different is picking up your child (and they have your approval to do so), I highly encourage them to introduce themselves to me as I won’t initially recognize them. Also, if your child is going home with another student’s family to have a play date, just shoot me an email as soon as you know.

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**Personal Activity Matrix (PAM):** Being a Health & Wellness-based charter school, we actually have a goal to increase our student body’s exercise by 10%. This makes us really stand out because most schools (be they charter, public, or private) don’t do this, let alone make it one of their school’s personal goals. In order to meet this goal, as well as prove it to the state, our school requires that each classroom document our extra exercise. Previously, I had my students take one timed lap around our track everyday, and write this data down. However, I have put this on pause because we were in the midst of making a more universal way to track our data school-wide. ***Now, once a month, my students will be making as many laps as they can around our track in a half-an-hour timeframe.*** I plan on joining them too. Students will collect data on how many laps they have taken, and I will average their numbers for each month. That data, along with their student health journals (completed during PE with Coach John), will be submitted to the state from every grade level. ***I highly encourage parent volunteers to join us, as well as, help the students accurately keep a tally of their own track laps. We will be conducting our laps every last Friday of each month from noon until 12:30 pm.*** Of course, in order to make up for the first few months of the year where we didn’t track this data, we’ll be doing two days a month until we catch up (***the first and last Fridays of each month from noon until 12:30 pm***).

**Reminders:**

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**Science Night:** Even though it’s not until 3rd grade when students actually get to participate by making a project, it’s not a bad idea for my 2nd grade students to get an early brainstorming start by perusing the upper grades’ projects. ***And don’t forget, 2nd graders ARE able to design an Egg Drop contraption and have it tested out that night, Thursday, January 22nd from 6:00-7:30 pm.*** For more details on the exact rules, reread last week’s Thursday Folder information.



**Box Tops Part Deux**: This is the second competition of the year, and seeing as how all the money raised goes towards our school, I’m all about it promoting it! It only takes a few seconds to clip one out. ***The competition ends Friday, February 20th***.

Student Read-Aloud Schedule

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Thursdays\*** | **Student** | **Book** |
| 1/15/15 | “Ender Lord” | *Eerie Elementary: The School Is Alive* |
| 1/22/15 | “Carmen” | *If You Give a Dog a Donut* |
| 1/29/15 | “Master Football Player” | *I Will Surprise My Friend* |
| 2/5/15 | “Wolverine” | *Matt Hides* |
| 2/12/15 | “Kip” | *The Story of Titanic* |
| 2/19/15 | “Nerf Guy” | *The Giving Tree* |
| 2/26/15 | “Maleficent” | *The Big Blue Book* |
| 3/5/15 | “tk” | *Today I Will Fly* |
| 3/12/15 | “Fast Man” | *Food Chain* |
| 3/19/15 | “Crash” | Bob Book |
| 3/26/15 | “Elsa” | *There Is a Bird On Your Head* |
| 4/9/15 | “Chop Chop” | *We Are In a Book* |
| 4/16/15 | “Frankenstein” | *There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed Some Books* |
| 4/23/15 | “Cheetah” | *Martin Luther King Day* |
| 4/30/15 | “100+100+100+100+100+100=600” | *Can I Play Too?* |
| 5/7/15 | “Batman” | *There Is a Bird On Your Head* |
| 5/14/15 | **Open Slot** | **Open Slot** |
| 5/21/15 | **Open Slot** | **Open Slot** |

\*All readings begin at 2 pm.

Sincerely,

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2nd Grade Teacher

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