

Panther Press English

February Newsletter



Principal's Message



1 - Kim Koller, Principal

Beginning Our Day

Shortly after our all school announcements each morning, students in each classroom at Putnam Heights gather in a circle for Morning Meeting. From the outside, it may seem simply a nice way to start the day, but Morning Meetings are perhaps THE most important part of our school day.

The Northeast Foundation for Children describes the importance of Morning Meeting in this way: "All classroom members--grown ups and students--gather in a circle, greet each other, and listen and

respond to each others' news. We take note of who is present and who is absent, who is smiling and buoyant; who is having a hard time smiling. We briefly grapple with problems that challenge our minds and look forward to the events in the day ahead. Morning Meeting allows us to begin each day as a community of caring and respectful learners." (The Morning Meeting Book, Roxanne Kriete)

As a classroom observer, one of the most compelling parts of Morning Meeting for me is the sense of significance and belonging that children find within Morning Meeting. Watching Morning Meetings at Putnam Heights, I see children who are excited to not only to share about themselves, but to learn about their classmates. I see and hear students who notice when a classmate isn't at Morning Meeting, commenting "_____ is gone today. I hope he feels better tomorrow." While an outside observer may simply see students sitting in a circle to start the day, Morning Meeting is much more powerful than that. It is the heart of classroom and school community.

Kim Koller - Principal

Celebrating our Partnerships

The community organization **Be the Bridge to Racial Unity** held a book drive and donated multicultural books to each of our 1st and 2nd grade students. The books were all wrapped, so our students had fun opening presents. Our students were thrilled with their books, and many hugged them with huge smiles. The mission of Be the Bridge to Racial Unity is to celebrate multiculturalism and to bridge the gap between racial inequality issues in our community. Thank you so much for thinking of our Putnam students.



Putnam Heights received a generous donation from Cornerstone Christian Church which included lots of warm mittens/gloves, new underwear, new socks, and other personal care items. Thank you so much for thinking of our students' needs. We value our community members and organizations that help provide us items to support our families.

Counselor's Corner



2 - Drew Brandenburg, School Counselor

Counselor's Corner:

February is often thought of as a month dedicated to celebrating the diverse cultures. The Putnam Community is rich with culture and it is worth exploring. Here are a few tips to spark your child's curiosity about who they are and those around them.

- Teaching your children words in the native language(s) of your family is a personal way to introduce them to different cultures, as well as family history. since many classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse, consider teaching your child key phrases, such as "thank you" in a language represented in her classroom, which not only models respect for diversity but could allow her to forge new friendships.
- Children's books are wonderful resources for helping your child develop a sense of his or her own identity, as well as an understanding of those who are different in terms of race, family composition, religious beliefs and ability. Visit your library for books such as: It's Okay to be Different (diversity); The Skin You Live In (acceptance); Same, Same But Different (culture and geography); Whoever You Are (diversity); Where Does God Live (religion); What is God (religion); Over the Moon (adoption); Don't Call Me Special (disabilities); My Brother Sammy (autism); and The Family Book (different family configurations).
- **Exposure to other cultures brings personal meaning.** Here are more hands-on activities you can try:
 - Encourage cross-racial/ethnic/religious/ability friendships.
 - Expose your children to foods from different cultures, like classic pork and cabbage dumplings or kimchi.
 - Attend different events/festivals that celebrate a particular ethnic group, holiday or personal accomplishment, like Special Olympics, the Chinese New Year, or the Hindu festival of colors.

- Museums often have an abundance of artifacts from different cultures and countries.
- Watch Movies set in other cultures like *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Kirikou and the Sorceress*, or *The Red Balloon*.
- Plan on presenting or attending **Putnam's Multicultural Fair April 5th** where traditions, food and activities from all over the world collide for a fantastic evening of learning and fun.

Drew Brandenburg – School Counselor .

Messages from PTO

As you know, the school play, Snow Biz, is coming up Thursday and Friday! The PTO would like to give a huge “thank you” to Mrs. Miller and all other school staff who have been involved in making this unique experience a reality for our kids. Having come from another district school, I can say that not every student in the district has an opportunity to be a part of a play or any after school music experience. What a gift! If you have not yet ordered a ticket, you can purchase them at the door. Even if your child is not a part of the play, it will be a great experience for them to watch their classmates perform on stage!

Parent/Teacher conferences are coming up on February 22nd. We ask that you consider contributing food for the day to show our teachers and staff our appreciation for all they do. This spring, we will specifically be reaching out to kindergarten, second and fourth grade families to donate. You will be receiving an email to sign up to donate. Stay tuned!

This year, for the spring carnival, work is already getting started on revamping to include a one-mile fun run that evening. We are looking for a couple of people who would be interested in helping make this idea come alive! If you are interested in helping, please email Julia Diggins (digginja@uwec.edu¹)!

Thanks, as always, for all you do! Julia Diggins- PTO President

¹<mailto:digginja@uwec.edu>

From your Partnership Coordinator



3 - Erin Anderson, Partnership Coordinator

We have been starting to plan for our **Multicultural Fair on April 5th**. In the past, this was known as the International Fair. This is my very favorite event of the school year. I love seeing our students and families come together to share different cultures by sharing food, traditional clothing, dance, music, stories, language, and more. At Putnam we have students and families from 19 different countries.

Those of us who have never lived in another country still have our own cultures to share. Our country is made up primarily of immigrants from many countries, so many of us have different cultures in our ancestry, even if we no longer identify with them. For example, my ancestors came from Ireland, Norway, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Russia, yet the only cultural traditions ever celebrated in my home as a child were Norwegian, and that was very minimal. My husband, who is 100% Swedish, grew up in a family where their Swedish culture was celebrated frequently.

The International Fair can be an opportunity for your family to discuss your child's heritage and family tree and possibly research some of the traditions that are connected to one of those countries in your family tree (or even another country your child is interested in) and share the traditions with other families at our Multicultural Fair. I encourage all our families to consider sharing. Registration forms will be coming home very soon. Please let me know if you have any questions or if you have any ideas to share to help make our Multicultural Fair even better.

School Nurse News



4 - Beth Passint, School Nurse / Enfermera/tus nurse

Restricted Physical Activity

If a child must stay inside from recess or sit out from Physical Education class for medical reasons, parents are required to send a note from a health care provider detailing the period of time of restricted activity.

RCU School Sense



February 2018

We LOVE seeing students save at Royal Credit Union School Sense!

This Valentine's Day, let your student plan a family activity to share time together and celebrate your love for each other! Decide on the amount of money they can spend on the activity and, depending on their age, either help them find options or let them plan on their own!

This activity teaches the basics of creating a budget and can encourage children to find fun things to do together that don't cost any money at all!

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Movie Night:** Go out to the theater, rent a new release, or watch one you already own. Remember to plan for snacks!
- **Game Night:** Go to the arcade, go bowling, buy a new board game, or play one you already own. Make awards for winners!
- **Craft Time:** Go to a craft store for some new materials or get creative coming up with a craft to make with things around the house: think recyclables, toys that aren't used often, or neglected art supplies.
- **Get Active:** Go skiing, skating, sledding, or just for a walk around your neighborhood to enjoy the crisp fresh air. Remember the hot chocolate to keep you warm!

To share the love this February, a sweet prize bag will be randomly awarded to a saver depositing Thursday February 15th!

The Putnam Heights Royal School \$ense is open every Thursday at lunch time to help your child develop good saving habits.

If you have any questions about the Royal School \$ense program please contact:

Emily Hanson

emily.hanson@rcu.org

715-855-5403

