



Ben Franklin Herald

OCTOBER
2009

Benjamin Franklin Elementary School

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From the Principal-

Greetings parents, guardians and members of our community! I hope that this edition of the Ben Franklin Newsletter finds you well. Now that the *initial* excitement and newness of the 2009 – 2010 school year is behind us, and we are building momentum toward achieving our first quarter objectives.

Before I touch upon those, I'd like to share with you some of the fun stuff that's already happening! Mrs. Werner organized a wonderful tribute to celebrate the anniversary of Francis Scott Key's *Star Spangled Banner*. As you may know/have noticed, the Project Fit America fitness playground has been installed just in time for our official ribbon cutting on October 9th at 10:00 am. If you look throughout our lobby, you will also see samples of the Art and Literacy Grant's artwork.

So that we are proactive about meeting the needs of our young and developing readers, we have launched the Response to Intervention process. We have administered benchmark assessment #1, held our data-analysis meetings and have planned our reading instruction to meet the diverse needs of our youngsters. RESPECT remains the Heartwood attribute for the month of October and we continue to teach, promote and model various ways that we can show respect toward one another and our school community.

I am excited about the possibilities for the 2009 – 2010 school year! You are always welcome to contact me if you wish to discuss those or anything else that is on your mind about your child's education at Ben Franklin.

Michael Minnick

Dates to Remember

October 9	Early Dismissal Day 11:45AM
October 12	No Classes-Teacher In Service Day
October 22	Parent Visitation Day/Open House
October 27-29	Grade 6 Trip to Lutheran
October 30	End of First Quarter
October 30	Halloween Parties 2PM
November 6	Early Dismissal Day 11:45AM
November 10	Veterans' Day/Grandparents' Day Programs
November 11	School Closed
November 25	Parent/Teacher Conferences-No Classes
November 26-30	Thanksgiving Break
December 1	Return to school

CLASSROOM NEWS

KINDERGARTEN

The kindergarten classes were fortunate to release their monarch butterflies to migrate south for the winter. It was an exciting time! We are working on our family booklets and learning the difference between needs and wants. We are looking for fall changes and will go on a trip to Yellow Creek the first of the month.

FIRST GRADE

During the month of October the first graders will be learning about fire safety, personal safety, and drug awareness. In math we will continue to learn about the use of numbers in their daily lives. We will begin learning to tell time to the hour and recognize and count pennies and nickels. In reading, the children are excited to be switching classrooms and working on various reading skills with each of the first grade teachers. This is a new program called RTI, along with our new reading series, Treasures. At this time students are beginning to build work families with short vowel sounds. You can help by playing rhyming games with your child at home. Thank you.

SECOND GRADE

Second graders have gone buggy! The students participated in a scientific study of the life cycle of the Painted Lady butterfly. This four to six week unit was designed specifically for children of this age level. Students learned scientific terms, developed observational skills, and recorded data in logs. Over the weeks, the students watched their own caterpillar grow, shed its skin several times, then transform into a chrysalis. Soon, it emerged as a black and orange butterfly. We hope that your child enjoyed being a scientist.

Please help us checking over your child's homework and homework folder. The Homework Assignment book helps you know what homework was assigned each night. Please check to make sure that your child has completed all of their assignments in a neat and accurate manner. Stress that your child needs to use their neatest handwriting while they complete their written assignments.

Reading W.E.B. is a part of your child's nightly homework. The more your child reads their self-selected reading books, at their independent reading level, the more he or she will increase their skills. Ask them a few questions about the book to make sure that they are not only reading the words but that they are comprehending what they've read. Your help is needed and appreciated. Together, we can make a difference.

THIRD GRADE

The third grade classes are currently exploring and learning about place-value in Math. Our upcoming theme in our Language Arts anthologies will center on Investigations and persuasive writing. This month's Heartwood unit has us focusing on the meaning of respect and ways to demonstrate respect. In science, we will be starting our desert unit.

FOURTH GRADE

This month in Social Studies we will be finishing up our explorers unit. The students really enjoyed creating 3D ships and an explorer book. We will also be starting our first official science unit, rocks and minerals. In Math we are working on addition and subtraction of three and four digit numbers. Each student has their own set of fact triangles to practice and reinforce the basic addition and subtraction facts. In reading the students will be reading the novel The Mouse and the Motorcycle, and be completing related activities. We will be starting Unit 2 in the reading series, Treasures.

FIFTH GRADE

There are several tools in your student's math folder to help with speed and accuracy of mastering multiplication facts. This will be helpful as we find products for whole number and decimal problems, solve multiple-step problems, and use estimates to check for reasonable answers.

Students will be reading novels during the first part of the month in reading class. We will continue working on skills and strategies to improve reading comprehension. Following the novels, we will be working in Unit 2 of the Treasures Series.

In science, students will be starting to learn about movement and motion in our Fun in Motion Unit. We will be exploring how objects move, various types of movement made possible by the interaction of our muscular, skeletal, and nervous systems, and comparing different factors that affect motion on earth and in space.

SIXTH GRADE

The school year is in full swing for the entire 6th grade. Again, we support open lines of communication as we use the year to prepare our students for a smooth transition into the junior high. Our emails are tbeard@iasd.cc, dhorvath@iasd.cc, and rpalya@iasd.cc.

Power School grades are up and running. **Power School** is an excellent way to check your child's progress on a regular basis. **Lutherlyn** is just around the corner. Our dates are October 27-29. Thank you for the timely return of forms and monies. The trip is already a success due to the parent volunteers, Ben Franklin staff, and students. We appreciate everyone's time and efforts. Many thanks go to the PTA for providing funds for this very valuable environmental trip.

ART

Kindergarten is starting the year off with a colorful mouse painting which practices drawing, painting, cutting and gluing skills. First grade is creating a primary color painting of a city. To begin our travels around the world, second grade is painting beautiful sailboats. Third graders are learning about complementary colors, colors that are opposite from each other on the color wheel, as they create a hot air balloon. Fourth graders are in the midst of creating Prehistoric Art, while fifth graders are working on one-point perspective drawings. Sixth graders will be designing a sculpture, with the Industrial Revolution as their inspiration.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Ben Franklin Elementary recently received a grant from Project Fit America for outdoor fitness equipment as well as indoor equipment and a fitness curriculum guide. This grant was sponsored by the Indiana Regional Medical Center. The total value of the grant award is \$16,371. This is great for our school, as I will be helping your child achieve a higher fitness level through the use of this new equipment that we have received. Our ribbon cutting ceremony for the Project Fit America equipment will be held on the morning of Friday, October 9th.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Current guidance lessons are focusing on bullying and the importance of respect for self and others. According to Dan Olweus (2002) bullying is any negative action that a child is exposed to repeatedly. As adults, it is important that we remember that negative actions can be physical, verbal or acts of exclusion. I believe that it is important for children to learn how to be assertive to the bullies in their lives. The following acronym is being used to teach the students how to handle a bully.

W: Walk away from the bully

I: Ignore the bully

S: Stand-up for yourself (assertiveness skills)

H: Go get help

If your child comes home and shares a bullying issue with you, please feel free to contact me at any time. I hope to work very closely with the students in overcoming bullying in our school.

October 26 through 30 is national Red Ribbon Week. The Red Ribbon Campaign was started when drug traffickers in 1985 murdered a DEA agent, Kiki Camarena, in Mexico City. This began the tradition of wearing and displaying a variety of red ribbons as a symbol of intolerance towards the use of drugs. We will participate in the celebration to fight illegal drug use. The focus of this campaign is to spread awareness on the effects of drug and alcohol abuse and to help educate children and adults on the dangers associated with abuse. A summary of this year's activities will be sent home soon.

As always if you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to call me!

Have a wonderful October!
Miss Polosky

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council elections were held on Tuesday, September 29. Fifteen students were eligible to run for office. The students did a wonderful job on their speeches. The following students were voted the 09-10 Student Council Officers:

President: Ben Strong
Vice-President: Kacey Raible
Treasurer: Jamie Simmons
Secretary: Wiley Frumkin

The students' classmates selected homeroom representatives as well. Each homeroom selected two representatives and an alternate to represent their homeroom.

Our first meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 15th.

Have a great October,
Shannon Tokar and Stephanie Polosky

LIBRARY

Check out the new program being offered at the Indiana Free Library. Every Wednesday and Friday, from 4:00 PM to 4:45 PM, a program called *Tween Time @ Your Library* is being offered. It is designed to encourage students in grades 4-6 to visit the public library to take advantage of all their resources. In addition to reading encouragement, the program will allow children to record their own book reviews, watch quality movies and enjoy a Wii game with their friends.

GENERAL MUSIC

On Monday morning, September 14, all Ben Franklin students and staff celebrated the 195th anniversary of the writing of the lyrics of The Star Spangled Banner. After practicing the song in music classes, the entire school population gathered in the gym to sing our national anthem. Mrs. Horvath's reading class students Maria Ali, Landon Coy, Brianna Dillon, and Jason Herrington presented a brief history of the War of 1812's Battle at Fort McHenry including Francis Scott Key's

penning of the famous words. In fifth grade art and library classes, under the guidance of Ms. Zacherl and Mrs. Peterman, a large flag and a display poster of SSB fun facts were created to enhance the special activity. Great job Ben Franklin School!

FROM THE NURSE

Are you prepared for the flu season? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that all children age 6 months to eighteen years old should receive the **seasonal flu vaccine** as long as they do not have a severe egg allergy. The **H1N1 flu vaccine** should also be available soon. The following five groups are considered most at risk for complications from the H1N1 flu and should consider getting the vaccine.

- Pregnant women
- Persons 6 months to 24 years old
- Healthcare providers
- Parents, household members or caregivers of children under 6 months
- Those under 65 with certain underlying medical conditions.

If your child does get the flu, remember that aspirin or aspirin containing products (e.g. bismuth subsalicylate-Pepto Bismol) **should not** be administered to anyone under the age of 18 with flu symptoms due to the risk of Reye's Syndrome. For the treatment of fever, Tylenol or ibuprofen is recommended.

K-KIDS



We are excited to start off another year of school and community service! New members will be accepted throughout the school year! Since Day 5 currently falls on 4th grade Swimming day, 4th graders won't be able to attend our meetings until October 22, when the rotation switches. Please see Ms. Helm or Ms. Zacherl with any questions.

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Reminder for PTA Homeroom Parents

The Homeroom Parent meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at 6:30 pm in the school cafeteria. This meeting will give you the opportunity to meet with other parents and begin to plan the Halloween Party for October 30. We look forward to seeing everyone on the 12th. (Note: If you have not yet submitted your PTA membership application, please do so prior to the meeting)

PTA REFLECTIONS PROGRAM

Please encourage your children to submit their Reflections Project to their teacher or the front office. Due by October 21, 2009. Projects should reflect the theme: "Beauty Is..."

Our Awards Program will be held on Thursday, November 5 at 6:30 p.m.

We hope to see a good turn-out this year, so please remind and encourage your young artists, and please mark your calendar!

QUESTIONS? LYNN SIMMERMAN 724-349-1348.

FUNDRAISER

Thanks to everyone who participated in the PTA Fall Fund Raiser! Orders will arrive sometime in mid-October. We'll send a flyer home with your child letting you know the exact pick-up date and time, as well as when order money will be due. If you have any questions about the fund raiser, please call Andrea Ebeling at 724-463-8248 or Amanda Owens at 724-349-0272.



Back to School Picnic



The Back to School Picnic was held Thursday, September 24th at Mack Park and a fun time was had by all. A total of 470 people attended to enjoy dinner, catch up with old friends, and meet new ones. The playground was full of Ben Franklin students having a great time.

Thanks go out to the following people and local businesses that helped with every aspect of the picnic, including setup, serving, clean-up, snocones, and food donations.

A big Thank You to:

Mrs. Beard, Mrs. Cunningham, Mrs. Galore, Mrs. Gatti, Mrs. Geary, Mrs. Hilliard, Mrs. Leonardo, Mrs. Matz, Miss McCutcheon, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Minnick, Mrs. Obush, Mrs. Ott, Mrs. Peterman, Ms. Polosky, Mrs. Werner, Miss Zacherl, Sara Dillon, Michelle Ferrington, Melissa Kocinski, Lisa Kuzneski, Connie Merriman, Rita Schreckengost, Lynn Simmerman, Stacy Simmons, Chris Slupek, Dana Smathers, Donna Swatworth, Terri Williams, Martin's Grocery Store, McDonald's, Sheetz, and Subway.

Stacy Kovalchick, picnic chairperson

MARKET DAY

Thank you to everyone who purchased Market Day in September and to all the volunteers who helped with delivery. Remember we have a Market Day sale every month. We had a profit of \$258 for the PTA in September. Thank you for your support. We are also having a thank you contest for Market Day. In December, Ben Franklin PTA will be giving away an insulated Market Day bag with Market Day goodies for your family. For every \$10 you spend at the October, November and December sales we will enter your name into a drawing. The drawing will be held on the December sale, which is December 7th.

Attention 6th Grade Parents: If you are interested in helping with the 6th grade activity and/or the yearbook there will be a meeting on October 20th. It will be held in the Ben Franklin Library at 6:30pm. Please come and help us make these events successful. Thank-you.

REFUNDING

We have kicked off our Fall contest for Campbell's and Box Tops. Thank you so much for sending them in. Please remember to cut them out to save time in submitting them. The contest will run until December 15th and the winner will get a classroom pizza party.

PARENT VISITATION

Parent visitation will be held on October 22nd. There will be a morning and afternoon visitation. More information will be coming home in an invitation soon. Please remember to fill this out and return it to school. This visitation will be for parents only. Grandparents will be attending with our Veterans' Day program later in the fall. Hope to see you there!

Veterans' Day/Grandparent Day

The Ben Franklin Elementary Veterans' Day celebration will be held Tuesday, November 10, 2009. This is our annual program for our Ben Franklin Elementary School grandparents and veterans. The program times are 9:30AM (3rd-6th grades) and 1:30PM (K-2 grades). If you would like to honor a veteran, please be sure to fill out the form which was sent home to be placed on our wall of fame. If you would like to have your veteran included in the power point presentation, which will be shown at the program, please be sure to send in a picture with your form, both are due by October 9, 2009.