



News From Room 14

January 2018

Dear Families,

One of the things I love about January is coming back from vacation and seeing the kids' big smiles as they enter the room. Even though it has only been a few months since they began first grade, they somehow seem changed when I see them again. It is truly amazing how quickly kids grow and learn!

All that growing and learning can give kids a big appetite! I have been going through extra snacks at a rapid rate; please be sure to pack a hearty snack for your child every day.

We will exchange valentines on February 14th with the students in our room only. Please remember that we are exchanging **cards only** (no food, trinkets, etc.). Below is a list of the students in our classroom for our valentine exchange:

Abby	Blake	Brystal	Elijah
Elsa	Evelyn	Grace	Helena
Isabel	Jeremiah	Jonah	Leah
Lucas	Mina	Nathaniel	Peter
Sondre	Sophia	Victoria	William
Xavier			

Your partner in learning,
Mrs. Sciacca



Our Arts are Elementary resident artist, Catherine Worthington, working with students on sewing their quilt squares.

Mark Your Calendar!

Rescheduled KinderKonzert – Feb. 6th
Colors Week – Feb. 12th – 16th
Dental Health Presentation – Feb. 12th
Valentine Exchange – Feb. 14th
Dental Screening – Feb. 16th
February Vacation – Feb. 19th – 23rd

Spring Concert

Please join us for our school-wide spring concert on March 10th! Save the date!

What's Happening In...

Reader's Workshop:

Our informational reading unit was a big success! The kids did a great job learning how to approach reading informational texts and made great strides in their ability to learn from their reading. They have learned about the structure of nonfiction texts, key words, and the importance of rereading to learn more (to name just a few of the skills we have worked on). They have been working hard to solve the tricky vocabulary words that go along with nonfiction reading and know how to stop and think about what new words likely mean. Reading is the single most important thing your child can do at home to enhance their learning – please help your child remember to read every night, even if it is just for a few minutes. The January reading calendar is due back on February 1st.

Writer's Workshop:

We are wrapping up our informational writing unit with a research project. Each child chose a topic they were interested in learning more about and used books to research that topic. We learned that studying pictures is a great way to get more information! The kids have been doing a great job of including interesting facts in their writing (remember, these are first graders, so my definition of “interesting facts” is loose!). We have learned all the parts of strong informational books and have been working on editing our writing to include punctuation and capital letters in the correct places. Punctuation is very elusive to many children and harder to grasp than one would think! We will be publishing our writing and will have them ready to share with you at conferences.

Word Study:

We have been working on “silent e” words this month for our whole group work. Students have been enjoying working on their individualized word study baskets and spelling words. I gave the kids a check-in packet to reassess the skills they have mastered and pinpoint the ones they need to continue to work on. Using this information, the students were put into new word study groups and I was able to choose sorts to match their needs. We have also been working hard on our handwriting. The kids are trying very hard to use the handwriting lines and to form the letters using the correct strokes; this comes easily to some and not so easily to others! If you see your child write a letter backwards at home, please point it out to them and have them fix it. For many kids it is simply a bad habit they have formed and they need to retrain their brain!

Math in Focus:

This month we have been working on addition and subtraction to 20. The kids have learned to transfer skills and strategies they know to larger numbers and have done a great job! We used strategies such as making a ten, double facts, and double plus one facts. Mastering facts to 10 fluently (in both addition and subtraction) is the key to doing computation with larger numbers; we practice these facts in class for a few minutes each day, but practice at home is needed as well! We are applying what we know to real world story problems and will wrap up the chapter this week.

Science and Social Studies:

This month we talked about making a difference in our communities and beyond. Using Martin Luther King, Jr. as a role model, we looked at how important it is to stand up for what is right, even when it is hard. We spent some time learning about growth mindset and the kids have really taken this to heart! Phrases such as “This is hard, but I’m going to get it!” are music to my ears! We have been learning about quilts with our Arts are Elementary resident, Catherine Worthington, which connects to our Now and Then unit. The kids each designed and stamped a quilt square, then got to try their hand at sewing. Our newly acquired growth mindset skills came in very handy for this difficult task! We have also been studying the season of winter in science.