

Ohio Elementary School News

March 2010

Dear Parents,

With the weather breaking many of our students will be walking to and from school and the bus stop more. Please take the time to talk with your child about safety for student walkers. I have included some information that may assist with your discussions.

- Encourage your child to walk with a buddy and not alone if possible.
- Emphasize that your child needs to be aware of their surroundings when walking.
- Never accept a ride from a stranger.
- Never talk to strangers while walking to and from school or the bus stop.
- If a vehicle pulls up next to your child to ask a question, he/she should never get close to the vehicle.
- Keep communication lines open with your children to be apprised of potential safety problems.
- Inform your children that if they are approached by anyone for any reason they should report the incident to a responsible adult.
- Make sure you are aware of your children's whereabouts if they are not going straight home from school.
- Keep alert and be aware.
- Remain calm as you review and discuss safety procedures with your children.

The Ohio has Talent show has been post-poned. We will get more information out as it becomes available.

Calendar at a glance:



March 2010

- 1st Candy bar fundraiser ends
- 3rd Evening Conferences 5:30-8:30
Ohio Meeting 6:30
- 5th Staff Development Day – No School
- 15th Third Grade Field Trip
- 16th Shared Decision Making Team 3:30
- 18th Parent Teacher Conferences ½ day
- 23rd Parent Teacher Conferences ½ day
- 24th Second Grade Field Trip

April 2010

- 1st 5th Grade Field Trip
- 2nd Holiday – No School
- 7th Ohio Meeting 6:30
- 9th Kindergarten Aquarium
- 19th-23rd No School
- 27th Shared Decision Making Team 8:00

NYS ASSESSMENT in ELA:

Grade 3: April 27 & 28

Grade 4: April 28, 29, & 30

Grade 5: April 27 & 28

Grade 6: April 28, 29 & 30

NYS ASSESSMENT in Math

**The Math Assessments will run from
May 5 – May 7th.**

Please remember, the best way to prepare our students for the New York State Assessments is to make certain our students are well rested with a good night's sleep, and to start their day with a good breakfast on the morning of the testing.

Thank you for your efforts to support our Ohio students in these ways!

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Reading Levels: What do they mean to our students and to you?

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As you meet with the classroom teachers during upcoming parent teacher conferences and review the progress on report cards, you will notice that we have now moved to recording a text level for your reference. It is **IMPORTANT** to know and understand that this is a complex reference to the development of reading skills for each child, and is **NOT** intended to be a comparison between or among children - regardless of comparisons that you may be tempted by within a family, among friends, or within a classroom.

Reading levels, also known as text gradients, are a venue for teachers to communicate with other professionals regarding the skills and experiences a student has with varied reading materials. As parents, it is important for us to ask questions about the learning objectives that are specific to our children, in order to help them to continue to make progress. Text gradients are not, and **SHOULD NEVER BE** used as a measure of how quickly a student moves from one level to the next. Each text level represents a group of skills that need to be developed with breadth and depth in order to be certain that our students are developing a solid foundation that will assist them in applying their reading skills across the curriculum and in real life!

With the North Tonawanda City School District's recent commitment to the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, our teachers have access to comprehensive materials that assist us in



identifying specific reading, writing, speaking, spelling and listening goals for every individual student. Teachers take much information into consideration when designing and building their reading program for your child. Teachers are looking at different genres, (such as fantasy or narrative, poetry, or nonfiction...); the content of text (familiar or unfamiliar); themes and ideas of text materials, (such as friendship or courage); illustrations that support reading; even print length and layout in selecting the appropriate text for your son or daughter's reading program. All of these considerations are guided by the text level or gradient that is most appropriate for your child.

Teachers are also using much information to determine the specific instructional goals for the student reading programs. These goals may be overarching goals for a unit of instruction or they may be smaller, more specific goals that are

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reflective of an individual lesson for a given day. These goals cross many areas - Thinking within the text, Thinking beyond the text, and Thinking about the text. When students are thinking within the text, we are developing skills that include recognizing or identifying words, monitoring and correcting our reading, searching for and using information, summarizing and fluent reading.

When students are thinking beyond the text, we are developing skills that include making predictions, making connections with the text, applying higher level thinking skills such as synthesizing and inferring.

When students are thinking about the text, students are learning to identify what writers have done to make the text surprising or funny. Students begin to notice use of specific words to convey meaning, (i.e. "said" vs. "shouted"), as well as share opinions about the writing or ideas within a text.

As students gain skills in each of these areas, they become better readers and more effective learners. Young readers, who are working at early or emergent reading levels, may appear to travel through reading levels at a "quicker" pace than older students. It is important to understand that the complexity of skills - the breadth and depth of skills that our students must develop increases significantly as the Reading levels (or text gradients) increase. A student reading at a level C is working on developing skills while working with text that has familiar easy content (such as family, pets or school), while a student reading at a level Q may be working with content that goes beyond the readers' personal experiences or require knowledge of history or geography to understand. It is easy to see and understand that students at higher grade levels may take nearly a year to progress through a text level.



All of this underscores the importance of having a dialogue with your children's teachers about the goals and objectives of their learning. Our dialogue should always be about the learning that is happening - and not a focus on a reading level letter!

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Identifying Your Learning Styles

There are a number of different learning styles and learning preferences. The most common include Visual Learning Style (the most common), Auditory Learning Style and Tactile (Kinesthetic) Learning Style. Additional learning styles and preferences include Logical (mathematical), Social (interpersonal) and Solitary (intrapersonal). There is no right mix. Nor are your styles fixed. Some people may find that they have a dominant style of learning, with far less use of the other styles. Others may find that they use different styles in different circumstances. You can develop ability in less dominant styles, as well as further develop styles that you already use well.

Visual Learning Style

Individuals that learn best when ideas or subjects are presented in a visual format, whether that is written language, pictures, diagrams or videos are visual learners. Visual learners usually learn best when the teacher provides written study notes, writes on the chalkboard and uses an overhead projector to explain concepts. Visual learners frequently take detailed notes in class, when studying from a textbook or listening to lectures. They also create diagrams and use pictures to understand and remember concepts and ideas.

Auditory Learning Style

If you learn best by participating in class discussion, by listening to your teacher lecture, or by listening to audio tapes then you are probably an Auditory Learner. Auditory Learners, unlike Visual Learners, are able to learn, understand and retain information better when they hear it rather than see it.

Tactile Learning Style

Tactile Learners, also commonly referred to as Kinesthetic Learners, are hand-on learners. They learn best when they are able to physically participate directly in what they are required to learn or understand. Tactile learners usually excel when they are able to handle something in order to learn about it. Tactile learners may do especially well in classes where lab work is required. Unlike Visual Learners that learn by seeing and Auditory Learners that learn by hearing, Tactile Learners learn by touching and feeling.

Logical Style

If you find that you like using your brain for logical and mathematical reasoning you probably prefer the Logical Learning style. Logical learners can recognize patterns easily and are good at making logical connections between what would appear to most people to be meaningless content.

Social Style

If social learning is your style, you'll communicate well with others, both verbally and non-verbally. You're a good listener and are able to understand other's views. People listen to you and come to you for advice. Social learners prefer learning in groups or classes and typically like to spend one-on-one time with a teacher or an instructor.

Solitary Style

If you have a solitary style of learning you tend to be private, introspective and/or independent. You're able to concentrate and focus on a specific subject, topic or concept without outside help. You are very self-aware and able to analyze the different ways you think and feel. Solitary learners prefer to work on problems by retreating to somewhere quiet and working through possible solutions by themselves.

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Art Room News

First of all I want to say ‘greetings’ to all of the Ohio Elementary parents, faculty, and students. My name is Garrett Fallin, and I am a student from Buffalo State College. I’m currently student teaching with Mrs. Holler, and it has been a joy to work with her and with all the fine students that make up the art classroom.

There’s a new program that Tonawanda Pediatrics has implemented called the ‘Tonawanda Childrens Gallery.’ This program gives aspiring artists from Western New York area a chance to display their original works of art in their offices and buildings. This program has been developed through a team of doctors and employees at Tonawanda Pediatrics.

Our school has been asked to participate in this worthwhile project. Select artwork has been chosen to be a nominated for the ‘Tonawanda Childrens Gallery.’ If one of artworks is chosen, the student will then receive a certificate and their ‘masterpiece’ will be framed and hung in the permanent collection at Tonawanda Pediatrics.

Congratulations to the nominees:

1. Taylor Dietrich
2. Alyssa Gendron
3. Emily Gabel
4. Jonathon Johnson
5. Layla Kaiser
6. Samantha Kennedy
7. Brooke Normandin
8. Johnathen Rakowski
9. Clarice Scarpace
10. Adam Steingasser
11. Crista Sukennik

Peer Club

During the month of March Peer Club will be raising money to support the Canine Helpers for the Handicapped. This organization trains dogs to help people with many disabling conditions and is now training dogs to be reading partners for children as well.

We are planning a visit from the Canine Helpers this month so that everyone may meet these special dogs and learn more about their training.

The Peer Club will be selling Doggy Paws for \$1.00 each to support the Canine Helpers. Each Doggy Paw will have the name of the person donating on it and we hope to have them lining the hallways to show our support. If you’d like to help, please send in you donation, including your name and room number, to Mrs. Strong. She will then be happy to send your Doggy Paw to you.

Thank you for all of your support to help keep those tails wagging!

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The Ohio Clothing Closet!



During the month of January, Ohio Elementary School has worked to open a Community Clothing Closet. In order to “stock” this closet, we have and will continue to warmly accept any gently used clothing – shirts, sweaters, pants, coats, boots, etc. that families may have outgrown. **All sizes are welcome!!**

As our clothing closet is filled, we would like to make these clothing items available to any family in need. If you or your family is in need of any item, we are happy to provide these to you!

Donations may be dropped off to the main office. Any requests for clothing may be made by using the Clothing Closet Request Form below.

If you are interested in receiving some of the clothing that has been donated – please fill out the Closet Request Form below and forward this to the main office.

Please mark the envelope: **Attention: Mrs. Dawn Lowry**

Cut here: -----

Clothing Closet Request Form				
Please describe the clothing items you need:				
1.) Clothing item(s): _____				
Size: _____	Male	Female	/ Child	Adult
2.) Clothing item(s): _____				
Size: _____	Male	Female	/ Child	Adult
3.) Clothing item(s): _____				
Size: _____	Male	Female	/ Child	Adult
<hr/>				
Please return to the Ohio Main Office – <u>Attention: Mrs. Dawn Lowry</u>				
<u>Contact Information:</u> Name: _____				
Phone Number: _____ Teacher Name: _____				

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Attention Parents: Notes to Note

Smarter Adults - Safer Kids District Training Dates:

<u>Date - Time</u>	<u>Building</u>	<u>Location</u>
<i>March 3 - 4:30</i>	<i>Ohio School</i>	<i>Library</i>
<i>May 4- 9:00am</i>	<i>Middle School</i>	<i>142</i>
<i>June 1 - 9:00am</i>	<i>NTHS</i>	<i>Guidance Office</i>

Substitute Support Staff – North Tonawanda is always looking for interested people!

The North Tonawanda City School District always accepts applications for the following substitute support staff positions:



Teacher Aide - \$9.15/hr

Typists - \$9.15/hr

School (lunch) Monitor - \$8.50/hr

School Nurse (RN) - \$17.00/hr

Cleaners - \$9.75/hr

Custodians - \$10.60/hr

Bus Attendants - \$8.50/hr

Bus Drivers - \$11.66/hr

Applications are available at the Administration Building, between the hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 175 Humphrey Street, N. Tonawanda.

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SEX OFFENDER NOTIFICATION

The North Tonawanda Police Department has informed the school district that we will no longer be receiving written notification of level 2 and 3 sex offenders through the mail as we have in the past. The Niagara County Sheriff's Department created a web site listing all the level 2 and 3 sex offenders in their jurisdiction and the NT Police Department has teamed up with them. Level 2 and 3 sex offenders residing in North Tonawanda are now on that web site.

Additionally, the web site will allow users to sign up for a notification service that will automatically notify you via e-mail every time a level 2 or 3 sex offender moves into or from place to place within Niagara County.

The Niagara County Sheriff's Department web site is www.ncsd.com/SOR/. Please also remember that the New York State web site is www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us/sor/. The state web site allows you to search by name, county, or zip code throughout New York. The state's toll free number is 1-800-262-3257.

The District will continue with notifications using the District newsletter and District web site www.ntcityschools.wnyric.org.

Attention Families: Has your contact information changed?



Emergency Contact Information

Attention Ohio Elementary School - Please note these changes in our contact information:

Student Name(s) and Grade levels _____

- Our new home phone number _____
- Our new cell number: _____
- Our new address: _____
- Additional persons with permission to pick my child(ren) up from school:

- Other contact information changes: (i.e.: Grandparent phone number changes if they are listed as emergency contacts)

Parent Signature

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