

# Merryhill News

*Nobel Learning Communities, Inc*

## Upcoming Events:

- February 3: 100th day of school
- February 4: Character Counts: caring
- February 5: Western Day
- February 11: Chick-fil-A Night
- February 12: Valentine's snack and card exchange
- February 13: Early dismissal
- February 13: Daddy Daughter Dance
- February 16: President's Day
- February 20: Spirit Day
- February 24: Baba Kwasi presentation
- February 25: CiCi's Night

## February Happenings

We are definitely fully back into the rigor of our normal school year! As we look over the February calendar, it seems as though we have an event or activity almost daily. The calendar definitely stays packed through the end of the school year!

We begin this month by celebrating our 100th day of school. This is a fun day as we all discuss the number 100, different ways to make 100, what it would be like to be 100, and several other activities centered around 100. Make sure you view our giant 100 quilt posted on our art board.

February will also host Western Day, Valentine's card exchanges, the Daddy Daughter Dance,

and President's Day. What a busy month!

In addition to all of our fun special events and activities, our students are busy in their classrooms. Every student is working to become a published author this month. Students will either collaboratively create a class book or create an individual book. Be sure to watch your student's folder for the order form. Do not miss this opportunity to purchase a copy of your student's published work!

All classes are also participating in project-based learning this semester. Students are engaged in STEM, Intrigue, and Giving Without Walls projects. In addition, there are also short-term classroom projects occurring.

These special learning opportunities allow students to truly dive into learning, form questions, find answers, and develop critical thinking skills.

We are looking forward to a fun and very educational month!

## FAQ

**Q:** What celebrations occur during February?

**A:** We have several fun celebrations and events during the month of February! We will celebrate our 100th day of school on Tuesday, February 3. We will create a 100th day quilt, will count 100 items, and will enjoy several other activities centered around 100. We will

then enjoy our annual Western Day celebration on Thursday, February 5. We will enjoy our traditional "cowboy" meal from the chuckwagon. We also encourage everyone to wear their favorite cowboy or cowgirl gear! Our Valentine's snack and card exchange will be Thursday, February 12. Students will need to bring cards for their class for the exchange. We will also celebrate

President's Day on Monday, February 16. There will not be any instructional classes this day.

In addition to these fun celebrations and events, we will also celebrate Black History Month all month. We will have several activities to honor black history.

## Character Counts: Caring



4th grade students perform a "caring" skit during the Character Pep Rally.

This month we will introduce our next character trait: caring. Students should wear red on Wednesday, February 4 to show their support of caring.

As we enter the month of February, it seems very appropriate to introduce caring. February is a month focusing on love and caring. We will especially be working with students to help them be kind, compassionate, and

showing others they care. We also will focus on expressing gratitude and helping others in need. Students will also be encouraged to forgive others this month.

As always, students will earn eagle heads and bands for exemplifying caring actions and attitudes this month. Be sure to check out our Character Counts board to see the great things our students are

doing!

As we continue to emphasize additional traits each month, we also continue to encourage our students to consistently display previous traits. We are thrilled with the strong character our students are showing!

## STEM

*"We encourage you to ask your student about the wonderful activities they participated in..."*

All of our students in Kindergarten-6th grade participate in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) project one quarter of the school year. During this quarter, students delve completely into the engineering and problem solving world that STEM brings. These projects are wonderful hands-on, project-based learning oppor-

tunities for our students. Students are able to truly dive fully into the concept and are immersed in all components.

STEM projects use a literature component to present students with a problem that they must solve. Projects range from designing wind-mills to exploring cell membranes to perfecting a play

dough recipe.

STEM allows students to fully engage in a hands-on, in-depth learning experience. The connection of multiple disciplines allows students to experience more meaningful curriculum that is relevant to the 21st century.

## Daddy Daughter Dance



Dads and daughters enjoy a wonderful evening during our Daddy Daughter Dance.

We will host our third annual Daddy Daughter Dance this month. We are so excited to once again be able to present this special evening for all of our girls and that special someone in their lives! This magical evening will take place Friday, February 13 from 7:00-9:00 pm.

The evening will include a delicious spaghetti dinner catered by Spaghetti Warehouse (including spaghetti,

salad, and bread) and a chocolate fountain for dessert (with plenty of tasty treats to dip in chocolate). We will also have dancing, music, and a photo booth.

It is so much fun to see our girls get dressed up with their guys (dads, grandpas, uncles, step-dads, etc) and enjoy a special and very memorable evening. Each "couple" will be able to take a special picture and frame

home to help remember the evening.

This is also a great social event! The girls have a blast dancing and socializing with their friends while the adults are able to make some connections as well. It is truly a special evening for all. We hope to see you there!

## Classroom Spotlight: Mrs. Coleman

Each month, we will focus on a different classroom, providing a deeper glimpse into the activities in each room. This month, we focus on Mrs. Coleman's Kindergarten classroom.

Kindergarten students have been super busy this year! They have learned to segment and blend sounds to tell and read unfamiliar words they encounter. They have also been studying the writing process, which is helping them to become authors. We will publish our first book this semester!

In math, we are making several

real-world connections in order to make learning more impactful. They made connections by identifying shapes in their environment that they see every day. They have also used their knowledge of numbers to compose and decompose numbers, tell how many objects there are in a group, and count to 50.

During our participation in the science fair, students were able to demonstrate their knowledge of living and non-living things. Students compared and contrasted attributes and drew and acted out the movements of

their favorite animal. This was also a great project connecting school and home!

During our STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) project, students had fun learning about wind and technology. They all became little engineers by using the "Engineering Design Process" to create sailboats, kites, pinwheels, and a windmill.

We have had a blast so far this year and are looking forward to continuing to learn and grow, all while having fun!



A glimpse at some of our great activities this year.

## Health and Safety

While we would like to think winter is over and spring is here, we do have a few more weeks of winter to look forward to (or cringe about). As we hunker down for the remainder of winter, please be reminded of a few notes and safety tips.

- Dress warmly with layers to protect from cold.
- Take breaks from outside play to come inside and warm up.

- Make sure children stay warm and dry.
- Remove wet clothing immediately.

In the odd case of inclement weather, we will make a decision regarding opening as early as possible. We will keep you informed by:

- Sending emails with all pertinent information.

- Posting information to our website.
- Posting information on local television channels.

Hopefully, we will not have to use our inclement weather plan, but it is always best to be prepared.

## Priority Registration

It's that time of year again! We have begun priority registration for the 2015-2016 school year. We are looking forward to a phenomenal school year and hope you and your family will continue as part of our Merryhill family.

Priority registration runs until the end of February. During this time, registration is open only to our current families, which allows you the

first opportunity to register for classes. We do have limited spots in several grades, so do not hesitate to get your registration in. In addition, priority registration allows you to save on the registration fee for the 2015-2016 school year.

We are very excited about all of the wonderful things the next school year will bring us. We are looking forward to further expanding our

technology program and helping students delve deeper into technology. We are also implementing more project-based learning, which truly helps students to develop higher level thinking skills.

We sincerely hope you will all remain part of our Merryhill family during the 2015-2016 school year!

# Preschool Focus

## Learning About the Uses and Benefits of Technology

Children today have many opportunities to interact with technology for entertainment value and learning. Most often we think of children using computer technology, including handheld devices loaded with games, books, music, and movies. In moderation, these devices can aid in children's learning and development.

Within our academic curriculum, we involve children in activities and reflection on ways that technology can improve our understanding of the world around us, help us do our jobs, and make the world a better place. We help children see how the understanding of science and math moves technology forward, and that someday they too might create new and improved ways to do things.

Below are a few ways that we integrate technology in our classrooms and some ideas to try at home.

### INTERMEDIATES

**In the classroom:** Beginning in our Intermediate program, students learn common technology vocabulary, such as mouse, keyboard, and email. Students explore the double meaning of verbs that describe online and offline activities, such as "tapping" and "surfing."

**At home:** *Dot*. By Randi Zuckerberg is a great book to read with your child to continue the learning at home. Dot, the main character, is a tech savvy little girl who leaves her electronic devices at home while she taps, swipes, and shares in the real world.

### PRE-K

**In the classroom:** Teachers encourage our older preschoolers to use technology as a tool to express themselves. For example, students use a camera to take photos of seasonal changes outdoors and write what they observed in their journal. This activity promotes creativity and provides a fun opportunity to practice writing skills.

**At home:** Allow your child to explore his world using digital photography tools. Ask him to describe his photos and explain why he chose those objects or locations to photograph. Encourage him to use descriptive language and emotion vocabulary.

In summary, we provide numerous opportunities for children to explore technology in our classrooms. Through these activities, children become excited to use technology educationally, and are better prepared to use technology in elementary school and beyond.

-- Lauren Starnes, PhD- Director of Early Childhood Education

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