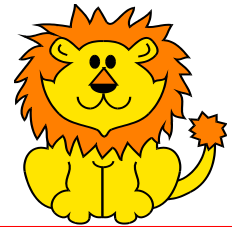


The Lions' Roar



Lothian Elementary
School Newsletter
December 2020

From the Principal's Pen

I hope that this newsletter finds you healthy and safe, and that you had a nice Thanksgiving break. I appreciate the partnership we have in our students' achievement, and I understand the challenges that virtual schooling brings to our families. We are a few weeks into the second marking period, and we will continue to teach and learn in the virtual world through the end of the semester. In order to support all our children, I believe it is important to address some best practices.

Part of our School Improvement plan for this school year focuses on student engagement. I know that this can be so challenging during virtual learning, however there are some things that really will help our students to be engaged and benefit from instruction. Two of these are attendance and participation.

Attendance is crucial for learning, whether we are in the building or on a screen. The data from the first marking period show that our Tier 1 attendance rate is about 84%. This means that while many of our students are attending classes every day, over 15% of our students have less than 90% attendance or have been absent for more than 10% of the school year. Students who are not present during class are missing out on solid instruction, assistance, and feedback from their teachers.

At the beginning of this year, Dr. Arlotto stated that student cameras should be on in classrooms - unless there are extenuating circumstances. During the Superintendent's Teen Advisory meeting in November, the input made it clear that we should encourage all students to turn their cameras on. Certainly, there are times or situations when a student turning their camera 'off' is acceptable, and I will ask our teachers to address situations individually. Importantly, students can now blur their backgrounds in Google Meet which may help the student to keep the camera on. When students' cameras are on, teachers can see the students' work, and their response to instruction, and they can adjust their teaching as needed. In addition, students can see, work with, and respond to each other during class.

During the first marking period, there were some assignments that were not completed, which resulted in lower grades for students who should have earned better marks. In addition, the students missed important practice of skills that lay the foundation for future learning. Our teachers reached out to students and parents to assist with incomplete work. Some students reported that it was overwhelming to turn in many missed assignments at the end of the marking period. As a school team, we have determined that all assignments that have been assigned with a due date from the beginning of the second marking period (November 16th) through December 15th be completed by December 18th. Students will receive interims on December 18th, and these reports will let parents know what students can do (and how teacher can help) to improve grades for the second half of the marking period. Please note the Office Hours that teachers have posted, these are great times for additional help.

I am grateful for all that you do to support your children and our school. My heart hurts for our students who are missing their friends and not benefitting from in-person interaction with teachers and peers. I delight in the Community Circle shares and the stories from students during their interactions while in virtual classes, during *Friends and Fun*, or while meeting in virtual lunch bunches. I appreciate the parents who reach out with questions or concerns, and the teachers who are ready to answer or solve a problem. I miss your kids more than you know, and until we can see each other in person, I will enjoy their interactions and smiles virtually. Please reach out if we can assist you in any way. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa, Yule, or the Winter Solstice, I wish all of you a happy and healthy winter holiday season.

~with gratitude, Mrs. Mary Beth Gormley

Volume 12 Issue 4

Attention!!!

- December 8 6:30 PTA
- December 9-2 Hour Early Dismissal- No PM ECI
- December 9- Unity Day Wear Orange!
- December 18-Interims
- December 23: Spirt Day: Pajama Day
- December 24-31 -School Closed-Christmas/Winter Break



December News from the School Counselor Kimberly Pletcher

Parents:

Please visit my Google School Counseling site for both parent/student resources. I regularly update the site and it includes food/benefit resources, helpful fliers, mental health resources, and parenting support information. You must be signed into google to access the site.

<https://sites.google.com/aacps.org/lothiancounseling/student-resources>

Students also have access to resources on my School Counseling Google Classroom. The resources supplement the guidance lessons that I teach in their classrooms. All students were invited to join the classroom at the beginning of the year, but in case your student didn't, please follow these instructions to join.

Navigate to their Google Classroom. Click the + in the topic right of the screen. Click join classroom and enter my code.

Code dikb5n4

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can be of any assistance to you or your children. You can reach me at 410-222-1697 (the school number), 302-464-0804 (google voice), or e-mail me at kpletcher@aacps.org
I hope that you have a joyous holiday season.

Lothian Elementary School's Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

At Lothian Elementary School, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment through strong relationships and open communication. All students will be engaged in learning to become responsible citizens, creative thinkers, and life-long learners.

Vision Statement

At Lothian Elementary School we envision a learning community in which stakeholders work collaboratively to nurture and develop the whole child and prepare them for their future in a global society.

Ed Extras

Helpful information about learning brought to you by Reading Rockets, Colorin Colorado, and LD OnLine

Picture This! Using Mental Imagery While Reading

One way to help a child comprehend what he is reading is to encourage him to visualize parts of the story in his mind. These “mind movies” help clarify information and increase understanding, and can be done with fiction or nonfiction text. The images can include any of the five senses.

Many of the books you read with your child may already contain beautiful illustrations, so try this visualization practice with the longer books you use as your read aloud. Or, sit facing your child and read a few pages without having your child look at the pictures. Then follow these few simple steps to provide your child with practice developing their mental images:

- **Begin reading.** Pause after a few sentences or paragraphs that contain good descriptive information.
- **Share the image you’ve created in your mind,** and talk about which words from the book helped you “draw” your picture. Your picture can relate to the setting, the characters, or the actions. By doing this, you are modeling the kind of picture making you want your child to do.
- **Talk about how these pictures help you understand what’s happening in the story.**
- **Continue reading.** Pause again and share the new image you created. Then ask your child to share what he sees, hears, tastes, smells and feels. Ask what words helped him create the mental image and emotions. By doing this, you are providing your child with practice with this new skill.
- **Are your images identical?** Probably not! This is a great time to talk about why your images might be different. Perhaps your child went on a school field trip or had a school assembly that changed the way they created the picture in their mind. Perhaps experiences you’ve had as an adult influenced what you “drew.” These differences are important to understand and respect.
- **Read a longer portion of text and continue the sharing process.**
- **Once this is a familiar skill,** encourage your child to use mental imagery when she is reading by herself. You can feel confident that these mental pictures will help your child understand the story in an important way.

For more ideas on using mental imagery, read “Pictures in the Minds: Magicians and Elephants”
www.ReadingRockets.org/articles/34040



Reading Rockets, Colorin Colorado, and LD OnLine are services of public television station WETA, Washington, D.C. Reading Rockets is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Colorin Colorado, a web service to help English language learners become better readers, receives major funding from the American Federation of Teachers. Additional funding is provided by the National Institute for Literacy and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. LD OnLine is the world's leading website on learning disabilities and ADHD, with major funding from Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes.