

PRENDERGAST AND YOU

January 2010 Newsletter



FROM THE PEN OF THE PRINCIPAL...

Happy New Year 2010! May each day of the New Year provide opportunities for the John G. Prendergast School staff to work collaboratively with the home and community that we serve.

More than ever, schools are responsible for meeting the academic, emotional, physical and social needs of students as they prepare for life beyond the compulsory years of school attendance. There exists a strong motivation on the part of the administration and teachers of John G. Prendergast School to be relentless in our efforts to meet the various needs of our students.

Daily we are striving to use the data team process to match instructional resources to educational need. We are constantly looking at academic and behavioral data to establish academic and social goals for all our students. Classroom teachers, support staff, interventionists, and tutors are monitoring student progress in order to evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum and intervention plans.

One of our instructional focuses for the next few months will be the implementation of the “Gradual Release of Responsibility Model” of instruction. The gradual release of responsibility model stipulates that the teacher moves from assuming "all the responsibility for performing a task ... to a situation in which the students assume all of the responsibility.” A common framework for implementing the model is “*I do it; we do it; you do it.*”

Parents might want to reinforce the “Gradual Release of Responsibility Model” at home with academic and non-academic tasks. For example, teaching your child how to set the table; teaching your child how to make a sandwich; teaching your child how to divide; and the list is endless.

I urge all parents/guardians to become active and collaborative members of the John G. Prendergast learning community. We need you!

In gratitude,

Mr. Lawrence P. DiPalma

PTO FOYER DISPLAY

Have you noticed the PTO Winter foyer display? This year our creative PTO Moms have a beautiful winter ice skating pond in our foyer. We always marvel at their imaginative displays.

Thank you PTO for all the holiday displays for the office area, also.

Thank You...Gracias...

A Prendergast School community thank you is extended to our music teacher, Mr. Hudson, who orchestrated three very successful holiday concerts.

We also are grateful for the Unified Arts department and classroom teachers who supported Mr. Hudson's efforts.

Thank you to all the parents who have donated supplies to our classrooms. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. All classrooms are always in need of tissues, hand sanitizer, and Clorox wipes.

FLU SEASON TIPS

In regards to the impending "Flu Season," we would like to offer the following recommendations:

* If your child has flu-like symptoms, fever of 100F or more with a cough or sore throat, **keep your child home for at least 24 hours after the child is free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medicine.**

*Help your child stay healthy by making sure he/she gets enough sleep, eats well and stays hydrated.

*Teach your child to wash his/her hands often. Washing with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds is ideal.

Teach your child to keep his/her hands away from his/her face to avoid contact with mouth, eyes, or nose.

***Have a backup plan for child care** should your child contract the flu and has to stay home from school for a number of days.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our children and school healthy!

MORNING KINDERGARTEN NOTICE

It's the "Let It Snow...Let It Snow" time of the year. Please be reminded that when there is a 90 minute delayed opening for the Ansonia Public Schools, **THERE WILL BE NO MORNING KINDERGARTEN CLASSES.**

Family Resource Fair Planned

Ansonia's School Readiness Grant is sponsoring its 7th Annual Family Resource Fair on Saturday, January 23, 2010 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at John G. Prendergast School. Snow date will be January 30, 2010. All families of children ages 2-6, residing in Ansonia, are invited to attend.

Activities will include Kindergarten Registration, a fire truck, ambulance, bus tour, children's health and dental information, storytelling, activity stations, community agencies' information and much more.

Transportation will be provided from Big Y and from North Main Street.

Please call Diana Brancato at 736-5052 for more details about transportation and the fair.

DISCIPLINE: Guiding Your Child

Despite all your attempts to encourage positive behavior, children will still misbehave at times. Misbehavior is a part of learning. Treat each situation as an opportunity for teaching appropriate behavior rather than for punishing misbehavior.

One way to discipline a child is to reward the child when he/she obeys. When a child misbehaves, involve the child in determining logical consequences. Punishment does not always solve the problem.

Instead you might want to try these problem-solving steps.

1. Talk about the child's feelings.
2. Talk about your feelings.
3. Brainstorm for solutions.
4. Decide which one/ones you will follow through on.
5. Write out a mutually agreeable plan.
6. Brainstorm consequences if the rules established are not followed.
7. Make sure your child understands that with opportunities come rules, with privilege comes responsibility.

For example, if a child wants to take part in the after-school club, homework must still get done. If homework slips, the child loses the privilege. When the homework is caught up again, the privilege can be resumed.

It is important for children of all ages to learn that there can be positive consequences associated with their decision to act appropriately. Be sure to comment on all positive behavior.

For example, you could say, "I really appreciate your getting the table set for supper. When we work together, we can eat earlier, get done faster, and then both of us can relax."

You have just described the behavior and the positive consequences. This type of praise can boost your child's self-esteem.

Superintendent's Community Meeting

Carol Merlone, Ansonia Superintendent of Schools, will host a Community Meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2009, from 7 AM- 8AM at 42 Grove Street. Superintendent Merlone welcomes parents and members of the Ansonia community to share questions and recommendations at these meetings.

MATH MATTERS

Math research indicates that fluency and understanding of small numbers is the foundation of success with larger number and number concepts. This is sometimes referred to as basic facts.

Understanding these basic relationships leads to facility with mental computation. When helping students learn their facts, provide students with "little tricks" or "helpful hints."

For example: $7 \times 8 = 56$

Starting with the product (the answer) the numbers go in ascending order: 5, 6, 7, 8!

$8 + 7$ Tell your child this facts reminds you of $8 + 8$ which is 16. So, $8 + 7$ is one less and $8 + 9$ must be one more, 17!

