

OCTOBER 19, 2011

BRANCHING OUT

The Maple Street School Principal's Weekly Newsletter



Dear Parents and Students:

It was a busy and productive week here at MSS. A high point of last week was the conclusion of the first session of the Community Clubs. Last Friday ended the first session, and I have to admit that I will miss my group of boys who spent several Fridays teaching me the nuances of the trading card game Yu-Gi-Oh! It was a terrific time for me to sit and learn from the kids, and for them to have a chance to teach me something about a game they enjoy so much. While I admit wholeheartedly I walked away from the experience significantly confused by the million or so variations of playing styles, card information (half of which are written in Japanese - so who really knows when there is a distortion in the rules anyhow!) and the "rules of engagement" as defined by nine and ten year olds, I can tell you I learned an awful lot about the kids playing the game. I learned who is a born leader, who is a thoughtful and caring teacher of others, who is considered by his peers as "the best" player of the game and why, and how all the players from grade four to six see one another in a social setting. I also helped them to learn about me as a person, my interest in the game, some personal information about my family and life interests, and how much I enjoy the company of the group I was with. In short I, like the other adults in this Community Club, took away many positives from this forty minutes of time with kids that lasted for four weeks. It is a wonderful opportunity to interact with one another and learn from each other in a way that is very different from the traditional classroom student / adult role. I know we are all looking forward to the next session after the holidays.

Another high point last week was seeing the role MSS is playing in leading professional practice in our District professional learning. Leaders in our building are working hard to serve as models of excellence in our District.

Whether it is the service of the Behavior Specialist assisting to develop and train staff members at the middle / high school in the growth and implementation of a student support center model, the efforts of reading teachers in our school to lead and develop professional learning communities focused on a new reading instruction model being employed in the elementary schools, or MSS science teachers sharing their lab report format with the middle / high school for general adoption to increase consistency and flow through the curriculum. MSS faculty have much to offer their colleagues in the District, as they have much to offer us. It is a pleasure to be a part of a District which supports one another professionally for the betterment of the children.

On a low note from last week, we had to postpone the fourth grade Ruggle's Mine trip this fall to later in the spring. Ruggle's has a very tight schedule, and they are closing their doors for the season and thus we couldn't reschedule until the much later date when they reopen. For those who may be unfamiliar with the mine, it is a beautiful resource for learning about rocks and minerals, but the mine is steep, loaded with sharp edges and slippery slopes, and does not mix well with rainy conditions. We felt that it posed too great of a safety risk to attend in the rain. We will reschedule as soon as we can.

Finally, I wanted to remind folks about the upcoming Halloween Costume contest sponsored by the Student council. Rules for the event will be posted online on the website. It is a ton of fun for kids, staff, and parents to watch. Look for more details online!

Have a great week ahead!

BE SAFE...BE RESPECTFUL...BE RESPONSIBLE... BE A COMMUNITY

DATES TO REMEMBER

October / November 2011

S	M	T	W	TH	F	SA
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Date

Time / Location

Event

October Events

- October 28, 2011 1:00 - 2:15 PM / Playground Halloween Costume Contest*

November Events

- November 9, 2011 All Day / NA Picture Retake Day
- November 10, 2011 All Day / NA No School - Parent / Teacher Conferences*
- November 11, 2011 All Day / NA No School - Veterans' Day
- November 23 - 25, 2011 All Day / NA No School - Thanksgiving Recess

*Indicates Parental Invitation