



K-K News



October 24, 2008

Dear Families:

There are two "hot topics" that I need to address in this week's newsletter: conferences and Halloween.

Conferences begin next Wednesday, and continue for the next few weeks. I wanted to take a minute today to write about the structure of those conferences, to help you prepare for our meetings. There is no written form for these conferences, but I will provide paper and pencils if you wish to take notes for a family member who cannot attend. I always begin by asking parents what is on their minds. If you have a concern or a question that you want us to address, please share it with me at the beginning of the conference (or by note in advance of our meeting) so that I may address your question fully during our time together, and so that you are not distracted by thinking about that question as we go through the conference. After questions, I will share my observations of your child's social, emotional, and behavioral progress to this point in the year and set goals for the months ahead. At the beginning of kindergarten, these are my most crucial concerns. We will then spend some time looking at the trifold, the summary of the kindergarten learning goals, which you received at orientation and again at Back to School Night. We will talk about my observations from my screening conference with your child, and the skills on which s/he is working at this time. I hope this summary helps you know what to expect, and I look forward to meeting with all of you in the next few weeks!

Halloween is next Friday, October 31. As you have probably read in the school-wide newsletter, we will be participating in the Hunnewell Halloween parade. On Friday, your child should come to

school in his/her costume, with clothing on underneath the costume. Please do not send toy weapons to school as part of a costume, and do not put masks or makeup on your child's face that morning. When the bell rings, we will come in to the classroom to do attendance and morning routines (while all of you enjoy coffee at the outdoor classroom, courtesy of the PTO). At 8:45, we will come outside with our third grade reading buddies to join the line for the parade. We will be circling the building so no matter where you stand, you should be able to see our class come by. When the parade is over, we will return to the classroom to remove costumes and go on with our day. ***Please send a bag to school with your child's name on it, so costume pieces will make it home safely for Halloween night.*** If you have signed up to help with photography, the costumes, or with our kindergarten centers time, there is an orange notice in your child's home folder today that explains your jobs for next week. In advance, I thank you for your help on a busy day!

In other news...

Next week, we will begin the next phase of our science unit on observation and description by creating a mold garden. Your child will bring home a jar and a note on Tuesday, asking you to send a piece of food back to school in the jar on Wednesday morning. We will then observe the transformations in the jars over the next few weeks. Don't worry - I will NOT be returning the jars to you! Also note that you may put whatever food you like in the jar, but foods with a lot of preservatives tend not to yield the changes for observation that we seek. Thank you for your support of the science curriculum!

We continue talking in Open Circle about solving problems with peers, trying to differentiate between "Double Ds" (Dangerous and Destructive behaviors which require an adult) and problems that children can solve independently. We also spoke this week about Hunnewell's CARE values: Community, Acceptance, Respect and Effort

towards Excellence, finalizing our decision about a quilt square about Community for the school wide quilt representing these core values.

We have begun working on our class book about families. I noticed that I am missing pictures from many students. If you have not sent in a family picture yet, please do so next week.

Thank you to Norah Piehl for her help with distributing the book orders this month. New order forms are in the home folders today, and book orders are due by the end of the school day on November 5.

Cold weather has hit this week, so there are a few things I need to address with you. First of all, please be aware that we go outside each day, and send your child with appropriate gear (hats, gloves, etc.). Please make sure items are labeled with your child's or family's name, so that I can return found items to the appropriate source. Finally, please review two things with your child: first, that school policy is for children to wear outside whatever they wore to school in the morning; and second, that when the teachers ask children to wear jackets, it is not time to enter into a negotiation. We have wasted a great deal of instructional and recess time because of arguments over these topics in the past week. Thank you for your support at home.

I think that is all for now. Enjoy the weekend with your children, and a safe and happy Halloween next week. I look forward to seeing all of you for conferences in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,

Lynn