

Irrawaddy Inquirer

"ONCE A WADDLE, ALWAYS A WADDLE"

From Mrs. Ritter and Ms. Vallecorse

March 2016

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REMINDER: When emailing with the teachers, please make sure to add both of them into the email.

Important Dates

3/2- Spirit Wear Day-Dr. Seuss inspired spirit wear, Charyl's Short Story Contest begins

3/6- Spirit Wear Day - Fox in Socks Day

3/9- Irrawaddy Culminating Event 2:00-3:00pm

3/13 - Spirit Wear Day -Dress as your favorite book character

3/16 - Last Day to bring in Leprechaun Traps

3/17- St. Patrick's Day spirit wear

3/20 - Spirit Wear Day - Readers are Leaders

3/21 - Beluga Ball

3/24 - Report Cards go home

3/27 - Spirit Wear - pajama day , Charyl's short story ends

3/30 - No school - SPRING BREAK!

4/6 - School Resumes

Upcoming Learning Targets

Reading: Readers have been reading non-fiction books about communities and the people in them. They have been making connections by asking questions like "What part of this book reminds you of something you've done?" or "When has something like this happened to you?". Next, our readers will be working on wondering, or asking questions, as they read. They will be using non-fiction text about animals and the changes they undergo as they grow into adults.

Writing: Our writers have been finishing up their non-fiction animal reports for our upcoming Culminating Event. Students have been creating their own text features to incorporate into their informational writing pieces. Next, we will be moving to letter writing. Students will be writing friendly letters to their classmates and other people in their lives. They will be learning that letters usually have the following five parts: date, greeting, body, closing, and signature.

Math: Mathematicians have been working hard on fact fluency, word problems, as well as addition and subtraction with regrouping. We have just begun moving into our measurement unit- always a class favorite! Students will be able to compare non-standard units of measurement to standard units in varying degrees depending on their math experience. Comparing lengths and choosing appropriate units of measurement will be a goal for all learners. Measuring in inches and centimeters will be a starting point and some students may work up to considering how to measure in miles. Soon we will be moving to data & graphing!



March is Reading Month

We are so excited for “March is Reading Month”! Some of our favorite highlights for the month of March are having literacy-themed spirit days each week, giving the opportunity for student readers daily, participating in a “March Madness Book Bracket” and comparing our class favorites, putting together various browse bins to check out new stories, and having a Read-in/Pajama Day to wrap up our festivities on Friday, March 27. We will also share a “READO” board with lots of reading activities to do throughout the month at home. We look forward to our fun month of reading together and appreciate our teamwork with you in making reading come to life for these children and developing life-long readers. See below for our spirit days and to save the dates now:

3/2 - Dr. Seuss themed (i.e. Fox in Socks, Cat in the Hat hat)

3/6 - Fox in Socks Day - wear your funniest socks

3/13 - Favorite Book Character Day - dress up as your favorite character!

3/20 - Readers as Leaders - dress up as what you want to be when you grow up

3/27 - Pajama day!! (Read on for more info)

Pajama Day

Friday, March 27, is our “Read-in” and PAJAMA DAY! Students are invited to wear any pajamas or comfy clothing (i.e. sweatpants, t-shirt, yoga pants, sweatshirt) instead of their uniforms on that day. Slippers and robes may be brought to wear during reading, but shoes, of course, still need to be worn outside. We ask that there are NO tank tops, shorts, leggings, or nightgowns. Students may also bring ****ONE**** toy/stuffed animal to accompany them during our “read-in”. They may also bring a blanket, but all items **MUST** fit together in their backpack. Labeling all items is a good idea to avoid any mix-ups. We also ask families to wash any items prior to sending them in and then you may want to wash as soon as they come home. Thanks for your support! We look forward to this exciting day!

Spring Break

Spring break wraps up the end of a busy and fun March. We hope you all are able to take some time to connect, soak in moments of love and joy as a family, to rest, and to have fun! We highly, highly encourage time to unplug and unwind. Of course, we also encourage you to find ways to keep learning going to help your child continue to make progress with their academic skills. We hope learning opportunities come naturally and authentically, providing not just skill practice, but ways to connect as a family. Below are some ideas!

Reading: Make a set time each day to sit down and read together! It’s so important for children to hear reading regularly. They can practice asking and answering questions as you read, work to retell parts of stories, point out sight words in context, and even read aloud and try to get faster each day as they reread the same book. Traveling? Check out a podcast to listen to stories for the drive!

Writing: Go outside and write sight words in the dirt! Go on a walk and write about observations. Write a letter to a family member or a note of thanks to community workers. Write a silly story as a family where everyone adds a new line.

Math: Graph minutes read each day! Grab a deck of cards and play an old favorite game, or check out a new one:

https://www.weareteachers.com/math-card-games/?fbclid=IwAR07OYZrT23D0ZzQ2Ls9l0eduZlejdCb_uTrrehDEeGLZsqR1tizBNj_pZ58

We wish everyone a safe, healthy, and joyful break!



March "READO" Learning Extension Choice Board

Coming soon in your student's Tuesday folder, you will see the March Learning Extension Choice Board. Remember that this is an optional activity board, but is designed to facilitate and support learning at home by making fun and real-world connections to what we'll be working on in the classroom. Each box can be completed more than once, adjusted to fit your learner's needs and the level they are personally working at as necessary. Students are welcome to send in any completed work items to share and the checked off choice board can be returned at the end of the month. Have fun!

Beluga Ball

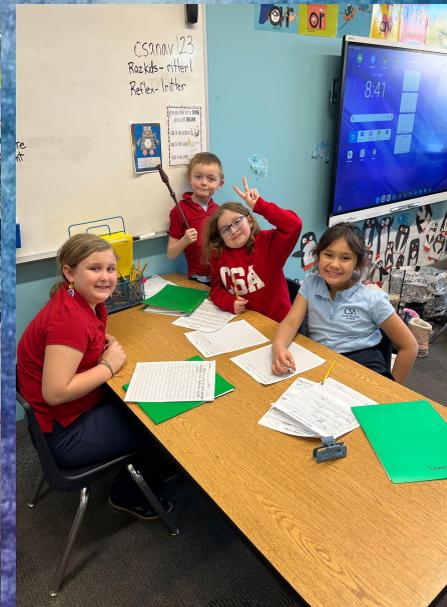
Thank you, a million times over, for all of the support to make our Beluga Ball such an amazing success! We are beyond grateful for all of the support for our classrooms, our teachers, our students, and our school! Thank you for all that you do.

The virtual event is Saturday, March 21 and we hope you'll join in and have fun bidding away! The Beluga Ball is CSA's largest fundraiser and brings in amazing support for our school. Comprised of a silent auction and live auction, there are truly some must-have items. "First in line at carpool", amazing themed baskets, teacher experiences, and so much more make this an event you don't want to miss.

Please check back to the Tuesday Times and scroll down to see updates and link from the Beluga Ball Committee. They could use help with donations, gathering sponsors, and for several aspects of the event itself. Email belugaball@csaschool.org with any questions or to see how you can lend a hand in supporting one of our school's most important events!

March is Music Month

In addition to it being "March is Reading Month", March is also "Music in our Schools Month!" Mrs. Yamaguchi is offering opportunities during Music class for students to share a musical talent or interest. It could be singing a song, playing something on the piano in class, bringing in an instrument from home, doing a dance, sharing their favorite song, etc. This is a voluntary and informal (but prepared) in-class participation opportunity. If your student is hoping to bring something from home, especially an instrument, please chat with them and their classroom teachers to confirm their "performance" date so that they will be prepared and have what they need for Music class on the correct day. Mrs. Y will have a piano and microphone available for use, as well as the ability to play a song to sing/perform to. If sending a video from home is easier, that can be emailed to classroom teachers or to Mrs. Y directly. Performances will be limited to two minutes and sign up will take place in their regular classrooms.



Character Corner

In February, we took time to celebrate and grow LOVE and BELONGING between Valentine's parties and actual Valentine's Day. Mrs. Mocerri wrote a wonderful piece in last month's Tuesday Times on how we work to meet our students' basic NEED of this. This is a foundational need that when met along with 3 other crucial psychological needs propels students to grow in swift and impressive ways. What are the basic needs we focus on? They are based on Dr. William Glasser's Choice Theory.

According to Dr. Glasser, all behavior is purposeful. By putting energy and focus into different areas of need or by taking away the opportunity to meet a need, our behavior is impacted positively and negatively. Dr. Glasser identified the five basic needs as survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun. These needs are the general motivation for everything we do and ties into CSA's focus on internal motivation as a character trait.

1. **Survival** - This need is a physiological need, which includes the need for food, shelter, and safety. Because we have genetic instructions to survive, not only as individuals but as a species, this is the need to sustain life.
2. **Love & Belonging** - This need and the following three needs are psychological needs. The need to love and belong includes the need for relationships, social connections, to give and receive affection, and to feel part of a group.
3. **Power** - To be powerful is to achieve, to be competent, to be skilled, to be recognized for our achievements and skill, to be listened to, and have a sense of self worth.
4. **Freedom** - The need to be free is the need for independence, autonomy, to have choices, and to be able to take control of the direction of one's life
5. **Fun** - The need for fun is the need to find pleasure, to play, and to laugh. Imagine a life without hope of any enjoyment, or no pleasure in hobbies. Glasser links the need for fun to learning, specifically in play. All of the higher animals (dogs, dolphins, primates, etc.) play. As they play, they learn important life skills. Human beings are no different. It is true that "play is a child's work."

Through the year, we purposefully work meeting these needs into the classroom routine. In March, we find it necessary to revisit our approaches to POWER, FREEDOM, and FUN with our students. As students have worked to find and understand themselves (and hopefully like themselves), we look to satisfy their need for POWER. We always work towards this through once-a-term activities like creating self-portraits and goal-setting. IF students believe in themselves, they feel the power to achieve those goals through their hard work. We set up opportunities for success through things like our non-fiction culminating event and by providing assessment feedback like DRAs, spelling tests, and math growth. Using tools like identifying quality work provides an opportunity to see their growth and motivate them to take even further control of their work and lives.

FREEDOM is often mistaken for a need of absolute choice in all aspects of life. This is not true. Unadulterated freedom would lead to chaos and be overwhelming for many. For students, we are reminded that giving even the smallest amount of choice in how they complete or present their work, or an opportunity to choose a topic to research, or a small set of centers focused on different areas - this need is met. In March and beyond, we often release more responsibility to students and remove some supports like timed rotations, specific must-dos, or assigned table or seat spots - giving them more freedom in their daily work.

FUN is the most obvious need for all, but often the first to be skipped or overlooked when we focus on the demands of everyday life. Fun can be mistakenly viewed as a luxury vs. a need and can take a backseat to deadlines and real or perceived responsibilities. In the classroom, we will continue to find ways to include fun from movement activities to art projects to spontaneous dance parties. Many classrooms will explore and create Leprechaun traps, or have a March Madness style battle of the books to see who reigns supreme!

Learning and growth CANNOT happen if the basic needs are not met. As we revisit these needs in the classroom, take time to reflect on what needs might NEED a little extra attention at home. You will be amazed how shifting time and energy into a specific need might alter behaviors in your children (and yourself)!