

BOES NEWS

Volume 4



Principally Speaking
Ms. Pearl L. Harmon, Principal

Can you believe it? The third quarter is upon us. It's amazing how time flies when we are having fun learning! The teachers, students, and I launch the second half of our year analyzing current student data (academics, attendance, and discipline) to determine appropriate gains and that we are targeting and providing rigorous instructions for all learners. In approximately thirty days, our third - sixth graders will take the MSA in Reading & Math. Please make sure that your child is prompt and present each day. I challenge parents to remain active with your children. Students will be taking the MSA in March and parents can help children by providing time to read each evening and supporting students as they complete home assignments. Our assessment schedule is included in this newsletter so that you can ensure that your child is here on those days ready to go. We are looking forward to having our students show their Eagle Pride by "Rocking the MSA's here at Barack!"

Things You Can Do to Help Your Child Succeed on the MSA!

Parents can do specific things at home that will directly affect the success of their child's standardized test performance. It is helpful for a child to understand why schools give standardized tests. Remind your child that tests are yardsticks that schools use to measure and then improve education. Some tests compare students by schools, school districts, cities, and across the whole country. However, ALL tests determine how well they are doing and that is ultimately very important. While it is good to be concerned about taking a test, it is not good to get "test anxiety." Excessive worry can mean disaster for a student. You cannot just tell a child to stop worrying, tell them to think about something else, or relax. But, you can reduce test anxiety by preparing your child for the demands of standardized test taking. You can provide your child with a quiet, comfortable place at home to study and read. You can make sure your child is well rested and eats a well-rounded diet — paying particular attention to a breakfast. Be sure to express your confidence in your child and make sure they understand your expectations: not focusing on what their score will be, but rather reminding them to do their very best, listen carefully, and follow directions closely. After school, give your child praise for a good attitude and reward him with extra play time to release any that left-over nervous energy.

Reminders from Ms. Marek:

Please remember to check your child's book bag, agenda book, our school website and listen for our robo-calls for important dates and information.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Principally Speaking	1
Meet Our New AP!	2
Grade Level Updates	2-6
February/March Calendar of Events	7

Meet Our New AP!

Mr. Nicholas A. Ohlson, Assistant Principal

Please let me introduce myself; I am Nicholas A. Ohlson, the new Assistant Principal. I have been hired as an additional position to the administrative team here at Barack Obama Elementary School. I am from Buffalo, NY where I studied my undergraduate at SUNY Fredonia in Elementary Education. I attended George Washington University where I received my Masters in School Leadership and Administration. In 2005 I moved to the area to begin my career in education. I have worked at Henry G. Ferguson Elementary School which is now part of Accokeek Academy. I worked there for nine years teaching elementary students in various grade levels and most recently was a fifth grade math and science teacher. During my time at Accokeek I also served as grade level chair, lead teacher, math department chair, mentor teacher, TAG coordinator and technology liaison. I also participated in the schools ELO tutoring program and ran rocket club.

I am excited to join your school and become part of your community. I am excited to begin working with you, your children and the teachers and staff here at Barack Obama Elementary School. Feel free to stop in to say hello and introduce yourself. I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Nicholas A. Ohlson



A Building We Will Go! - Pre-K News

We will finish our theme Animals Everywhere and then we will begin the theme **Construction Zone.**

During the theme, the students will read stories and do activities based on building and constructing and working together to solve problems. The students will learn to identify and write the letters **Bb, Mm** and **Rr**.

In **math**, the students will compare the length and height of objects using words such as longer/shorter; heavier/lighter or taller /shorter. They will use standard and non standard units to measure the length, weight and height of objects. (Common Core Standards PK.MD.1 & PK.MD.2) In **science**, we will explore magnets and simple machines such as ramps, pulleys and wagons.

In **health**, we will discuss proper dental care. In **social studies**, we will create simple representations of homes, schools and the community. In honor of African American History Month we will learn about African American inventors.



Kindergarten News - Ms. Pace & the Kindergarten Team

It's already third quarter and our students are off to a wonderful start. As we continue to assess our students, we notice our students progressive development in Literacy, Math and Writing Skills.

In Reading, we are continuing to build skills such as categorizing, classifying, making predictions, comprehension, questioning and more. In Math, we are making number sets, finding missing addends, and finding total numbers of two addends. In Science, we are exploring the Earth in many ways. In Social Studies, we will be highlighting many African Americans and their contributions. In Health, we will highlight Dental Hygiene and the importance of making sure our teeth are strong and safe.

We know that the year is moving fast and we do want your child to be ready for first grade. Rigorous academic instruction will be provided and will remain a priority within your child's kindergarten experience.

Thank you for all you have done thus far. We appreciate you!

Fun with Firsties! - Ms. Coley

The school year seems to be drifting by quickly – we're already halfway through the academic year. The first graders have really been working hard as they know that second grade is soon approaching.

They are enjoying learning about blends and digraphs, and their reading and writing abilities continue to soar. The first grade teachers continue to urge students to summarize stories read with minimal prompting. In math, students have tackled a quite complex skill of balancing equations. They soon will explore fractions. In social studies, they are studying food groups and the servings they should have of each group, daily. They seem to enjoy learning about good and services in social studies. The students are now exploring physics, as the earth science unit has come to a close.

The first graders are eager to learn and they are growing smarter by the day. They are excited about celebrating the 100th Day of School and Valentine's Day, as they are quickly approaching.

The first grade teachers urge parents to review student homework and to make certain that students are reading a minimum of 20 minutes, daily.

Sensational Second Graders - Mrs. Logan

We have completed our mid-year DRA testing and we see that progress is being made with second grade. The second grade is working on **African American History Biographies**. Students were able to choose an African American that shared the same career choice as they would like to be when they grow up or they most admired. You can visit the 2nd grade hallway and check out some of the awesome projects that were submitted and learn a little history while you're at it.

Continue to **read with your child each day** and **ask them questions as you are reading** to build up their understanding of text. Also continue to work on **basic addition facts** as we are now adding three digit numbers with regrouping in the tens and ones place.

Last but certainly not least we have been utilizing the **Mobile Mac Labs** once a week for research, Study Island, Spelling City, First In Math, or Moby Max. Students are becoming more familiar with using the computer as this will be something they need in upcoming school years for testing.

Talented Third Grade News - Ms. Rezk

Happy New Year Parents and welcome back. We continue to focus on the Common Core Standards across the curriculum.

In **Math**, we are continuing our fact fluency quest - continue using First in Math to help increase fact fluency and earn those stickers! The next topic is fractions. The first project of the quarter will be our African American MATHEMATICIAN Biography 5 Pocket Person.

In **Science**, we are finishing our study of Space and will be starting Physics.

In **Reading** we are discussing plot and plays. We continue to learn about the writing process by studying language, proofreading and phonic skills, identifying unknown words, theme, identifying character relationships within various texts, analyzing text and interpreting text features. Learning these skills will help to bring deeper meaning to your child's reading stamina, fluency and comprehension.

In **Social Studies**, we are learning about natural resources found in many communities.

Reminders:

Please check your child's agenda book daily for assignments and notes.

Study Island and First in Math (websites) are used in class and at home.

Edmodo.com is a great learning tool that third grade is using for enrichment this year.

4th Grade News - Mrs. Jacques

In **Mathematics**, students will extend their understanding of fractions as we add and subtract mixed numbers with like denominators. We will also solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions. As well as use baseline fractions to make line plots that display a data set of measurements in fractions of a unit. Please practice your math facts!

In **Science**, students are currently beginning Theme C ~ Physics, Electricity and Magnetism in Chapter 13. The next topic will be Theme D ~ Chemistry and Structure of Matter in Chapter 11.

Things are moving along in the **Reading Language Arts** department! We are continuing to work on inferences and main idea. An important topic that goes along with main idea is summarizing. It is important that students can conceptualize the information and place it in their own words. You can work on this at home by having students to read an excerpt from a newspaper or magazine and have the students to tell you verbally what they have read. Next, have your child write down the summary using details from the magazine or newspaper. A new indicator that we will begin is text organization. The students will read a passage and decide if it is organized by comparing and contrasting, cause and effect, sequence, main idea and supporting details, problem and solution, question and answer or chronological order. Please refer to your child's journal for notes that will be taken in class. As always encourage your child to read nightly. Reading nightly builds stamina and boosts student's vocabulary.

In **Writing** we are continuing to focus on our author study of Cynthia Rylant. We are working through the writing process and currently we are at the drafting stage. During the drafting stage students will plan, envision, and organize text. Authors, like Cythina Rylant consider the structure or organization of their stories when deciding how they will tell them. Students will use a narrative text structure when writing their drafts.

In **Social Studies** we are explaining the importance of the relationship between the Cherokee and the European Settlers. We will also describe the events that lead to the Civil War.

Homework is given on a daily basis. Please check the completed assignments against your child's Agenda Book.



Fantastic Fifth Grade - Mrs. Doster

Greetings Parents!

The Fantastic Fifth grade remains focused on **fabulous fractions!** We have just finished our unit on Multiplying and Dividing Fractions and have even uncovered ways to “Multiply as Scaling”! Talk your child and ask him or her to “show off” their new skill!

Over the next several weeks we will begin to interpret data with fractions, specifically solving real world problems through the division of fractions.

Please assist us by reviewing your child’s homework as some of the concepts are challenging and we need your support in reinforcing concepts at home.

Additionally, please have your child to continue reviewing his or her math facts; some students are doing exceptionally well!

Lastly, we encourage your child to complete his or her Study Island math assignments and frequent First in Math as they are both purchased programs either from our PTA and our school district. As always, we appreciate your support.

6th Grade News - Mr. McCray

This quarter in **Reading**, we are focusing on text features, organizational patterns, author’s viewpoint, author’s purpose and argumentative essay.

In **World Geography**, students will be studying the culture and people of Canada and the United States. They are also completing Black History Month projects.

In **Mathematics**, students will be starting Unit Three. In this unit we are focusing on Equations and Expressions. Students will learn how to read, write and evaluate numeric and algebraic expressions.

In **Science**, students are starting a new unit where they will be studying about the “Inside of Earth.” Students will also be receiving a project in which they will make a model of the inside of earth. More details will be coming from the teacher.

Please make sure all students are completing homework daily and you’re checking the websites for homework.



Mark Your Calendar

February & March Calendar of Events

February 4th - 2nd Quarter Awards Assembly
1st Day of ELO
PTA Meeting @ 6:30 pm

February 5th - Second Quarter Report Cards Released
Early Dismissal @ 10:55 am

February 3rd-23rd - Pennies for Patients Fundraiser

February 14th - Schools Closed

February 17th - Schools Closed

February 20th - Class Pictures - Wear Uniform

February 25th - African-American History Program @ 6:30 pm

March 4th & 5th - Reading MSA

March 11th & 12th - Math MSA

March 24th - 31st - 5th Grade Online Science MSA

March 28th - Schools Closed