



February 1, 2018

Dear Parents,

WOW. Where did the first month of 2018 go?!?!?!

Multiplication and Division: Many of the students are making very good progress on memorizing all of the basic facts up to 10×10 ! ☺ They're truly motivated and excited! We have spent *much* time learning strategies for *figuring out* the products and quotients, but ideally, the facts must be memorized, not "figured out" (or counted with finger tricks). Please keep practicing with your child and encouraging them to practice on their own. In chapter 10, we will be working on the **commutative, associative, and distributive properties, and writing equations**. I'm sure you've noticed that there is a very heavy emphasis on reading comprehension in math (word problems) and I'm pleased that the children are finally beginning to believe me about the importance of daily reading at home. The more they read, the easier it gets, therefore the more fun it is, when it's no longer *work*, but *fun and enjoyable*. The exposure to vocabulary enhances spelling and writing, as well as fluency in reading. I see this happening in school, and it's exciting for me to see the children enthusiastic about reading books!

After chapter 10 in math will be area and measurement, but we won't stop practicing and drilling multiplication facts for a very long time! I keep track of each child's individual scores, via the Multiplication Masters Club - the goal is to improve each time. Hopefully, everyone has flash cards at home- Please have your child continue to practice – especially the 6's, 7's, 8's and 9's. They'll use this skill every day for the rest of their lives.

In **Reading**, we continue to use our excellent reading series, and had a lot of fun with a Pecos Bill play, where your child learned to "talk cowboy." Two weeks ago, we read about an Ice Hotel in Sweden, and had a bonus social studies/science exposure to the Northern lights- the children wrote about them and painted them! These are displayed in the hall, and will eventually come home. Last week was a mini unit on Aesop's fables. Each Friday, we also spend some time reading and working on reading skills in Storyworks Jr, which the school has been gracious about buying for us. The children love the articles- there are plays, poems, fiction, non-fiction, paired texts (which compare two texts on the same topic) and more. And of course, I read to the class every single day after lunch- I'm trying my best to instill a love of books.



In **Social Studies** the children are eagerly learning about our United States government and Washington DC, the Revolutionary War, as well as Benjamin Franklin and other great American leaders. Ben Franklin, coupled with **science**, makes for fun lessons. Ask your child about the glass armonica!

The children have completed learning the lower case **cursive** alphabet, and I'm thrilled with the beautiful writing and enthusiasm they're showing! We're about halfway through upper case letters. We will continue to practice and beginning with the 4th quarter, the children will be expected to write *everything* in cursive.

And, just a reminder- our Valentine's Day party is Wednesday, February 14th, in the afternoon. If you signed up at Open House to provide a treat for the party, I'll be sending a reminder home to you. I'm also sending home a class list so that the children can get a start on making valentines. I do ask that if your child makes a Valentine for some, that he or she makes one for *everyone*. And make sure your child signs their valentines! (I know, it seems obvious, but....) Thank you for your continued interest and support!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Faxlanger