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From the Principal's Desk

Welcome to Winter! While visiting classrooms the last couple of weeks, it is clear that students are back working hard. February through April are highly productive months for students and staff. It seems as if students really "take off" on an upward learning curve right after winter break.

January's schedule included some district testing to check on progress made so far this school year.

- FAST is a reading test given to students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The tests measure a variety of reading skills, such as fluency and decoding.

- MAP reading and math tests are given on the computer. All students in grades two through five take these tests in the fall, winter and spring. Kindergarteners and first graders also took the tests for the first time. The tests allow us to track student growth and align to the Iowa Core curriculum.

As with all tests, it is important to remember that no one test can give us a complete picture of a child's progress. Rather, we use a combination of test results and observations. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Mrs. Goodman

School Goals

Each year Mulberry Elementary School staff and students set goals. These goals align with the Board of Education goals. Here are Mulberry's goals:

- *Raise reading achievement for all students.* Evidence for achievement of this goal consists of results from FAST, MAP and Iowa Assessments. In addition to interventions for small group instruction, teachers are implementing the Iowa Core curriculum which mostly consists of standards developed at the national level. Midyear data from MAP shows an increase in seven percent of students performing at the highest level as well as decrease in five percent of students scoring at the lowest level.

- *Raise math achievement for all students.* The Iowa Core is being fully implemented in grades four and five. Midyear MAP data shows a five percent increase in students scoring at the highest level as well as an eleven percent decrease in students scoring at the lowest level.
- *Increase student attendance.* First semester attendance was 96.5% which is well above the state goal of 95%.

As always, it is a team effort between home and school to make this kind of progress. Thank you for your efforts!

In Town Bus Trips -

At the suggestion of some parents, this box will start including information about bus trips your children will take to places here in Muscatine. This month's bus trip is as follows:

-Feb. 10 (am) Students will travel to Central for an arts program.



*"Mulberry
Elementary School
– Committed to
Excellence!"*

Family Trivia Night

The annual trivia night sponsored by Mulberry staff will take place at the Board Office on Friday, February 20th. Doors open at 5:30. Play begins at 6 pm. Pizza and snacks will be available. A table for six is thirty dollars. Often families join together to make a table. (At least one adult must be at each table.) Join in the fun and reserve your table now!

PTO News

Boxtops

Keep sending those Boxtops into the school. We recently received a check for over \$1000. Mrs. Wangberg, one of Mulberry's staff members, helps with this worthwhile project. Thank you for your support!

PTO General Meetings

The next PTO meeting will be March 5th at 7 pm.

Musical Notes -

Band and Orchestra Concert

There is a beginning band and orchestra concert on Thursday evening, February 12 at 7:00 pm, in the auditorium at Central Middle School. Students will need to arrive by 6:40 pm with their instruments and music folders. They do not need to bring a folding music stand, but may if they own one and would rather use their own. Attire is dress-up, but it does not have to be black and white.

Winter Clothing

The snow is flying, and with it will be children wanting to play in it. Here are the guidelines:

- Students should dress appropriately for the cold weather. If the wind chill is above 10 degrees, students will be going outside for recess. Please make sure your child has a winter coat, gloves and hat. (Note that if these start "disappearing," you might want to check the lost-and-found table outside the office.)
- Students are allowed to play on the equipment and leave the concrete only when they have snowboots. In order to play on the field, students need BOTH snowpants and snowboots.

From the Nurse's Office - Dental Month

February is National Dental Health Month! During this month, there will be a short program in some of the classrooms regarding the importance of keeping teeth healthy. I would like to take this opportunity to review with parents the importance of limiting sugared beverages and snacks in your child's diet.

What can you as a parent do?

- Read food labels to determine the amount of sugar per serving, as well as the nutritional value that food is providing to your child
- Limit sugared beverage consumption
- Make sure calcium rich foods are incorporated into your child's diet
- Make sure water is the beverage of choice for your child
- Be a role model for good oral hygiene... from brushing to flossing and scheduling regular dental check-ups

Holiday Giving Thank You!

Eight boxes of toys were donated to the University of Iowa Children's Hospital. Almost pairs of mittens were distributed throughout Muscatine Schools. Over \$500 was donated and given to a Mulberry family awaiting a transplant. Thank you!

Holiday Room Parties

Room advisors will be asking for donations. Parties will be held on Friday, February 13.

Mulberry PTO on Facebook

Check out the Facebook page and click, "Like!"

Shawna Trosen and Melissa Rinnert,
Co-Presidents

Winter Concert CD

Mrs. Meyer is making copies of the Holiday Concert. If you are interested in receiving one, the cost is \$5 and all monies will be used to purchase some large instruments for the classroom. Please send money to the office.