



# THE DIXSON/GRADY HAPPENINGS

MARCH/APRIL 2010

**The Dixon/Grady Happenings provides you with a quick glance of what is going on in both schools. You will notice a description of plans/themes by grade level as well as information from each 'special' area.**

**If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 592-8962.**

**Mr. Harders, Principal**



# DIXSON/GRADY HAPPENINGS

## STUDY SKILLS

A habit is hard to break. The sooner you are able to get your child(ren) in the habit of studying daily, the better s/he will be prepared. Get your child(ren) started by having them review his/her notes daily for 5 minutes. Gradually increase the time to 15 - 20 minutes. This could be the beginning of a habit you won't want your child(ren) to kick or forget.

Make it a great day, or not, the choice is yours.

Wayne S. Harders  
Principal  
Dixson Primary/Grady Elem. Schools

## DIXSON HAPPENINGS

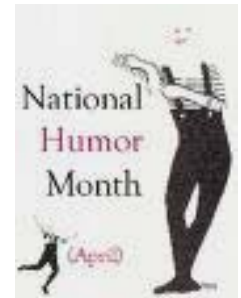


Scrubby the Bear visited with all of our classes to teach the children the importance of proper hand washing. At the end of the presentation, each student received an official Scrubby the Bear membership club card. They recited the motto:  
Don't get sick, Wash up quick!



April is: [National Humor Month](#) -

"Honor those who make us laugh, professionals and amateurs alike, as well as friends, neighbors, teachers, principal and relatives."



### Dates to remember:

Spring Break March 29<sup>th</sup> – April 5<sup>th</sup>

Parent/Teacher Conferences:

April 29<sup>th</sup> (6:30-9:00 PM) and 30<sup>th</sup> (12:30-3:00)

Call for an appointment: 592-2092 after announcement is sent home.

Happy Spring!

Ms. Barbosa  
Dixson Head Teacher

## Pre-Kindergarten

We will begin the month of March with a unit on dental health and an afternoon class celebration of the 100th Day of school. The theme for the 100th Day is "Stop Everything and Count to 100".

In Second Step, the empathy lessons will focus on learning the difference between accidents and things which are done on purpose, learning how to be fair and learning how to use the "I" message to tell someone how we are feeling. We also plan to continue "Building a World of Kindness" by making spring cards for a nursing home.

Our class trips are:

Thursday, March 25th--The New Jersey Children's Museum

Tuesday, April 13th--"Are You My Mother" at the Tarrytown Music Hall

Mrs. Funny----Teacher  
Mrs. Williams-Teaching Assistant  
Ms. Oliva-----Teaching Assistant

# KINDERGARTEN

In Language Arts, we have completed learning all of the lowercase and uppercase letters and their sounds. We are beginning to blend the sounds together. In math, the students will continue showing different arrangements for numbers with manipulatives. We will also have our annual Easter Egg Hunt in March. You will receive more information about the egg hunt soon. Spring will be arriving soon! Hooray! In Science, we will learn all about the season of spring. We are also busy getting ready for progress reports and can't wait to tell you wonderful things about your child. Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held on April 29th and April 30th. Please remember to call the office to make an appointment to meet with us after you receive appointment letter in April. Happy spring!

Kindergarten Teachers  
Mrs. Capocci, Ms. DeBlasio, Mrs. Potenza, Mrs. Young

# FIRST GRADE

Happy spring! During the months of March and April the first graders continue to work on becoming better readers and writers. We are now focused on noticing nouns, verbs and adjectives in reading and using these conventions in writing. We will also attack comprehension strategies and write fictional stories. Spring's math topics will include algebra readiness and solid shapes. In science, we are learning about soil, animal life cycles, plants and weather. We are very excited about our non-fiction publishing celebration that will take place at the end of March. Stay tuned for details!

The First Grade Teachers  
Ms. Plati, Mrs. Podhaiski, Miss Sanese, Mrs. Velardo

# ELL

During the months of March and April, our kindergarten and first grade English Language Learners will continue to discover the English language through an assortment of listening, speaking, reading and writing activities.

The kindergarten English Language Learners will be using their English language skills to explore word families and an animal unit. The first grade English Language Learners will be working on a variety of reading and writing strategies.

Echo and Baby Echo will continue to help the kindergarten and first grade English Language Learners practice their reading and writing.

Miss Buonassisi  
Mrs. Roman  
ELL Teachers

# GRADY HAPPENINGS

## SECOND GRADE

Spring is in the air! One minute speed tests are being given daily to improve addition/subtraction practice. Please continue to have your child memorize their basic addition and subtraction facts at home. This will help them grasp math concepts that are being taught now and in the future. Please continue reading with your child daily. Parent conferences will be held on Thursday, April 29th from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. and Friday, April 30th from 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. Please call 592-8962 to make an appointment after you receive appointment letter in April.

The Second Grade Team  
Mrs. Leibel, Mrs. Nelsen, Dr. Short, Mr. Volpe

## THIRD GRADE

During the months of March and April the third graders will be preparing for the New York State English Language Arts Test. We will be working on comprehension skills, listening skills and editing through various genres. In math, we will be reviewing concepts and strategies for the New York State Math test that will take place the first week in May. Our science units on plants, animals and ecosystems are underway. We look forward to seeing you at Parent-Teacher Conferences at the end of April. Enjoy your spring vacation!

Third Grade Teachers  
Mrs. Fulgione, Mrs. Hopper, Mrs. Morrow

## **FOURTH GRADE**

The fourth graders are studying matter and measurement in Science. We are also getting ready for the NYS Science exam by using a variety of science tools. We are starting our American Revolution unit in Social Studies. In Mathematics, we are working on problem solving and explaining our mathematical reasoning. We are also learning area and perimeter. In ELA, we are writing how-to paragraphs and personal narratives. We are also working on listening skills and writing to a prompt in preparation for the NYS ELA exam in May. In our reading groups, the students are involved in various novel studies.

The Fourth Grade Teachers  
Mrs. Breen, Mrs. Budzynski, Mrs. Byrne, Mr. Hopper

## **FIFTH GRADE**

In reading, we continue to use the Houghton Mifflin scope and sequence to ensure that all necessary reading and writing strategies are taught through the various reading themes. Currently, we are using the theme Nature's Fury. We will be using the book, Ladders to Success, to practice applying various comprehension skills.

In math, we are completing our unit on decimals. Please help with reminding the students to work neatly and apply all strategies presented in class. Next, we will be moving on to working with fractions. Our work with fractions will include renaming, comparing, ordering, and addition/subtraction of like fractions.

In science, we are completing a unit of study on the weather. In our next unit we will begin a study of our solar system including the Earth, Sun, and Moon interactions. In social studies, we are learning about the history and culture of Latin America today. The students will be doing research projects on countries in Latin America. Also, they will be making collages from the research that they complete on their country.

The Fifth Grade Teachers  
Mr. Carolini, Mrs. Cleveland, and Mrs. Katsetos

## **SIXTH GRADE**

In Social Studies, students will begin to study life in the Middle Ages. They will learn about feudalism and what it was like to live in a feudalistic society. We will discuss the causes and consequences of the Crusades as well as trace the Black Death and its effects on European society. That will lead us right into the beginning of the Renaissance in Italy and the emergence of humanism. There, we will discuss the work of important figures in art and science. We will also examine the Hundred Years' War and the Spanish Inquisition.

In Reading, students are continuing with their novels. Students will continue to write thematic essays. We have increased our preparation for the New York State ELA exam which is coming in April. Students will continue their hard work and sharpen their skills to be totally prepared for the test the week of 4/26/10.

In Math, the students have started their unit on Geometry. The students were introduced to circles and are exploring Pi as well as learning about the relationship between radius and diameter. The students will also be challenged to find the area of irregular polygons and the area of sectors.

In Science, the students will finish up their unit on waves with the study of light and the electromagnetic spectrum. They will then begin a new unit on forces and Newton's Laws of Motion. The students will then begin the unit on plant and animal cells.

The Sixth Grade Teachers  
Mr. Donepp, Mr. Fernandez, Ms. Proctor

## **ART**

The creativity continues to flow in the Art room!!!  
We have SUCH WONDERFUL, and talented, students at Dixson and Grady!

The Dixson students have been learning a great deal while finishing up their winter landscapes and patterned mittens. They will be starting self portraits and still life while trying out some new mediums!

The students at Grady will be finishing up their projects and starting to learn about abstract art, the stained glass work of Tiffany, dinosaurs, color gradation and 3 dimensional sculptures.

Be sure to check out the bulletin boards, and the District Art Show opening in May!

Mrs. Sanft  
Art Teacher

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The energy level is at an all-time high in the Grady gymnasium these days! In our physical education classes, the 4th-6th grades are involved in a European Handball unit. The 2nd-3rd grades are participating in Movement games and activities. Our "Hoops for Tradition" day will be held on March 26. Students will participate in the morning and then the "Staff Hot Shot Blitz" will take place in the afternoon. If you would like to come and watch you are more than welcome. Any donations would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns the gymnasium doors are always open.

Sincerely,

Mr. Watson & Mr. Tiernan  
Physical Education Teachers

# COMPUTERS

Did you know that myths were used by ancient cultures to explain the natural world? Fifth grade students will write their own myths that explain natural disasters. Sixth grade students will explore the mythology of several ancient civilizations and compare. Fourth grade students are learning about flow charts. They will look at flow charts that diagram video games and scientific processes before creating flow charts of their own. Third grade students are going to learn the basics of engineering using LEGO machines and robots they build themselves. Kindergarten, first, and second grade students will learn how to be safe and responsible on the internet. They will then visit websites that are great for kids (who have an adult's permission to go online, of course.)

Dr. Davis  
Computer Teacher

# INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

March and April are months of preparation in the band room. The Advanced Band is preparing music for our concert in March. It has been rescheduled from February 24 to March 17 at 1:30 in the Grady gym. We will be performing a selection of both large and small group pieces. It should be a fantastic show. Many of the members of the Advanced Band have begun to learn scales and solo pieces in preparation for the NYSSMA solo festival in May. As a group we will also begin to learn many of the techniques for marching band in preparation for the three parades that take place in the spring.

Beginner band is going very well. We currently have ten students who have passed the Beginner Band Test. They are: Naomi Imaizumi, Emily Baca, Tabitha Yuqui, Rachel Jessamy, Gabrielle Blanks, Mikayla Green, Angelina Torres, Steve Espinosa, Milton Lanza, and Jammie Paredes. With more students passing everyday I'm sure that rehearsals will begin in March. We will work on review material from our method books to learn the techniques for playing and listening together.

Recorder class is also going well. Students have learned to play four notes on their recorders: G,A,B and C as well as perform moving eighth notes and the dotted half note. Woodwind and brass instruments will be introduced with teacher and student demonstrations. This is an opportunity for students to ask questions about a particular instrument that they may want to play in the fourth grade. Happy spring!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Allison Shapiro  
Instrumental Music Teacher

# VOCAL MUSIC

The vocal music room is alive with many seasonal activities, instrumentation and song.

The sixth grade will be analyzing a song "Give a Little Love" by Ziggy Marley and learn a very complicated stick passing game that involves memory and eye/hand coordination.

The lower grades have been and will continue experiencing lessons that explore various pitched and non-pitched instruments that are found in the music room.

Mr. Brown  
Vocal Music Specialist

## **LIBRARY**

“**March is Reading Month**” and we are busy in the library coming up with creative new ideas on how to celebrate and encourage reading for enjoyment and learning. Other March themes that will be woven into our library curriculum include Dr. Seuss’s birthday, St. Patrick’s Day, and Women’s History Month. Along with April Fools’ Day and Earth Day, April brings National Library Week and, of course, spring!

We continue to explore all genres of literature while learning and practicing library and research skills. The first two **FAB** (Food and Books) sessions were a huge success, and we look forward to the third session in early April. As the school year goes on, we are also looking forward to sharing many more student stories in our **Author of the Day Program**. Please continue to encourage your children to participate! You should have received flyers with details about both programs, but we have plenty in the library if you need another.

Don’t forget, you can also promote “**March is Reading Month**” at home. One fun idea is to play, “Get Caught Reading”. Keep a few healthy treats, stickers or other small prizes in your pockets, and reward your children if you “catch” them reading on their own! As always, please feel free to send a note, call or stop by if you have any questions or concerns or if you just want to say hello.

Ms. Sparber  
Library Media Specialist

## **ELL**

Our second grade students just finished a unit on changes that occur on the Earth’s surfaces and are beginning a Water Cycle Unit. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELL students are being supported in class by the ELL teacher in ELA and Math Prep for the State Assessments. The 4<sup>th</sup> grade SIOP classes are learning about Colonial Times which includes a field trip to Philipsburg Manor. Both the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade ELL students are being supported in social studies with 6<sup>th</sup> grade studying Central America and 5<sup>th</sup> grade learning about Ancient North American Civilizations, such as the Mayas and the Incas.

Mrs. M. Kelly, Mrs. Cronin, Mrs. Montgomery, Mrs. Alicea  
ELL Teachers

## **A.I.S.**

### **READING and WRITING**

The second grade groups are busy working on a variety of reading strategies and skills to improve their sight word recognition, vocabulary, decoding, fluency, and comprehension. We have been building word families and playing connect the word. Please ask your child about these fun activities!

The third grade is working on reading and creating dialog. They are learning about speech and thought bubbles, quotation marks and other punctuation used in written conversations, how and where to indicate the speaker, synonyms for said, and starting a new paragraph each time a character speaks. Next week we will be performing reader’s theaters with the characters they have been reading about!

Sixth grade is starting to prepare for the ELA test to be held this spring. We are starting with multiple choice questions and the best strategies to use when answering these types of questions. Please remember your sixth grade student has reading homework on a regular basis. This should be completed each time it is assigned.

Thank You,

Ms. Wygant  
Reading Specialist

The first graders have been working hard on non-fiction research. Students first selected from a list of interesting topics. Then information was gathered from book sources related to the various topics and organized using graphic organizers. After editing their work, students will finish their illustrations and table of contents and finally assemble their non-fiction book. Nice work!

After reading the emotional story "A Taste of Blackberries", fifth grade students were asked to look at the conclusion of the story from a very different point of view and write about what they would be thinking and feeling as that particular character. With a focus on editing this month, students are carefully looking at grammar, usage, proper noun capitalization, and appropriate punctuation. In the next few weeks, students will be drawing conclusions as a reading strategy to help them interpret meaning in text.

Mr. Carpanzano  
Reading Specialist

# MATH

This spring will be busy as we get ready for the New York State Assessments. The math assessment will be administered May 5 – 7. I will be working on problem solving skills with those students that I see in small groups. Test prep is being done in all classes as well. Makeups, if needed, will be given to students the week following the initial administration of the assessment.

The next big math event will be the return of the 24 Challenge for students in grades 2 through 6. This year's tournament will be scheduled for sometime in late May. Look for more information to follow after the exams. 24 is a unique and exciting math game that really helps to reinforce basic fact mastery. Parents, your help will be needed. If you are interested in helping to proctor during the tournament, please contact me at school. You do not have to be able to play 24 to be a proctor.

Parents, as always, please continue to have your child practice their basic math facts. Mastery of the facts is critical to success in all areas of mathematics.

Miss Hittner  
Math Specialist

# HEALTH OFFICE NOTES

## NO JUNK FOOD WEEK

March 21-March 27

**No Junk Food Week has been declared for the week of March 21-March 27 at Grady and Dixson Schools!**

Please encourage and support your child's participation in this Westchester County Department of Health campaign which stresses the importance of nutrition and physical activity as key components of health.

No Junk Food Week contracts will be distributed in the classrooms. Examples of healthy and unhealthy snacks are listed on the back of the form. Students are asked to record one healthy snack they eat each day. Parents/guardians should sign the form as indicated. At the end of the week, all forms will be collected by teachers. All participants will be entered into a raffle.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call us at 914-592-2252/Veronica Lederman RN or 914-592-1063/Carol Florio LPN.

Veronica Lederman, RN  
School Nurse