

# Oak Hill Academy Third Marking Period February 2016



## Headmaster's Message Joseph A. Pacelli

In the last newsletter I spoke about "Good Decisions" as a part of my talk entitled "Ten Things Every Child Should Master." Today I want to discuss how our children will deal with the subject of "Resilience."

Just like any other trait, resilience needs opportunities to develop. This means that if we always shelter our children from failure, we may be hindering their ability to deal with difficult times and know how to bounce back. Colleges are reporting a decline in resilience. College faculty are expected to do more hand holding and students are having trouble with problems in everyday life. They are afraid to fail, so they stray away from taking risks.

We must give our children the opportunity to learn how to solve their own problems. We can start with small things and we don't always have to be there to come to the rescue. It has been said that children should get two things from their parents – "roots and wings." To build resilience we must step back sometimes and let our children figure it out for themselves. They must develop the mindset that the effort will lead to success. Their inner being should be saying, "Keep trying, try something different, what went wrong?" The mindset shouldn't be that I failed, rather "I haven't been successful yet! I'll keep going, I need time and patience."

Psychologist Brene Brown suggests that if we accept that we may sometimes experience fear, and that these may be imperfections, and we

may be vulnerable, ultimately we will lead a more joyful, happy life. So we try, we learn, and we bounce back.

**Mrs. Larkins**  
**Director of Development**

### Spread the Word

We will be having a special FRIDAY open house for families interested in Oak Hill during the school day on February 19th. Attendants are to arrive at school at 9:00 a.m. The morning will include an information session, classroom visit, and tour of campus by OHA students. Please spread the word to any family that you know might be interested in OHA.

Also note that Oak Hill Academy will continue its tuition assistance program to benefit our current students as well as prospective applicants. Information has been sent home and is available on our website. Thank you in advance for your continued help.

### "Diamond Oak" Cash Raffle and Ad Journal

"Diamond Oak" was chosen as the 2016 theme of this year's annual cash raffle, gala/auction, and ad journal.

The cash raffle is part of the school's major fundraising event of the year. The cash raffle itself is a wonderful opportunity to win sizable amounts of money. This will be the 24<sup>th</sup> year of our progressive 50/50 cash raffle whereby three cash prizes are awarded. The **FIRST PRIZE** is 70% of the winning 50/50 share up to \$17,500. The **SECOND PRIZE** is 20% of the winning 50/50 share up to \$5,000. The **THIRD PRIZE** is 10% of the winning 50/50 share up to \$2,500. Tickets are \$50 each and are limited to the first 1,000 sold.

Each current Oak Hill Academy family will receive a raffle packet containing four raffle tickets. For every four tickets sold, you will receive, in turn, an incentive ticket qualifying you for our beautiful incentive prize donated by Ashford & Grace Fine Jewelers of Colts Neck (owned by OHA's Blankenbaker Family).

The winners of the cash raffle prizes and incentive prize will be drawn during the April 16<sup>th</sup> gala and auction at the lovely Navesink Country Club. It should be an evening to remember and we hope you can join us.

Please encourage friends, relatives, co-workers, etc. to take a ticket. Why not take a chance....like they say...you never know!!! (and you will be supporting a worthy cause!)

We have continued the tradition of the OHA Ad Journal in conjunction with our Cash Raffle. It is a wonderful opportunity for a business to advertise to our local school community and a nice place to send a personal message to your child, teacher, etc. Ad forms are on their way to you.

Proceeds from all these events will continue to expand school technology. Please participate at any level and help us prepare for an even brighter future for our children.

**Miss Murray**  
**Director of Personnel/Administration**

### Admissions

Our first entrance test was given on Saturday, January 9<sup>th</sup>. Over 15 children were tested for entrance into grades one through eight. Our kindergarten testing has also begun this month. The PreK is accepting applications for the five and three day programs.

### Lip Sync

The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Lip Sync will continue with the two-night format! PreK - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade will perform on Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. Grades 4-8 will perform on Friday night, February 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm. The faculty acts will perform on both nights. Songs need to be less than three minutes in length. Details will be coming in February. Practices will be starting on February 16<sup>th</sup>.

### Eighth Grade American Scholastic Challenge

This will be the sixth year that our eighth graders will compete in the American Achievement Scholastic League's Scholastic Challenge on February 19<sup>th</sup> at 2:30. This 100 question online test will cover the following subjects: Language & Literature, Geography, History, Science, Mathematics and General Knowledge (i.e., food, art, sports, music, current events, entertainment, mythology). Results will be calculated as a school and as an individual. The contest will take one hour to complete. At the conclusion of the test, the students will convene in the Scire Student Activity Center for pizza and a movie!

### M.A.S.T. Jeopardy Tournament

A small group of eighth graders (and possibly seventh graders) will be chosen to compete in the Marine Academy of Science and Technology Jeopardy Contest on Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. Oak Hill students have done very well in this competition in years past!

Oak Hill student moves on to the Elks "Hoop Shoot"® New Jersey State Finals

Oak Hill Academy sent five students (Ella Skelton, Jack Mandarino, Samantha AbdelBarry, Nick Mavica, Joan Hager) representing the Red Bank Elks Lodge on Saturday, January 9, 2016 at the Carl Sandberg Middle School in Old Bridge, NJ, to Elks "Hoop Shoot"® District Finals sponsored by the South Central District of the Elks.

The 2015-2016 "Hoop Shoot"® is the Elks most visible and largest of the youth activities that they sponsor. Over 3 million boys and girls ages 8-13 will compete throughout the country through district, state, regional and ultimately the national finals in Springfield Massachusetts. Winners get their name permanently enshrined in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. After shooting 25 foul shots in their respective age groups, Samantha AbdelBarry won the 10 - 11 year old division and will move on to the State Finals! Good Luck Samantha!

**Mr. Bruckmann  
Communications Director**

**Web Page Updates:**

1. See the "[Experiences](#)" link for student guided tours, photos, past news events and more!
2. Look for the [Summer Institute for the Gifted \(SIG\)](#) catalogs were emailed home a few weeks ago. This program has chosen Oak Hill to house it as its local location, and it was a bigger success last year in year #2.
3. Also, our list of Oak Hill Summer Camps can be found on-line under "Experiences" as well as in the Parents tab: [Summer Programs](#). This year there is a single, simpler REGISTRATION form for all camps except the two listed. We have streamlined the process to make it easier and more efficient for all those involved. Please refer to the website for more information and schedules of all of our [Summer Programs](#).

**Mrs. Livingston  
Lower School Guidance**

With the happy holiday of Valentine's Day taking place in February, the stories that I will share with the children will focus on reaching out to other people through "heart thoughts".

Gr. 1 - [Heartprints](#) by P.K. Hallinan defines heart-print as "the impression left behind by a deliberate act of kindness." Throughout the story many examples of ways that we can leave heart-prints behind were given. It was also pointed out that the heart-prints we give out make us happy too. Needless to say, it is a win-win situation. We are encouraged to make a deliberate effort to leave heart-prints behind each day!

Gr. 2 - [Howard B. Wigglebottom Listens to His Heart](#) by Howard Binkow is the story of a little bunny that stops doing what he loves the most because he wants to "fit in." He tries the activities that his friends are involved in but finds them not to be the answer to his problem. Howard's grandpa convinces him to keep doing what he loves—dancing. His classmates come to appreciate Howard's talent for dancing and cheer him on. Upon completion of the story, the class discusses what "following you heart" means. It is important to be true to yourself as we all have different talents and reasons to be proud of ourselves.

Gr. 3 - [Somebody Loves You Mr. Hatch](#) by Eileen Spinelli is a favorite that we share around Valentine's Day. Mr. Hatch was a lonely man who thought no one liked him and therefore led a very solitary life. One day an anonymous valentine arrived that changed the life of unsociable Mr. Hatch, turning him into a joyful friend who began to appreciate and help his neighbors. We never know when our kindness touches someone's heart and changes the outlook of their day!

Gr. 4 - Our folktale this month from [Rhinos and Raspberries](#) is "The Emerald Lizard." This is a Guatemalan tale of helping others. It is the story of a priest who has a kind heart and helps a poor man who cannot afford medicine for his sick wife. The priest gives the man an emerald lizard. Many years later the man goes to the priest to return the gift to him. Be sure to ask your children about this special lizard and the part it plays in this story. We will discuss the kinds of things that enrich our lives other than money or expensive material goods.

**Mrs. Weikes, Director  
Mrs. Wood/ Miss Bonanno  
Pre-Kindergarten**

Happy New Year and best wishes for 2016 to all of our Oak Hill Academy students and families. We hope that everyone enjoyed a memorable and joyful holiday season.

Students eagerly came back to school and welcomed in the new year. January brought a substantial amount of freezing cold weather, a monumental snow storm and plenty of opportunities for winter science experiments and lessons about Animals in Winter. During after school Science for Young Minds Club, the students will take part in a lesson on [Birds in Winter](#) that included making bird feeders to be placed on trees around the campus. The classroom will also find the students involved in a unit on hibernation.

Author Jan Brett, set the scene for the story [The Mitten](#). This classic piece of literature came to life as students acted out the story which stresses inclusion and friendship. In addition to rich literature, Pre-K enjoys their in-class exposure to art and famous artists; Cezanne being the most recent. artist. Water color paintings and still art are a student favorite.

Pre-K is in the process of completing an alphabet review of letters and sounds introduced to date. Pre-K loves The Letter People! Rhyming is an ongoing skill; while word families and curriculum generated sight words have now been introduced. In preparation for 100 Days of School, students are practicing their counting skills to 100. As a challenge students are counting objects by 2's, 5's and even 10's and counting using tally marks and bundling sticks. Lessons in Singapore Math continue to stress graphing, sorting, classifying objects and strengthening our basic shapes and geometric shapes. Lessons on telling time to the hour, coins and correctly forming numbers to 20 are being highlighted throughout January and February. Students are very proud of learning their family telephone numbers and addresses.

Our iPads provide us with numerous Apps and opportunities to strengthen and reinforce our reading and math skills. Students are progressing on numerous skill levels. Students also enjoy their interactive lessons and activities on the white board.

The school-wide character trait for January was perseverance. Ask anyone in Pre-K what perseverance means and you will get a clear answer. Students developed a meaning for dedication and hard work when fulfilling a commitment to Ronald McDonald House in Long Branch. The theme for this project was "The Pre-K Bucket Brigade." Students traveled by bus and delivered over 30 buckets of toys for families housed there during the holidays. They have also easily transferred lessons on the life of Martin Luther King Jr. and his efforts for peaceful change and civil rights. Martin's Big Words was a favorite story, and it was wonderful experience when Mr. Pacelli read part of M. L. King's "I Have a Dream" speech over the public address system. Students illustrated and recorded words and pictures detailing their own hopes and dreams. Coinciding with Martin Luther King Day will be literature written by Ezra Jack Keats. Students will learn that Keats classic tales, "A Snowy Day" and "Whistle for Willie" were the first children's books to depict an African American boy named Peter.

Some of the highlights for Pre-K during the next several weeks will be our scheduled swim and play classes in the newly relined OHA pool. Students cannot wait! In addition, a trip to Sunrise Assisted Living facility, in Lincroft, to deliver handmade valentines, student-made Valentine cookies and to sing "Love Songs for Seniors." A much anticipated field trip to the State Theater, New Brunswick, to see Eric Carle's "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" brought to life our February 12th Valentine's Day Tea with our moms, and everyone's favorite, Lip Sync.

"Mommy and Me" classes for 3's and 4's began in October and will run through the month of February. Mrs. Weikes conducts the series of eight engaging classes for children accompanied by an adult. The classes serve to introduce the children to the Pre-K experience and the strong and nurturing environment at Oak Hill Academy. Classes are open to both Oak Hill Academy families and non-Oak Hill Academy families. Classes are still open for February. For information on attending any of these classes contact the Pre-K at 732.530.1326.

On February 8th our Chinese New Year celebration will highlight "The Year of the Monkey." Pre-K festivities will include; a Lion Dance parade, Chinese writing on rice paper, crafts and a sampling of Chinese food. We wish all of our families celebrating the Lunar New Year, "Gung Hay Fat Choy." Happy New Year from the Pre-K students and staff.

Once again, Have a Happy and Healthy New Year. With this recent blast of bitter, cold weather we invite everyone to "Think Spring."

**Mrs. Schwartz  
Mrs. Colbert/Mrs. Gilfillan  
Mrs. Lambert  
Kindergarten**

HAPPY 2016! We are thrilled to start 2016 in Kindergarten and to reflect on all of the exciting things we did at the end of 2015. In keeping with our theme of diversity, Kindergarten learned how holidays are celebrated around the world. Each child was asked to bring in one shoe to leave for St. Nicholas in hopes that he would leave us a treat. We were thrilled the next day to see that his horse had traveled all the way from Sweden and had eaten the carrots we left and that he left us with brand new crayons! We then "traveled" to Holland where our Kindergarten girls wore a headband of candles and served our class a sweet treat in honor of St. Lucia. We also honored our Jewish students by lighting a Menorah on each day of Hannukah and enjoying delicious potato latkes! We were then treated to a special visit by Santa. He helped hand out presents before we all headed over to the Student Activity Center to meet our guests. Parents and friends were there to help us decorate gingerbread houses. We thank our class moms for the wonderful party we had beforehand!

No month would be complete in Kindergarten without a field trip. In December we visited Woodfield Christmas Tree Plantation. The day was extremely warm for December but it still got us in the Christmas spirit! We learned a great deal about different types of trees and were treated to hot chocolate and candy canes.

In Math the children have learned how to measure the length of objects using items other than a ruler and to utilize a balance to compare the weight of objects. We are currently studying capacity and actively using water and different containers to see how much each can hold. The children are beginning to realize that math is a part of their everyday lives which makes it easier for them to relate to the concepts.

The Letter People continue to join our Kindergarten family. We have welcomed Ms. P, Mr. B, Mr. Z and Ms. S. With Letterlights I, U and O we are able to make so many more words. We'd like to take a moment to thank the parents who come in every week for special snack. Coming up with original snacks for each letter sometimes tests one's creativity.

We appreciate your time and always have so much fun during your visit.

The children have begun our Writing to Read program. We are so impressed with the progress they are making thus far. They are now starting to apply their sounds and sight words into writing stories. The children will soon be given journals to write in at home. This is a great opportunity for them to further fine tune their writing skills.

We are gearing up to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school in February so be on the lookout for Kindergarten marching through the halls and classrooms of Oak Hill with their 100<sup>th</sup> day flags, glasses and crowns! We look forward to what the rest of the year has in store for us.

**Miss Arscott/ Miss Colson/  
Mrs. Quagliato  
Grade 1**

HAPPY 2016 to all our First Grade families. We are back and hard at work. We are off to a good start!! We have been learning about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his pursuit of PEACE, LOVE and HARMONY. The wonderful book, "Martin's Big Words, the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.," inspired us with the actual heroic story of Dr. King.

In math, we are expanding our higher level thinking skills in the following areas: number bonds, addition and subtraction facts to 20, counting and comparing, proximity, position and direction. Our families joined us in the SAC for a fun-filled afternoon playing addition fact games. Miss Murray was a delightful BINGO announcer for our ADDITION BINGO game. Many children won nice prizes for coming in first.

Our Worldly Wise lessons have provided our students with stories and materials which enrich not only vocabulary but also oral language. The use of these exciting, colorful vocabulary cards and fun workbook pages really help our students broaden their proficiency and fluency.

We have had many fathers and mothers come into the classroom to read to our children. It is a JOY to see the happy and PROUD faces as they listen to the exciting and sometimes funny stories.

We look forward to the months ahead filled with learning!!!!

**Mrs. Buchner/Miss Colson**  
**Grade 2**

We have all settled into our second grade routine after a nice winter break. We shared some great stories about what we did while we were off and everyone was happy to see one another and to be back.

The greatest excitement we just recently had was getting ready for our "Math Arcade" day which was on January 14th. Right before our winter break we finished publishing our very own second grade math books. The children worked diligently writing and rewriting their math problems for the publishing of this book. After they were satisfied with their written problems they became illustrators. They drew and colored beautiful full-page pictures of their math problems.

After the book was completed we still had a lot of work to do to prepare for the big day. We had to practice three very challenging math games that we would be playing at the "Math Arcade." Our opponent would be a family member or friend.

Finally our day for "Math Arcade" came. Everyone was so excited. The children were ready to "let the games begin!" They played Add Three, Think Big, Pig and every child presented one or two of their problems from their published Math Book. The afternoon went very well and everyone had a wonderful time.

We also celebrated one of our great American Heroes, Martin Luther King, Jr., this month. We read books and discussed Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream about a world where everyone lives together in peace. We then discussed our own dreams and what good things we would like in the world in our own future and then wrote and shared our ideas.

We are now looking forward to February where we will watch to see if the groundhog sees his shadow, discuss Chinese New Year, celebrate Valentine's Day, Presidents' Day, and learn about some famous African Americans as we move into Black History month.

We hope you and your families have a very healthy and Happy New Year!

**Mrs. Alexander/Mrs. Staley**  
**Grade 3**

The winter snow has finally arrived, and the third graders are plowing into the world of the Plains Indians. As we prepare for Plains Indians Day, students have been immersed in activities such as designing Native American clothing, learning about Native American folktales and legends, as well as performing them.

After Kirsten met Singing Bird in the story [Kirsten Learns a Lesson](#), the students learned about the impact that pioneers had on the lives of the Plains Indians. The students have gained an understanding of the importance of the buffalo and how the pioneers farming practices diminished their food supply.

Through our lessons about the Plains Indians' lifestyle, the students are more aware of the Native American culture. We look forward to a fun day with family and friends at our Powwow.

The 6, 7, 8 and 9 multiplication and division facts are currently the main focus in the third grade math program. The students are learning how to quickly multiply and divide, so their attention is on solving multi-step word problems. Students are also mastering long division. Keep practicing those facts at home so long division is easier for them!

In writing we are working on using descriptive details in our writing pieces. Students have learned that using more colorful language helps the reader to paint a picture in his or her mind about what is being read.

In reading, the third grade class just completed a unit which asked the Essential Question, "What does it take to solve a problem?" We read stories from different genres that focused on problem solving and author's point of view. The students enjoyed our last selection, which was poetry, and the third grade teachers were very impressed with the students' understanding of figurative language and similes.

**Mrs. Roehrig/Mrs. Tolleth**  
**Grade 4**

Many thanks to our fourth grade room mothers for a delightful Christmas party. We appreciate your efforts at such a busy time of the year. The project was very fun and the aprons and gingerbread houses so thoughtful and generous.

The fourth graders had a wonderful experience in the Pine Barrens in historic Whitesbog Village on Thursday,

December 3<sup>rd</sup>. We attended a program called Lenape Living. We experienced life, as close as it could be, to the way the Lenape lived. We thatched a wigwam made just as we learned. We ground corn into cornmeal and added cranberries and maple syrup to bear fat that was being heated. We were making pemmican, which we got to eat after it cooled. We made herbal medicines and learned their uses. We played Lenape games which used bones, strings and stones. Lastly, we took a walk through the forest with our guide showing us how the Lenape used their environment for food showing us acorns, blueberry bushes, and cranberry bogs. She also showed us animal footprints used to track wildlife. We knew that the Lenape never killed animals for sport, only for food, shelter, or clothing.

In English, we finished our unit on adjectives and are presently working on punctuating quotations. A new poetry form, the diamante, challenged us to use synonyms and precise describing words. Look for our creations in *Early Reflections* this spring.

We finished up our novel study and hated to say goodbye to our *All-of-a-Kind Family* by Sydney Taylor. We gained a lot of insight into character traits and literary techniques as we enjoyed this story. It also taught us quite a bit about the Jewish culture, customs, and holidays. This added to our diversity studies broadening our understanding, for many of us, of a different culture and faith. Upon our return to our *Wonders* reading book, we were entertained by a graphic novel while working on cause and effect. We also read a narrative nonfiction about businesses that don't just look at their bottom line (yes, we know what that means) but help others. Another of our main stories dealt with the theme of respecting animals in their environment in our Anthology. Through our *Wonders* program we get to read, learn, and enjoy many other stories besides the main ones in our Anthology.

**Mrs. Bordiuk/Mrs. Mee**  
**Lower School PE**

In the third marking period at Oak Hill Academy, the Lower School Physical Ed classes began a jump rope unit. During this unit, students have gained proficiency in coordination and timing while working on their cardiovascular health. Once a week during the third marking period, students went to Health class. The health portion of our curriculum involves the students watching an educational health video, followed by a brief discussion where

students are assessed on their understanding of the content and have the opportunity to ask questions. Both the jump rope and health unit will be continued into the fourth marking period.

### **Mrs. Cahalane** **Lower School Science**

In Science class, PK students have been learning about the 5 Senses. Kindergarteners finished up a unit on the ocean. First graders are doing dissolving experiments. Students in grade 2 began a unit on simple machines. Third graders are learning about the solar system and fourth graders finished up a unit on Mystery Powders. Please see my teaching blog for some great photos of the children in science class!

### **Mrs. Vacca** **Ho Ho (Heads On, Hands On)**

Students are learning so much about this wonderful and vast country, **BRAZIL**. Students recently enjoyed watching some video clips of Brazil and learning songs about this beautiful country, its wildlife, terrain, points of interest, sports, and even celebrities.

Preparations have been in full swing now that the lower school students are meeting once a week for Ho Ho. The Kindergarten class has been brainstorming about transportation and the naming of the **Green Anaconda Gym**. The 1<sup>st</sup> graders will be designing their postage stamp and their artwork will go on display at the **Parrot Post Office**. Second grade students designed their passports and will be having fun creating clay pretzels for their business- **Pele's Pretzels on Littleton Day**.

Posters are being sketched as advertisement, **Littleton** houses will be drawn, and menus for **The Brazilian Bistro** and the **Cocoa Bean Corner** are being designed and so much more. Final touches are being added to the **Littleton Day** invitations, thanks to Mrs. Griller and the third graders along with the design of the **"tiny bucks,"** by the fourth graders. In February, a much detailed packet will be sent home about our annual event called **Littleton Day** which be held on **Wednesday, March 9, 2016**. It is a half day and fun for all, so mark your calendars and encourage your child to continue earning those important **"tiny bucks."** Also, students should start writing mail to each other using the **Littleton Day Address Book** that will be going home at the beginning of February. Students can also earn **"tiny bucks"** by submitting items for inclusion in the **Littleton Press**. Thanks to our

brand new editors: Mrs. McConnell and Mrs. Patel and daughters, Madeleine and Aanya as co-editors for taking on this important job. The Ho Ho room is bursting with enthusiasm anticipating the upcoming event. Any questions, please feel free to e-mail me at any time.

### **Mme Koar** **Grades 1 & 2 Spanish**

The First and Second grade students completed their Fall semester of Spanish using the online program created by Middlebury College. They listened to traditional stories in Spanish to review and practice vocabulary to learn to count, greet people, meet new friends and talk about family to help practice newly acquired vocabulary. Songs are included in each vocabulary unit.

### **Grade 3 French**

The third grade students enjoyed singing "J'ai faim, J'ai soif" ( I'm hungry, I'm thirsty) to practice common French verbs, manger, boire, jouer, courir, sauter, dormir. We also practiced numbers and classroom objects during this semester.

### **Mme Simon** **Grade 4 French**

In the fourth grade, we studied the classroom objects. The students first memorize the material and then we play games to reinforce the vocabulary. We play "Around the world" and "Kahoot" with the iPads. Kahoot is a very engaging game and students answer the questions in real time which are projected on the big screen. They love to see their name appear when they are in the top five winners.

It is a pleasure to see the enthusiasm of the students during our classes!

We also watched videos and photos from our Pen-Pals from France, Astrid and Constance. It was really interesting to see what they do for their birthday, Halloween and Christmas, horseback riding and their daily lives.

### **Mrs. Scheuer** **Upper School Advisor**

Ring in the New Year provided a great opportunity to make resolutions. During Language Arts and Critical Reading classes, upper school students wrote their goals for 2016. Students referenced; continuing to work hard at their studies, avoid procrastinating, devote more time for pleasure reading, exercise more frequently and increase involvement in community service projects.

Service learning projects have taken root both on and off campus. Student Council efforts assist numerous charities to help those in need in Monmouth County, Haiti and Africa. Our upper and lower school interaction provides an opportunity for our students to connect within our school community. Grade levels were paired accordingly; 1<sup>st</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>. Each marking period, teachers coordinate a meaningful project to foster the interaction. Two grades meet to work on arts and crafts, read together or view presentations. The interaction experience, bolstered by Mr. Pacelli, yielded wonderful results. It has been a joy to observe upper school students greet their lower school friends by name, offer a big hello in the commons and high fives around campus.

It was a pleasure to observe the countless lessons throughout the upper school pertaining to the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The classrooms were alive with role playing, video and audio excerpts of his speeches, stories as well as music and art projects. Dr. King's principles of fairness, equality and education resonate throughout Oak Hill Academy. A famous quote of Dr. King's in Mrs. Williams room exemplifies our core values; "Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education."

For fifth graders and students new to the school, exams presented an enhanced experience for cumulative review. A round of applause for students and parents alike for instilling effective time management skills and the level of preparedness for mid-terms. Congratulations to upper school students for a job well done!

As we turn the page on the first semester, it provides an opportunity to reflect upon our student's accomplishments to date. This mid way point in the school year also provides renewed focus for the second semester and great anticipation for what the future holds!

### **Miss Lee** **Grade 5 Literature/LA**

Congratulations, 5th graders! We made it through our first set of Big Tests! Your studying and preparation served you well. Now that we're heading into the second half of the year, it feels like we've established a comfortable routine. Let's keep the momentum going!

Before the Big Tests, we spent some time back in our Literature anthology books, reading "The Circuit" (a short story), "Harvesting Hope: The Story of

Cesar Chavez” (a biography), and “The All-American Slurp” (a short story). This marking period, we are reading our second novel, Island of the Blue Dolphins. The novel was inspired by the true story of the Lone Woman of San Nicolas. As we read, we will continue to discuss and explore literary elements such as setting, plot, characterization, and conflict. We will also be making connections between the novel and history, ourselves, and other literature we’ve read.

In Language Arts, we have started our Verbs unit. Our first topics are the types of verbs (action, helping, and linking verbs). From there we’ll begin exploring verb tenses. Meanwhile, we’ll continue to work steadily through our Vocabulary Workshop books. It’s always exciting when we can find ways to incorporate vocabulary in our writing and class discussions. Keep an eye out for vocabulary words in your pleasure reading books, too! Everyone’s been working diligently on their historical essays. We’ll be finishing those this marking period. I encourage you to share and read your essays with your family.

Remember to bring your appropriate books, notebook, folder, pen/pencil, and planner with you each day to class. As always, you can visit our class website (MsLeeLLA.weebly.com) for homework, class handouts, and other materials and resources related to Literature and Language Arts.

**Mrs. Matson**  
**Grades 5 & 6 Geography**

**Geography Bee News**

Congratulations to all who participated in the Final Rounds of the National Geographic Bee, and particularly to our Champion, Alex Mitchell, who will compete for a place in the State Bee, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Runner up, Jake Fradkin! Kudos also to the other finalists: Morgan Feiler, Kyle Harris, Thomas Wang, Kushal Bhattacharyya, Dillon McCann and Kevin Kinsella!

This year is a History/Geography Fair Year! The Geography Fair will be held from May 18<sup>th</sup> to May 20<sup>th</sup>. Information will be given out in class shortly.

In the fifth grade, geography students are studying the geography of the United States. They will be expected to identify all of the states by the end of our studies. They can take online map quizzes at: [lizardpoint.com](http://lizardpoint.com) and [ilike2learn.com](http://ilike2learn.com).

The sixth graders are studying Africa, and are very pleased to be designing their own board games. They also can study for their African Countries Map Quizzes at: [lizardpoint.com](http://lizardpoint.com) and [ilike2learn.com](http://ilike2learn.com).

**Mr. Bruckmann**  
**Grade 5 Singapore Math**

Students have been working to complete Book 5A soon after Mid-term exams. Unit 4 introduced fractions and division as well as more multiplication. We learned a few riddles to help in the process. The students have since moved onto Unit 5 that concentrates on Perimeter, Area and Surface Area of various shapes both two-dimensional and three-dimensional. We then used this understanding and attempted to put it into use to solve various types of word problems. This took us into the our first “BIG Test” or mid-term in January where students needed to show their understanding of Units 1-5. Since our program is constantly integrating information from past Units, this was just a longer test.

As the second semester begins, we are now moving into a short unit on Ratios in Unit 6 that will then complete our first book!! Then it will be on to Unit 7 and a very extensive unit that focuses on Decimals in our second book of the year (5B). Students will study addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of decimals by other decimals as well as multiples of tens, hundreds and thousands. Please remember that corrections of quizzes and tests is not optional and that homework is a very important step in the process of learning lessons of both that day as well as previous days. Also, please use my website as a tool to enhance learning as well. <http://www.oakhillacademy.com/mr-bruckmanns-math-class>.

**Mrs. Cotterell**  
**Grades 5 – 8 Math**

**Grade 5 – Period 2**

We have essentially completed the first book of our two part series. After exams are over we will have a brief review of the calculation of speed and average speed and then move onto the second book of the program. The third marking period was primarily focused on calculation of ratios, comparing two quantities, comparing three quantities, solving proportions and calculating rates. We spend any “free” time in class answering SAT questions. The students love the challenge. These students are bright and hard-working. I look forward to second half of the year.

**Grade 5 – Period 3**

Fractions! Fractions! Fractions! The entire marking period was focused on this very important topic. The students learned how to read and write fractions, how to compare and order them, how to find equivalent fractions and how to add and subtract them. Fractions will be a part of their math courses right through high school so it is very important they have a firm understanding of these concepts. After the exam we will begin with fractions and word problems and multiplying and dividing fractions. When we study the word problems, we are going to use bar models. Since bar models are divided into units, it has a natural application to fractions. If the students use the bar models, seemingly difficult word problems will be much easier to solve. Homework continues to be a very important part of the class. It is essential to complete the homework every evening and to have it in class for review the day it is due. Thank you for your continued support making sure that this is accomplished.

**Grade 6**

This marking period’s focus was on percents and ratios. We spent a good amount of class time discussing the importance of percents in the “real world”. The students learned how important it is to calculate percents for shopping, calculating sales tax, interest charges, commission and tips. The students also learned how to compare two and three quantities as ratios. They learned how to find the LCM in order to compare the ratio and they learned how to take ratios and put them into algebraic equations to solve a ratio word problem. We are moving at a moderate pace; we take enough time with each concept to ensure that everyone has full understanding. The students work hard and are prepared for class. Their excellent work ethic is so important and will help assist them as they progress through their studies. We will resume with proportions, scale drawings, rate and speed after the exams. The group is a pleasure to teach. Thank you for your continued support at home.

**Grade 7**

What is your favorite type of dance? What is your favorite season? What is your favorite type of cookie? The 7<sup>th</sup> grade students had the assignment of selecting a question and surveying 25 or more people. They were then required to prepare at least two graphs, calculate the associated measures of central tendency and forming a conclusion. The graphs had to be hand drawn and colorful as well. They were excellent! I hung the graphs at the end of the hall and have

received many complements on their work. I thoroughly enjoyed grading the projects.

We also spent a significant amount of time on some general geometry concepts. We explored the different types of triangles and quadrilaterals and how to solve for the missing variable algebraically. The students learned what a regular polygon is and how that determines the lines of symmetry. They learned about MC Escher and how to make an Escher-like translation. After exams we will begin with our chapter on divisibility, GCF and LCM. We will be setting the foundation for our work on fractions.

I love working with this group of students. They are always prepared and have an enthusiasm to learn. Thank you for your continued support at home.

#### Grade 8

We began this marking period by finishing the last few sections of Chapter 4 – negative exponents and scientific notation with positive and negative exponents. We spent the rest of the marking period working on Chapter 5 which was essentially fractions (both positive and negative) and all of the foundation work associated with that topic e.g. finding the least common denominators and simplifying algebraic fractions.

The students also learned how to solve and check algebraic equations. They were taught two ways: the pre-algebra method in which the fractions are kept and the high school method in which the fractions are eliminated by multiplying the entire equation by the least common denominator). The last lesson in the chapter was identifying arithmetic and geometric sequences and finding the measures of central tendency with integers.

This group continues to work hard. Everything they master now will make their Algebra 1 class so much easier. I appreciate their enthusiasm and dedication and look forward to working with them the second half of the year.

#### Grades 7 & 8 Algebra 2

This incredibly hard working group of students completed two chapters this marking period. It is very important that we do not miss a beat in this class since the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students need to pass their high school placement tests in the spring.

Chapter 6 concepts included: using properties of exponents, evaluating and graphing polynomial functions, adding,

subtracting and multiplying polynomials, factoring and solving polynomial equations, finding rational zeros and using the Fundamental Theorem of Algebra. Chapter 7 topics included: finding roots and working with rational exponents, properties of rational exponents, power functions, inverse functions, graphing square root and cube root functions, solving radical equations and statistical graphs and calculations including standard deviation.

As soon as exams are over we will immediately begin chapter 8 – logarithms! It is a true pleasure working with this bright, energetic, determined group of students.

#### **Mr. Clapp Grade 5 Science**

Happy New Year everyone! I want to give a big thank you to all of the parents and students for their very thoughtful gifts. They were all very generous and well appreciated.

Over the last marking period our 5<sup>th</sup> graders have been learning about all of the different physical and chemical changes that substances can go through. We discussed the differences between the two types of changes and then we experimented with them, trying to see real-life demonstrations of each. They are all chemistry magicians now! They know some substances that will mix and create a brand new substance in front of your eyes. We also took a look at molecules and compounds so they now know much more about everything that is around them in their everyday lives.

After their big, half of the year test we will start to switch into space science to learn about the planets, stars, and maybe a few other things that might be lurking in outer space!

#### **Mrs. Vacca Grades 5 & 6 Math Workshop/Tech**

Jobs have been assigned and students are doing last minute work in preparation for our visit to **JA Biz Town on Tuesday, Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>**. A detailed letter/permission slip was sent home this week which needs to be **returned by Monday, Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>**. This will be our first visit to this establishment which should be both educational and fun. Financial literacy is important to learn at an early age. This field trip should be both challenging and a great way to culminate these last few months of hard work. Please remember to send in the signed permission slip allowing your child to participate in this wonderful opportunity.

#### **Mme Koar Grade 5 French – period 1**

The students in fifth grade were introduced to the two main irregular verbs in French, “être et avoir,” (to be and to have). They are familiar with the present tense indicative of common “er” verbs. We practiced some of these verbs with a song, “J’ai faim, J’ai soif” (I’m hungry, I’m thirsty). We practiced vocabulary with several games and songs, however the favorite game among this class was “Kahoot.”

#### **Mrs. Duffy Grade 6 English/LA**

Sixth graders prepared diligently for the “Big Tests” this marking period. Learning to review a large body of material, to identify what is important in that material, and then to synthesize the information reinforces the study skills that Oak Hill students develop and carry with them into high school and college.

After completing a variety of short stories, the sixth graders are immersed in Israel Horowitz’s play, *A Christmas Carol: Scrooge and Marley*, adapted from Charles Dickens’s *The Christmas Carol*. The students rotate parts so that everyone gets a chance to exercise their ‘inner ‘drama.’

In the writing of their compare/contrast essay, sixth graders used their critical reading skills to analyze and synthesize material from the “Finding Your Place in the World” unit in their literature text and then created well organized and well thought-out writing pieces.

#### **Mrs. Daly/Mrs. Grier/Mrs. Scheuer Grade 6 Reading**

The sixth graders have been studying many different comprehension skills. Students have been utilizing the *Hero/Monsters* anthologies for main idea and inferencing. Some subjects have ranged from the Cardiff giant hoax to Florence Nightingale to amazing animal rescues. Students have been focusing on skill development as our *Read for Real* continues.

The classes did very well on their big tests. Looking forward, the fourth marking period will introduce many invention stories, while concentrating on skills. Students are challenged to report on the greatest inventions of the last 100 years. Lots of exciting stories to carry us through the winter!

**Mrs. Palamara**  
**Grades 6 – 8 Math**

Math 6

This marking period we continued to discuss interest, sales tax, and discounts where the focus was on problems where the students needed to find the original cost or value of a quantity given its final value after a percentage, increase or decrease.

In Chapter 5 we began our discussion of ratio and its relationship to fraction and percentage. Students compared two and three quantities using ratio and expressing these ratios in simplest form. Students then moved on to solving word problems using ratio and proportion.

Math 7

This marking period began our introduction into Algebra I. In Chapter 1 students reviewed variables, exponents and powers, order of operations, equations, inequalities, expressions, and problem solving models. A new topic introduced was functions. This material was mastered and now students are working on properties of real numbers in Chapter 2. Topics already covered in this chapter include the real number line, absolute value, and addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of integers. Application word problems for each concept have also been introduced and practiced.

Algebra I

During this marking period students learned how to solve linear equations and to use formulas, ratios, rates and percents. They learned to solve linear equations which involve multiple steps; to solve decimal equations; to solve a formula for a specified variable; and to solve real-world problems involving ratios, rates, and percents.

Students are using a variety of methods to explain mathematical reasoning, including words, numbers, symbols, and models and developing strategies that can be used with more complex problems.

OHA Math Team

Congratulations to the OHA Math Team on their first place win at the St. Joseph High School Mathematics competition. Congratulations also to Michael Zhang and Alex Mitchell on a tie for second place and Thomas Wang on his fifth place position. Over 27 schools and 300 students participated. The contest consisted of 16 challenging free response questions. No calculators were permitted. Rounding out the team were Kara Pietrowicz, Aarya Doshi, Raymond

Shen, Jake Fradkin, Justin Weber, Molly Jain, Jessica Yatvitskiy, Grant D'Orsi, Mason Garber, and Nicholas Geissler.

Kudos to all for a job well done!

Math-A-Thon

Our annual fundraiser for St. Jude Children's Hospital is here again. Math-A-Thon is designed to be an educational learning experience for your child while raising money for the children at St. Jude who are counting on our help.

Last year 25 students participated and raised \$3,924.00. Aside from the prizes awarded by St. Jude Hospital, all participating students will receive a dress down day in the spring.

The Math-A-Thon Funbook is now available at [www.mymathathon.org](http://www.mymathathon.org). It includes games, hospital information and updated problems. Please decide if you want the online or the paper version of the Funbook for your child when turning in the permission slips. All grade levels are included online.

Look for permission slips coming home soon!

**Mrs. Billet**  
**Grades 6 & 7 Science**

The sixth grade class just finished a unit discovering patterns of heredity and how inherited changes can influence evolutionary trends. Both simple and Mendelian heredity patterns of multiple alleles and polygenic inheritance were explained.

Blood types were learned. DNA was investigated and made using twizzlers and colored marshmallows. Some lower school students came over to the Science Center and put it together with us. Our doggy DNA lab was interesting because it showed us that no two dogs were alike.

The seventh grade continues its study of physical science by studying electricity. Electricity not only provides us with light, but also heat, refrigeration and power to run countless electrical devices we use every day. Where does electricity come from? How does it get to our homes, schools and offices? And how can you control it by flicking a switch or pushing a button? We learned the answers to these questions.

**Sra. Dotto**  
**Grades 6 - 8 Spanish**

This marking period, the sixth grade students have been immersed in learning a lot of grammar. We have continued the study of the verb "gustar" with indirect object pronouns and how to clarify. This is a very hard concept to understand and apply but students have mastered it. They have continued building vocabulary and worked on the usage of the preposition "de" to express possession. Furthermore, the students have also learned the geography, history, and culture of Puerto Rico.

All this has been reinforced with power point presentations, audio CD's, videos, Smart board games, Youtube videos, classroom interaction and by logging in to my sites, Weebly, and Educreation for visual and auditory practice.

I want to take this opportunity to let you know what a great pleasure it has been working with all of you these past few months. We have had a lot of fun and your enthusiasm has made my job easier. See you all in seventh grade!

**SIXTH GRADERS: SAVE YOUR TEXTBOOK AND WORKBOOK FOR NEXT SCHOOL YEAR.**

In the seventh grade, we have progressed at a very nice pace. We have covered expressions and vocabulary about making plans, inviting someone to do something, saying what you have and what you need, talking about classes, body parts, expressions with the verb *tener*, the usage of the verb *venir*, conjugation of the verb *hacer*, expressions with the verb *hacer*, along with some irregular first person verbs. The students have also learned the geography, history, and culture of Costa Rica. All this has been reinforced with power point presentations, audio CD's, videos, Smart board games, Kahoot, Youtube videos, classroom interaction and by logging in to my sites, Weebly, and Educreation for visual and auditory practice.

Class, it was a great pleasure working with you. We had a lot of fun and learned quite a lot. I will miss you!

**STUDENTS TAKING SPANISH IN 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE. PLEASE KEEP YOUR TEXTBOOK AND WORKBOOK FOR NEXT SCHOOL YEAR.**

In eighth grade we have been studying one of the most confusing irregular verb for a non-Spanish speaker to learn, the difference between the verb *ser* and the

verb *estar* (both verbs mean “to be”, but are used under different circumstances). The students have worked very hard with these verbs and I am pleased to say that they have mastered them. Also, they have been working with a good amount of adjectives specifically used with the verb *estar*, vocabulary on locations where people live, chores and responsibilities plus negation with *nunca* and *casi nunca*.

Furthermore, the students have also learned the geography, history, and culture of Chile and worked in groups on a dialogue, which they recited in front of their classmates. Their pronunciation was great and they all showed a great deal of enthusiasm. ¡Buen Trabajo!

All this material has been reinforced with power point presentations, videos, audio CD’s, Smart board games, Kahoot, YouTube videos, classroom interaction and by logging in to my sites, Weebly, and Educreation for visual and auditory practice.

### **Mrs. Tirella/Mrs. Murray Grade 7 Literature**

In Literature, we have just completed our in-depth novel study of *The House of Dies Drear* by Virginia Hamilton focusing on various critical thinking skills that will be beneficial for our standardized tests in the spring. To finalize our unit, the students created an illustration of the Dies Drear house (a station on the Underground Railroad) emphasizing the architectural detail, color, and design of the house. We have also added QR Codes (Quick Response Codes) that show a link to something that relates to the novel. They will be on display in our Upper School. Come and see our illustrations and try out the QR Codes.

In our next unit, we will embark on a new adventure into the world of William Shakespeare. We will learn about his life, as well as the Globe Theatre, and we will read a prose and play version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. We will end our unit with a live performance from the New Jersey Shakespeare Theater of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. This will certainly broaden our horizons and provide us with a new perspective of the English language.

### **Mrs. Tirella/Mrs. Daly Grade 7 Language Arts**

We have accomplished so many things this first semester. Our written work continues to develop as well as our vocabulary and sentence structure.

In Language Arts, we have just completed a unit on Verbs and will begin a unit on Modifiers: Adjectives and Adverbs. In vocabulary, we will go on with our units in *Vocabulary Workshop* and continue to add to our list and understanding of new words.

We will also be starting on our Red, White, and Blue Compositions dealing with the topic of Community Service. We will be working on the complete writing process using our Google Docs accounts.

### **Mrs. Daly Grade 7 Critical Reading**

The seventh grade students have been diligently working on skill development. Each *Read for Real* story provides students with key skill components for success. Topics have included endangered animals to adventurers. Using tech devices, students traced Lewis and Clark’s expedition across America. Journal entries for Lord Shackleton’s journey included locations, weather conditions, and general facts. And, Heyerdahl’s *Kon-Tiki* trip was examined using tech devices.

Our vocabulary program uses key tech programs such as padlet and kahoot for word reinforcement. Students collaborate on the white board to create vocabulary sites for test reviews. Student articles for our news summaries include endangered species, water found on Mars, homework guidelines, and many other interesting and thought-provoking pieces. Students did well on the Midterm Exam!

### **Mrs. Mayer Grades 7 & 8 History**

The seventh grade has been hard at work learning about early English colonization. We focused on the hardships early settlers endured and analyzed the first local governments that were formed. We discussed which governments were most effective in The Harkness Room. Students look forward to learning more about the French and Indian War and The American Revolution. The seventh grade also created stories about The Age of Exploration and shared them with our lower school. Everyone truly enjoyed

and learned from this experience. We look forward to more interaction in the future.

The eighth grade has been hard at work studying the dramatic changes our country experienced between the Civil War and World War I. We analyzed the effects inventions had on our daily lives and how they transformed the country. We also took a close look at worldwide Imperialism and discussed how this helped cause World War I. We visited the Harkness Room to explore these topics and look forward to learning more about the modern age.

### **Ms. Burke Grades 7 & 8 Latin**

The seventh graders began the third marking period by learning the personal endings of Latin verbs. We also learned about grammatical concepts such as person and number of verbs, infinitives, and conjugations. As always we reinforced their new grammar by translating stories. In culture, we learned the stories of the founders of Rome, Aeneas and Remus and Romulus, as well as Roman numbers and numerals. Finally, we rounded out the marking period with an intensive review of grammar and culture in preparation for their exams.

In the eighth grade, we learned the meaning of the principal parts of a Latin verb and then learned how to translate and form the final three tenses in Latin: the perfect, pluperfect, and future perfect tense. In culture, we learned about the Roman army and the government of the Republic. We also continued reading Books 4 and 6 of *Aeneas*, an age-appropriate version of Vergil’s *Aeneid*. Finally, we ended the marking period with a review for their exams.

### **Mrs. Larkins Grade 7 Math Workshop**

Seventh graders had some fun ordering virtual pizza over the internet. With such toppings as smiley faces, peace signs, eyeballs, and nails, it was easy to investigate such topics as area and best buy.

Food was a great motivator in our latest math workshop project. First we used goldfish crackers in order to simulate a method called “tag and recapture” that is used by scientists to estimate the total number of sharks within a body of water. Then, groups used their data from the goldfish simulation to form proportions and find averages.

It was a pleasure having the seventh grade this semester. Good luck to them in Explorations!

**Mrs. Williams**  
**Grade 8 Language Arts/Literature**

In eighth grade Language Arts, students continued their study of vocabulary. In addition, they concluded the grammar unit: *Modifiers*. Furthermore, students continued their writing assignments with the start of the research project. Students selected a topic, created a working outline, and began researching sources. During the fourth marking period, students will continue the research project, vocabulary lessons, and grammar lessons.

In Literature, students concluded the novel, *The Outsiders*. Moreover, students read nonfiction short story selections. They made connections to history and examined the literature for figurative language. Next marking period, students will begin reading Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*.

**Mrs. Daly**  
**Grade 8 Critical Reading**

The eighth grade classes have been reading many interesting stories. While working on their comprehension skills, students have been focusing on the historical extinctions and ecosystems of the world. Stories have included the dodo bird, the dinosaurs, the prairie dog and many other species. Using tech devices, timelines were created for the mass extinction periods. As we move through the series, time moves to the present and to the future.

Our *Hero* anthology has provided key skill developments while reading timely pieces. Some of the topics included have been a modern twist on *Alice in Wonderland*, immigration, athletic dreams, and a man who attempted to eat a bus. Student news summaries have been relevant to today's headlines. Focus has been on the presidential election, the refugee crisis, and other world affairs.

Our vocabulary program has used technology in the classroom regularly. Through the use of programs such as padlet and kahoot, students can collaborate on a chapter and publish it for test review. This has helped students perform well on the midterm exams.

**Mr. Clapp**  
**Grade 8 Science**

Happy New Year everyone! I want to give a big Thank You to all of the parents and students for their very thoughtful gifts. They were all very generous and well appreciated.

Over the last marking period our 8<sup>th</sup> graders learned all about Earthquakes and volcanoes. We did many demonstrations to see what really happens during an earthquake such as seeing how all of the seismic waves travel throughout the Earth. After that we switched into volcanoes and took a deeper look into what actually causes volcanoes to form and erupt along with the main types of volcanoes and what makes them different.

After the midterm we will now totally switch gears and start learning about human biology. The first two organ systems we are going to learn about are the skeletal and muscular systems!

**Mr. Pacelli**  
**Intermediate Algebra**

This marking period we learned the skill of factoring polynomials and have used it to solve some very complex problems. Our work has included solving quadratic equations as well as dealing with rational expressions which are algebraic fractions. We now know how to simplify, multiply, divide, add and subtract these critters. Our work has included solving word problems dealing with work, mixture and motion. Next up will be radicals.

**Mrs. Vacca**  
**Grade 8 Explorations**

Students have just completed their debate presentations, thus ending the first semester. Topics worthy of discussion were researched and the pros and cons were presented. Sources needed to be documented to support each side's platform. Some of the topics were; Do credit cards do more harm than good? Should America switch to the Metric System? Should the USA significantly increase space exploration? Do beauty pageants for the young do more harm than good? Is it morally acceptable to experiment on animals for medical purposes? Should the penny be eliminated? Should the voting age be lowered to 16 years old? Should video replay be used for soccer? Finally, the debate as to whether or not college athletes should be paid. Debate topics were informative and interesting.

**Mme Simon**  
**Upper School French**

**Grade 5**

This marking period, we studied chapter 3 in the Bon Voyage Book and the daily lives of French students at school (verbs and vocabulary) and then we did a complete review during the first week of January for the big test.

I feel that we have accomplished a lot during these three marking periods. We learned the ER verbs, the verbs "To be" and "To have" and quite a lot of vocabulary. Students also got the opportunity to practice their speaking skills. We watched videos and photos from our Pen-Pals from France, Astrid and Constance. It was really interesting to see what they do for their birthday, Halloween and Christmas, the horseback riding and their daily lives.

Playing games is very important to reinforce the material. We play "Around the world" and "Kahoot" with the iPads. Kahoot is a very engaging game and students answer the questions in real time which are projected on the big screen. It is a pleasure to see the enthusiasm of the students during our classes. Great job!

**Grade 7**

During the 3rd marking period, the student presented a cultural presentation about a French Province, a French territory or a French speaking country. This allowed to know more about where the French language is spoken around the world. The presentations were very much in depth and we learned a lot.

I feel that we have accomplished quite a lot during the 3 marking periods and we have covered irregular verbs, ER and Pouvoir/Vouloir verbs, practice of dialogs and vocabulary.

Students also got the opportunity to practice their speaking skills. We watched videos and photos from our Pen-Pals from France, Astrid and Constance. It was really interesting to see what they do for their birthday, Halloween and Christmas, horseback riding and their daily lives.

The students showed a great level of enthusiasm and it was a pleasure to have them in my class.

BON TRAVAIL ET À BIENTÔT!

### Grade 8

In the eighth grade, we have mastered quite a lot of regular and irregular verbs, vocabulary and auditory and speaking exercises. The student presented a cultural presentation about a French Province, a French territory or a French speaking country. This allowed to know more about where the French language is spoken around the world. Their research was very informative and well done.

We are still working on acquiring vocabulary and grammar with a great emphasis on listening and speaking.

Soon, we will be working on past tense which is a complicated tense but I am very confident that the student will be mastering this tense quite quick! Great job!

### Mrs. Bordiuk /Mr. Rosenfeld Upper School PE

HAPPY NEW YEAR! HAPPY NEW SEMESTER!

The fifth and seventh grades have just completed their marking period of Health Education and will be returning to PE classes on January 25, 2016. Hopefully the students found Health class to be informative and useful. The 4<sup>th</sup> marking period Phys. Ed. classes will be units in basketball and volleyball and of course fun "gym" games.

The sixth and eighth grades will be having Health Education for the 4<sup>th</sup> marking period. That starts Monday, January 25, 2016.

We are trying to schedule a ZUMBA DAY for February or March. We will let the students know when that is.

Swim classes will start up again in March. We will give plenty of notice to the parents and students as to this exact date. It will be put out in a future notice.

### Mrs. Griller/Computer

With it being the middle of the school year it is time for those who have been in Computers to go to Art and for the Art students to begin Computer Class. In the first grade we ended our computer class by making animated slide shows in KidPix. The second graders used the Internet to find information about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and created information wheels. The third graders continued to practice their typing skills and created five fact charts on what makes someone a good person. While the fourth graders completed and

presented their PowerPoint Presentations. In fifth grade students created digital stories using pictures they took with digital cameras and the software program Photo Story and they themselves narrating the story. The sixth grade classes created animated stories using Scratch animation programming. The seventh graders designed computer games using Game Maker software. In eighth grade the students created and website in Microsoft Publisher and an Information database in Microsoft Access. That completes their computer classes for the year!

### Miss DiMaggio/Art

First grade painted watercolor flowers and traced their hands to represent Pablo Picasso's Posies. They made a Snowval (an oval shaped snowman out of paper). 1A had time to trace themselves on large paper in Keith Haring inspired poses.

Second grade drew silly sandwiches, made paper collages of their favorite foods and drew a self-portrait of themselves in the scene of The Scream by Edvard Munch.

Third grade drew a self-portrait inspired by Pablo Picasso and his cubism abstract style. They also drew chameleons and colored them with oil pastels using a warm and cool color scheme, and using paper they represented a snowman looking up.

Fourth grade drew an oil pastel owl and made a city using construction paper to practice our paper cutting and to show depth.

Fifth grade carved linoleum blocks and made many prints. Using the extra prints, they made an Andy Warhol inspired Pop Art project. They made a paper mosaic snowman and drew what they wear outside in a snowstorm.

Sixth grade drew funny face self-portraits using the grid method and using oil pastels they drew winter trees. They participated in a snowflake zentangle drawing contest. They drew bubbles using oil pastels and drew patterned tea cups.

Seventh grade used acrylic paint to paint a picture showing texture. They used oil pastels on black paper and drew Sunflowers like Vincent Van Gogh. They tie dyed t-shirts, drew their name in bubble letters and colored it with a monochromatic color scheme, and drew an OP Art picture.

Eighth grade drew an Instagram inspired picture in the shape of a circle, made different tints and shades of a color with acrylic paint, participated in a snowflake zentangle drawing contest, learned different shading techniques and used watercolor or sharpie to make a pointillism picture using tiny dots.

All students switch from art to computers the first week after exams.

### Mrs. Tyma/Music

The December holidays were celebrated in the lower school music classes with Kwanzaa songs and dances accompanied by conga drums (2nd grade), Hanukkah and Christmas songs/dances (K-4<sup>th</sup>), and dancing to the *Nutcracker Suite* by Tchaikovsky (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>). Accompaniments appropriate to the skill level of each grade were performed with these songs, and the joyfulness of the season was experienced by all.

Songs and stories about wintertime provide opportunities to explore music concepts and to be creative. In **first grade** we are experiencing triple meter as we "skate" (on paper plates) to the *Skater's Waltz* by Waldteufel. We are creating an accompaniment of sound effects for a snow song as we experience compound meter. In **Kindergarten** classes, we are singing songs about snow angels and snow children as we explore ascending/descending melodies and play games to develop our singing voices, beat competency and movement skills. The wonderful children's book *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen about owl watching in winter is being enjoyed again this year by the **first and second grade** classes. After reading the story, we listen to the composition *Cathedral Forest* by the contemporary composer Paul Winter in which he depicts the sounds of the forest, including the song of the spotted owl. Some of the classes may choose to interpret the music with creative movement. This unit gives us the opportunity to explore several areas: 1) the importance of protecting wildlife and their habitats and 2) for those older children for whom this is a second and third listening, an opportunity to apply newly acquired musical knowledge to a previously studied composition.

The **second, third, and fourth** grade classes are learning about the life of Martin Luther King Jr. through books, videos, songs and poetry. In **second grade**, we are learning a rhythmic poem about Dr. King's life that we are orchestrating for unpitched percussion instruments while experiencing syncopated rhythms and reviewing half

notes. In **third grade** we are learning a song about his work, adding an accompaniment on the barred instruments and then expanding the form of the song by improvising a contrasting section. These improvisations are based on rhythmic patterns that each class creates. We are exploring the pentatonic scale and working on our compositional skills of rhythmic and melodic phrase building. In addition, we have begun to learn to play the recorder! (More on this exciting unit in the next newsletter.) In **fourth grade**, a rhythm piece about Dr. King is being orchestrated for drums by the class while gaining a better understanding of syncopated rhythms. A song and book about the Underground Railroad and Harriet Tubman continues our study of famous African Americans. The American spiritual *Follow the Drinking Gourd* will be accompanied on the barred instruments in order to continue our study of syncopation and to begin a study of harmonic progressions.

Experiences in syncopated rhythms and in new notes for recorder were had in the **fifth grade** with a song from the Caribbean in calypso style. The addition of drums and other percussion characteristic of calypso music rocked the room with rhythm. Additional experiences in rhythmic syncopation were offered through a song in celebration of the winter solstice. Not only was choral singing highlighted, but also the class demonstrated their understanding of these more complex syncopated rhythms by improvising melodies on the barred instruments as a B section for the song.

After completing our study of a canon by Carl Orff for the barred instruments, the **sixth grade** classes decided to use it as a model for our own improvisations, giving us the opportunity to apply all the knowledge we gained from the study and to work on music composition. Using the rhythmic text (in compound meter) of the lovely book *Harvest Home* by Jane Yolen as a model, we improvised more melodies and created a melodic refrain to serve as an accompaniment to the reading of the poem. Finally, we enjoyed a drum piece that used almost every kind of drum we have in the music room, from congas to log drums, in a wonderfully rhythmical finale to the semester.

The Oak Hill Players and Music Makers performed for the Upper School Awards Assembly on February 5<sup>th</sup>. The Chorus is excited to perform for the Parent Organization meeting on March 4<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to seeing parents at all of these performances.

Your interest in your child's musical education makes a difference. SING, SAY, **DANCE, PLAY**, LISTEN, CREATE! These are things you can do at home to enrich your child's musical interest and skills.

**DANCE or Move** to any music...just for the joy of it.

**PLAY** instruments if they are available, or create a "kitchen band" or use household items to create interesting, layered rhythms. Play music games like "Name that Tune: or "Sound concentration (matching unseen sounds).

Next time.....**CREATE** and **LISTEN**.

#### **Mrs. DeVivo/ Drama**

During the month of December, Pre-K and Kindergarten enjoyed reading and acting out some familiar holiday stories, such as "*The Gingerbread Man*" and "*The Nutcracker*." The students also watched a unique video of "*The Nutcracker*." The performers were not ballet dancers, but marionettes!

First & Second grade students took part in similar holiday activities. The students played pantomime drama games that required them to act out holiday words and themes. Snowmen, snowflakes, Rat Kings, toy soldiers, Rockettes, and more visited the Drama room this December. They also had a blast acting out one of their favorite stories, "*Mrs. DeVivo's Toy Shoppe*." In this story, students become their favorite toys and each night when Mrs. DeVivo locks up the shop, the toys come to life!

The Third grade students created their own versions of "*The Gingerbread Man*." The students worked in groups and decided on a new runaway food to be the main character of their plays as well as a supporting cast, too. Some new runaway food characters included a croissant, a birthday cake, a carrot, a watermelon, chicken nuggets and so many more! The students made stick puppets of all of their characters, rehearsed their skits and then presented these unique and entertaining puppet shows to the class.

Fourth grade students enjoyed playing "*Holiday Charades*" and learning a new improvisation game called "*Press Conference*." The students also read a variety of holiday Reader's Theatre scripts such as "*Red Headed Robbie's Christmas*," and "*Carol's Christmas*" just to name a few.

The Seventh Grade read and acted out Charles Dicken's "A Christmas Carol" in Reader's Theatre style presentation. It took several classes to read through the play because, as the students learned, Charles Dickens was paid per word. Therefore, in order to make more money, his novels are quite wordy with a lot of repetition!

Finally, the Eighth Grade performed their original one acts. Some plays were performed live in front of a lower school audience, while others were recorded and then shown to lower school classes. They were really entertaining!

Congratulations to all of the talented students that performed in the Drama & Dance Assembly on December 15<sup>th</sup>! The forensics and dance performances were wonderful and "The Day the Crayons Quit" was spectacular!

Rehearsals have been well underway for "*You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*." The performance is on Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>. Only seven weeks to go!

#### **Mrs. Vacca/Miss Arcscott Student Council**

First, a big thanks to all of our Oak Hill Academy families for their generous holiday donations, whether it was toys, specific items, or money/gift cards. All the organizations that we collected for were deeply touched by our generosity. We are certain that numerous smiles and happy faces were evident this past holiday season.

On **February 11<sup>th</sup>**, we will have our **RED DRESS DOWN DAY** for the **American Heart Association** and students are encouraged to dress in **RED** to help bring awareness to this important organization. Once again we ask that all students contribute at least \$1, and additional donations made out to the above mentioned will be gladly accepted. We also will be selling **RED DRESS** pins for \$2 to show support for this organization in addition to brand newly designed **BLACK/RED** bracelets for \$5.

**Fabulous Footwear Day will be on Friday, Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>. Also, on Wednesday, Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> there will be "MOVIE DAY" for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. More details will be coming home soon.**

## ATHLETICS

### Boys' Varsity Basketball

Mr. Bruckmann's and Mr. Misson's team is playing tough games and competing very well. They currently have a 5-3 record! They had won five games in a row! The team has had exciting wins over Eatontown, Rumson Country Day, Tinton Falls, West Long Branch, and Oceanport! Upcoming games are in the next two weeks in February!

### Girls' Varsity Basketball

Mrs. Porzio's team has been playing each game closely and has a 4-5 record. They have had wins over Rumson Country Day, Seashore and Eatontown. Upcoming games are during the next two weeks of February!

### Boys' JV Basketball

A large group of enthusiastic 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders are playing on Mr. Rosenfeld's JV Basketball team! With a 2-2 record, they have wins over Seashore and Ranney. Their two losses were by two points each! The team is looking forward to their upcoming games.

### Girls' JV Basketball

In only our ninth year of Girl's JV Basketball, Mrs. Scheuer has been pleased with the effort of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders! They are a hard-working and eager group! The team has a 3-0 record with wins over Rumson Country Day and Ranney! The team will have a few more games to close out their season!

### Swim Team

Mrs. Bordiuk and Mrs. Mee have both been pleased with the Swim Team. There are some veteran swimmers and many young swimmers, too. The team had a decisive win over Elizabeth and a close loss to Neptune! They will also swim against Stuart Country Day, Pennington, and Ranney in their remaining meets. On Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>, our team will compete in an invitational at Ranney.

### Cheerleading

Mrs. Wood is quite pleased with the cheers and halftime routine that the squad has worked out! They are a very enthusiastic group that has been adding support to our basketball teams! The cheerleaders have

also been working with our Mustang Mascot!

### Scorekeepers

If you haven't noticed, a group of very dedicated and talented students are running the scoreboard and keeping score of the basketball games. They have received many compliments from the basketball officials for their work. It is a pressured job, but these students are handling it quite well!

## Summer Basketball Camps

Miss Murray will be running her basketball camp this summer at the following times:

### Girls, ages 9-15

June 27 - June 30  
9:00am - 3:00pm

### Boys, ages 9-15

July 25 - July 29  
9:00am - 2:00pm

Mr. Misson's Basketball Camp will run the week of: June 13-17

### Girls and Boys, ages 6-8

9:30am - 12:30pm