

The TOAST Times

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October/November, 2008

Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science & Technology

<http://toast.albany.k12.ny.us/index.html>

Principal: Mr. Timothy Fowler

Editorial Staff:

Mrs. Ciufu, Mrs. Florance, Mr. Flynn, Mrs. Reynolds-Hoffman, Ms. Whipple

From The Desk of the Principal:

Be on the lookout for information on *College Friday's*. This is a new program that we are planning which will begin soon.

Report cards will be sent home on Monday, November 3rd. Please arrange a conference time with your child's teacher on Parent/Teacher Conference Day on November 4th. There is a new report card format this year; please read the Parent Guide which explains the changes.

Mr. Fowler
Principal

Upcoming TOAST Events:

October, 2008

- Tuesday, October 21st: Wear red for Apples
- Thursday, October 23rd: Fire Safety Assembly (K-6)
 - Friday, October 24th: School Picture Day
- Monday, October 27th: Halloween Safety Assembly (3-6)
- Friday, October 31st: Donate \$1.00 and wear your PJ's
 - Friday, October 31st: Harvest Celebration

November, 2008

Monday, November 3rd: Report cards go home
Tuesday, November 4th: **No School for students.** Parent/Teacher
Conference Day
Wednesday, November 5th: Career visit from a Chiropractor
Friday, November 7th: TOAST T-shirt Day
Tuesday, November 11th: **No School;** Veterans Day
Wednesday, November 12th: TOAST Family Night at the NYS Museum:
6:00-8:00 pm
Monday, November 17th: Rowdy & the River Rats, Health & Fitness Assembly
(3-6)
Tuesday, November 18th: TOAST Family Science Night: 5:30-6:30, Room
313
Tuesday, November 18th: TOAST PTA Meeting: 6:30, Auditorium
Friday, November 21st: Crazy Hat Day
Wednesday-Friday, November 26-28th: **No School;** Thanksgiving Recess

Greetings From Kindergarten:

Happy Autumn! We are off to a great year and have already learned so much. We have had 2 exciting field trips this year. We went to Indian Ladder Apple Orchard where we used our 5 senses to investigate apples. We saw trees full of apples, tasted apples, apple cider and apple doughnuts, we smelled the apple doughnuts, touched the pressed apples used to make cider and listened to the many sounds of the busy apple orchard. It was so much fun! We also went to the Children's Museum of Science and Technology where we used our hands to learn about many new things. We even touched a snake and a turtle. We are learning about numbers, patterns and letters. Ask us about what new letters we have learned this year. It is sure to be a great year of hands on learning and fun!

Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Luciani & Mrs. Molitor

Dear Fourth Grade Friends,

Our year is off to a fabulous start! We are very proud of how well our learners have adjusted to our new home. In September, we welcomed our St. Rose student interns: Mrs. Kent, Ms. Frey, Ms. Tscatani, Ms. Dempsey, Ms. Curran and Mrs. Francis. They are helping us learn by playing games, building cells and showing us living specimens! We have a lot of fun with them.

We have homework every night in 4th grade. We need to write in our Writers Workshop notebook everyday. We are reading every day, our goal is to read 100 books by next May. Our library books need to be returned each week, we love getting new books!

In SS, we are learning about NY State. We are reading elevation maps and are able to identify landforms in New York. New York has many natural resources that taste delicious. Can you name any? Just ask us!

Mrs. Ellis, Mrs. Googins & Mrs. Serapilio

Second Grade:

The second graders have settled into our new space and are raring to learn. We are actively learning about living things and how they grow and change. In SS, our discussions are about our family histories and traditions. We are happy again to be celebrating our successes within the second grade community through our monthly movie parties. Students who exhibit consistent, positive behavior and effort are invited to these celebrations. We hope to see all the students there.

The Second Grade Team:

Mrs. Lo, Ms. Nies, Mrs. Scandurra, Mrs. Shanahan & Mr. Thompson

Library Lowdown

We're all getting adjusted to our new surroundings and are showing off our excellent sharing skills as we combine books, resources and space with our friends from Arbor Hill Elementary. The combination gives us so much more variety and so many more resources! Check out the seasonal fun with numerous books about apples and pumpkins, spiders and bats, chilly air, falling colored leaves and scary stories...oh, my! And I hear, RIF is in the air!

Mrs. Florance

Sixth Grade News:

The sixth graders have had a fantastic first few months of school. They hit the ground running, switching classes, using lockers and taking on a real leadership role now that they are the oldest at TOAST.

After learning about world belief systems and their impact on cultures in social studies, we are busy studying the rise and fall of the classical civilizations of Greece, Rome, Africa, India and China. In science, we have made it through our first interval test and are working hard on becoming "experts" on our science fair topics. Research papers should be finished before the holiday recess.

It's been a busy fall in Writer's Workshop as well. We've completed units on personal narratives and expository writing and will soon begin getting ready for the NYS ELA exam in January. We sent our first letters to our pen pals in Ethiopia and are looking forward to hearing back from them soon!

Students should continue to read every night as well as getting their agenda books and RAH sheets signed every night. Our rock and bowl field trip is coming up so be on the look out for details.

Ms. Bennett, Mr. Costello, Mrs. Holley, Ms. Adams & Mr. Martenis

What's Going On In Art?

TOAST students have just completed learning some very important art concepts since the beginning of the school year. They have worked on projects using lines and line directions with rulers, shapes, tracing, contour drawings, apple collages and primary and secondary colors. Everyone has been doing a tremendous job on their art projects! BRAVO! Keep up the self-motivation and EXCELLENCE! Some interesting projects that are coming up include: Ancient Egypt Hieroglyphics, 3-D pyramid drawings, repetition of shapes, color wheels, mask-making and many more! Keep up the creativity!

Mrs. Wright ☺

News From the Science Lab:

We're off to a great start! On our first bird watch, we saw several species of birds including a small falcon called a Merlin. Our Friday Afternoon Theme Group collected and identified several micro-organisms from the pond at Washington Park. Thanks to Heather Dunbarry and David Hopkins for their help and expertise. So far, two students brought in ladybugs to be photographed. We sent photos and cheek cells to Cornell Universities' Lost Ladybug Project. Mrs. Bennett's class looked at some of their own cheek cells using TOAST's compound microscopes during their lab period. Mrs. Haggerty's and Mrs. Scandurra's classes went to Washington Park to observe signs of autumn and to collect leaves and seeds. Check backpacks for info/ideas concerning our school-wide them: Up In The Air.

Upcoming Science Events:

Bird Watch: November 7th
After School, Grades 2 and 3: November 17th
After School, Grades K and 1: November 18th
Family Science Night: November 18th

Mr. Flynn

Summer Reading:

Congratulations to the following students from TOAST who participated in the Albany Public Library's summer reading program. The students will be honored at a special luncheon later this month: Haroon Arif, Usman Arif, Emily Bedell, Robert Brown, Eneirah Fite, Khadejah Martin, Anik Paul, Kyle Pearlman, Sophia Pearlman, Jacky Wu and Shirley Wu. Congratulations and keep reading!

Mrs. Shanahan

News From The Computer Lab:

We're off to a great start in the Computer Lab! Things are going well and everyone has been excited to get back to into the swing of things, working on the computers and learning new programs.

A BIG THANKS to all of the parents and students who came to Family Technology Night, it's always great to see and talk with everyone!

If you have not returned your internet contract, please do so as soon as possible. We have many theme activities and projects that we will be working on and you need to have a signed permission slip on file in my room.

Ms. Whipple

Websites For Parents & Students:

Fire Prevention: <http://www.sparky.org/>

Kaboose: <http://www.kaboose.com>

Homework Help:

<http://www.kidbibs.com/homeworkhelp.htm>

Fall Activities:

<http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/fall/kids-crafts/>

Halloween Activities:

<http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/halloween>

Sports Illustrated For Kids:

<http://www.sikids.com/>

Ms. Whipple

"Perfect Practice Makes Perfect"

Students who are involved in instrumental music have a high level of expectations that they need to meet. Band and Orchestra students have the added responsibility of practicing in their lesson books, ensemble music as well as the responsibility of getting their regular homework done. We, as their music teachers, understand that this is not always easy. However, we still expect the work to get done.

Students are expected to practice a minimum of 20-30 minutes a day. By "practice" (with the exception of the first lesson or two) we mean that they should be opening their books and working on their assignment. Yes, they do have assignments every week that they are to be completed.

As the parents, please help your child to schedule practice time each day so that it becomes a part of their daily routine, which will only help ensure their success.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of your child's music education.

Mrs. Reynolds & Mr. Cady

TOAST Drama Club

Auditions were held on Tuesday, October 15th. All the students involved did a great job and this year's production of School House Rock, Jr. is sure to be a success.

Rehearsals are on Tuesday's and Friday's from 2:30-4:30 pm. Parents are reminded that students involved in the musical need to be picked up on time. The teachers involved donate their time after school to the benefit of your children and are unable to stay for longer than the end of rehearsals. If picking up your child at the appropriate time is not possible, then they will not be allowed to be part of the show.

We're looking forward to another great performance by the TOAST Drama Club!

Mrs. Reynolds & Mr. Cady

News From The Health Office:

Students in Kindergarten and 1st grades have had health lessons on hand washing and stopping the spread of germs! Ask your child what they have learned—you will be surprised at what they know! Now that the cooler weather is here, we have to remember to wash our hands frequently to keep cold and flu germs at a minimum. Please check with your pediatrician to determine if your child needs the flu shot, especially if your child has asthma.

The Health Office is continuing to collect physicals from 4th grade students, please remember to send them in. Any 6th grade students who is turning 11 years old needs to have a Tdap booster shot. Please call your pediatrician when your child turns 11 to schedule an appointment.

Mrs. Greenwood

Health & Wellness:

The apple is October's Fruit of the Month. The Health and Wellness Committee is sponsoring a "Wear Red For Apples" Day on Tuesday, October 21st. Our cafeteria will be serving apples for lunch that day as they do many other days. Please encourage your child to eat fresh fruits and veggies every day. Rule of thumb is 5 servings a day! The students are learning fun facts and healthy tips on the benefit of eating apples. "An apple a day keeps the doctor away!"

October is also Fire Safety Month. Albany Firefighters will come to TOAST on Thursday, October 23rd to host an assembly for each grade. **Be sure to review with your family the following checklist:**

- Keep lighters and matches out of reach and teach children never to touch them.
- Make sure all smoke alarms are working, check them monthly and change the battery every 6 months.
- Have a fire escape plan with two ways out of each room and have a meeting place for everyone to go.
- Practice your escape plan.

Stay tuned for more Health and Wellness tips next month!

The Health and Wellness Committee