

Dear Armatage Families,

“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.” – Winston Churchill

Happy 2017! I hope you had a wonderful holiday and were able to spend some time with family and friends.

Testing

This week we will begin the winter MAP testing for 1st - 2nd graders. This is an opportunity for us to assess the progress our students are making and adjust instructional strategies if necessary. Upon completion of these assessments, the 3rd – 5th graders will take the OLPA tests. The OLPA is a good indicator of how the 3rd – 5th graders will perform on the state Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments tests this spring.

Construction

Slowly but surely, we are moving forward with the construction project. Over winter break, contractors did some work on the servers as they will be moved over spring break.

This week, I will attend a meeting to discuss door hardware and security for the building. The plan is to have a vestibule like we currently have that requires visitors to buzz the doorbell in order to gain access into the main office. This plan will prevent anyone from walking into the building without going through the office first.

Statue

Last fall, I received an email from Cathy Rebuffoni, former Armatage parent and now grandparent asking if I was interested in a bronze statue called “Old Friends” by George Lundeen. It is 7’ tall and weighs about 500 lbs.; it is spectacular!



The biggest challenge with receiving this gift for the school was the cost of moving it to the building. Last month I put out a plea for anyone having a contact that could assist us in getting the statue moved.

I received an email from Susan Wirth, Armatage parent stating that her family owns a moving company and would be happy to move the statue at no cost to the school; unbelievable! Over winter break, the statue was moved to the school and will be stored until spring when the ground thaws and it can be permanently secured to the ground.

A HUGE thank you to both the Rebuffoni and Wirth families for their generous donation and support in making this gift a reality for Armatage. I can't wait until the statue is in our prairie garden!

GLAD Training

This week, eight Armatage teachers (David Luiken, ELL; Anita Webster, Music Specialist; Elizabeth Koch, Art Specialist; Kaitlyn Fishingbauer, Science Specialist; Daniel Pollard, Physical Education Specialist; Mike Leach, Physical Education Specialist; Sarah Hassebroek, Instructional Specialist and Paul Scanlon, Assistant Principal) are participating in GLAD certification. GLAD is a national organization providing professional development to promote language acquisition, high academic achievement and 21st century skills.

The staff members will spend 4 days in Kristen Hanson's room observing and practicing the content skills. The goals of the training are:

- Creating a platform for all of the educators in your district to be thinking through the same lens, making the goal of 100% student success easier!
- Providing a common set of highly effective teaching strategies for all staff.
- Easy observational tools to check for efficacy.
- Improving pedagogy with consistent instructional routines.
- Creating vertical articulation across grade levels to meet state mandates "Make sure all standards are being addressed."
- Streamlining the visibility of your organization's structure for success in gaining equity for all students including ELL! "Amplify don't simplify."
- Supporting staff to become confident and competent in dealing with instructional change for state and district requirements "Be GLAD teachers!"
- Creating a school environment responsive to diversity with an inclusive learning environment.
- Classrooms where problem solving and cross-cultural respect are evident "Create problem solvers and not just having problem identifiers."
- Establishing a project-based, student-centered curriculum process that is inquiry driven.

Coins for Guatemala

The 1st and 2nd Grade classrooms started a program called Coins for Guatemala which helped feed, educate, and/or provide necessary living expenses, furniture, or even a home for a Guatemalan family. The children collected coins in the amount of \$1521.23. They were able to build a house for a family in

Guatemala!!!! Congratulations and a huge THANK YOU to all the 1st and 2nd grade students, families and teachers.

Community Leadership Group (Do Good things)

On December 25th, some of the Community Leadership Group (former students from Anthony & Ramsey joined our Armatage students in grades 2 – 5) distributed coats, wool socks, long underwear, hats and mittens to hundreds of chilly folks on the streets of Minneapolis. The recipients were extremely grateful to have articles of clothing that will help them stay warm though out the winter. Kudos to Sue Gonyea, Math Specialist who initiated this effort and provides ongoing service learning opportunities the first Monday of each month from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m.. If interested in being part of this effort, please contact her at Susan.Gonyea@mpls.k12.mn.us.

Kids On Broadway

I was remiss in acknowledging **Kids on Broadway** in the last Kanga News publication prior to winter break. This theatrical and musical event is a huge undertaking that typically begins in the spring and goes through December. The performers begin rehearsals in October and practice twice a week for 2 hours until the final 5 productions over the course of 2 ½ days in December. This year for the first time, **Kids on Broadway** was led by parent volunteers and director Bailey Hess. True to form, it was amazing! To see children get up on stage and sing, dance & act with what appeared to be little or no trepidation was astounding.

An event such as this takes an incredible amount of work by very dedicated and hardworking parents. Thank you to everyone who stepped forward to make this Armatage tradition a reality for the children; their dedication and support is truly appreciated.

Holiday & Professional Development

A reminder there will be no school on the following days:

- Monday, January 16th – Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
- Friday, January 27th – Record Keeping Day
- Monday, January 30th – Teacher Professional Development Day

Sincerely,

Joan Franks, Principal