

“If it is to be, it is up to me” Richard Green (Former MPS Superintendent)

Dear Armatage Families,

Happy October!

This Saturday is the Armatage Family Fun Walk, our biggest fundraiser of the year. I have been watching the predictions and it appears we are in line for fantastic weather; 54 and sunny ☺.

The Family Fun Walk is the PTA's main fundraiser for the year. The goal this year is to raise \$35,000, and there is still a ways to go. Proceeds from this fundraiser go directly to support classrooms, field trips, Kids on Broadway, and all the extra programs that make Armatage such a vibrant school to attend. Keep collecting and turning in those pledges for the chance to win a pizza party!

Join us for the Fun Walk from 9-11:30 a.m.. You can also join us for a pancake breakfast starting at 8:00, for \$5 per person. Volunteers are still needed for the Fun Walk- please go to the website to find out how you can sign up to volunteer for an hour and still have time to spend with your family.

Just a reminder that everyone 6 months and older can get a flu vaccine at the Family Fun Walk inside the park building. Please bring insurance cards. If you do not have insurance, it will be provided at no cost.

I look forward to seeing you on Saturday!

### Conferences

Conferences are right around the corner. They are scheduled for:

- Tuesday, Oct. 18th - 2:40 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, Oct. 19 - 7:40 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

On Monday at 6:30 a.m. the electronic version of sign-ups were made available through Sign-up Genius. If you have not already done so, please

make sure to sign up for a conference. If you have any questions or need assistance in getting a conference scheduled please contact your child's teacher or Abdullahi Aden at 612.668.3180.

### Learning Walk

Last Tuesday morning, Lucilla Davila, Academic Superintendent; Deb Anderson, Magnet Program Facilitator & Lynn Harper, Magnet Program Facilitator did a Learning Walk through at Armatage. The purpose was to visit rooms and provide feedback to help improve instruction for all children. The 3 areas of focus were: ***Student Engagement***

#### ***Feedback to Students***

#### ***Alignment to Standards***

We talked about what we individually saw in each room and then agreed upon the following summation:

Patterns:

- Grounded in Montessori philosophy
- Student self-assessments value academic & behavioral expectations
- Standards posted & implemented
- Student expectations for each other
- Support systems
- Rituals & routines
- Respect for the environment
- Students empowered to solve problems
- Team planning

Evidence - Student Engagement

- Notebooks

- Visuals to support
- Multiple groups & work stations
- Exit directions

#### Evidence - Feedback to Students

- Visual modeling
- Restating strategies for clarification
- Verbiage, “Please use grace & courtesy when returning to your seats”
- Chime - unspoken signal
- Students making connection between assignment and previous lesson

#### Evidence - Alignment to Standard

- Learning Targets posted in all rooms (In some cases in form of I can statement)
- Student logs
- Rigor
- Expectation for demonstrating evidence of understanding
- Follow-up activity designed to clear up misconceptions
- Vocabulary posted

It was a pleasure to hosts our guests and have them see the amazing work our teachers and children are doing to support equity and excellence in education for all students.

#### Construction

We are moving forward one day at a time 😊. Last week the construction team met to look at heating panels below the air vents in the classrooms.

It will be necessary to do some preliminary work on the panels in order to prepare for the installation of air conditioning. Based on decisions regarding the most effective and efficient way to complete this work will determine whether the timeline will require modification. As it stands right now, we are targeting next April as the beginning phase when construction will be more visual to everyone.

Just a side note about the front of the building. Julie Sherber, resident gardener and former parent has transplanted many of the flowers & plants to the Anthony Middle School grounds. As previously mentioned, the five trees in front of the building will also be transplanted to the back of the school by the lunchroom playground in order to preserve the legacy of our students that moved to Kenny School during the Changing Schools Option several years ago.

### **Data Meetings**

Last week, Sarah Hassebroek, Literacy Specialist; Sue Gonyea, Math Specialist; Paul Gonyea, A.P. and I met with each classroom teacher to talk about the progress their students are making based on specific data and anecdotal information they have derived during the first 6 weeks of school.

These meetings are very important as it helps us determine if our resources are in the right place and if there are materials or other supports that we can find to help the teachers meet the needs of every child.

### **Second Step Training**

Each week our teachers do a 30 minute Second Step lesson with their students.

The Second Step program helps strengthen the social-emotional skills of young children. It provides an excellent means to assess, build, and strengthen children's social skills, protective factors, and resilience.

This year we are providing some additional professional development for the staff. The training will be a refresher as well as an opportunity to ask questions about any changes in the curriculum.

### Literacy

How often do you hear someone say, “I am reading THE best book” and you immediately put down the one you are currently absorbed in to start the one they recommended? I do it all the time! Currently, I have 4 on my desk that I am jumping between, they are:

Waking Up White, Debby Irving

The Power of One, Gail L. Thompson

What Great Teachers Do Differently, Todd Whitaker

Presence, Bringing your Boldest Self to Your Biggest Challenges, Amy Cuddy

Research has proven that reading early and often to children is a key factor in developing critical skills to become proficient readers and students. Whether it’s Dr. Seuss or some other favorite author, children need as much exposure to written literature as possible. Last week, I was walking down the hall and one of our 4<sup>th</sup> graders accidentally bumped into me as he was reading and walking around a corner. He said, “I couldn’t put the book down it is so good.” What a dream response ☺.

The amount of “Screen time” children have access to is definitely a concern that it discussed in many different arenas. I was reading an article in nprED that said, “Most American children spend more time consuming electronic media than they do in school. According to Common Sense Media, tweens log 4 1/2 hours of screen time a day, seven days a week, 52 weeks a year. For teens, it's even higher: nearly seven hours a day. And that doesn't include time spent using devices for school or in school.

From babies with iPads to Chromebooks in classrooms, digital devices seem more ubiquitous every year. And one of the hottest issues today in

both parenting and education circles is the proper role of electronic media in children's lives.

There's research to support both the benefits and dangers of digital media for developing minds. Plenty of questions remain unanswered.

But those of us raising and teaching children can't afford to wait years for the final evidence to come in. That's why the American Academy of Pediatrics plans to update its guidelines on media use later this year. Current recommendations are to avoid all screens for children under 2, and to allow a maximum of two hours per day of high-quality material for older children.”

All this to say how important it is to your child's development that they are encouraged to put down the electronics and pick up a book (or four ☺) in order to develop and improve their literacy skills.

I hope your October is off to a great start! I look forward to seeing you this Saturday and at conferences.

Sincerely,

Joan S. Franks, Principal