

Elysian Charter School Weekly Newsletter

September 26, 2011

Vol. 7 Issue 3

Please note that the school newsletter is sent out on Mondays. When Monday is a holiday, the newsletter will be sent the following day. If you have news to send, please send it to lynneshapiro@rocketmail.com by 3:00 PM on Mondays.

Harry's Corner

Focus on Education—Learning by Doing

Recently, a first grade class went to the community garden and picked tomatoes. They brought them back to the classroom, cut them up, added spices and other ingredients and then ate salsa. This is an example of “learning by doing.” Children of all ages learn best by actually working through a process. In this particular activity children were learning about plants and the food chain (science), measurement (math) and following directions (reading/literacy). On the other side of the age spectrum, eighth grade students will, towards the end of the year, be studying the Constitution and the different branches of government. Students will then “pass” legislation that may affect them. These new “laws” will then have to be presented to a Supreme Court Justice (me) in order to determine if the current rules will allow them to be enacted.

At Elysian one of the teaching tools is the use of hands-on activities, where children are challenged to problem-solve issues and learn by completing actual real world tasks. Teachers also have to keep their skills updated, using the latest in educational theory and technology as well as knowing the new requirements that are coming from the State and Federal governments. To this end, one of this year’s staff development initiatives is to expand our knowledge of hands-on and problem-based learning. In grades K to 2 the teachers are studying ways to have students more actively engaged in the study of science. They are working together to bring in new ideas and are planning and debriefing together in order to analyze the latest strategies and techniques that they are trying in the classrooms. In grades 3 to 8, the teachers are studying problem-based learning and how to develop long term units that not only address academic issues, but also address the building of responsibility and ownership of academic tasks.

In addition to ensuring that all students perform to the best of their abilities on the academic side, we want to ensure that the students grow up to become responsible, have good character and are successful problem solvers.

Security Drills

We are all familiar with the traditional fire drill. The bells ring, everyone lines up and quietly exits the building. The result of years of fire drills around this country has been that no one has been hurt in a school fire for many years. With the advent of incidents such as Columbine, and a greater awareness about school safety, there are some new regulations surrounding drills. Every month the school must have one fire drill (it used to be two) and one “security” drill. There are several types of security drills that we must have the children practice. These include

- Active shooter drills
- Evacuation (non-fire)
- Bomb threat
- Lockdown

We must have one of these other types of drill each month as well.

On Friday, in the Rue Building we had our first lockdown drill. The lockdown is designed to protect the children in case of a threatening person being in the building. The classrooms were notified of the drill through our public address system. Classroom doors were closed and locked, lights turned out, door glass was covered up and shades drawn, and the children were instructed to sit on the floor in a corner, away from the windows and door. Someone roaming the halls would not know if anyone were in a room and would be unable to gain entry to a room.

Our students are hugely cooperative during these drills. They understand the seriousness of them and do exactly as asked. But I am concerned that sometimes a drill like this may cause anxiety. The children, especially the young children, are prepared in advance for this type of drill. If you think your child may get nervous over this, it is a good idea to talk about the drill, to point out that it is highly unlikely that this will happen, but that if it should they are prepared to take care of themselves. Similar drills will be held at Demarest as well.

Harry Laub, Ph.D.

Lunch Forms

If you did not turn in the Free and Reduced Lunch form (which was in the packet of forms you received) you need to do so as soon as possible. **ALL FAMILIES MUST HAVE A FORM ON FILE** - even if you choose not to apply for aid. If you do not have your form, please find it on our website: <http://www.ecsnj.org>, under Parent Forms.

October Lunch Orders

Please be sure to get your lunch order in by 11:00 AM this Wednesday.

Seaquest Program Begins Wednesday

Once again, Elysian is pleased to have been chosen to participate in a free, multi-session program with the American Littoral Society program. This program takes place on Wednesdays (and a few Tuesdays) after school, both in the classroom and in the field. Students learn about the ocean, sea-life, and have the opportunity to visit Liberty State Park, Liberty State Museum, Sandy Hook and the NOAA labs, as well as go fishing on Pier A.

Applications - with a tentative schedule - were sent home with 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Applications are due tomorrow, Tuesday, September 27th. The program will begin after school on Wednesday, September 28th. If you have any questions, please phone Lynne Shapiro at school or home, 201 653-6392.

Book Fair Sign UP - Volunteers Still Needed

Take a look at the time slots and email me directly at jenniferLLL@comcast.net to reserve your preferred time. Thank you in advance to the volunteers! I will update the list frequently to show remaining availability.

Monday Oct. 3rd - Set up.

12:00pm

1. Diana Bousel
2. Mitzi Joss
3. Janet Rothermal

Tues. Oct. 4

8:30-11:00

1. Anne Marie Schreiber
2. Mitzi Joss
3. Clara Perez

11:00-1:00

1. Andrea Hession
2. Charlotte White-Lee
3. Harriet Fitzpatrick

1:00-3:00

1. Nicola Hoelzl
2. Amy Hand
3. Abbe Rivers

Wednesday, Oct. 5th

8:30-11:00

1. Suzy Wilson
2. Shana Lee
3. Stacy Mello

11:00-1:00

1. Janet Jenkins
2. Andrea Hession
3. Alicia Brown

1:00-3:00

1. Alison Borelli
2. Wendy Oswald Kinney
3. Marcia Wolf

6:00 PM - The Book Fair will be open 1/2 hour before Back to School Night at Demarest,

(which begins at 6:30 PM) and after Back to School Night Ends.

1. Kathy Prussack
2. Jennifer Lisimachio

Thurs. Oct. 6th

8:30-11:00

1. Suzy Wilson
2. Stacy Mello
3. Anne Marie Schreiber

11:00-1:00

1. Elma Crabbe
2. Pam Laden
3. _____

1:00-3:00

1. Charlotte White-Lee
2. Harriet Fitzpatrick
3. _____

6:00 PM - The Book Fair will be open 1/2 hour before Back to School Night at RUE (which begins at 6:30 PM) and after Back to School Night Ends.

1. Jeri Slavin
2. Jennifer Lisimachio

Friday. Oct. 7th

8:30-11:00

1. Alison Ziegler
2. John Fisher
3. Jen O'Callagan

11:00-1:00

1. Anne Marie Schreiber
2. Jocelyn Bullard
3. Michele McCue

1:00-3:30

1. Nicola Hoelzl
2. Jennifer Chapeau
3. _____

3:30 Break Down and Clean up

1. Tenesh Weber
2. _____
3. _____

Shop Elysian's Online Book Fair, October 3 - 14

This is our first online book fair! If you're booked up during Book Fair week (or just want to keep shopping), be sure to visit the Fair online!

Please send the link below to family and friends who are unable to attend the fair but who may want to buy books as gifts.

<http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/homepage/elysian>

Send wish lists to family and friends!

Browse an expanded book selection!

All orders ship to school with no shipping fee!

If You have a Bike, We've Got the Blender!

Do you have a kids' bike to donate to Elysian? Elysian is looking for a new bike to power our Purple Pedal Power Berry Bicycle Blender. Our old bike was too big for many of the kids. The ideal bike would be kids sized (3rd -6th grade sized is the ideal) and in good working condition. And, oh yeah - you have to be willing to let us paint it purple!

If you have such a bike please contact Aram at 917-364-3734

Physical Education At Elysian

Dear Elysian Parents,

Welcome back. I am excited to inform you about this year's Elysian Physical Education and Wellness Program. With the new schedule, the majority of the grades have the opportunity to participate in physical education class twice a week.

The first class will primarily focus on fitness activities used to progress the children's five basic components of fitness: aerobic endurance, muscular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility and their body compositions. These goals are achieved through warm up exercises such as, core strengthening moves which include planks and wall sits, modified push-ups, as well as dynamic movement stretching routines. These exercises are used to promote blood flow and increase oxygen to the brain, not only assisting in the physical education classroom, but to keep your children more cognitively alert throughout the school day as they participate in their academic classroom tasks.

The second half of the first class will involve lead up games and fitness activities to introduce whatever particular sport we are learning that week. The children mostly participate in modified sports that limit waiting time and increase overall activity for every student simultaneously. I try to adhere to the snapshot rule, which is - if you were to take a picture of the physical education classroom - every student will be constantly engaged in an activity for the full 45 minutes of each class. Specific sports and activities that the children will participate in this year include, but are not limited to, soccer, basketball, flag rugby, team handball (soccer with your hands) badminton, crazy kickball (a modified version of traditional kickball used to make sure every child gets maximum participation) as well as a few other games that I have created to limit waiting time and ensure sufficient daily exercise for all students.

The second physical education class of the week will concentrate on actual game play with teams. The primary focus is on teamwork in order to instill collaborative skills, have an appreciation for fellow teammates and other students, and to embrace the importance of community, in alignment with the Elysian Charter School mission and vision. Another area we focus on is that game play, in the physical education classroom, is not about winning or losing but it is about being a good team mate, through displaying a positive attitude and demonstrating sportsmanship at all times. The students understand that they need to shake hands at the end of every game with their opponent and verbally address them with an

example of positive feedback, such as saying “good game”. I honestly believe that competition, when monitored, instills positive character traits and values needed to become successful life long learners.

Towards the end of the second semester the students will also be participating in two huge events that promote FTF “fitness through fun” and a sense of community. Elysian has teamed up with Jump Rope for Heart Hoboken, which is a weeklong fundraiser that teaches the students how to take care of their heart, jumping rope, which benefits children with special hearts. The other event is the 2nd annual Elysian Crazy Kickball May Madness Tournament. This is a school wide tournament that includes an interdisciplinary aspect of the event where every subject taught at Elysian is incorporated in the unit. Last year the tournament was a great success, based on the students’ interest levels in the three week unit. I would like to invite the community to come out and support our students at the championship match.

I urge you to be confident that I understand that children learn at a different pace and have multiple learning styles. Every activity is designed so that each student has the opportunity to succeed at a pace comfortable for that individual that allows for growth in that particular skill. The tasks are also created so students can problem solve on their own and have an opportunity to become creative in accomplishing their goals. My uppermost concern is the student’s safety and that each student gets the most out of their physical education classroom experience, becoming positive and healthy life-long learners. I am attentive to every student and monitor their progress with the goal of having everyone participate with their best effort, displaying a positive attitude and demonstrating sportsmanship at all times.

Please instruct your children to wear proper attire on physical education classroom days, which is mandatory. This includes sneakers and clothes that are appropriate for movement.

If you have any questions or concerns about the physical education program or you would just like to introduce your self to me please do not hesitate to do so. I am very approachable and you can always reach me at my email address, which is ElysianPE@gmail.com.

Kindest Regards,

Casey Mizzone
Elysian Physical Education Teacher

Easy, Healthy Cornbread Recipe

Finding ideas for snacks and breakfasts that my kids will like has become challenging. They've deemed the old standbys boring, yet requirements remain the same: good flavor and nutritional merit.

So when a batch of tiny, barely-sweet cornbread muffins came out of the oven to rave reviews, I knew we found something: We started with an easy cornbread recipe and went light on the sugar and oil -- in fact, instead of the 1/2 cup oil called for, I used 1/4 cup plus a scant 1/4 cup of low-fat yogurt. The kids added fresh blueberries and raisins to some of the batter, fresh corn to the rest. We baked it in mini muffin tins (always a hit, and perfect for portion control...) and the result is now successfully in our rotation.

Lisa Chernick, (mom of Charlotte and Juliet Hysen)

Track to Begin

Check your child's backpack. Track applications and information will be sent home on Wednesday. Track will officially begin in October.

Elysian Gardening This Fall

Now that school is back in swing the Elysian Gardeners are making plans for the 2011-2012 school year. If you have time, tools, or even ideas of how you and your child's class can help Elysian's Garden to grow behind City Hall then please contact Carter Craft (craft@panix.com) or Lisa Cavanaugh (lacavanaugh@msn.com). Whether you have seeds or bulbs to contribute, or can help get an after-school program started, any/all assistance is appreciated.

Thanks! Carter Craft (dad of Nella in Ms. Melissa's class)
917-709-3371

News from Friends of Elysian

The Friends of Elysian (thanks to a generous sponsorship from Kathy Mone) will be hosting its New Families-Veteran Families Back-to-School Mixer on Saturday, October 1, from 1-3PM at the Court Street Restaurant in Hoboken. We invite all new Elysian parents to stop by our mixer and meet veteran upper class parents, board members and PTSO leaders. We will be serving snacks and drinks so please come and allow us to get know you and welcome you to our community.

This is an adults-only event, and we are providing free babysitting services (led by Francine) from 12:30-3:30PM for all who attend the mixer. Kids can be dropped off at the Rue building, 4th Floor, beginning at 12:30PM.

During the reception we will introduce you to the Friends of Elysian and review the fundraising work we do. We will also raffle off one free ticket to the Friends of Elysian Dinner/Dance and Auction on Saturday, March 10, 2012. Please send in your RSVP by 10.26.11 by emailing the Friends at friends@ecsnj.org.

Looking forward to seeing you on October 1!

PTSO Corner

Upcoming PTSO Events:	Date	Chairpersons and Speakers-Topics
Scholastic Book Fair	10/3- 10/7	Jennifer Lisimachio and Team
PTSO Meeting	10/12	Kathy Mone - Finances
Halloween Party	10/29	Susan Chait, Stacy Mello and Team
PTSO Meeting	11/2	Diane Sasso – Anti-Bullying
Innisbrook Sale	November	Tenesh Weber
Kumba Day	12/10	TBD (3rd Grade Parent team)
PTSO Meeting	2/7	
PTSO Meeting	1/4	
Chili Dinner	1/21	Paul Demopoulos, Ted Mauseth
Square One Art	January	
PTSO Meeting	2/1	
PTSO Meeting	3/7	
Spring Fling	3/16	
PTSO Meeting	4/4	
PTSO Meeting	5/2	
PTSO Meeting	6/6	
End of Year Picnic	6/14	Melissa

Volunteer to Help at Family Alliance Evening

The Hoboken Family Alliance is hosting an Open House at Hoboken High School, 5:00 - 8:00, Tuesday, October 4th. We need Elysan parents to help answer questions and collect lottery registration forms. Please call or e-mail lynneshapiro@rocketmail.net or 201 876-0102.

Bollywood Night A Success - Thank You!

Friday's Bollywood Night was a fun-filled event with great food and dancing. Elysan raised about \$1,000 - money that will go towards Elysan's After School "Arts To Grow" Program. Thank you to Joseph Branco, the owner of Room 84, for his generosity and hospitality. Thanks to John Mercado, Sonya and Ethan Chazen, Mary Ann Bowen, Ken Nilsen, Rashilla and Nishant Amin.

We also want to thank Rasoi and Dosa Hut in Jersey City for their generous discount on food. Thank you to RajBhoj for their dessert donation, Saphthigiri for their vegetarian entree donation, both Jersey City restaurants - and Hoboken's own Karma Cafe for their Biryani donation.

Picture Day

Thank you, Deb Rosner, for organizing this year's picture day, again. It's a great deal of work, and greatly appreciated by staff and families.

Lunch on Tuesdays

Send in a bag lunch for the Hoboken Shelter. We collect lunches every Tuesday. Please look for a letter about this program in your child's backpack tomorrow. Contact: Jennifer Giattino, 201.780.6779

Pay Online for Class Trips, Lunch, Before and Afterschool

Go to www.ecsnj.org. and click on "Pay for School Services". Please enter the MONTH for which you are paying under "comments." For more info contact School Business Administrator Kathy Mone (201) 876-0102 kathymone@gmail.com

September Calendar

Wednesday, September 28

- Seaquest Program begins 3:00 PM.

Thursday, September 29 and Friday, September 30

- School closed for Rosh Hashanah.

October Calendar

Saturday, October 1

- Friends of Elysian host New Families-Veteran Families Back-to-School Mixer, 1:00-3:00 PM at the Court Street Restaurant in Hoboken, see above.

Tuesday, October 4

- Elysian Book Fair opens, as does the on-line Book Fair.
- Hoboken Family Alliance Fair, 5:00 - 8:00, Hoboken High School. Elysian Volunteers wanted to help with outreach, see above.

Wednesday, October 5

Back to School Night, Demarest, 6:30 PM, for parents of 2, 3, and 4th grades.

- Book Fair Open during the day and a half our prior to Rue Back To School Night and after Back to School Night Ends.
- Middle School "Culture of Death" Seminar visits Historic Green-Wood Cemetery.

Thursday, October 6

- Back to School Night, Rue, 6:30 PM, for parents of K,1,5, 6, 7, and 8th grades.
- Book Fair Open during the day and a half our prior to Rue Back To School Night and after Back to School Night Ends.

Friday, October 7

- 8th Grade visits NYC art galleries in Chelsea.
- Shereeza's class sees *The Little Prince* at the New Victory Theater, 11:00 AM performance.
- Book Fair closes in the afternoon.

Monday, October 10

- School closed for Columbus Day.

Wednesday, October 12

- Angela's class goes to New Victory Theater to see *White*, 10:30 performance.
- High School Information Night, 6:30 PM, Rue Building Gym, for 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade students and their parents.

Thursday, October 13

- Megan's class sees *The Little Prince* at the New Victory Theater, 11:00 AM performance.
- The 2nd grade goes to Howell Farm in New Jersey.

Monday, October 17

- The New Victory visits the 4th grade for a post-visit workshop about *The Little Prince*.

Wednesday, October 19

- Half day of school for staff development, 12:30 dismissal. Afterschool Program is available as usual.

Thursday, October 20

- Josie's class goes to New Victory Theater to see *White*, 10:30 performance.

Tuesday, October 25

- Melissa's class goes to New Victory Theater to see *White*, 12:30 performance.

Wednesday, October 26

- After School Trip, 4:30 PM performance, to see *World of Sports* at the New Victory Theater, more info to follow.

Saturday, October 29

- Elysian's Annual Halloween Party, more info to follow.

Monday, October 31

- Parent Teacher Conferences begin.

301 Garden Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030
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