



SOUTHEAST NEWS

December 2012 - January 2013

Southeast Elementary School, 134 Warrenville Rd., Mansfield Center, CT 06250 423-1611



Dear Parents/Guardians:

As this year comes to a close, I want to say thank you for your enormous support and encouragement. I feel so fortunate to be part of a community that works together to provide enrichment and support to all of our children. Together everyone does achieve more! I am looking forward to our continued partnership in making Southeast School a place where all children meet with success.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season filled with lots of happiness, love and good health.

Fondly,
Norma Fisher-Doiron
Principal

Congratulations to Julie Brennan, Outstanding Teacher of the Year



Congratulations to Mrs. Julie Brennan on being recognized as the Teacher of the Year for the Mansfield School District. In honor of this distinction, Mrs. Brennan was recognized and received a plaque at an awards ceremony held at the Bushnell in November. The CT Teacher of the Year Program began in 1952 and celebrates excellence in teaching by recognizing teachers who have inspired a love for learning in their students and who have distinguished themselves in the profession.

Mrs. Brennan loves forming relationships and getting to know each student as part of her classroom family. She has a genuine love of children and takes great pleasure in playing a role in their success.



Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF

Despite Hurricane Sandy's best efforts to disrupt trick-or-treaters from collecting money, the Mansfield School communities raised over \$750 for UNICEF. Thanks to all of our students who were encouraged to take the orange UNICEF boxes and collect and/or donate money. Children around the world will benefit from the money that was collected for this worthy cause.



Calendar of Events

December

- Dec. 8..... Hanukkah begins at sundown 
- Dec. 14..... 6:30 PM Cocoa, Caroling & Crafts 
- Dec. 16..... Last day of Hanukkah
- Dec. 18..... 8:15 AM- Schoolwide Enrichment Team Meeting
- Dec. 24..... NO SCHOOL - Winter Vacation - Christmas Eve 
- Dec. 25..... NO SCHOOL - Winter Vacation - Christmas Day
- Dec. 26..... NO SCHOOL - Winter Vacation
- Dec. 27..... NO SCHOOL - Winter Vacation 
- Dec. 28..... NO SCHOOL - Winter Vacation
- Dec. 31..... NO SCHOOL - Winter Vacation

January

- Jan. 1..... NO SCHOOL - Winter Vacation - New Year's Day
- Jan. 7..... 7:00 PM- PTO Meeting 
- Jan. 10..... 6:00 PM- Savory Samples Dinner
- Jan. 15..... 8:15 AM- Schoolwide Enrichment Team Meeting
- Jan. 21..... NO SCHOOL - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 
- Jan. 23..... 4th Grade Ice Skating Field Trip



WINTER WEATHER : DELAYED OPENINGS, EMERGENCY EARLY CLOSINGS

As winter approaches, the possibility exists for storms that would require the Superintendent to order a delayed opening or an emergency early closing.

It is the parent's responsibility to be aware of delayed openings and early closings or cancellations by listening to the radio or TV and to make arrangements for childcare.

We encourage you to sign up for email or text notification of school closing announcements through:

www.mansfieldct.org/ealerts
and
www.CTWEATHER.COM

For more information about delays and emergency early closings, please log on to our website at:

www.mansfieldct.gov and click on schools.

Attendance Line/Nurse: 423-2793 Please call by 9:00 AM if your child will be absent or tardy

Save the Date!



Savory Samples at Southeast School
has been rescheduled.

It will be held on **January 10, 2013.**

We'll be in touch with details!



Thanksgiving Dinner

The Annual Thanksgiving Dinner was prepared for our Southeast PreK-4 students and school staff on Friday, November 16th. The dinner was part of a schoolwide assembly. All of the students and faculty sat together to enjoy a family style meal, which included turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, corn, rolls, applesauce, cranberry sauce, gingerbread and milk.

This year Mary deVecchis, one of our second grade teachers, delivered a message of "giving thanks". Our second graders began the festivities by singing Thanksgiving Day songs.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Mrs. Gagne and Mrs. Rosado for preparing our delicious feast. We are also grateful for the energetic parent volunteers that arrived early to set-up, serve and clean-up for this special celebration day.

Green & Healthy Snack Day

As part of our science curriculum this year, our 3rd and 4th graders and staff had a Green & Healthy Snack Day celebration. Many of our students and staff grew greens such as spinach, lettuce, and radishes in the Southeast School greenhouse. These harvested greens were prepared and served as a special green and healthy snack last Wednesday, November 21st. Salad samples as well as smoothies with greens blended in were prepared to serve at this first Green and Healthy Snack Day event.



Our parents were a big part of the celebration. We thank them for providing donations of salad toppings, salad dressings and fruit for the smoothies. It was truly a delicious and healthy snack celebration!



First Grade Scarecrow Festival

We would like to thank all the parents who helped us during our Scarecrow Festival. The children did such a wonderful job creating their scarecrows and placing them outside our garden for all to enjoy.

A special thank you to the Wells family for providing grain bags and twine again this year.

Susan Irvine Honored at CAS Recognition of Excellence Celebration

At this year's CT Association of Schools Recognition of Excellence Celebration, Southeast recognized Enrichment Teacher Susan Irvine and the Enrichment Program. This annual event was held on Tuesday, November 27th at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington.



The following statement was put into the program brochure: The Southeast School Enrichment Program led by Enrichment Teacher Susan Irvine is based on the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM). This program has attracted interested educators from around the world. Much of the success of the Enrichment Program is due to the enthusiasm, dedication and creativity of the Schoolwide Enrichment Team, which includes teachers, parents, administrators and graduate interns. Students also contribute to the planning and implementation of enrichment activities. Each year, the enrichment team organizes a variety of high level interest-based enrichment opportunities for all students which include: artist-in-residencies; enrichment clusters; assemblies in the arts, sciences and character education; and events such as Earth Day, Science Fair and Invention Convention.

Native American Cooking Demonstrated at 4th Grade Workshop

As part of the 4th grade Native American Social Studies unit, Primitive Technologies, Inc. of Bethlehem, CT. provided an on-site workshop. Since 1978, PTI has specialized in the replication of all aspects of Native American culture, exhibit design and installation, artifact analysis, manufacturing and functional experimentation.

Leaders Jeff and Judy Kailin showed us how to prepare and cook Native American foods on a fire. Southeast students did things like put clay on the outside of a trout, make Yellow Birch switch wreaths for tea, use a deer jaw to scrape corn off the cob, and use rock knives to cut up other vegetables to make a wonderful meatless Native American soup. Students used mussel shells to hold the foods they sampled. Of course, the fire department was involved in the monitoring of the controlled fire which occurred outside on our school grounds. This wonderful workshop opportunity was funded by our PTO.





Southeast Runs!

We're done for the season but we'll be back in the Spring!

Southeast Running Club and Southeast Mileage Club are finished for the season. Both clubs have provided great opportunities for kids this fall. Participation was at a record high!

Kids of all ability levels have been out having fun while running incremental distances at their own pace. They are on their way to developing life-long fitness skills along with a feeling of accomplishment as they reach goals they've set for themselves.

It's been great fun and we hope to see even more kids, staff and parents this spring out having a great time while developing fitness skills. We'll see you when the snow melts!

BIG THANKS TO ALL OUR PARENT VOLUNTEERS!!!



Stories for Southeast The Gift That Keeps on Giving

If you are interested in purchasing a book for our library, please contact Suzanne Kelly at 423-6071 for more information. Books may be dedicated to your child in honor of his/her birthday, a thank you to someone special, in memory of a loved one, to wish congratulations, or any occasion.



Caring For Our Community Adopt-A-Family



We need your help! The holidays are a time for giving and with that in mind we want to help families in need. Southeast is sponsoring five families through the Town of Mansfield Human Services Department. Families participating in this program have a need for holiday gifts as well as gift cards to grocery stores. If we all pitch in, we can make a huge difference in a family's life and brighten their holidays this year!

A notice will be sent home with your child letting you know how YOU can get involved.



PICKING CHILDREN UP FROM SCHOOL

Please remember to send a written note in with your child if you will need to pick him/her up from school early or unscheduled at the end of the day. A separate note for each child's teacher is preferred. This will eliminate any confusion at dismissal time and ensure your child's safety.

Phone calls, e-mails and/or faxes cause interruptions of the classroom and are not reliable or acceptable ways to notify the teacher or the office. Please keep in mind that if there is a substitute teacher, they do not have access to email or voicemail.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.



THE GIVING TREE

Every year we put up an evergreen tree in the office for children to decorate with mittens, scarves and hats for local families in need. Both adult and children sizes are needed. We are requesting that all donations come in prior to December 16th. The items will be picked up by the Mansfield Services Youth Department for distribution.

We will also accept warm coats and outerwear.

The children really enjoy seeing the tree fill up and knowing that they have helped keep someone else warm during these cold winter days.

Monetary donations to Mansfield Youth Services will be accepted this year as well.

Holiday Gift Ideas to Encourage Creativity and Imagination

Children love to create and art supplies are a wonderful gift to help encourage them to imagine, create, explore, problem solve, and have a blast in the process! Art supplies don't have to put a big dent in your wallet. Here is a list of things we use in the art room that are favorites with my students. Buy a plastic bin or tote to keep everything in and your budding artists are good to go! Most of these items can be found at stores like Dollar Tree, Lots and More, Ocean State Job Lot, Wal-Mart, A.C. Moore or Jo-Ann's. Have fun shopping. I guarantee you and the kids will love these!

-Karen Anger/ Art Teacher

- * Colored Construction Paper
- * Pad of white drawing paper
- * Markers
- * Crayons (regular, fluorescent, metallic...)
- * Oil crayons
- * Tape (clear and masking)
- * Scissors (I like the *Fiskar* brand)
- * Pencils (colored and regular)
- * Pipe cleaners, all kinds!
- * Craft foam (in sheets or shapes)
- * Colored felt squares
- * Pom poms
- * Googly eyes
- * A box of craft sticks (popsicle sticks)
- * Glitter glue
- * Watercolors/brush (these are not very messy, good for at-home use)
- * Brown paper bags
- * White paper plates
- * Elmer's Glue (works the best!)
- * Glue sticks
- * Yarn or string
- * Sequins
- * Assorted buttons
- * Save boxes, cardboard tubes, etc. (the kids love creating and building things with them using masking tape.)





PTO Corner:

Officers 2012-13 school year:

President Cyndi Wells
 Vice President Jessica Higham
 Treasurer Gwen Sgro
 Secretary Jana MacDonald

thank you!

Thank you to the SE community for your continued generous support! So far this school year we have raised over \$8,000 and have been able to support several school initiatives including Primitive Technologies, who provided our fourth graders with a hands on experience in Native American lifestyle, snacks for the Running Club, and the Biomes Aquarium Exhibit that was held in September and October.

A huge thank you to all who supported two bake sales during November. We especially want to mention Jean Johnson who organized and did much baking for the Election Day Bake Sale which made over \$700 and received positive attention from the community. In addition the Holiday Bake Sale raised an additional \$350 and all of the yummy treats everyone provided were well received.

A BIG thank you to Erin Ballou for organizing the Jeannine fundraiser- over \$1,000 was raised. Thank you everyone for contributing to the cause.



If you wish to purchase photo greeting cards for the holidays, there is still time! Log on to www.cardraising.com and place your order. You can find the flyer for this fundraiser on our website.

*Best wishes for a healthy and happy holiday season!
 From the Southeast PTO*



Dealing With Holiday Stress

Holiday stress is felt by most people. It is a time of experiencing mixed feelings. For many there are feelings of excitement and anticipation while for others there are feelings of sadness and loneliness. Depending on what is going on in their lives people can experience both feelings simultaneously. Here are seven coping skills sure to help you lessen stress during the holidays.

- Acknowledge what you feel. If you have had a loss or can't be with loved ones you will feel sadness. Give yourself permission to be sad but also look for positive ways to help you get through this time of year.
- Be realistic about change. Remember that change is a constant in life. All families grow and change as do celebrations and rituals. Look for what you can do to make this a meaningful time of year for you. Hold on to rituals that you enjoy and can continue and find ways to add newness to the holidays.
- It will help to accept family members and friends as they are. Every one of them is dealing with their own stress. Let go of unspoken expectations. Instead see how you can be supportive to them.
- Keep up your daily healthy habits. If you regularly exercise, stick to your schedule. Exercise is a great way to relieve stress. If you have not been exercising try to add 15 minutes a day for some aerobic exercise. You will be amazed how much more energetic you will feel after a brisk walk around the block.
- If you tend to indulge too much try having a plan this year. There will be more food and alcohol to tempt you. Eat a healthy snack before going to a party so you don't go overboard on the items that are hard to say no to. Overindulgence increases self-loathing. Better to remind yourself ahead of time and stick to a plan instead of berating yourself with guilt.
- Be the one who decides what is right for you. Learn to say NO. Get good at listening to what your body and mind say you can handle. Others may have expectations of you but you are the only one who can decide if you can fulfill them or not.
- There is no such thing as perfect holidays. Don't aim for perfection. What you want to keep in mind is that you will be more relaxed if you have a simple goal like "I want to enjoy my holidays."



We have a few upcoming events to continue celebrating the holiday season:

Join us on Friday, December 14 for an evening of **Cocoa, Caroling and Crafts** at Southeast. Families will have a chance to make holiday crafts together while singing carols and sipping on cocoa. Please bring a mug to drink from (if you can), and a non-perishable food item to be donated to the food pantry.

We will also be working with the Character Education Committee to hold the **Adopt a Family Program** again this December. We hope to provide gifts for five area families during the holidays. Please consider donating to this worthy cause that greatly impacts our local community.



In the new year we will be holding a clothing consignment shop during the first weekend in February- stay tuned for more information. Also, if you are in the midst of clearing out no longer needed coats, please consider donating them to WAIM, they are in dire need of gently used coats and snow pants this year. All items should be washed and they are open to accept donations Tuesday-Saturday mornings.

School Building Project

If you had a chance to watch the town council meetings or read the minutes, you will know that they are re-evaluating the referendum question of whether to build two schools. Any members of the community are encouraged to voice their opinion to the town council by e-mailing them or attending town council meetings. More information about the town council can be found at the Town of Mansfield web site.



Just a reminder that there is **no PTO meeting in December**, our next meeting will be January 7, 2013. We are looking for ideas from families for upcoming Parents' Hours (a one hour topic of discussion that is usually held before the PTO meetings). If you have an idea, please e-mail Cyndi Wells at cyndi.wells.pto@gmail.com would love to hear from you.