

# PENNELL IN PRINT

PENNELL ELEMENTARY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2012

## WE ARE GROWING INSIDE AND OUT!

The months keep passing us by...and here we are in February all ready! I would like to take this opportunity to update you on the progress of this year's building theme and goals with regard to teamwork and collaboration. As you know, our theme this year is **"Growing Inside and Out"**. We have been working to build relationships within our school community and encourage students to be kind and supportive of one another.



PHILLIES PHITNESS

Many of our assemblies in the fall and early winter have focused on teamwork skills and healthy habits of mind and body. For example, the Phillies Phitness team visited Pennell on Thurs. Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> (picture above and more information on page 6). We have done two "mix-it-up" all-school activities that engaged our children in conversation and activities with older and younger peers that they typically would never work with. All of these initiatives have been fun, exciting, and educational and we are beginning to see the impact on our students.

Recently our Guidance Counselor, Mrs. Im surveyed the 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade students about bullying at Pennell. This is an annual survey that we use to address areas of need. When the survey results were totaled and analyzed, we discovered many positive outcomes! Overall, our reported verbal and physical bullying has seen a consecutive decrease over the last 3 and 4 years respectively. We are always striving to build an environment where our students feel safe and well-respected. We feel that our efforts and initiatives with **Growing Inside and Out** have made a real difference in how our students are treating one another. I will be presenting these results in greater detail at the February PTL meeting (Feb. 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm). If you are interested in more information, please come to the meeting or contact our office. As always, thank you for your continued support!

Mr. Shawn Dutkiewicz, Pennell Elementary Principal

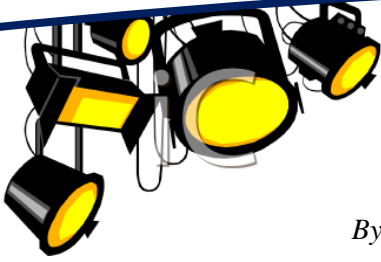
## What's coming up in February?

- 2<sup>nd</sup> 1:15 am Early Dismissal
- 10<sup>th</sup> BINGO Night  
7:00 pm at NMS
- 13<sup>th</sup> PTL Meeting  
6:30 pm / Library
- 14<sup>th</sup> *Happy Valentine's Day*
- 16<sup>th</sup> 11:15 am Early Dismissal  
Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 17<sup>th</sup> 11:15 am Early Dismissal  
Variety Show Rehearsal at SVHS / 6:00 pm
- 20<sup>th</sup> Presidents' Day  
Schools and offices closed
- 21<sup>st</sup> NO SCHOOL  
Teacher in-service

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# SPOTLIGHT ON CURRICULUM



## GUIDANCE COUNSELING

*By ~ Fran Im, Jen McCarty, Bill Reaume, Nicole Small: Elementary Guidance Counselors*

The elementary guidance program is a proactive, comprehensive, and developmental approach to addressing the wide variety of needs that our students present. One key component to this balanced approach is the use of classroom guidance lessons. Our curriculum is designed to provide our students with the foundational skills and knowledge needed to find success in both their educational and interpersonal endeavors.

Understanding and coping with our emotions is essential to finding success and happiness in life. A significant challenge for children is learning to both accept and manage feelings of anger. In each grade level, this topic is explored in guidance class. Our first grade curriculum begins the discussion with lessons on recognizing body language and using one's words to express feelings. In second grade, we teach a variety of coping skills such as counting to ten, taking deep breaths, and talking it out. In third grade, we reinforce many of the previously taught coping skills and explore the connections between triggers to anger, chosen actions, and consequences. In fourth and fifth grades, the topic is addressed as part of our unit on conflict resolution. Students learn a structured approach to the resolution of conflicts. As part of this approach, the use of the

"I statements" is employed to express their feelings and to help them in the successful resolution of conflicts.

*Home/School Connection* ~ Discussing difficult emotions with your children is critical in the process of helping them develop a self-image and ultimately finding success in handling these feelings. Encourage your child to use the coping skills above by role-playing practice sessions of imaginary conflicts together. Establish mutually agree upon timeout areas and other options for your child to de-escalate when feeling angry.



*It's wise to direct your thoughts towards problems – not people, to focus your energies on answers – not excuses. (William Arthur Ward)*

# CORE ESSENTIALS: VALUE OF THE MONTH

Each month, Pennell focuses on a core value/essential that we hope students will practice and apply in their daily lives. We recognize students who exemplify our core essentials by giving them “team tickets”. Team tickets are awarded to students and then displayed in our lobby. At the end of the month, students who received a team ticket are chosen randomly to have lunch with the Principal, Mr. Dutkiewicz.

## **FEBRUARY’S MONTHLY VALUE:**

**Honor – Letting someone know you see how valuable they really are.**

### **Car Time –**

#### **DISCUSSION STARTER:**

Sometimes it’s easy to miss seeing how valuable something is. Carbon doesn’t seem very valuable. It’s found in pencil lead. It’s also found in a lump of coal. If you saw a lump of coal lying on the side of the road, it would look like a dirty black rock. But given a lot of time and the right circumstances (very high heat and pressure), that seemingly worthless dirty rock will turn into a diamond, one of the most rare and valuable of all precious stones.



#### **WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

- ✓ We all tend to honor some people and overlook others. Who are some people you tend to overlook?
- ✓ Why is it important to honor that person?
- ✓ How could you use your time and actions to make this person feel more valuable?
- ✓ Together, decide on one person for each family member to honor this week.

### **Rest –**

**K-2:** *The Big Cheese of Third Street* by: Halse Laurie Anderson; Little Benny is bullied constantly for being so little. It isn't until he wins the pole challenge that everyone cheers and honors Benny.

**3-5:** *The Number on My Grandfather’s Arm* by: David Adler; The moving story of a young girl who learns her grandfather's experience in Auschwitz and then helps him overcome his sensitivity about the number on his arm, this award-winning picture book gives children just enough information about the Holocaust without overwhelming them.

**Experience** – There are many ways to honor people in our culture. We honor good students by putting them on the honor roll. We honor brave soldiers by awarding them with the Medal of Honor. And for really valuable people, we might build an entire museum in their honor. This month, take a family fieldtrip to a museum that honors a person or people group in your area. For example, The Martin Luther King Center in Georgia, The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Illinois, or the Holocaust Museum in DC. For help finding a museum in your area, visit <http://museumca.org/usa/> or visit your city’s homepage for more information.

If you do not live near a museum built in honor of a person or group of people, bring some home baked goodies to a local fire department, police station, or assisted living community to show how valuable these members of the community are.

# READING COUNTS

With *Scholastic Reading Counts* your child participates in an independent reading program that tracks their success on the books they read, in and out of school. This technology-based program creates a personalized and engaging learning environment that ensures independent reading accountability.



This year, our school-wide *Reading Counts* goal is 112,000,000!

**\* As of January 26<sup>th</sup> 2012: Congrats to the students who have read at least 400,000 words!**

Students	Total Words Read
Colin Bradley	2,486,033
Emily Egan	2,010,184
Kyra Green	1,364,582
Mollie McGroarty	1,110,720
Chelsea Hendrix	1,037,708
Hannah Nearey	940,153
Brooke Lawton	918,901
Christian Parker	879,892
Arianna DePasquale	877,614
Sara Chodak	875,946
Christian Hansen	865,795
Zach Volturo	796,835
Luke Rice	722,181
Devin Widmaier	698,281
Dylan Mokshefsky	669,035
Randy Marker	658,575
Shannon Purfield	656,070
Shalane Buck	647,838
Kelsey Celestino	647,072
Jack Segool	646,234
Nicole Buscaglia	624,234
JayIn Slaughter	590,449
Ryley Marker	571,137
Jason Bandjough	556,575
Zach Seddon	530,579
Nina Shicatano	501,210
Darren Panusky	492,472
Lindsey Romesburg	459,122
Connor McDermond	455,109
Kyri Colson	440,476
Jamie Simons	436,034
Kassidy Lambert	435,648
Jenna Ford	422,495
Gabrielle Lobb	421,886
Claudia Miller	410,016
Sarah Gartland	401,154
Ria Medagam	400,408

**PENNELL IS MAKING GREAT PROGRESS IN READING COUNTS!**

**WE ARE UP TO 5 MILLION-WORD READERS AND MANY MORE NEARLY THERE!**

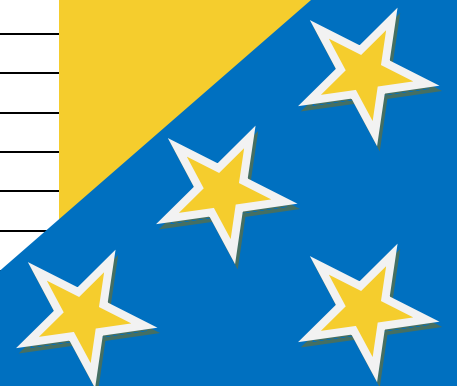
**OUR STATUS UPDATE FOR THE 2011-2012 YEAR IS:**

**54,438,419**

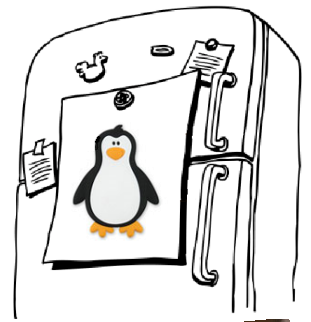
**54,438,419 / 112 MIL = 49% OF OUR GOAL!**

**ALMOST HALF WAY THERE!**

**KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK PENNELL!**



# WHAT'S ON THE 'FRIG THIS MONTH?



"What's on the 'frig this month" is a page dedicated to those things that we want to celebrate here at Pennell... the things that could be deemed, "refrigerator worthy"!

## PENNELL MATH NIGHT WAS GREAT FUN!

From exploring "range" in an engaging game of Shark Island with Mr. Clark to building and measuring paper towers, it was great to see students and families back at Pennell working on mathematics!



A BIG THANKS to our staff and students who came out for math night to run our stations!



After years of hard work, Pennell Kindergarten Teacher, Mrs. Melissa Huber recently earned her doctorate!

Congrats to Dr. Huber!



On December 12, 2011, Symphony Publishing's monthly magazine "School Band and Orchestra" published their 14th annual "50 Director's Who Make a Difference." Penn-Delco's Mr. Doug Raines was selected to represent the State of Pennsylvania for this year's December, 50 State/50 Top Directors issue. Mr. Raines is the instrumental director for Pennell and Parkside Elementary Schools, and also serves as the liaison to the administration for coordinating Penn-Delco's music curricula and programs.

"This annual report features an array of outstanding educators whose incredible diversity in style, geography, and demographic setting mirrors the similarly wide range of thriving music programs throughout the country.

Teachers who make up the 2011 "50 Directors Who Make a Difference" present an uplifting mosaic of school music programs nationwide."

# THE PHILLIES PHITNESS TEAM COMES TO PENNELL!

On Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, the **Phillies Phitness Team** came to Pennell to work with our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Phys. Ed. teacher Mr. John Clark teamed-up with our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to write essays to the Phillies Phitness Program and convince them to come to Pennell!



The Phillies Phitness Program includes a team of Nova Care Rehabilitation trainers that work with the real live Phillies players and local student athletes. The trainers worked with our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, leading them through fun warm-up and cool-down drills while playing various games in between. The team's focus was on healthy-living, exercise, and safety!



# EARTH'S JOURNEY COMES TO PENNELL!

On Monday and Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, Cliff Sunflower and his assistant, Miss Lisa came to Pennell to facilitate two all-day assembly and workshop programs that engaged all our students in a 45 minute performance called, *Earth's Journey*.



Mr. Cliff and Miss Lisa led the students through a mythical Native American story about a people 10,000 years ago. The story led the students through a lesson in cultural diversity. They learned first-hand how a different culture thinks and acts individually and socially about common problems and solutions.



From elements of the solar system to animals and parts of nature, students were so creative in making a variety of costumes to play their parts in the culminating theater production, *Earth's Journey*!

