It is hard to believe, but the end of January marks the completion of the first half of the school year. At this point, all our parents should have received student report cards for the second marking period.

Prior to the end of the marking period, our teachers and students were engaged in mid-year assessments of our students’ academic progress. The data gathered from those assessments were used in conjunction with other information to assign grades, monitor student progress, and will be used to guide classroom instruction as we strive to meet the learning needs of our students.

We recognize that the success of all our students should be a joint effort between school and home. We know that for this to happen there needs to be two-way communication between our teachers and parents. If you should have any questions or concerns about how your child is doing, please do not wait for the end of a marking period or for a report card to be sent home before you contact your child’s teacher. By working together, we can ensure that all our students will learn and achieve at a high level.

As always, I thank you for all you do support our students, teachers, and programs at Flower Hill.
Kindergarten Highlights

As we welcomed January and it’s wintery weather we embarked on many exciting activities during the month.

In writer’s workshop we continue writing in more detail and are writing descriptive sentences from our real world experiences. We read such books as Eric Carle’s *Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear* and Jan Brett’s *Three Snow Bears* to tie in our Arctic animal themed month that expanded into social studies, science and math. We celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King’s birthday by reading and learning more about his journey for equal rights.

In math, we are preparing for the 100th day of school in February, by counting by 5’s, 10’s and 20’s. The children will be asked to continue using their counting skills to count items that add up to 100 in school and at home for the 100th day. We have also formally begun guided reading groups and are immersing the children in learning reading strategies to enable them to become independent readers.

We look forward to reading and writing even more in the coming months...

The Kindergarten Teachers

First Grade Highlights

The 1st graders have added a spelling component to their daily routines of Guided Reading, Writer’s Workshop, Math, Science and Social Studies! The spelling is an individualized program that includes some class words relating to a spelling rule or principle, and some personalized words.

As we wrap up our Magnet unit in Science, we will be beginning the “Keeping Fit and Healthy” unit with a focus on using the food pyramid to make healthy food choices, along with dental health, exercise and good sleep habits.

February is a busy month for Social Studies. We will be studying Lincoln and Washington for President’s Day, as well as learning about Chinese traditions during the Chinese New Year. On Feb.14th we will be celebrating Valentine’s Day.

Our new Math chapter connects our place value lessons and the counting-on strategy to money. The children will be solving story problems involving money as well as working with numbers from 1-100. This will tie in perfectly with the 100th Day of School! First grade is an exciting and busy place!

The First Grade Teachers

Second Grade Highlights

The weather may be cold outside, but there’s a warm feeling when we read and listen to good books and poetry in second grade. We are sampling different genres of literature. As an important part of our Language Arts program, we are learning the conventions of good writing. Please encourage your child to reread homework sentences to find errors in punctuation, spelling and grammar.

The students are progressing in our Math program with regrouping, money, skip counting and time. Please help your child by reinforcing these skills at home.

In Science we have culminated our unit on energy and motion with a visit to the Vanderbilt Planetarium. It is so exciting to view in a realistic setting what we have learned in class through pictures and books. For Social Studies, we examined through books Dr. Martin Luther King’s message of peace and equality. We discussed ways children and adults need to talk about and solve problems in nonviolent ways. We also learned about geography, including continents, oceans, and understanding maps. We are all looking forward to a fabulous February!

The Second Grade Teachers
**Third Grade Highlights**

Hopefully the groundhog will predict an early Spring! January brought us a tremendous amount of snow!

The children have taken another mock ELA exam and a mock math test in preparation for the state tests in late spring. We continue to review and implement skills in order to be successful.

February will be an extremely busy month. We have many exciting activities and holidays to celebrate. President’s Day, Valentine’s Day, Chinese New Year, and our 100th day of school all fall in the month. February is also dental health month, so don’t forget to floss!!

The children continue to explore many genres of reading in our Treasures series. They are involved in small group guided reading activities as well as conferences for writing activities. The children have come so far since September!

In math, the children are finishing up a chapter in patterning. Next up will be a unit on multiplication and division! This will require much memorization and practice!

In science, we are discussing the scientific process. We are preparing for many fun experiments that will lead us to the Science Fair later in March. We are also learning about the Sun, Moon, and Earth in our science books.

In Social Studies, we have studied time lines, the US Presidents, and Black History Month. Coming soon will be a unit on economics, resources, and trade. Have a wonderful month!  

The Third Grade Teachers

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**Fourth Grade Highlights**

Our fantastic fourth graders have been working extremely hard this blustery winter.

We are looking forward to our science unit of electricity and geometry. Electricity, magnetism, and force! “Oh my!” Students will participate in a number of hands on activities to understand the energy that is produced by electricity, magnetism, and force.

In Math the students are learning how to do long division. We learned how to divide a three digit number by a 1 digit number. Please continue to practice math facts each night with your child to increase their recall ability and strengthen speed in solving problems.

Reading at home every night is strongly encouraged. Your child can read orally to you or another family member. If your child prefers to read silently, have him/her retell or summarize what they have read after several pages or at the end of a chapter.

We continue to produce 5 paragraph persuasive essays. It sounds really intimidating, but the students are working to their potentials and beyond! Class pet, no more homework, and better cafeteria food are just a few ideas that are being cultivated into convincing pieces of persuasive writing.

In social studies, we are continuing to study life in colonial New York. We are looking forward to starting our unit on New York and the American Revolution.

Thank you for all your support at home!  

The Fourth Grade Teachers
February in the Flower Hill Library is always “Fabulous!”

Last month, during January, all of the students heard a great story about Dr. King’s boyhood life in Georgia. The book was entitled Martin’s Big Words (By: Doreen Rappaport). The story was about Martin growing up and seeing the sign “white only” in his hometown. Every time he would read the words, he felt bad. Until he remembered what his mother told him: “You are as good as anyone”. Doreen Rappaport (the author) weaves her words and the words of Dr. King into a captivating narrative to tell the story of Dr. King’s life. The text is graceful, simple, and completely accessible for young readers to enjoy this marvelous account of this great American. Bryan Collier, the illustrator, used several stunning collage art work to make an unforgettable portrait of a man whose dream changed America, and the world, forever.

This year’s Flower Hill Book Fair was held in our gymnasium. Listed below are some of the book titles that were available:

1.) Diary of a Spider  By: Doreen Cronin
2.) Pinkalicious  By: Victoria Kann
3.) Hot Rod Hamster  By: Cynthia Lord
4.) I Spy Spectacular  By: Jean Marzollo
5.) Kitty Corner  By: Ellen Miles
6.) Smells Like Dog  By: Suzanne Selfors
7.) Book of World Records  By: Scholastic

As always, please read to your children daily.

Yours in Reading, Mrs. Smith