The 2015-16 school year continues to move at a rapid pace for our teachers and students. At this point, our students have completed the first half of the school year. All of our parents should have received second quarter student report cards, which were sent home on February 1st.

As is customary at this time of the year, our teachers have been busy measuring the progress our students have made since the beginning of school in September. 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 will be used to guide classroom instruction, monitor student progress, and ensure continuous improvements of student performance for the remainder of the school year.

We believe that our parents are an integral part of our efforts to improve the learning outcomes of our students. Please continue to be a part of the conversation on the academic, social, and behavioral progress our students are making. If you should have any questions or concerns about how your child is doing, you do not need to wait for the end of a marking period or for a report card to be sent home before you contact your child's teacher. It is important that these conversations are held as soon as possible so that our teachers can work collaboratively with you to address your concerns. By working together, we can ensure that all of our students will learn and achieve at a high level.

I wish our faculty, staff, and families a very restful mid-winter break. As always, I thank you for all you do to support our students, teachers, and programs at Flower Hill.

Upcoming Flower Hill Events for February

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flower Hill Talent Show</td>
<td>February 5th (Postponed to March 4th)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid Winter Recess</td>
<td>Feb 15th—Feb 19th</td>
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<tr>
<td>January Star Students of the Month</td>
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Sophia Curley; Kieran Fox; Alessandra Leotta; Alexander Colonna; Asani Ingram; Kayla Malone; Dylan McKeen; Angelina Joseph; Keylen Gomez Quintanilla; Alexander Carter, Jr.; Brady LaCosta; Isabella Palacios; Elizabeth Sheran; Connor Fox; Gianna Delva; Marcus Oromaner; Paige Wallace; Erika Treminio Reyes; Olivia Stone; Lily Tierney; Tess Calabria; Keylis Flores-Velasquez; Luis Umana Cabrera & Jannel Marroquin.

Great Job!!!
We have been very busy this winter in kindergarten. We are working on Module 3 in math, where we are comparing length, weight, capacity, and numbers to 10. We just completed Unit 5 in Treasures on Animals and are beginning Unit 6 on Neighborhoods. In Treasures we are learning to make predictions, identify main ideas and retell important parts of a story. We have just completed Unit 2 of Fundations. The students learned how to form uppercase letters and to blend and read three-sound words. In Unit 3 we will listen for the vowel sounds in words and distinguish between the long and short vowel sounds in words that we segment. In science we are exploring forces and motion. We will learn how forces can change the position and motion of objects.

We look forward to celebrating our 100th day of Kindergarten on Monday, February 22nd.

The Kindergarten Teachers

January and February are busy months for our first graders. We started off the New Year reading non fiction stories about art, culture, and customs around the world. We did some comparing and contrasting of how children around the world live to our lives. We discussed main idea and details and finding key details in the texts we read. We have also focused on academic vocabulary. When children have more vocabulary knowledge they have a better understanding when reading. We are also using our knowledge of vocabulary to expand and improve our writing. We have been focusing on writing non fiction stories and expanding our written thought with more details and descriptive writing.

In math we have been working on word problems and using different strategies to solve them. We are practicing our math strategies 'making ten', 'take from ten' and 'counting on'. We are also focusing on strengthening students' ability to fluently add and subtract within ten.

During the month of February, we will be learning about our presidents and famous African-American leaders.

The First Grade Teachers
Our second graders have been working very hard in this New Year. We started off making school and personal New Year’s resolutions. Let’s hope we can keep them! In reading, we have been focusing on cause and effect as well as facts and conclusions. We have continued to work on writing friendly letters, personal narratives, and opinion essays. In February, we will spend more time learning about persuasive writing and expository compositions. We will continue to work on locating text evidence and using details in our writing responses.

In math, we have been working on Module 4 where we have been exploring addition and subtraction within 200 with word problems to 100. Please continue to refer to the Homework Helper sheets. In Module 5, the children will work on addition and subtraction within 1,000 with word problems to 100. In science, we have been learning all about the Water Cycle. We are also studying different types of Weather and recording information daily.

In Social Studies, we have been learning about landforms. We have been reading books about Martin Luther King Jr. and discussing how to treat all people with respect. Next, we will be learning about consumers and producers and our presidents. We will share valentines with each other to celebrate Valentine’s Day! We will also will be learning about Black History Month and the Chinese New Year!

Please continue to have your child read their fluency passages every night. Reading fluency is the ability to read quickly and easily. It means that a child can recognize and decode words accurately and automatically and understand the words as they are being read. Children who do not read fluently have to work hard on the mechanics of reading that there’s no mental energy left to think about the meaning of what they are reading. Repeated reading has been proven to be one of the best strategies for developing reading fluency. Children should be provided with many opportunities to read the same passage or story several times.

Also, please practice addition and subtraction facts to 20 at home to increase math fluency.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation!

The Second Grade Teachers
The third graders have been very busy. In January, the students read many interesting fiction and non-fiction stories in Treasures. They sharpened their comprehension strategies and skills of: generating questions; analyzing text structure; author’s purpose; character, setting, plot; cause and effect; sequencing; and making inferences. Writing was focused on organization and word choice. In grammar, present, past and future tense verbs were studied. In math, the students continued to work on building multiplication and division fluency to 100. The students were introduced to the use of a letter to represent the unknown number in an equation. They also learned how to multiply by multiples of ten using place value models and solved 2 step word problems. In science, the students enjoyed doing various activities involving weights and measures and learning about weather and climate, which will continue in February.

In February, the topics in our Treasures program include: visualization as a comprehension strategy; drawing conclusions; theme; and problem and solution. In math, the students will explore area as an attribute of 2 dimensional figures and relate it to their understanding of multiplication. The students will learn to determine the areas of rooms given a floor plan.

Of course, we are all looking forward to our upcoming trip to the Vanderbilt Planetarium! Parents please continue to practice multiplication facts with your child everyday.

The Third Grade Teachers
In Math, we are working diligently in Module 4, "Angle Measures and Plane Figures", a bit of a break from multiplication and division. (Although make sure your child continues to practice their facts at home!) The students began with identifying and constructing lines and angles. Students were introduced to circular protractors and using the common protractor to draw angles to a certain degree. Please remember to look for "Math News" to assist with the homework. Always remember to contact the classroom teacher if there are any questions, or concerns.

In Science, some students are working in the Chemical kits and have begun piloting a new program called, "Science Fusion". We appreciate your insight and support on completing your child’s Science Fair project.

For Social Studies, the students have learned how Europeans arrived in New York and how New York has developed since this time. We will be taking a closer look at the “Purchase of Manhattan” and whether there is enough evidence to prove that Peter Minuit bought Manhattan from the Natives for $24 worth of coins, beads, jewelry, and pots. A field trip to Theodore Roosevelt’s House in Oyster Bay is planned and details about this trip will be sent home soon. In addition, we are excited to work on our biographies to create and present a slide presentation on their Chrome book.

In Language Arts, the students continue to read many passages, short stories, and books at school. They are becoming more aware of their writing abilities as we practice our writing skills. Please remind your child to find details in the text and reread their sentences by checking for spelling and grammar.

Thank you always,

The Fourth Grade Teachers
Greetings from the Flower Hill Library!

2016 got off to a fabulous start here at the Flower Hill Library! It was wonderful to reconnect with familiar faces as well as meeting our new students. The library is a place where ALL students visit so I do my very best to make it as inviting and exciting as possible for your children. There are a lot of great things coming up here; namely all of the new books that have been ordered. Students are just as excited as I am and cannot wait to start checking out the newest titles. There are a lot of fiction, non-fiction, and series coming to the shelves. I have been tailoring library lessons to coincide with the upcoming ELA units; reinforcing good reading strategies and helping students with text connections. The younger grades have enjoyed reading about the various holidays that are celebrated in the fall/winter months and have no doubt showed you some of the projects they made. We work on locating items correctly as well as exploring different authors and reading both fiction and non-fiction books.

I look forward to the upcoming months as we begin to dive into research and literature genres. As always, please feel free to contact me if there is ever a concern or question.

~Mrs. Jeanine Caras
**Words, Words, Words**

One of the most compelling enduring findings in reading research is the extent to which students’ vocabulary knowledge relates to their reading comprehension. To be able to accurately understand written material, children need to be able to decode what they read, make connections between what they read and what they already know, and think deeply about what they have read. One big part of comprehension is having a sufficient vocabulary, or knowing the meaning of enough words.

According to the National Reading Panel (2000), explicit instruction of vocabulary is highly effective. To develop vocabulary intentionally, students should be explicitly taught both specific words and word-learning strategies. To deepen students’ knowledge of word meanings, specific word instruction should be robust (Beck et al., 2002). Seeing vocabulary in rich contexts provided by authentic texts, rather than in isolated vocabulary drills, produces robust vocabulary learning (National Reading Panel, 2000).

**What parents can do to help at home**

There are many opportunities at home to reinforce sight word (high frequency word) recognition and increase vocabulary:

- Increasing background knowledge about a topic along with exposure to new words will help your child when reading. Background knowledge is what you already know about a subject.
- Help your child make connections between what he or she reads and similar experiences they have felt, saw in a movie, or read in another book.
- Discuss the meanings of unknown words.
- Focus on real life words and experiences that are important and relevant to your child.
- Discussions and conversations are easy ways to build vocabulary and, thus, background knowledge. Encourage family discussions. Turn off the TV and talk. One of the best places is the dinner table. That’s one of the few times an entire family is together.
- When reading a new or unfamiliar word, encourage your child to think about what that word may mean in the story.
- If you have a cassette recorder, make a tape of words. Say the word, define it, and then use it in a sentence. (Select words that he will find interesting.) Better yet, have the child do the taping.

**Happy Reading!**

The Reading Teachers
Now that we are in the “cold” and “flu” season, here are a few reminders of when it is best to keep your child home from school.

- Elevated temperature, child should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours.
- Coughing, sneezing, or runny nose that would interfere with learning, especially if drainage is discolored.
- Strep-throat, child must be taking antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Any rash accompanied by other symptoms, such as fever, unusual tiredness or irritability.

Please reinforce good hand washing, use of tissues and to cover mouth when coughing. Please call the attendance number 673-2139 to report your child absent. Also, please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease.

Students are not allowed to carry medication in school, including cough drops. All medications will be dispensed by the school nurse with a parent/doctor note only.

Taking a few simple measures to prevent the spread of germs will help us enjoy a healthy and happy 2016!!

Nurse, Cavalcante