

Eagle Point Press

Eagle Point Elementary School • 1044 Western Avenue • (518) 475-6825

December 2017

From the desk of Principal Barbato

Hello everyone:

December is a time to reflect on ups and downs of the last 12 months and wonder what the new year will bring. There are a lot of great things happening at Eagle Point Elementary School.

We recently had our student council elected. Students were nominated by their classmates to represent them for student council. All the candidates were winners, regardless of the vote count. The winners are Endri Hoxha, president; Esperanza Soto, vice president; Joachim Perez, secretary; and Marilyn Meyer, treasurer. Congratulations!

You may hear about the "Giving Tree." This is something I started in Schenectady last year. This project provides hats, gloves, and/or scarves for students who may need them. I urge students to take only what they need and used examples like, if you forgot your hat, would you take one off the Giving Tree? Students responded with a no. With the cold winter months ahead of us, I hope this can provide some warmth.

Lastly, I want give warm holiday wishes to everyone and I hope that the holidays bring you joy and happiness. This has been a wonderful three months here at Eagle Point and it is good to be home! Thank you for all the support you have given to our school.



Sixth-grader Marilyn Meyer makes a pitch about why she should be elected to the student council.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 12/11** Winter Concert, 7 p.m.
- 12/13** PTA meeting, 6:15 p.m.
- 12/14** Holiday shopping
- 12/15** Morning Program
Holiday shopping
- 12/25**
-1/1 Holiday recess,
no school



Take the Family Engagement Survey

The City School District of Albany is asking all families to take part in a survey that will help inform the district's school-improvement work.

The Family Engagement Survey is open through Dec. 22. You can find a link at www.albanyschools.org in our From the Superintendent section. From that page, just click on the survey link and enter the password **Albany**.

It's easy to complete. The survey has 50 questions rated on a five-part scale, plus three open questions for comments. We ask that there be one survey per household; all responses will remain anonymous.

Students in grades 3-12 also will have opportunities to complete the survey. This will allow the district to build a comprehensive database important for our planning.

"We appreciate your assistance in completing this important survey," said Superintendent Kaweeda G. Adams. "Parents and guardians are such an important part of what we do, and we are grateful to you for taking the time to respond."

The district also mailed a letter about the survey all district families in November. If you have questions, please call our Office of Curriculum and Instruction at (518) 475-6060.

Prekindergarten

Mrs. Rabinowitz' class

The holiday season is upon us! We've had the pleasure of caring for your children for almost 3 months now — it's hard to believe it's going so fast! We have covered many things and have seen the children grow so much in this short time.

This month's theme focuses on celebrations around the world, holidays, and family traditions. We would like for you to have conversations with your child about the different traditions that are celebrated in your family. We are supporting family traditions by promoting a multicultural approach to this festive season by reading, learning and sharing songs, poems

and traditions that include Christmas, Chanukah and Kwanzaa.

In English language arts, our focus will be letter sound relationships, learning to discriminate beginning sounds, and writing the letters in our names and our focus letters: Tt, Dd, Gg, Hh, and Kk.

In math, we will identify and describe basic shapes (circle, square, rectangle, and triangle) regardless of size. We will also focus on positional vocabulary, and creating and extending a pattern.

We will continue to hold outdoor activity time as long as the weather cooperates.

Please be sure to send all the clothing (warm coats, hats, mittens, snow pants) needed to keep your child warm and comfortable! Also, when there is snow on the ground, please be sure to send boots! The children will not be able to wear them in the classroom however, so an additional pair of footwear is needed to wear inside.

We will be holding a holiday party at the end of December. You will receive a separate letter stating the day and time and we hope you can all join us. We hope you have a wonderful holiday season and safe travels!

Mrs. Lasselle's class

December is all about caring and sharing. We are learning to be part of a caring community of friends.

We will be talking about the many celebrations people observe during the month of December. We will travel from America to the Middle East then to the Netherlands, the North Pole and Africa. As we travel we will learn about Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanza and the wonderful season of winter. There will be many special events this month to help us appreciate the changing weather and the many new activities that it makes possible.

Please dress for outside time. We are all trying to learn to dress ourselves in our winter clothing. Everybody is practicing zipping and buttoning their coats. Children will not be wearing boots in the classroom so please send in extra shoes.

We will continue to work with letters and writing our names. We are practicing counting and learning about symmetry. We will do more of the same in the new year.

Kindergarten

Ms. Zarro's and Ms. Kitto's class

Thank you to all of the families that attended parent teacher conferences. It was so nice talking to you about your child's progress in kindergarten. This was our only formal conference for the school year. With that said, we are always willing to set up a meeting or have a phone conversation if you have any question or concerns.

We would like to send a special thanks to all of the families that donated items, and/or were able to volunteer for our Fall Celebration. The students had so much fun at the four centers. If you get a chance, try making the "Pilgrim Pudding" at home. It is delicious!

December is a fun month in kindergarten! We will be reading fun gingerbread stories and we will focus on comparing and contrasting a variety of gingerbread stories using a "double bubble map"! We will also focus on characters, setting and sequence of events during this festive theme! *(continued on page 3)*

Kindergarten

Ms. Zarro's and Ms. Kitto's class *(continued from previous page)*

Please look for the weekly "Refrigerator Copy" to see additional skills we are working on in reading.

In math, we are working on identifying, writing and representing numbers 6-10. Please practice counting sets of

objects and writing numerals 0-10 at home.

The weather is getting chilly and we will be going outside. Please be sure to send your child with appropriate gear for the cold weather: winter

coat, hat, gloves, and boots if it is wet outside.

We hope everyone has a great holiday break!

Mrs. Rutnick's class

News: It was so wonderful to see so many of you at our International Festival on Nov. 21! Thank you for sharing so much with us.

The Barnes and Noble Book Fair was a big success for Eagle Point Elementary! Thanks for getting out and supporting our school. It was fun singing with Nora, Yujia, and Rogan!

We will be learning about the neighborhood and community helpers.

In math, we are exploring numbers six to ten. We completed Topic Two: Comparing and Ordering Zero to Five, and have been assessed. In writing, we continue to work on narratives.

A reminder of our schedule:

Monday, Thursday and Friday we have **gym** with Mr. Black. Tuesday we have **art** with Mrs. Suwara.

Wednesday we have **music** with Mrs. Aiello. Thursday we have **library** with Mrs. Curry. Please make sure child has sneakers on gym days.

Star of the week. Each week a child will be featured as a "star." When your child is selected, please send in five to seven pictures of your child, family, friends, etc. I will return the photos the following week along with

A note about birthdays in our class

We celebrate birthdays by singing, crowning, and bestowing a pencil to the birthday child. You are welcome to send in a token (goodie bags). If you are having a birthday party outside of school, and are inviting everyone, I will pass them out in class. **If you are selecting only some classmates, send in a stamped envelope with the child's name to me, and I will address and mail them for you.** Little children have fragile egos. It is NOT fair, and in fact, quite hurtful, to send in invitations for some and not others. Thank you for your understanding.

your child's responses to questions asked in class that will be published in the classroom newsletter. The star may bring in a "sharing thing" on the Friday of their star week. Please have your child be prepared to talk about the item they bring. December stars of the week are Gianni (Dec. 4), GiveJoy (Dec. 11) and Ilva (Dec. 18).

Holidays. As part of our social studies curriculum, we celebrate holidays. If this goes against your belief system, please contact me. If you have information about a holiday or customs you would like to share, let me know. It's always a pleasure to have a parent share knowledge/expertise with us. Also, please alert me to any dietary restrictions your child has so we can be sensitive to their needs.

Please keep us informed of any changes happening in your child's life so we can be sensitive to your child's needs. Contact us whenever you have questions or concerns. We value your opinion.

Update your information if you move or get a new phone number. It is critical that we be able to contact you immediately should an emergency occur. The school phone number is (518) 475-6825 and fax number is (518) 475-6827.

Thanks so much! We are thrilled to be working with you and your child this year!

First grade

Mrs. Barry's class

Happy Holidays from the first grade! The first-graders would like to thank all of their families for making our Thanksgiving celebration a huge success. We enjoyed a traditional Thanksgiving menu and looked adorable in our Thanksgiving outfits. Thank you also to the parent helpers. We couldn't have done this without you. It was certainly a day to remember.

Please remember to check Our Class Story on Class Dojo for photos of all

our exciting events. Thank you for sending in the family gingerbread projects. They are fantastic. The first grade families are very creative!

As December progresses we will be learning and sharing information about many different holiday traditions and customs that are celebrated throughout the month. The first graders will host the Eagle Point Assembly on Dec. 15. The theme will be holiday traditions. All

family members are welcome to attend. More information will be coming home about this exciting event at 9 a.m. on Dec. 15th.

We will wrap up our unit on traditions with some VERY special projects and activities.

Congratulations to Emily, Roman and Domenica for reading 100 books and reaching the district-wide reading goal.

Happy Holidays!

Ms. Lebrecht's and Ms. Adams' class

Happy Holidays from the first grade! Thank you again for your emails, notes, and especially all of your donations for our Thanksgiving Feast!

In English language arts, we are continuing to work on key details in a text, moving towards identifying the characters, setting, and events in a story. In non-fiction or informational texts, students are working on identifying the main idea of the text or what the book is mostly about and giving details to support it. Please continue to work with your child at home on the spelling weekly as the words will become more challenging. Also, send in your "Read Every day"

sheets so your child can move on the hot air balloons to get to 100 books read and receive a special prize. We have wrapped up our narrative writing unit and will begin writing informational books. Informational books consist of how to books and all about books.

In math, we are continuing to work on our addition and subtraction facts within 10, and quickly approaching within 20. We are also beginning to work on noticing patterns within math facts, such as doubles (1+1, 2+2, etc.) and adding 0 or 1 to a number. We are also noticing doubles plus 1 to help solve

problems. We will also continue working on fact families/related facts. We will be wrapping up our Topic 2 in math and begin Topic 3 before the holidays.

This month we will be learning about the many different holidays and customs that are celebrated throughout the month of December. Our focus will be on family traditions. Be sure to send back the family traditions response.

We will end the month by performing the December assembly. The assembly will be held on Dec. 15 at 9 a.m. Thank you again for all of your support!

Second grade

Mrs. Armstrong's class

Swimming at the Albany High School swimming pool is started Wednesday, Dec. 6. Every Wednesday we will swim until the week of March 12.

It works best if your child wears his/her swimsuit under their clothes to school. Please pack a towel, flip flops

or water shoes and a pair of under-pants in a plastic bag. A hat or jacket with a hood is suggested. I will make sure everyone is bundled while we go to and from swimming.

It was a true pleasure meeting everyone at parent/teacher conferences.

Your children are so fortunate to have such caring and intelligent parents.

As the holiday season begins for most of us and the year comes to an end, I wish everyone a peaceful and joyous New Year.

Second grade

Mrs. Shelmerdine's and Mrs. Mullen's class

December is here and the hustle and bustle associated with the holiday season does not escape the second grade! They are all busily trying to juggle their many responsibilities both in and out of the classroom.

Homework can sometimes get lost in the shuffle during these times but please remind your children of the importance of repeated practice in mastering new skills.

Thank you to all for taking time out of your schedules to talk with me about your child's progress so far in second grade. It was wonderful to sit down and/or talk with you about both where the children are and where we want them to be. Feel free to contact me with any questions at any time.

There are many activities our children will be involved in this month. Please check your child's folder daily so you don't miss any important notices.

DON'T FORGET! Swimming starts Dec. 7. All children should bring a swimsuit, and towel in a plastic bag. Swim caps, ear plugs and goggles are accepted if needed. PLEASE wear LOOSE clothing on those days so changing afterwards is easy. (getting tight clothing onto 25 damp bodies is extremely difficult and time-consuming) If you do not have a swimsuit or towel one will be provided.

Have a GREAT holiday!

Third grade

Mrs. Keough's and Mrs. Paulsen's classes

We hope everyone had a happy and healthy Thanksgiving!

This month, we are digging deeper into both math and ELA topics. It is imperative that our children know their times tables facts up to 10x10. Please help them practice with flash cards. We are working on deconstructing word problems so that we know what we are supposed to do, what information we will use, and how we will use it. We have been practicing drawing or sketching out what the problem describes. Shopping for gifts, groceries, or compiling wish lists are great opportunity to practice estimating sums and differences. Ask your child about how much something costs, or about how much change they should get.

We are asking that your child read 20 minutes every night at home. The best way to improve on a skill is by practicing it regularly and frequently, and reading every day at home will make a big difference in your child's fluency and comprehension.

When we respond to literature, it is essential that we use evidence from the text to support our answers. For instance, it is no longer sufficient to say "I think Mr. Klutz is a risk taker." Third graders are supposed to respond, "I think Mr. Klutz is a risk taker because he agreed to kiss a pig and he allowed himself to be raised up the flagpole if his students read enough books." These skills can be encouraged at home when you ask your child what he or she is reading, what

they think about it, and why. Even watching holiday specials, while not reading, can lend itself to this type of discussion, and is very motivating for kids. They can tell you why or why not they think Santa was unfair to Rudolph, why or why not the Grinch was misunderstood, whether or not the magician deserved another chance after melting Frosty, etc.

Our "Good Morning Eagle Point" assembly is Jan. 19 at 9 a.m. We are staging a red carpet event for a pretend "Adaptation Elation" Awards show to show off what we have learned in science.

For those of you who celebrate Santa this month, there is a great website: noradsanta.org which tracks the big guy's journey and is a great way to incorporate geography skills. Children can see which direction he is traveling and see how many countries are in continents.

Happy Birthday this month to Natalie, Erik, and Kairell. We are happy you are in our classes and hope you have wonderful birthdays.

Finally, we have to say goodbye to Miss Bradley and Miss Page. Thank you for all you have done. You are amazing teachers, and we will miss you terribly!

Have a safe, healthy, and relaxing holiday season!:)

Fourth grade

Mrs. Neenos' and Miss Wall's classes

English language arts news:

The Common Core Standards demands more rigor, and we are devoting much more of our academic time to just that. We are reading, thinking about reading, and responding to reading in writing and verbally. At all times, across all subjects, we are talking about the children's thought process.

The Monthly Book Report expectation sheet is on its way home with your child at the end of the month. Here is an excerpt from it:

*"Reading outside of school is an important part of your education. Although there will be time in the school day to engage in independent reading, it is my expectation as your teacher that each of you are reading **at least 20 minutes outside of school each and every day.** These monthly book reports prove to me that you are reading outside of the classroom and that you understand the major elements of the story: characters, setting, plot and resolution.*

*Each book activity will be discussed in class early in the month; but it is your responsibility to complete them during your time at home. **One book project is***

expected every month from each of you.

At the beginning of each month we will send home the necessary materials and instructions to complete each activity.

*****Parents: As an in-class oral presentation is a component of each book report; please have your child practice his/her oral report at home prior to presenting it to the class. The oral presentation should be no longer than 3 to 5 minutes.*****

*****Monthly Book reports are not option;** as the projects will weigh heavily for your child's ELA grade.*

Math

In math we are well into learning about multiplication and we will soon start division. It is so very important that your child master his or her basic multiplication facts. Without this mastery, advanced multiplication will prove to be extremely difficult. Please put every effort into helping your child master his or her basic facts.

As always, please let us know if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

Happy holidays!

English as a new language

We spent much of November talking about the origins of Thanksgiving and what we are thankful for. Did you know that the first Thanksgiving was three days long and they did not eat turkey? If you want some more fun facts about Thanksgiving, check out <http://allparenting.com/my-life/articles/969379/20-thanksgiving-fun-facts-to-teach-kids>.

One thing students said they are thankful for is their education. As parents, it is often hard to find time to help our children with schoolwork. In some cases parents may not have had the chance to go to school themselves and don't know how to help their children. Here are some suggestions from Colorín Colorado. <http://www.colorincolorado.org/families>

- Have children read to each other. This will help keep them busy while you are doing other things.
- Talk to your children in your native language. The more you talk to your children and ask them questions, the more they will develop their oral language skills.
- Talk to your child's teacher to find out what your child is doing in school. You should know what progress your child is making and what homework they have. Even if you can't help them with their homework.
- Give your child a place to do homework. Children should be doing homework at a table or desk with good lighting. Make sure that they have a safe place to keep their school supplies. An old shoe box is a good idea. Check their homework and make sure that it is done and put in their book bag every day.
- Check your child's book bag for important papers. If you don't understand them, please ask. We are here to help.

We value parents as a partner in your child's education. We work as a team to make sure your child is successful. Please visit our class website at <http://sassonesl.weebly.com/>.

Fifth grade

Miss Sano's and Mr. Napierski's classes

Happy December! It's hard to believe we're in the last month of 2017!

Here's what we've been up to:

Word study and vocabulary:

Studying words will help students notice patterns amongst words, allowing them to learn more words and expand their vocabulary. Please remind your child to complete his/her homework nightly. Word study homework is due on Fridays. Friday is also the day we take our word study and vocabulary quizzes- look for them in your child's take-home folder on Mondays. We are excited to see the growth!

Math: We are wrapping up our unit on place value and will soon begin learning how to multiply and divide decimals by whole numbers. In order to be successful in math this year, it is important that basic multiplication facts are being practiced regularly (up to the x12). In order to be successful in math this year, it is important that basic multiplication facts are being practiced regularly (up to the x12). A letter was sent home with tips and interactive computer games that students can access and use to practice with at home. One game that we found to be especially helpful for students who are having difficulty is: <http://mrnussbaum.com/drag-and-drop-math/>

Science: Before the holiday break,

we will wrap up our unit on the human body. As you know, every Friday we do an interactive experiment surrounding the topic we are learning about. So far we've learned about the muscular, skeletal, digestive, circulatory and nervous systems. Did you know that the human body sheds about 600,000 skin cells every hour!? Gross! Here's another fun fact: The human eye is so sensitive that if the earth were flat, you could spot a candle flickering at night from up to 30 miles away. We will finish this unit off with a big unit test. Be on the lookout for the study guide that we are sending home. We will be sad to see this interesting unit go, but we have more exciting experiments on the way! When we come back from break, we will begin preparing for the Science Fair!

Social studies: We have just begun our unit on Colonial America. We will discuss the formation of different colonies and how our Founding Fathers laid the foundation of America's government. Students will actually investigate the difficulties of coming to a new land and creating a civilization from scratch, by in fact, creating their own colonies! This is our next digital project and it is a fun one!

Congratulations to the entire fifth grade for making our November

Assembly a great success. Here's the link to our How to Change the World Video: <https://youtu.be/X7etDy8Og7A>

Thank you to all of those who attended Parent-Teacher Conferences! Our partnership is important in your child's success.

As you know, we use www.classdojo.com to track our behavior throughout the day. For updates on how your child is doing, use the login code that was sent home and visit www.classdojo.com/parent. If you need a new login code, please contact us:

Please visit the fifth-grade website: <http://eagles5th6th.weebly.com/>
Visit the new school website at: <http://eaglepointes.weebly.com>

Congratulations our November Students of the Week: Josh, Natalie, Faybian, Logan, Alexis, Mia, Celia

Happy Birthday to our December birthdays: Christian, Jude, Donovin, Natalie, Joti, Syed

Sixth grade

Ms. McCoy's and Ms. LeFevre's classes

It's cold outside. Please ensure that your student is appropriately dressed for outdoor recess. Below is our policy:

Cold-weather policy (based on wind-chill temperatures)

Above 25 degrees F

Regular outdoor activities

16-25 degrees F

Sunny days - Regular outdoor activities

Overcast days - limited outdoor activity (10-15 minutes)

10-15 degrees F

Sunny days - limited outdoor activity (10-15 minutes)

Overcast days - no outdoor activity

Below 10 degrees

No outdoor activity

We have been learning....

Math: Ratio and proportions (appropriate language to identify ratios and ratio relationships, equivalent ratios with tables) and reviewing number sense.

Science: Science presentations, digestive and excretory systems.

English language arts: "Lightning Thief ." This novel ties into the social studies unit.

Social Studies: Egypt (hieroglyphics, cuneiforms)

PBIS update

Eagle Point Elementary faculty and staff are working together to create and promote a safe and productive learning environment for all students through PBIS — positive behavior interventions and supports.

PBIS is a school-wide program that is research based and designed to recognize students for appropriate behaviors in all areas of the school. Faculty and staff teach positive behavior expectations to students, in return students know exactly what is expected of them. Every student is expected to do his/her best to be responsible, respectful, and safe.

Students who take responsibility to behave appropriately are recognized and rewarded in a variety of ways.

When students choose not to meet the school-wide expectations they too will be aware of the consequences that will result from their actions. Students will receive on-going instruction from staff on our school-wide expectations in all areas of the school.

[What can you do to help your child stay on the path to positive behavior?](#)

- Review the three school-wide expectations with your child: Be

safe, be respectful, and be responsible.

- Ask your child about his/her day at school every day.
- Stay connected with your child's teacher.
- Get connected to Class DOJO

Parents are an important part of the implementation of PBIS. We encourage you to use the same expectations and rules that the school teaches. The common expectations create consistency for your child.

Ten tips to help build your child's reading skills

1. Reading and **re-reading easy books** is a great way to build your child's reading fluency. Have your child select a favorite book and read it aloud two or three times. This approach, called repeated readings, is one of the best ways to promote reading fluency.

2. **Model fluent reading** for your child by reading aloud daily. Be sure to use expression in your reading. You can even use funny voices for dialogue as you read aloud.

3. **Echo reading** helps to build reading fluency. You read a phrase, sentence or paragraph aloud to model fluent reading. Your child then reads the same phrase, sentence, or paragraph afterwards, like an echo. Continue this pattern until you have read a book, story, or page of text with your child.

4. Have your child practice reading a **simple book to share with a younger sibling** or another young child. Once your child is able to read the book fluently, ask him or her share it with the other child. Both children will benefit from the reading experience.

5. **Poetry and nursery rhymes** can be used to practice fluency. Take turns with your child reading a short poem or nursery rhyme until he or she can read it fluently.

6. Use **paired reading** to build reading fluency with your child. First, read a poem or short passage to your child. Then, you and your child read the poem or passage

together several times. Finally, have your child read the poem or passage to you. Great books to use for paired reading are *You Read to Me, I'll Read to You: Very Short Stories to Read Together* by Mary Ann Hoberman and other books by this author.

7. **Review basic sight words** with your child to make sure that he or she knows these words automatically. Knowing these common words on sight will help to improve your child's reading accuracy and rate. For a lists of basic sight words and online sight word review games, visit this website: <http://www.learningbooks.net/Dolchflash.html> 8. Choose a **comic strip** from the newspaper. Read the comic strip aloud, using expression. Then ask your child to read the comic strip aloud. This is a fun activity to do at the breakfast or dinner table with the daily newspaper.

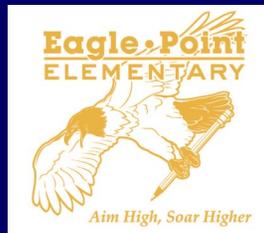
9. Have your child practice **reading a text aloud** while riding in the car or on the bus. Your child will stay busy and entertained, and this extra practice can make a big difference in your child's reading fluency.

10. **Set aside reading practice time every day.** Even 5 minutes of reading fluency practice using any of the activities listed above will help to develop your child's reading fluency.

Adapted from Timothy Rasinski's work, 2015

Did you know?

Our school is called "Eagle Point" because of its location near the highest point in the City of Albany.



If your child is sick ...

- Please send a written excuse to the school. If we don't have a written note, the absence will be treated as an unexcused absence.
- Call the school the morning of the absence at (518) 475-68325

WHO'S WHO

at Eagle Point Elementary School

Mr. Gabriele Barbato, principal

Ms. Christine Wood, school secretary

Ms. Margaret Shea, school nurse

Need to reach us? Call us at 475-6825.