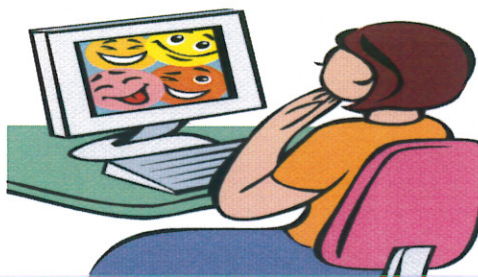


From the Desk of Mrs. Jaster

December 21, 2015

djaster@stjstr.org



shutterstock - 209505580

APPLE OF MY EYE: Congratulations to the following students who were recognized for doing something good:

Katlynn Razler, Grace Leigh, Andrew Lyons, Mena Murphy and Peter Jorgenson.

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT: Our annual Christmas program will take place on tomorrow evening, December 22nd beginning at 7pm in church.

- The students are to wear their winter uniforms with no Christmas adornments for the presentation.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten children are to be dressed as angels. However, our angels don't have wings and need only a simple "garland halo" in their hair.



HOME AND SCHOOL NEWS:

- Chances are being sold at lunchtime to win free "Wendy's Wednesdays" for the upcoming lunch order. The chances cost \$1/each or 5 chances for \$3.
- Milk and cookies will be provided for everyone on Wednesday morning.

AND THE WINNER IS...: Congratulations to Nick Sheldon, grade 2, the winner of the beautiful gingerbread house that was donated to the school by an alumni family, The Theirs!



CONGRATULATIONS! : We have received word that Nicole Chesla, grade 8, has received a Presidential Scholarship to Archbishop Wood for the coming school year! Congratulations to Nicole, her family, and her teacher on this wonderful achievement.

I-PAD PROGRAM: As Christmas time nears, I want to send a gentle reminder to families of future sixth graders. Sixth grade students are required to have their own iPad for use each day in class. There is no requirement as to size or amount of memory. (In case Santa wanted gift ideas...)





MRS. STANTON: Our art teacher, Mrs. Jean Stanton, will be having knee replacement surgery in January. Because of this, she will be out for several weeks. We are fortunate to have Mrs. Janine Edwards serve as our substitute during this time.

GENTLE REMINDERS:

- **Dismissal on December 23rd:** We will be dismissing at 12noon on Wednesday to begin the Christmas break. All school districts will be supplying bus service for this dismissal.
- **Classes will resume for the children on Tuesday, January 5, 2016!**

JUST A THOUGHT: As Christmas grows close, here is my wish for all of you:

"I said a prayer for you
As Christmas Day grew near,
That God would bless you richly
Throughout the coming year.
I did not ask for Him to send
You gifts of worldly wealth
But prayed that He would fill your life with
Peace, and Joy, and Good Health! "



© Maria Bell · www.ClipartOf.com/69930

HSA NOTES

Wendy Wednesday Raffle

Raffle tickets for free Wendy Wednesday meals for the next hot lunch order will be on sale at lunch Tuesday, December 22. Tickets are \$1 each or 5 for \$3.

Talent Show

This year's family fun night theme will be a talent show. Any student who has a talent and would like to perform a 2 MINUTE ACT, either as an individual or a group, may audition in January. More information to follow after the break.

THE HELPFUL PARENT: “Executive Functions”— What is it?

Currently, there is a lot of educational buzz around the term Executive Functions. Executive Functions is an umbrella term for a set of skills that help children get things done, such as:

- **managing their time**
- **paying attention**
- **switching their focus**
- **planning and organizing**
- **remembering details**
- **avoiding saying or doing the wrong thing**
- **doing things based on their experiences**

These skills are engaged when children pause and reflect before reacting. Researchers attest that when children have these skills they will experience a more enriched and enhanced life both within and outside the learning environment.

There are three major components of executive function:

Working Memory—the capacity to hold and work with multiple pieces of information simultaneously.

Mental Flexibility—the capacity to easily switch between different ways of thinking, such as changing behavior to fit different situations or seeing something from a different perspective.

Self-Control—the capacity to resist impulsive reactions; control the body, and resist distractions, in order to do what is advantageous.

Children aren't born with these skills, so how do parents help their children develop them?

1. For children ages 5-7

- a. Games and activities that require fast responses help to practice attention and inhibition such as musical chairs, the card games Snap, Slapjack and the game Perfection
- b. Games where children can match playing cards, such as Uno and Crazy Eights develop flexible thinking skills
- c. Activities such as puzzles, brain teasers, mazes and word searches practice attention and problem-solving skills

2. For children ages 7-12, it is important to increase the difficulty and complexity of games and activities

- a. Crossword Puzzles encourage the manipulation of letters and words in working memory as well as flexible thinking
- b. Complex games, such as, Minecraft (computer game), involve fantasy play, which require children to hold in their working memory, complicated information about places visited in imaginary worlds, rules about how characters and materials can be used, and strategy in attaining self-determined goals
- c. Organized sports enables children to practice the ability to hold complicated rules and strategies in mind, monitor their own and others' actions, make quick decisions and respond flexibly to play.

NATIONAL COOKIE DAY— DECEMBER 4TH

December is a month filled with holidays and celebrations. Let's celebrate National Cookie Day by making the treat that all children young and old enjoy! Supervise your children as they gather the necessary ingredients and measuring cups/spoons and as the ingredients are added to the bowl.

Granola Breakfast Cookies

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups granola cereal

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. In a large bowl, cream together shortening and brown sugar; add eggs, milk and vanilla beating well.
4. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking soda and salt.
5. Mix well and add to sugar mixture.
6. Stir in granola; drop by teaspoonfuls onto prepared baking sheets.
7. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until edges are browned.

