

Tiger Cub News

Delano Elementary School Newsletter



December 2019-January 2020

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December

4.....DQ night, 5 to 8 p.m.

18.....Two-hour late start

18.....DQ night, 5 to 8 p.m.

23-31.....Winter break

January

1-3.....Winter break

6.....Classes resume

8.....DQ night, 5 to 8 p.m.

14.....ES PIE, 7 p.m.

15.....Two-hour late start

20.....MLK Day, no school

20.....Conferences and book

fair, noon to 8 p.m.

23.....Conferences and book

fair, 4 to 8 p.m.

29.....DQ night, 5 to 8 p.m.

Find us on...



Saluting vets

Delano Elementary students enjoyed learning about military service, including how to salute and march, during a pre-Veterans Day program on Friday, Nov. 8. A guest speaker was Adam Kessler, brother of DES teacher Lauren Kessler. See Page 6.

Learning targets: roadmap to mastery

By Darren Schuler
Principal

On the third Wednesday of each month, all PreK-12 teachers have been involved in professional development with literacy specialist Bonnie Houck.

During our November two-hour late start, our literacy emphasis was the topic of “learning targets.”

I would like to focus this month’s article on the purpose of learning targets in our classrooms and why “hitting the learning target” is vital to student motivation and suc-



Darren Schuler

cess. Learning targets focus on the most important aspect of each lesson and what students

should know by the end of the lesson.

The target should describe what the students will be able to say, do, or produce if the learning is on track.

If you are visiting or volunteering at DES, you can step into any classroom and notice a visible learning target for reading and a learning target for math.

An example of a second-grade learning target in reading is: “I can use sentence clues to find the meaning of

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Helping hounds

Reading skills aided by therapy dogs

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

While schools employ a wide variety of strategies to help students learn to read effectively, Delano Elementary has found success using mentors who, at first glance, might seem unlikely candidates to boost literacy -- dogs.

Or, more properly, registered therapy animal teams. Students who need some extra assistance with reading meet monthly with a trained dog and its owner to practice reading aloud, a practice that often yields significant results.

"Animals are ideal reading companions because they help increase relaxation and lower blood pressure, listen attentively; do not judge, laugh or criticize; allow children to proceed at their own pace, and are less intimidating than peers," said Melissa Assels, the Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services (ADSIS) instructor at DES. "Participating kids make enormous strides in reading and communication skills while, along the way, building self-esteem, confidence and social skills."

A typical visit

During a reading session in the DES Imaginarium on Nov. 13, students cycled through for 10-minute time slots with Getty, a mild-mannered 9-year-old golden retriever, and her owner Wendy Hitch. Students practiced reading while Getty rested her head on their lap and enjoyed ear scratches and pats.

"It's probably the most rewarding thing I've ever done," said Hitch, who lives in Minnetonka. "It's so fun because you get to take your dog with you."

Hitch, a member of North Star Therapy Animals, explained that registered therapy



Getty, a nine-year-old golden retriever, was the dog on duty, along with her owner Wendy Hitch, for reading lessons on Nov. 13.



Students enjoy interacting with the animals, and have the opportunity to read aloud apart from their peers.

animal teams go through an extensive training and registration process with Pet Partners, which includes guidance for both animals and their owners, as well as stringent evaluations.

Animals must be screened for health, and their temperament is a key factor in the registration process.

"My job is not really to correct students as they're

reading, but to help them read with some fluency," said Hitch. "I'm always encouraging them. Mostly, the experience with the dogs is just to give them the opportunity to read out loud. It's almost like a lesson in public speaking. A lot of kids never read out loud."

After finishing their lessons, students had the opportunity to give Getty a treat and say goodbye until their next lesson.

Team partners

Assels first learned about the Read With Me program while she was working in a different district.

"A colleague of mine started working with this program and I witnessed how special it was with my students. I knew I wanted to bring the program here to Delano Elementary School," Assels said.

Administrators were supportive, and Getty and Hitch

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Book drive to benefit classrooms

In an effort to bolster classroom libraries, Delano Public Schools will hold a book drive during January conferences (Jan. 20 and 23) and during the month of February, which is "I Love to Read Month."

What can be donated? New or gently used books that are appropriate for K-8 students; books that are classics, are well-loved, or have a copyright date of 2010 or later; or money for book bins and shelves to support classroom libraries.

Why are donations needed? Research indicates that K-8 classrooms should have about 350 books within each room to support a literature-rich experience for young readers. This year's literacy initiative, and the adoption of the new K-4 language arts curriculum, rely heavily on this concept.



Grateful gobbler

DES students and staff members each contributed a feather with something they are grateful for to construct this enormous turkey.



Reading

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first came to Delano Elementary during the 2017-18 school year after establishing a working relationship with Assels in her previous district.

This year two additional teams are also working at DES. Jan Engelhardt brings her miniature schnauzer, Astro, and Kay Mathias teams up with her Rottweiler, Reyna.

Astro is a retired champion show dog from Texas who "loves to cuddle and thinks having someone scratch his ears is the best," said Engelhardt.

Mathias has five children of her own, and said she enjoyed fostering a love of reading in them. She also had experience raising guide dogs in Florida.

"I loved training dogs and helping others at the same time," she said. "When we moved back to Minnesota I decided I wanted to help others with my own dog. ... Reyna



Above, Kay Mathias and her Rottweiler, Reyna, are a new animal team at Delano Elementary this year. So are Jan Engelhardt and her miniature schnauzer Astro, right.



and I love kids, so I decided the Read With Me program was a perfect fit."

Hitch explained that her own daughter had struggled with reading, but improved after she spent time reading aloud to their pets.

"We had a rabbit and a dog and a cockatoo and they would all snuggle up and she would

read her books to them," Hitch said. "It really wasn't until later when I saw an article about (therapy reading animals) that I thought, 'This is what I need to do. I've seen it work. We've done it.'"

Assels said the program has helped students involved in the student support intervention services such as ADSIS, Title 1

and Basic Skills improve their reading and communication skills while having fun with a pet.

"We are so excited to have the Read With Me program here at Delano Elementary School again this year," she said. "The kids love it!"

Vieau's passion for children honored

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

Four staff members from Delano Public Schools received Leaders in Educational Excellence Awards during a ceremony at the River's Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud on Wednesday, Oct. 23.

Those honored were DHS media center specialist Monica Kunkel, DES Title 1 teacher Karla Vieau, sixth-grade teacher Sara Potter, and DHS Spanish teacher and current Delano Teacher of the Year John Fitzer.

Vieau represents DES

"I have a passion for helping children," said Vieau. "I knew since I was in second grade (when I had a teacher who didn't appear to enjoy teach-



Karla Vieau

ing) that I wanted to go into teaching and let the kids know that learning can be fun, and I wanted them to feel loved every day!"

Vieau has maintained that enthusiasm for her students

after 33 years of teaching, including 22 years in Delano.

A fellow staff member who nominated Vieau for the award cited her "unwavering belief that all students, especially those with the greatest challenges, deserve the opportunity to reach their potential."

Title 1 is a program designed to assist students who perform below their grade level in reading so they can succeed in the regular classroom.

"I feel that a large part of my job is to teach my students the love of reading," Vieau said. "I feel the world can open up to children when they learn to love reading!"

Vieau said her favorite aspects of the job include the opportunity to see students catch on and begin reading, or simply light up when they are

greeted kindly. According to the nomination on her behalf, Vieau has influenced the other staff members as much as she has her students.

"She inspires me and others to strive for rigor, relevance, and relationships," said the nomination. "Former students hug her 10 years later because they know that she believed in them."

Vieau said that being recognized as a Leader in Educational Excellence is gratifying.

"It is so nice to know that teachers acknowledge the hard work you are putting in with students and appreciate working together," she said. "I thank all that voted for me, and people past and present that nominated me for this honor!"

LUNCH

DECEMBER 2019

Delano Elementary School

Delano Elementary School
\$2.95

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Chicken Tenders 2 Mashed Potatoes Peas / Roll Lettuce Salad Pineapple	French Toast Sticks 3 Sausage Tritater Broccoli OJ Cup	Hamburger 4 Sun Chips Baked Beans / Baby Carrots Lettuce / Tomatoes Pickles / Onions Fruit Cocktail	Teriyaki Chicken 5 Brown Rice Stir Fry Vegetables Lettuce / Pineapple Fortune Cookie Ice Cream Cup	Tomato Soup 6 Grilled Cheese Sandwich Goldfish Baby Carrots Lettuce Salad Fresh Fruit
Hot Dog 9 A)BBQ Rib Sandwich Sun Chips Baby Carrots Baked Beans Rosy Applesauce	Chicken Gravy 10 A)Polish Sausage Mashed Potatoes / Peas Lettuce Salad Roll Baked Apple Slices	Chicken Nuggets 11 Tritater Green Beans Veggies Fruit Cocktail	Cheese Pizza 12 Corn Lettuce Salad Pears	Walking Tacos 13 Lettuce / Cheese / Salsa Refried Beans Fresh Fruit Teddy Grahams
Popcorn Chicken 16 Brown Rice Stir Fry Vegetables Lettuce Salad Pineapple	Corn Dog 17 Potato Smiles Baked Beans Veggies Rosy Applesauce	Italian Dunkers 18 Corn Lettuce Salad Fresh Fruit	Chicken Patty – Bun 19 A)PBJ Sandwich Chicken Noodle Soup Crackers / Veggies Lettuce Salad Peaches	Quesadilla 20 Refried Beans Corn Lettuce / Salsa Fresh Fruit
Winter Break 23 No School	Winter Break 24 No School	Winter Break 25 No School	Winter Break 26 No School	Winter Break 27 No School
Winter Break 30 No School	Winter Break 31 No School			



Elf at lunch

Cast and crew members of the DHS musical “Elf” took their show on the road to perform at DES during lunch hour Friday, Nov. 8. Efforts to promote the show were a success, as over 2,700 tickets were sold.



Word study is a new approach to spelling

By Greg Hinker
Assistant Principal

How did you learn to spell? For most of us, teachers taught us spelling by giving us a list of words on a Monday, a test on Friday, and possibly some practice at home in between. The next week we moved on to a new list, never having to think about those words again.

This type of drill and practice has earned traditional spelling instruction a reputation of being boring, not to mention ineffective.

Luckily, there is an alternative to traditional spelling instruction called “word study” that is not based on the memorization of random words. The focus of a word study is teaching students word



Greg Hinker

patterns. When kids learn word patterns, they’re able to construct and deconstruct words based on their parts. They learn to apply this knowledge to new words, not only the list of

words. When tested, students are expected to not only spell words on the list correctly, but similar words as well.

Departure from the past

There are two big differences you are likely noticing with this new approach. First, spelling lists are not coming home each week for kids to practice at home. When our teachers are doing word studies in their classrooms, all of the practice is happening at school. Teachers have short word study lessons each day during which students learn and practice the weekly spelling skills.

Second, spelling tests look quite different. Rather than being tested on a predetermined list of words, teachers check if students can apply the

spelling pattern to a short list of new words. You will also see sentences on the spelling tests. On test day, teachers also give students a sentence or two to write. At least one word in that sentence contains the spelling pattern and the teacher is checking to see if students can use the pattern while they are writing.

Spelling has moved beyond writing a list of words five times each to learn to spell, or decoding words by simply “sounding them out.” Using word study lessons to round out a balanced literacy program promises a much greater chance that students retain word meanings and are able to make sense of spelling rules.



Above, students enjoyed learning how to march in step. At right, a pair of young admirers talk with guest speaker Adam Kessler.



Learning about military service

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

DES students had their own Veterans Day event on Friday, Nov. 8, when Adam Kessler, brother to DES kindergarten teacher Lauren Kessler, came in to speak.

The former intelligence analyst and Blackhawk helicopter pilot shared about branches of the military, jobs that service members do, and opportunities to help and protect others.

Students also learned about

the concept of sacrifice and why it is important to thank veterans: because they spend long periods of time away from loved ones and sometimes deal with difficult situations.

Students were able to practice marching, standing at attention and saluting, and also had the opportunity to introduce family members who have served. Those family members also had time to share briefly about what branch they served in, when, and what their jobs were.



Students were eager to share what knowledge they had about branches of the military.



Students introduced family members who had served.



Guest speaker Adam Kessler shares about jobs military members do.



The proper way to salute was among the lessons students participated in.

Schuler

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unknown words and phrases. I can explain to my partner how I used clues to find the meaning.”

DES teachers are taking the MN Language Arts Standards at each grade level and designing learning targets in student-friendly language that have student success criteria built in.

When designing a learning target, teachers need to consider the following:

- What will it look like when students are doing and showing their learning of the target?
- What do my students already know about this topic?
- What do the students need to learn to master this topic?
- What learning extensions do I need to consider to meet my high performing students' needs?

Once the learning target has been introduced to the

‘Research has indicated that ... when students understand learning goals, there is a high probability that learning will improve.’

students, the teacher monitors student progress towards the learning target through whole group instruction, observation, and both formal and informal assessments to know if the students have met the target for this lesson.

Research has indicated that when teachers have clear learning expectations and intentions, and when students understand learning goals, there is a high probability that learning will improve.

In closing, the next time your child comes home from school and you are having a conversation at dinner, ask your child the following question: “What was your learning target today?”

You might be amazed at their response!



Drive for vets a success

Thank you, Delano community, for your generous support of our annual clothing drive for veterans in need. Once again, your generosity will make a significant difference in the lives of veterans. Later this week school staff will deliver sheets, towels, clothing and hygiene items to the Eagle’s Healing Nest along with 12 pairs of winter boots. In addition, 170 items will be delivered to the St Cloud VA Hospital to support their new clothing center. Here, members of the 7-8 Student Council sort some of the hygiene items that were collected.



Treats for troops

Delano Elementary conducted a drive to collect unused Halloween candy for the benefit of service members in early November. The candy was then given to the Wright County Area Blue Star Mothers. For the past 12 years, this organization has done a holiday project that involves decorating Christmas stockings by hand. The stockings are then filled with goodies, candy, and hand-made cards from the community. The candy collected in the school drive is used to help fill the stockings, which are sent to deployed Minnesota service members and their children.



APEX Fun Run

Delano Elementary held its annual Apex fundraiser in November, which combined character lessons with a fun run to support the school. The theme was "GAME ON," an acronym for go-getter, appreciate, move forward, explore, others first, and now what? Details on the amount raised were not available in time for this newsletter.





Reinforce Math Skills With Everyday Activities

A solid foundation in math is essential for students to succeed in school and beyond. Incorporate math into your family's daily life—without a lot of time, effort, or expense—with these fun ideas.

In the kitchen. Cooking is not only a terrific way to help children understand fractions—it's also excellent family bonding time. Show younger children how measuring two half-cups of flour yields the same amount as one full cup. Ask older children to help you cut a recipe in half or double a recipe. Have them write down the new measurements and check the computations together.

At the grocery store. Bring a calculator with you to the store when you shop. Young children can add up how much you have spent on groceries or saved with coupons. Kids in third grade or higher can help determine which size of detergent offers the best value, or whether using a particular coupon is cost-effective.

In the garage. A tire gauge is one of the simplest tools for a child to use, and can help him or her learn about addition and subtraction. Show your child how to measure the pressure in your bicycle or car tires. Then, have your child help you determine how much air you need to add or release. Older children can calculate gas mileage.

On the computer. Find activities that reinforce math skills, from computer games like Math Blaster to apps.

On the road. Long car trips were made for math games. Pick a number from one to 10 and have each family member try to find a license plate with the target number. Younger children can add the numbers together. Children who have learned subtraction can try to find one that involves adding a few of the numbers and then subtracting one.

Kids who have learned multiplication and division can put those skills to use.

At the toy store. If your child is trying to save up to buy something special, keep a chart of how much money they will need and what they have saved to date.

At home. Classic games such as dominoes, cards, puzzles, or Monopoly teach math reasoning. Sewing and building projects both involve plenty of computation. Teach your child how to measure and sew fabrics together, or build basic structures out of wood (with adult supervision).

Above all, avoid passing any math phobias that you might have on to your child. It's important for children to hear at home that what they're learning is valuable—that all the work they're doing trying to comprehend division or fractions or measurement will pay off their whole lives.



Web Resources

Common Sense Media provides reviews of education apps.
www.commonsensemedia.org

PBS Parents has a math portal with tips, games, and everyday activities.
www.pbs.org/parents/education/math/

The **Figure This Family Corner** offers tips, tricks, and downloadable brochures.
www.figurethis.org/fc/family_corner.htm

The gift of warmth for those in need

Gratitude was the November theme of the month at DES, and the school is grateful to its generous families. During the month first- and second-grade students created about 80 fleece blankets for children in foster care, crisis nursery, and families or individuals in need. Some of the blankets included embroidered sayings like “You are Loved,” “You are Strong,” and “You are Amazing.”

A special thank you to DES parents Sara Kvasnicka and Jill VanBeusekom for their assistance with this project.

Students will continue to learn about kindness and perform acts of kindness throughout the school year.



First- and second-graders show off the results of their efforts, with about 80 fleece blankets created for children in foster care, the crisis nursery, and more.

Announcements

School closing information

School may be closed for the day, started late or dismissed early due to weather conditions, emergencies, utility outages or other conditions that threaten the health and/or safety of our students and staff.

Families will be notified by the school district’s instant parent contact system for emergency school closings.

The following news media outlets will also be notified: WCCO 4 TV, KSTP 5 TV, KMSP 9 TV and KARE 11 TV.

Families are encouraged to have a plan in place for their students when emergency closings, late starts or early dismissals occur. Watch for calendar changes and possible make-up days due to school closings communicated via school publications, Skylert parent emails, phone calls, the district website, Facebook and Twitter.

If you would like to receive a text message, you must set this option up in your family access account. Log into your account and on the left, click on Skylert. You can list your phone number under “Text Message Numbers” and check the categories for which you want this option applied. Then click “Save.”

Seasonal safety reminders

As ice, snow and cold weather arrive, please remember to drive safely and attentively through campus. Walkers and bikers should

only cross Tiger Drive at the ice rink or tennis courts where a crossing guard is on duty. No crossings should occur at County Road 30.

While facilities staff work to keep sidewalks passable and safe during winter weather, remember to use the “penguin shuffle” to avoid falls, and beware of ice that may be concealed beneath thin layers of snow.

Holiday Boutique on Dec. 7

Delano Community Education is hosting a Holiday Boutique from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Community Education gym during Delano’s Old Fashioned Christmas on Saturday, Dec. 7. Admission is free, and the event features unique and local hand-made gifts. Additional vendors are welcome and can contact Dawn Hilgers at dawn.hilgers@delanoschools.org. Vendors can begin setting up at 8 a.m.

ECFE plans Teddy Bear Tea

Early Childhood Family Education’s free Teddy Bear Tea and Story Time will run from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7, in room 116 at the Community Education Center. ECFE children’s teachers will read holiday stories to children and their families while they enjoy a small snack and refreshments. Free will offerings accepted.



Tiger Cub News is published by Delano Elementary School. Editor, Paul Downer, District Office, 763.972.3365, ext. 1911, paul.downer@delanoschools.org



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