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UE3 January Classroom Newsletter

Dear UE3 Parents,

Happy New Year! I trust that everyone had an enjoyable and peaceful winter break. After a bit of a slow start on the first day, we are all back into the routine: engaged, active, and learning!

I've had a few questions from some of you regarding the work plans I email to you (4th and 5th Social Studies and Science). Please note that these go out at different times, as 5th years are on six-week work blocks while 4th years are on nine-week work blocks. I just sent out new 4th grade Science and Social Studies work/project plans to parents. Fifth grade students will be receiving new work/project plans in approximately 2-3 weeks; at which time I will email copies to parents.

Students were introduced to our new Assistant Head of School, Barbara Griffith, during our "Casa Community" on Friday. Mrs. Griffith comes to us from Tennessee, and has two daughters currently attending Casa.

Curriculum

4th Grade Science: Students officially began the unit on nutrition and the digestive system. They were introduced to the topic with a lesson on the food pyramid and "healthy plate", and brought in baby pictures to share with the class. We discussed factors that make a baby healthy. Next week we will be studying calories, and Mr. Conroy (the Middle Grades Science and Math teacher) will be performing a demonstration on how food provides energy by burning a walnut. The children are eagerly anticipating this. I have asked students to keep a chart of their height and weight throughout the nine-week block (as their homework assignment), so that we can compare how they've grown between the start and end of the block. If you do not have a scale at home, children will be allowed to weigh themselves at school. This block is largely experiment-based, rather than project-based. Grades will be based upon classwork and tests.

5th Grade Science: Students are continuing their research on landforms and ecosystems. Many beautiful projects were turned in on Monday! Students will have the remaining two weeks to complete their level A projects, followed by a final exam. Study questions will be provided a week prior to the final exam, and students will be allotted class time to research the answers. I encourage parents to review these questions with their children during the week leading up to the final exam.

4th Grade Social Studies: Students were introduced to the new Social Studies unit (North Carolina government and economy). They have begun work on their first level C projects, and classroom assignments. Grades will be based on weekly classwork, projects (2 level C, 1 level B, and one level A), and a final exam. Students will be given study questions a week prior to the final exam.

5th Grade Social Studies: Students are continuing their research projects related to European History, Part I. As with Science, students will have the remaining two weeks to complete their level A projects, followed by a final exam. Please begin reviewing these questions with your children as soon as they

receive the study guide. The test is open notebook; however, it is important to ensure that your child has all the information required for the exam in his/her notes.

Mathematics: Both grades continue to take Singapore Math lessons with their respective math groups. In addition to hour-long sessions on Mondays through Fridays, students will be given 45 minute lessons on Fridays this quarter and through the remainder of the year. This is to ensure that students complete their current level books and are ready to transition into new level books in the fall. In addition, students do weekly “Competitive Edge” math assignments independently, with review sessions and mini-lessons each week.

Vocabulary/Spelling: Fourth and Fifth grade students are in the process of finishing up the “Wordly Wise” curriculum. After they have finished their books, they will transition into spelling textbooks appropriate for their level. Students are provided with weekly grammar sheets, which teachers check for accuracy. Fourth grade students are also provided with sentence analysis lessons.

Reading/Literature: Students do independent reading throughout the week in an assigned reading level book. In addition to completing literacy packets, students engage in activities related to their books (i.e., write plays, create board games, trivia games, etc.). We still have several openings for parent volunteers, and encourage you to attend. In addition to literacy circle reading, students are given two reading comprehension packets (an article or story, and related worksheets) each week. Teachers check for accuracy and understanding.

Music: Sra. Mendez has introduced several new songs to the students. They are practicing them in preparation for “Fiesta de las Familias”, which will take place in the spring.

Spanish: The students continue to engage in a variety of interesting activities and lessons provided by Sra. Mendez on Monday and Wednesday mornings.

Don't forget: Show your support by purchasing a Casa t-shirt for your child. Students will be permitted to wear these shirts on Fridays. Teachers have already ordered theirs – expect to see us sporting them when the first order arrives in late January!

Thank you for supporting UE by providing (and buying!) our bake sale goodies. This week we made over \$260.00 which will go directly into our field trip fund.

Important Dates:

January 11 8:30am – 10:00 am PFA Executive Mtg. (Panera Bread 6213 Capital Blvd)

January 12 7:00pm – 8:00 pm Human Resources Committee Meeting

January 13 8:30am – 9:30 am Board Affairs Meeting

January 13 11:00am – 12:00pm Executive Committee Meeting

January 16 Holiday/School Closed

January 19 6:00pm – 9:00pm Board Meeting

January 25 6:00pm – 7:30 pm CHILDREN TEACH PARENTS in ALL Rooms

January 26 8:45am – 10:00am Coffee with the Principal (Bring your favorite pastry to share)

