

This Week at Central Academy

May 21, 2010

It seems hard to believe that this is our last edition of *TWAC* for the year! I remember when I was in school. The year and the days seemed endless! I would check the time on clocks often as the day wore out. Do years actually speed up as we get older? I know we're still in school the same number of days we were then, but somehow the year seems to race past. A quick informal survey of our students, however, gave me information that said clearly that no, they felt the year had also whizzed by! Perhaps it's the difference in how our days are structured here at Central when compared to how the days were structured in my own schooling.

This week's newsletter highlights the various celebrations that each classroom is experiencing as we close the year. Our littlest members of our community have grown so much in maturity and responsibility! Our oldest members will be our first graduating class from our middle school. Both are definite accomplishments to celebrate.

As we pause to think about those things we hold most dear, and to celebrate them, I can't help but think about our caring relationship between you as families and those of us who work with your children each day. We have had the remarkable opportunity to work closely with so many of you and to get to know both your cares and happiness. In particular, I want to take this opportunity to thank *Rob Stamper, Trica Sloan, Kelly Moore and Randi Rowe* for their tireless work this year on our TEAM board (Central's PTO).

I also want to thank *Dr. Sheri Leafgren, Dr. Tammy Schwartz, and Dr. Tom Poetter* for their help and support in extending our professional knowledge and growth this year through our partnership with Miami University. A friend who is dearly missed since he left MUM and moved to a Vice President's position at a college in Florida is *Dr. James Ewers*. *Deborah Meier* and *James Beane* both came to visit us this year, and stretched our thinking around students and learning. These and many others help us to keep current in understanding educational techniques, and expand our horizons.

Enjoy the summer with your child/ren and families. Before we can begin to realize it, we will all be back once again, working and growing together!

Dianne

Central Academy's Website

Find out what's going on at Central by frequently visiting our website. The website includes:

Important Dates Newsletters Classroom Web pages

Pictures of Students (**You can search by student's first name, teacher name, or by level!**)

www.middletowncityschools.com (click on Central Academy)

IMPORTANT DATES

May 21	Field Day
May 24	Last day of school
May 24	Celebration of Learning – 9:00
May 24	Talent Show – 1:00
Aug. 18	1 st day of school for 2010-2011

HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY SUMMER!

EARLY PRIMARY CLASSROOMS

The students in **Mrs. Brooks' Early Primary** class have much to celebrate! We have made a lot of growth in our academics as well as in our character. We have learned what it looks like and feels like to be a community. Students have shared and applied ways to help one another, encourage one another, and problem solve with one another. Along with social celebrations, Mrs. Brooks' class has also reached many goals academically!

All of the *Youngers* in Mrs. Brooks' class met benchmark in PSF! (Phoneme Segmentaion Fluency, or as we like to call it, chopping and smearing This is a way of breaking big words apart and sounding them out. ☺) All of the *Olders* in Mrs. Brooks' class are whizzes at reading non-sense words! (It may seem strange to work on nonsense words, but it is a way for us to practice and use our phonics skills, which always helps when we get to real words we don't know.) We have all become great questioners of the books we are reading. We are also marvelous mathematicians! Everyone has improved their counting skills!

Individually, *Kirsten* and *Aby* have taken off as readers! They are both reading 2 levels above where they were in January. Wow! *Taylor* knows 1st, 2nd, and most of 3rd grade snap words! *Mason* knows all of the Kindergarten snap words! *Jerrel* and *Eli* are solving addition, subtraction, and multiplication CGI problems! These are just a few of our many celebrations in **Mrs. Brooks' class**.

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During our most recent morning meeting, the students in **Ms. Roe's Early Primary room** shared what they felt was their biggest accomplishment this school year. *Katie, Austin, Carter* and *Dallas* felt that they had each grown in their Writing skills this year. The boys were so proud of their abilities to write complete sentences this year. *Katie* felt that her sentences were more creative and detailed than last year. *Emma C., Chloe, Eristan* and *Shawvontae* were excited about their success in Reading. The group felt they were using their strategies and what they had learned from the Phonics Dance to find and read "just right" books. *Heath, Bree* and *Emma S.* shared that they learned a variety of strategies to solve math problems. They were also proud themselves for accepting the daily challenge to solve the problems using all three sets of numbers (ranging in difficulty). *Rowyn* was proud that she ALWAYS gave what she felt was her best effort in whatever task she took on. *Mark, Payton* and *Ian* were impressed with themselves for making good choices and never having to change their behavior card. *Alayna, Ronnie, Curtis, Matthew, Andrew, Christian, Jordan, Gabe* and *Khaleim* said they felt their behavior had improved throughout the school year. I am SO PROUD of each and every student in our room! They each have worked SO HARD all year long!

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Mrs. Uhl, Mr. Jarrell & Ms. Stillwell's Early Primary Class wants to CELEBRATE! The student's have grown so much over the year and their accomplishments are astounding! We have been fortunate enough to teach a group of students who have a passion for learning and have worked collaboratively to help one another succeed.

When we asked each student to identify which area s/he felt they grew as a learner and were most proud of this year, we were fascinated by the responses! *Charlie* felt he grew as a mathematician in solving the

word problems. *Ashley* became a fabulous reader. *Trinity* felt she grew as a reader, writer and mathematician. *Eniyah* felt she became a better reader. *Alex* felt he grew the most in writing. *Addison* is most proud of counting by two's. *Noah* has become a great reader. *MyOnna* is most proud of her writing for adding juicy words. *Kyler* is most proud of his work in math. *Isaiah* has worked the hardest in writing. *Jordan* is pleased with his growth in reading. *LaTeria* is most proud of her writing because she enjoys writing each day. *Trey* is pleased with his artwork during our writing time. *Gabe* enjoys reading so much that he never wants to stop! While *Tye* felt he did his best in everything, he was most pleased with his effort in writing. *Madelyn* was proud of her growth in writing and math. *Lexey* enjoyed writing so much that she even wrote at home. *Nathan* is most proud of writing and drawing pictures. *Ahvonni* felt she grew as reader. *Jakob* has grown at finding snap words. *Hanna* has become a better writer. *Paige* is most proud of how she grew as a reader. *Ariel* grew as a mathematician.

As you can see we have a strong community of learners! When we think back to where we started and look now at how far we have come, Mr. J., Ms. Stillwell and I are so pleased with the progress our class has made. We can't believe the school year is coming to a close but we are looking forward to seeing the progress each of these fabulous students will make next year!

LATE PRIMARY CLASSROOMS

Mrs. Andrade & Miss Zumbahlen's Late Primary Class had difficulty not identifying what to celebrate, but what not to celebrate. Like the other Late Primary Classes, we experienced some awesome field trips this year. We had a great time extending our learning about Fairy Tales by watching *Peter and the Wolf* and *Hansel and Gretel* performed at the MUM Free Fridays. Who could forget the grandness of The Aronoff Center singing "a spoon full of sugar helps the medicine go down" as Mary Poppins flew around with her umbrella. Then, there was the spectacular Space Celebration, which was produced and acted by all of the students in our room. Truly understanding the demotion of poor Pluto from an official planet to a dwarf planet was a topic of daily discussion. One thing we all walked away with was an appreciation for space beyond what the human eye can see.

Celebrating student growth is another way we could show off all of our hard work. We could surely celebrate everyone moving up in their reading levels or DIBELS scores (words read per minute). CGI and Investigations have also increased everyone's mathematical thinking. Spelling Inventories also proved that a little phonics instruction and individualized goals can build strong files of regular and irregular hunks and chunks.

More importantly, we want to celebrate the characteristics of a strong community. There is not a day that went by that we did not make a plan together. Sometimes we figured out how to handle a situation together or how to manage our daily affairs more efficiently. Watching children take part in the democratic process by helping to run their own room is perhaps the biggest celebration of all. And as *Rowan, Allison, Austin F., Briley, Hayden, Daniel, Anastasia, Emily, Donnie, Jake, and Aly P.* move on to the Intermediate Level, we know that they have truly evolved into young citizens who know how to make every moment count. The torch is passed to this year's youngers, *Austin R., Savanna, Chelsea, Briella, Chris R., Madison, Kya, Chris J., Gabe, Day'Sean, Jocelynne, Amalia, and Aaron*, to sprout into next year's older leaders.

This week in **VanBurgey's** room, we're ending the year by reflecting on some of the great celebrations we've had. We started with a field trip to Miami University Middletown to see the fairy tale *Henny*

Penny. We also went twice more for a musical performance and *Peter and the Wolf*. Then, in the winter, all of the students took part in the Late Primary Program. What great talent they have! We had so much fun as the students pulled us teachers in along with parents to dance with them.

Throughout the year, we had some wonderful celebrations of learning and shared projects on bugs and animals and did a reader's theater for the whole school. As the year is winding down, we had the wonderful opportunity to see *Mary Poppins* at the Aronoff in downtown Cincinnati. The girls thought the show was great, but the boys thought the bus ride was even better!

Last, but not least, we ended the year a few weeks ago with a trip to the Hefner Zoology Museum at Miami University in Oxford for a culminating science experience. We think *Casey* is definitely on his way to becoming a scientist – he hung on every word that came out of our tour guide's mouth! We learned some interesting facts about many different types of animals! Just ask your child about what Penguins do after they eat! As the year comes to a close, we are already getting sad anticipating our olders leaving our room. After having a child for three years, you really become attached. Have a great summer! GO CENTRAL!

INTERMEDIATE CLASSROOMS

It is difficult to believe that another school year is coming to an end. Here at Central, keeping up the learning until the very last day is important. We also like to mix in some fun and “play.” After all, students have worked very hard all year long and they've earned it. In **Mrs. Larison's Intermediate** classroom, we will be planning a year-end celebration, which will occur sometime during the last week of school. Students are already asking about what we will do. A few of our students will be leaving us this year. For instance, *Madysen's* family is moving to a different school district, and *Cody* and *Brooke* are moving on to middle school at Vail or Verity. We need to take the time to celebrate their time with us and to wish them good luck at their next school.

The end of the year will also be a time for all of us to reflect back on our school year and reminisce about what we learned, which includes the fun times, the silly times, and the frustrating times. *Barbie* might think back on her project about a horse rescue mission that she researched and visited. Along with a friend, she also raised money to send to them. *Theo* might reflect on his project about Central. He learned about the daily activities of the teachers, Dr. Suiter, and Mrs. LeForce. Perhaps *Alhmad* will think about constructing boxes and using cubes to find the volume of the boxes. *Kyra* might remember reading and discussing *Heartbeat* with her book club members. Of course, I could go on and on, but I'll stop now. Ask your child about his or her school year and see what they can remember. If at first you get an, “I don't remember” (a common response), try again. I'm sure they have many things to share.

Other year-end events include field day (a big hit with the kids), a final Celebration of Learning (I hope a few from our class will participate), a talent show (*Emma* has already signed up), and yearbook signing.

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There has been so much to celebrate this year in **Muenchenburgey Land!** We have seen academic growth, as well as social growth in many students. It was difficult to select just a few examples out of all the successes we've seen this year, but since we don't have the entire *This Week at Central* to fill up, we had to!

Marriah has made fantastic growth socially this year. She has connected with her classmates through engaging in conversations with them in the classroom, during recess, and at lunch. She invites children to

play games with her at recess and likes to sit with her friends and read. We are so happy to see *Marriah* take such big steps socially, so she deserves a big cheer!

An example of a student who has really grown academically is *Geraldine*. She has done so well developing an understanding of place value, as well as what it means to multiply! Her excitement about her growth is quite evident when she shows us that smile after demonstrating her new knowledge. *Teryne* has also made incredible gains this year. She has developed such an awareness of the importance of her learning and what it can do for her. We are so excited to see how much she values doing her work and doing it well this year. *Marissa's* reading level is reason for her to celebrate! She has jumped up two reading levels this year, showing her accelerated skills in reading.

Sean has really shown nice growth in terms of taking responsibility for his learning. If he realizes he is in a situation that doesn't support his best learning, he will take the initiative to move himself into a more productive setting. He is really developing in his ability to monitor himself and make decisions that benefit him the most academically. Another student who we want to celebrate is *Tonya*, as she has grown so much both socially and academically! Her reading skills have blossomed and her ability to help problem solve situations now reflects such maturity!

As we said, it is so hard to pick individual students, as we could speak about reasons to celebrate for every child in **Muenchenburgey Land**. Collectively, our class also has reasons to celebrate. When compared to the beginning of the year, we have watched our classroom family develop into members of a community who consider each other's perspectives, take responsibility for their actions, show genuine care and concern for each other, and have become amazing problem solvers. Words cannot express how proud we are of each and every one of them, and they definitely deserve a big celebration for all their accomplishments!! ***Go Muenchenburgey Family!***

Students in **Ms. Thinnes' Intermediate Class** celebrate our learning in many ways. One way we celebrate our learning is through sharing the projects that are researched. Students sign up on the board for a time that they would like to present their projects to the class. The class gives positive feedback and provides suggestions of how the presentation could be improved for future sharings. The class decides if the presentation should be shared at Celebration of Learning. *Noasia P.* and *Jazmyne B.* have shared their project on Global Warming and the impact global warming has on the environment. *Karah W.*, *Bailey S.*, and *Alyssa J.* have worked on a project researching Leukemia. The project shares the symptoms of the disease and the impact that the illness has on others. All projects have student discussions if we should celebrate learning in the classroom or with the whole school in a Celebration of Learning.

Another celebration of student learning is that everyone in the class has shown some reading gains this year. All students in **Ms. Thinnes' Intermediate Class** are reading proficiently. The reading achievement is a huge accomplishment for all members of the class. Students who have worked with the tutor this year have made huge gains in reading fluency and comprehension as well. Congratulations to all students on their reading achievements this year. I hope everyone enjoys the summer. Be safe and continue to read. Learning to be an active reader is a celebration in itself!

MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

The end of the year brings with it a time for reflection and celebration. The reflection of the events, relationships and growth of students, as well as staff, about how we can learn from our accomplishments and challenges is an important part of our growth together. The celebration that is the end of the year and

the coming break for the summer are milestones to us. But with the celebration comes a note of something that will come to an end.

This year will mark the first year ever that we have had a group of students who will be departing us and starting a new chapter in their lives. The sixteen students of Central Academy's graduating class will be graduating on May 21, 2010. Some of these students have been with us for nine years! This is a milestone in their life because in just a few short years they will be entering adulthood and taking different paths in their education. It has been a pleasure to see all of these students grow and mature. *Emily, Paige, Jonah, Mikala, Samantha, Raven, Leta, Jacob, Corey, Aleah, Kashley, Braden, Kayla, Lydia and Lexi* will all be leaving us soon, but will always be in our hearts and a part of our life. Thank you for all the work you have been doing and for helping us to understand how to become better teachers.

Mrs. Hodson's Humanities class has been busy putting together last minute finishes on their language arts projects. *Ericka* has just recently joined us here at Central and is new to our school. At first she was unsure of what to expect, but she has discovered a welcome with open arms by the staff and the students. She just recently finished her poetry project. *Ericka* turned it in with great enthusiasm and pride in her accomplishment. As she turned it in she explained, "This is the hardest thing I have ever had to do. I really didn't understand what a project was, but now I do. It makes me feel good about myself because I did it and put a lot of time into it. The only other thing I did at my other school was worksheets. My sister is in honors English class and is doing the same thing I just did. I told her I was doing what she was doing."

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As the year is drawing to a close, there are many opportunities to reflect on growth and celebrate success. First of all, congratulations are due to *Julia*, a student in **Kristi Joseph's** Humanities class, who was the first eighth grader to graduate by portfolio. Her presentation piece was her book comparison in which she compared and contrasted *The Giver* and *The Uglies*. *Julia* gave a wonderful dramatic performance as one of the main characters in *The Uglies*. In addition she gave an oral defense of her capstone paper. When all was said and done, *Julia* graduated with distinction. Way to go *Julia*! *Jacob S.* has been busy authoring stories as a self-selected extension project. He has published and assembled a collection of short stories, and he plans to add to this collection as he writes new stories.

In **Kristi's** math class, *Stevie* and *Erica* are almost finished with their math project on endangered animals. They began collecting data on specific types of endangered animals, but as they researched, their focus switched to endangered plants and animals in the United States. They are compiling their data into a large bar graph; they determined the layout, labels and units to use on their graph themselves. *Althea* researched a mathematician named Escher and designed and created her own tessellation with a dog theme. *Jonathon* stepped up into a leadership role in his math group. His group is creating a picture book of geometric patterns in which they define a geometric term and represent the term with nature photographs that show the pattern. *Corey* has completed the requirements for his presentation portfolio, and his graduation presentation is scheduled for May 11th.

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In **Mrs. Smith's** class we are also celebrating the work of our students this year. Several of our eighth graders have chosen math or science as their capstone graduation project. They have been hard at work completing both the project and the presentation for their committees. It's great to see the responsibility they are growing as they work on this very important exhibition of their knowledge.

My advisory also completed its annual college trip last week when we visited Miami University in Oxford. Our Student Intern, Miss Kelley, served as our host and tour guide to her campus. We had a

chance to find out more about how to get accepted to Miami and what they are looking for in scholarships as well as seeing the campus itself. It was a great day for learning more about college as well as bonding together as an advisory.

I also want to celebrate the learning all of my students have done in math and science this year, but especially want to take this opportunity to congratulate the students who are completing their high-school level work in both algebra and geometry. These students have worked above and beyond the normal middle school level, have struggled together with deadlines and assessments, and have met the benchmarks demonstrating their knowledge.

We have much to celebrate at Central; but more than anything else, we celebrate the growth in learning and maturity of our students!

Other Places and Voices Around Central

Mr. Perdue and his advisory would like to celebrate the graduation of three of our family members to the high school. We are very excited to wish good luck to *Jacob, Paige* and *Kashley*! We want to let them know that even though they are leaving us, they will always be part of our Central family, and they will be greatly missed. We know that all three of you will accomplish great things. Also, Mr. Perdue would like to thank his advisory group, *Grant, DeAnna, Lillie, Paige, Jacob, Leah,* and *Kashley* for their upstanding behavior on the trip to Xavier University. What a great college trip, it was a lot of fun, and we learned a lot about college life.

Anticipation is brewing in our middle school classrooms. It is full of excitement as 8th grade students filled with pride tell me, "I've got everything ready for my portfolio graduation. Do you want to see it?"

Mrs. Carroll got to talk with *Julia* in the hallway as she had just finished her presentation to her graduation committee. As she was bouncing on the inside and out, you could see that she was anxiously awaiting their comments and approval of her presentation. She didn't realize that she was the first student to present until that day. (Wow! How I've seen these kids grow up into mature young adults. I'm so proud of their accomplishments!)

With many students still presenting, I'm sure the excitement will continue to build as our year comes to an end. What a great way to commemorate graduation from Central Academy as our first 8th grade graduating class by celebrating your accomplishments and hard work! Way to go 8th graders!