



November 21 & 28, 2016

Link Letter

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Principally Speaking

Short Week

This week is a short week with the Thanksgiving holiday. We will be closed Wednesday through Friday. We'll see you back next Monday. This week's Link Letter will cover everything for this week and next (so you won't receive a Link Letter next Monday). Please really soak in this break as Winter Break is almost a week shorter this year!



Re-enrollment Time Again

Our annual enrollment process is almost upon us. The process will be a little different this year for all of you who are re-enrolling. Please see the article in the column to the right.

Spotlight on Attendance

Attendance has become more and more important in the life of students. "Getting your child to school on-time, every day, unless they are sick, is something that you can do to ensure your child has a chance to succeed in school. While others can help, you are the bottom line." (AttendanceWorks.org) For more on what you can do to promote good attendance, see the suggestions here: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/about/what-can-i-do/parents/>



Thanksgiving

As we enter into this week of the Thanksgiving holiday, I hope you and your family have some quality time together and plenty to be thankful for. I'm thankful for all of you, and the wonderful school community that we've built, and continue to nurture together.

Keep Discovering! Have a great break!

Coach

John Robinson, Principal/Executive Director/Superintendent
robinsonj@grcdc.org

Family Team Corner

Huge thank you to everybody who ordered wreaths, and to everybody who helped with the sale! The Family Team raised over \$400! This money will be used to help fund extracurriculars, Family Team events, and enrichment materials and field trips for our Discoveries.

Now that it's getting chilly, it will take the kids longer to get ready to go out for recess. Please help teachers by having your children (especially the younger ones) practice getting into and out of their winter gear quickly, to help maximize their time outside.

First Friday Food is the day when the families have the opportunity to provide lunch for the staff at GRCDC. December's meal theme is Healthy vs. Unhealthy. If you would like to participate, sign up by following this link: <http://signup.com/go/z5QjX8>

Central Office Updates

- **Open Enrollment for the 2017-2018** school year begins December 1, 2016. By law in Michigan, charter school families must indicate their intent to re-enroll for the coming school year. **NEW this year**, each family will be receiving a personalized "Intent to Enroll" application in the mail. You must return this document to the school by February 24, 2017 in order to have a spot on the class roster next year. If you do not return this document, your student may lose his or her spot at GRCDC. Make sure to return that document ASAP! Thank you.
- **Thanksgiving Break begins** Wednesday, November 23rd. We have Wednesday, Thursday and Friday off from school.
- **Winter Break** is shortened this year due to the state mandated increase in the number of school days and another state mandate for schools to follow the common calendar that is set by our area intermediate school district (Kent ISD). Please be aware and plan family trips to coincide with the planned days off from school. This is a reminder for you as we made efforts to get the word out about this as early as June of this year via a letter that was mailed home, in the Link Letter and in the printed school calendar.

Calendar

The calendar also available at grcdc.org

11/21	Math Club until 4:30 (5th grade) Girl Scouts 6:00 PM
11/22	Math Club until 4:30 PM (4th grade)
11/23-11/25	Wednesday, Thursday, & Friday Thanksgiving Break, NO SCHOOL
11/28	Math Club until 4:30 (5th grade)
11/29	Math Club until 4:30 (4th grade)
11/30	Early Release Day, Dismissal at 1:10 PM Math Club until 2:30 PM (5th grade)
12/1	Odyssey of the Mind until 5:00 PM Math Club until 4:30 PM (4th grade)
12/2	Afternoon Meeting, 3:00—3:15 PM First Friday Food http://signup.com/go/z5QjX8
12/23—1/2	NO SCHOOL, Winter Break The last day the school is in session before Winter Break is Thursday, December 22nd. There will be no school starting Friday, December 23 through Monday, January 2nd. The first day back in session will be Tuesday, January 3rd.

Please arrange for your child to arrive at school between 7:45—8:00 am. Please sign your child in at the office if arrival is after 8:05 am.

Dismissal is 3:15 pm M, T, Th, F and 1:10 pm on Wednesdays

The Philosophy by Sarah Cooper

From my own classroom experience and current work with Discovery teachers, there seems to be a life cycle associated with projects in our Reggio Emilia inspired school. Projects, as we have come to appreciate them have phases, which vary by Discovery and project. In general I observe projects evolving throughout the school year.

August – October: A summer provocation or homework is sent home prior to the start of the school year and asks children to share parts of their identity. Children represent who they are and teachers use the information provided to build relationships, find commonalities among children and make connections to academic content. Teachers begin documenting how children respond to new provocations in a period of research that yields a documentation tool called the Ball Toss. It tracks the activities teachers plan and the resulting student responses. Under our way of working, teachers use student responses and their work to plan next steps. And the dance continues as if a ball is tossed back and forth between teachers and students. See the Ball Toss from Discovery B this year below:

GRCDC Ball Toss
The purpose of this document is to keep an active record of next steps between teachers and children. This document informs the direction of our yearlong studies and shows the emergence of new ideas, theories, twists and turns, and new understandings.

Teachers	Children
8/15 Summer Provocation Sent home What is play? How do you play by yourself? How do you play as a family?	9/6 Most responses were drawn, some written C. may not have been connected to work (Sana) C. looked for connections (Molly)
9/28 T. Sort provocations by type of activity and talked "what is play?" responses.	9/30 Studio: How do you play with _____? How do you work with _____? PAINT WORK: linear, organized straight lines Play: curvy, messy, fun
Relationships 22 Materials 16 ? 13	
9/30 Ask c.	

November – December: During this time period, generally teachers follow children’s theories found in the summer provocations or other classroom work. Teachers and children engage in conversations, writing, drawings, sculpting, painting, observation, etc. to uncover a meaningful context for teachers to connect academic and social skills to for the remainder of the year. The ball toss continues between children and teachers. And as a result, project goals begin to develop. Adults hypothesize possible challenges, outcomes and how academic content can be arranged to best facilitate learning. Typically teachers uncover social/emotional goals as well, often regarding collaboration and communication. Such a timeline is a general record of how children and teachers work to build meaningful long term projects. It is our Reggio inspired process and will no doubt evolve as we do. But, I urge you to seek out your child’s current project goals and find a way to join! Start with your child’s teacher. He or she is always your primary connection to the classroom, outside of your child.

Sarah Cooper, Pedagogista
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Grand Rapids Nutrition Center

The full menu is available on our website:
<http://grcdc.org/be-connected/link-letters/>

Breakfast (\$1.50):	Lunch (\$2.75):
Milk only: \$0.50	
T— Scrambled eggs	Ham & Cheese Calzone
W— French toast, turkey sausage	Hot dog, onion rings
Th— Egg, cheese, sausage slider	Chicken nuggets
F— Turkey sausage bites	Tony’s cheese pizza
M 12/5—Mini egg & cheese	Honey BBQ dippers
T 12/6—Mini pancakes, yogurt	Philly cheesesteak
W 12/7—Breakfast boat	Chicken fajita
Th 12/8—Waffle stick	Chicken patty
F 12/9—Breakfast wrap	Double stuff cheese pizza
M 12/12—Turkey sausage bites	Minh’s orange chicken

Breakfast time: 7:30AM—7:50 AM

Discovery A & B

Lunch 11:55 AM—12:15 PM Recess 12:15—12:40 PM

Discovery C & D

Lunch 10:55 AM—11:15 AM Recess 11:15—11:40 AM

Discovery E & F

Lunch 11:25 AM—11:45 AM Recess 11:45 AM—12:10 PM

- You may send cash or check with your child to school or you may pay for meals online at mypaymentsplus.com

Community Corner

Immigration Information

I am an immigration attorney and mom to a GRCDC kindergartener. I work with immigrants and the people who love them on a daily basis. Given the promises President-elect Trump made to take some serious and far-reaching steps on the issue of immigration, people are understandably frightened. In an effort to keep our GRCDC community strong and unafraid, I want to offer to speak with anyone about immigration options they may have, or simply about which of the many immigration related “to do” items Trump promised are possible and/or likely. Knowledge is powerful at times like these. Please feel free to email me at mmoore@avantilaw.com or call my cell phone at (616) 635-7871. Should you wish to support our immigrant communities here in Michigan, I suggest a donation to the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (<http://michiganimmigrant.org/>). Thank you, Meghan Moore.

Water for Flint



Families of Flint still need our help! The Flint Water Crisis continues to affect thousands of families and forces them to live with polluted water in their communities.

How can you help? Please join Erica Soto, a GRCDC parent, by donating any amount of sealed water cases or monetary contributions to buy water cases. She will be collecting donations through December 3rd. All donations will be delivered to residents of Flint, Michigan on December 5th and 6th. You may drop off donations at Roosevelt Park Ministries located at 1530 Grandville Ave SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

If you have questions you may contact Erica at 616-206-9602, ekyma7@gmail.com or you may contact Taqiyya Hinds at 860-984-2174, Taqiyya_Hinds1@icloud.com

For monetary donations you may visit:
<https://www.gofundme.com/flint-water-relief-2w857z8>

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