



April 24, 2017

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Link Letter

Principally Speaking

We Need Your Help!

Thank you so much for your help finding two wonderful individuals to join our teacher team. Do you know of anyone in your circle or extended circle that can help us find good candidates? We have leads out on social media now as well to help with the search. To connect with those, please get in touch with me. Otherwise, give your contacts this link (<http://bit.ly/2pt3tMG>) or have them email me, robinsonj@grcdc.org for more information.

Touch Points

Here are a couple interesting touch points for you:

- Students in Discovery D were so excited about their study that they involved it in their play! See Mrs. Cooper's article on the other side for more.
- Check out the Let's Play events at various Grand Rapids Public Library locations this week (<http://bit.ly/2pXuCEK>)
- Check out this resource about National Poetry Month (<http://teacher.scholastic.com/poetry/>).



Strong Schools, Strong Communities

We have received some questions about the Strong Schools, Strong Communities Proposal that will be on the ballot on May 2nd. While this is not an initiative that will benefit GRCDC (based on current law), we are happy to share where you can find out more information. Please follow this link to hear more about the proposal: <http://bit.ly/2ooRdoB>

Early Literacy and Mathematics Benchmark Assessments

GRCDC is participating in the Early Literacy and Mathematics assessments (for all children in grades K-2. It is a short online, state test to measure progress in English language arts and math. We opted into this assessment because 1) we foresee similar testing will be required soon and it offers our children a low stakes opportunity to experience online testing. 2) The data that we receive informs our instruction as results are broken down into content standards. We look forward to reviewing scores to continuously improve our practice and support all children.

Each child will take two tests in math and two tests in English language arts; tests are intended to be approximately 25-45 minutes. Though a timeframe is given, there is no time limit or pressure to complete the test within the scheduled test session. Your child's teacher will monitor children and suggest breaks too. Children are making stress balls and will have access to gum, snacks, water and breaks.

Check out what the test will be like at home with a practice test available here: <http://bit.ly/1Cx Dx2D>. This program will only load in a Chrome browser. If you have any questions, please speak with your child's teacher or contact Sarah Cooper at coopesar@grcdc.org. Thanks!

That's all for this week. As always, thanks for reading, Be Kind, Keep Discovering, and have a great week!

Coach ☺

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

Family Team Corner

Calling all Party Animals! The 1st Annual GRCDC Family Dance is this Saturday - April 29th, 4-7pm! Admission at the Gym Door is free but we are asking for donations. We'll have a band, free family pictures & free refreshments! Dress however you're comfortable - fancy, a little bit dressy, jeans or pjs! Our theme for decorations is a Jungle Party so come out with the whole family for a wild good time! If you would like to donate a baked treat or sign up to help with Set Up on Friday evening or Refreshments on Saturday, please click on the link to sign up - <http://signup.com/go/P8LgzV>

The 2nd Annual Family Team Craft & Rummage Sale will be on Saturday, May 20th. The Sale runs from 10am-4pm and is held right here at GRCDC on the Playground! If you would like to have a booth at the sale, please return the booth reservation form (attached to the Link Letter email) to the Office by May 17th. We accept all types of vendors selling things like homemade soaps, clothing, jewelry and more! It's also a great way to reach more people when you're looking for an alternative to a yard sale! Please email the Family Team with any questions at grcdcfamilyteam@gmail.com.

It is also yearbook shout-out and sponsorship time! For only \$10 you can include a personalized shout-out in this year's yearbook for your special student(s). An order form came home today in your child's folder. Orders are due by Friday, May 19th. If you are interested to sponsoring a larger space, like a whole, half or quarter page, please email family team, grcdcfamilyteam@gmail.com for more information. Every student will receive a yearbook at no cost. We are able to do this with the money generated from the shout outs and sponsorships.

The Central Office Updates are located on page 2 this week!

Calendar

The calendar also available at grcdc.org

Thru 5/26	M-Step Testing -5th and 1st grades testing this week
4/24	Girls on the Run M/F Team until 5:00 PM Girl Scouts, Brownie's only today, 6:00 PM (no Daisy's)
4/25	Girls on the Run T/Th Team until 5:00 PM
4/26	Early Release Day, Dismissal at 1:10 PM Art Club until 2:30 PM
4/27	Girls on the Run T/Th Team until 5:00 PM Minecraft Club, 5:30—7:00 PM
4/28	Afternoon Meeting, 3:00 PM Girls on the Run M/F Team until 5:00 PM
4/29	Family Dance @ GRCDC, 4:00—7:00 PM
5/8	GRASP enrollment forms are due (see page 2)
5/17	Booth Reservations due for craft and rummage sale
5/19	Yearbook Shout Out and Sponsorships due
5/20	GRCDC Craft and Rummage Sale, 10:00 AM—4:00 PM
5/23	Rain Garden Installation—look for more info soon
5/29	Memorial Day Break— NO SCHOOL
6/7	End of Year Celebration, 5:00—7:00 PM
6/9	Fifth Grade Camp Out (overnight at Camp Rockford)
6/12	Fifth Grade Graduation, 2:00 PM

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

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—Kolache	Chicken strips	
W—Turkey bacon boat	Tasty turkey burger	
Th—Mini pancakes	Teriyaki dippers	
F—Breakfast wrap	Ultimate beef nachos	
M 5/1—Cereal	Cheeseburger	

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

The Philosophy by Sarah Cooper Provoking Project Work

As you may know, green space and the grading necessary for a rain garden was installed during the summer of 2016. A rain garden collects storm water that runs off impervious surfaces like our parking lot. According to local experts, the Plaster Creek Stewards, the “rain garden includes native plants that will do well without added nutrients or pesticides. Its purpose is to capture the storm water and filter it naturally through the soil.” Since September, Discovery D children have been curious about our new rain garden space, the collected water and the creatures that could be living there. Teachers challenged children to share their theories about what happens when it rains and identify positive and negative impacts rainwater has on our community. Consider the depth of these responses:

Ruby: [Rainwater] helps plants. Storm water picks up pollution and [can] destroy homes.

Amelia: Water is for us, plants and trees. It brings up worms. [It can cause] erosion, may cause floods and kills insects.

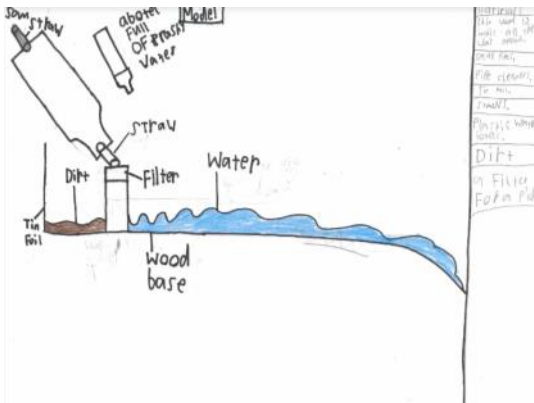
Grae: Mostly [water] makes its way to the lake. [It can cause] floods, wears down mountains, erosion and fills up streams.

Quinn B: When it rains it goes into a drain and that drain goes to the sewer.

Kaelyn: I think the rain goes in the sewer drains. I also think the rain gets absorbed by the ground. Also, plants drink the water.

Diego: Rainfall either seeps into the ground and is filtered through aquifers or runs off hard surfaces into storm drains and back into rivers and lakes.

This year Discovery D researched an eight step process associated with rainfall, storm water and rain gardens. Collaboratively, small groups each designed one of the eight steps as a model to demonstrate what happens when it rains. Each model works with real water and children are currently creating a video to explain their learning and the importance of rain gardens.



Sam’s initial plan for his group’s model (pictured on the left)



NEW, EMERGENT DEVELOPMENT!

Recently, after a big rain, children noticed water pooling near the blacktop and basketball court on the playground. The runoff caused some erosion that children spotted right away! They were inspired by their classroom learning and have begun building their own rain garden on the playground. Children are eager to make it slightly larger, add native plantings and a drain. They have written the entire school to share their work and ask for help. Children keep the space sectioned off to prevent injury with caution tape, tires and cones. Adults are eager to support their interest and excitement; a more official barricade and sign will be coming soon! It is truly inspiring to watch children engaged in their learning, bringing tools from home, building together at recess and naturally solving problems they see in their environment. Thanks for supporting this non-traditional addition to our playground!

SAVE THE DATE! On May 23, the Plaster Creek Stewards will guide us through the installation of our large rain garden, just north of the family parking lot. Parents from all Discoveries are welcome to volunteer that day; a sign up will be published soon. Discovery D children will rotate throughout the day to help with the planting too!

Thanks for your support, Sarah Cooper, Pedagogista coopesar@grcdc.org

Central Office Updates

- **Discovery Care Summer Camp** is a great child care option for the summer. For more details, follow this link and go to the article on page 2: <http://bit.ly/2p9OGqj>
- **This week, the M-Step testing continues for 5th grade students and begins for 1st grade students.** Looking for ways to support your test taker? Check out the Link Letter article by Sarah Cooper from March 20th (page 2) <http://bit.ly/2odlKZl> and this resource from the Michigan Department of Education: <http://bit.ly/2oXQF05>
- We have **applied for a waiver** with the Michigan Department of Education to **start school on August 28th** next school year. For more information see a past Link Letter article about this (page 2): <http://bit.ly/2p9OGqj>

Community Corner—GRASP

The Grand Rapids Academic Summer Program (GRASP) is a 9-week correspondence program for students who have completed grades K-8 that helps students maintain reading and math skills while they are on summer break. It should take you and your child approximately one hour per week to complete each weekly lesson. The enrollment fee is \$20 for one subject or \$36 for both subjects. New this year, students who have just completed 4th—8th grade can participate in the program online! Just indicate your choice on the order form that was sent home today. To see FAQ’s, program reviews, and sample pages, go to <http://www.grps.org/grasp>. (Please note that the pricing on the website is more expensive than the pricing you will get through GRDC.) Questions? Please contact Mrs. Rachel: harthrac@grcdc.org

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