

No School Tomorrow—Teacher Work Day

The News Digest

Parent Conferences Friday, October 9th



Auction Update
from Monica Finkelstein

We are excited to announce that the grand prize for December's pre-auction raffle will be a seven-day stay at a beautiful 2-bedroom condo at the Marriot Royal Palms Resort in Orlando, Florida along with four one-day passes to Walt Disney World theme park. These passes, valued at \$524.00, provide admission to a magical experience at one of the following parks: Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney's Hollywood Studios, or Disney's Animal Kingdom for one day.

This fabulous trip is booked for July 3-10, 2010. This is the perfect time for a family getaway and most importantly, this is a week when Steppingstone does not offer summer camp. Keep a watch out because more details will follow on how you can get your raffle tickets and enter to win this spectacular package. Again, if you would like to volunteer for our event, contact Monica Finkelstein at (248) 882-0470.

Get the most out of this opportunity, parents, and be sure to arrive on time. Each conference period is 45 minutes, and conferences are often back-to-back. If you are going to be late, please give us a call so we can try to reschedule.

At this conference, teachers will be sharing all learning materials, an overview of your child's progress, personal development assessments and goals, and approaches to teaching. They will also have short comments from the enrichment instructors in computers, art, drama, and foreign language.

You will receive a confirmation of your conference start time if you have not already received one. Please contact Donna Coffin immediately if you would like to reschedule. If there are no alternatives available, make-up conferences will be scheduled at 7 am the following week.

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by **Gordon Korman** Page 2

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It's not just a day off. Read about the **Teacher Work Day** . . Page 4

No Classes Tomorrow—Teacher Work Day

Upcoming Events ...

FRI, Sept 25
NO SCHOOL—Teacher
Workday

FRI, Oct 2
Careers Conference

Deadline: Fridays, one week prior
to Thursday publication dates.

Email articles to:
jroder@steppingstoneschool.org

cc:
therbst@steppingstoneschool.org



En Garde!

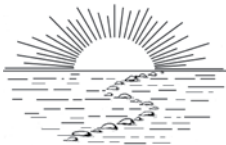


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Steppingstone is an independent state-approved 501(c)(3) non-profit elementary school (K-8) for gifted students. Steppingstone does not discriminate based on race, color, creed, gender, religion, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of any school policy or program.

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Schooled by Gordon Korman

Linda Hoff's, Upper Elementary

Upper Elementary students will be exploring a variety of literature genres this school year as they continue to expand and explore their world of reading. In addition to Power Reading, which is done each day for 30 minutes after lunch, students will be required to read selected class novels.

Beginning a new school year with new classmates and a new teacher can prove challenging at best, but imagine being enrolled in the eighth grade at a public middle school after having spent your previous years being home-schooled by your hippie grandmother! In this novel, Capricorn (Cap) Anderson will help the students explore some of the politics of public school, including bullying, friendship, fitting in, and maintaining individualism.

Individual reading will be supplemented with responses to writing prompts and group discussions. Beatles music is referenced in the novel, so students will have an opportunity to listen to some.

Research indicates that it is important for children to see their parents reading books, newspapers, magazines, and other publications. Check out *Schooled* at your public library, and engage your child in conversation.

Field Day 2009

by Evan Houdek, age 12

Instead of coming to school on Friday, September 11, all students met at Maybury State Park for a Field Day! Armed with extra water, a big lunch, and light clothes, we were ready to play games outside all day long—and the weather was perfect! We played soccer, capture the flag, did stations (for the younger kids), and we also went biking and horseback riding (that last activity was for PHS only). One highlight for everyone was the awesome playground that had a huge climbing structure, swings, and drinking fountains.

About 6:00 pm there was a potluck with our parents who brought all this great food, including potato salad, chicken, AND ice cream! After eating, we chatted, played on the field, and went home. This was one great field day!

The Ancient World

Ms. Morse in the Pre High School

This year in Social Studies, the PHS class will be studying the Ancient World. This text focuses on ancient civilizations, how countries developed, how people decided to settle the land, and how the cultures spread.

We will be focusing on various religions—Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity—and how they were spread. We will also study ancient Greece, the war between Sparta and Athens, Alexander the Great, the rise of democracy, the first unification of India, and the Roman empire.

I am aiming to teach students to think critically through these topics, not only sharing information they know about these cultures and religions, but learning about others and finding commonalities. I hope that it will cause some discussions and that students can learn from each other and teach each other about their belief systems. We will not be trying to change beliefs. We will be sharing different points of view.

As we move through these topics, please pay special attention to the At Home assignments. They are meant to allow you and your child to discuss your philosophies, learn together, and facilitate the exchange of ideas. Parents, this is your opportunity to reinforce your values.

Field Day Thank You

A special thank you to all of the parents who volunteered at this year's Field Day & Potluck. It was a great success!!

Jacquelyn Allen
Nenita Baker
Luis Collazo
Tom & Cindy Collins
Brian Deming
Paul Dyde
Monica Finkelstein
Vicki Gaines
Dawn Gilmore
Nancy Houdek

Kelly House-Seaman
Teodora & Zoran Jevtic
Aparna Joshi
Shere Kahn
Kevin Lampi
Wendy Mayer
Olga Mondrusova
Jackie Robbins
Sanjiv Shah

Ready Set Read!

in Ms. Powell's Early Elementary

This year students will learn to read and practice their new-found reading skills. Reading is like riding a bike—it takes practice. In the classroom students have different opportunities for reading than they do at home.

As parents, you play a key role when you read with your child. When you read with your child, it creates "a sense of enjoyment, wonder, and even a passion for reading." Although it has been mentioned before, I believe that the list below offers some easy and practical ways you can read for pleasure with your child:

- Read with your child every day possible
- Have your child read out loud to you—praise your child's reading
- Take turns reading
- Read books that are of interest to them but are too hard for them to read by themselves
- Have your child retell the story—the way they remember it
- Have your child make up new endings for their favorite story

Now, get ready, set, read!

En Garde!

Steppingstone's Pre High School students have begun saber-fencing classes with Wayne State University's fencing coach, Master Jerzy Radz. The benefits of this lifetime sport and the enthusiasm with which it was embraced by the students caught the attention of the school's administration this summer when Master Radz conducted a one-week summer day camp in the sport. The end-of-class demonstration and competition were given unanimously positive marks by students and parents alike.

The twice-per week classes comprise the major portion of the students' physical education curriculum and emphasize stamina, flexibility, coordination, and mental and physical discipline.

Each student's saber and the required safety gear (mask, vest, and glove) were distributed early this week. The students (and their teacher, Keiko Morse) were eager to receive the equipment and are keen to put it to use.



Suggested Adventure & Mystery Books

Kindergarten - 1st Grade

Adler, David A.
 Bonsall, Crosby
 Calmenson, Stephanie
 *Capucilli, Alyssa
 Cazet, Denys

Christelow, Eileen
 Cronin, Doreen
 Cushman, Doug
 *Frost, Erica
 *Hall, Lynn
 Lexau, Joan M.
 *Myrick, Mildred
 *Palatini, Margie
 Riddell, Chris

Root, Phyllis
 *Rosen, Michael
 Scheffler, Ursel
 *Sharmat, Marjorie Weinman
 Skofield, James
 *Williams, Linda

Bones and the Cupcake Mystery
Case of the Double Cross
Marigold and Grandma on the Town
Biscuit
Minnie and Moo: The Case of the Missing Jelly Donut
Where's the Big Bad Wolf
Thump, Quack, Moo: A Whacky Adventure
Aunt Eater Loves a Mystery
Mystery of the Runaway Sled
Barry, the Bravest Saint Bernard
Rooftop Mystery
Secret Three
Web Files
Ottoline and the Yellow Cat
 (and others in series)
Rattletrap Car
We're Going on a Bear Hunt
Spy in the Attic
Nate the Great (and others in series)
Detective Dinosaur (and others in series)
Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything

Grades 2 - 4

*Adler, David A.

Bunting, Eve
 Clements, Andrew
 *Coleman, Evelyn
 Conford, Ellen
 Dahl, Roald
 Fleischman, Sid
 Hildeck, E. W.

Kline, Suzy
 Marsh, Carole

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds
 *Osborne, Mary Pope
 Peck, Robert Newton
 Peterson, P. J.
 Roy, Ron

Simon, Seymour
 *Sobol, Donald

*Williams, Barbara
 Wright, Betty Ren
 Yep, Laurence

Cam Jensen and the Mystery of the Dinosaur Bones (and others)
Coffin on a Case
Room One: A Mystery or Two
Circle of Fire
Case for Jenny Archer
Minpins
Jim Ugly
Case of the Fantastic Footprints
 (and others in the series)
Herbie Jones
Mystery of the Ancient Pyramids: Cairo, Egypt
Bomb in the Bessledorf Bus Depot
Ghost Town at Sundown
Soup
White Water
Who Broke Lincoln's Thumb (and others in series)
Howling Dog and Other Cases
Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective
 (and others in series)
Titanic Crossing
Ghost in Room 11
Skunk Scout

Grades 5 - 8

Aguiar, Nadia
 *Avi
 Balliett, Blue
 *Bellairs, John

*Byars, Betsy
 *DeFelice, Cynthia C.
 *Doyle, Arthur Conan
 *George, Jean Craighead
 Giff, Patricia Reilly
 *Levin, Betty
 Morpurgo, Michael.
 *Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds
 *Paulson, Gary
 Philbrick, W. Rodman
 Popescu, Petru
 Reiss, Kathryn
 Skurzynski, Gloria
 Van Draanen, Wendelin
 *Wallace, Barbara Brooks
 Wallace, Bill
 *Wright, Betty Ren

Lost Island of Tamarind
True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle
Chasing Vermeer
House with a Clock in Its Walls (and others by author)
Coast to Coast
Ghost of Fossil Geln
Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
Julie of the Wolves
Eleven
Shadow Catcher
Ghost of Grania O'Malley
Fear Place
Haymeadow
Young Man and the Sea
Footprints in Time
PaperQuake, A Puzzel
Wolf Stalker (and others in series)
Sammy Keyes and the Dead Giveaway
Peppermints in the Parlor
Trapped in Death Cave
Out of the Dark

* Books in the Steppingstone Library

Book Club!

Ms. Schultz in the Intermediate Elementary

Next week, students from the Intermediate Elementary class will begin a new phase of our study of literature. Every week students will be given a Book Club assignment to complete. The book club assignment will correlate to the current novel or short story that we will be studying at the time.

Reading novels will be new to our classroom routine this year. To make novel reading fun and educational, I will be adding a new assignment for the students. The Intermediate classroom will have their very own book club in which they can hold discussions, ask questions, and compare thoughts with fellow classmates.

Every Thursday after our literature lesson, students will be given the assignment, a synopsis of our mini-lesson, and the requirements to complete the assignment properly. This will ensure that both the parent and the student are fully apprised of what is expected. Each student may not have the same text, but the focus for the assignment will pertain to the same strategy and, specifically, to her/his reading level.

Please look for the newest book club assignment next Thursday and ask your child what it is about. Hopefully, this assignment and those in the future will be a great way to talk about literature with your child and offer opportunities to share ideas and opinions. I look forward to holding our very own "coffee house" book club, and I hope you do too!



Upper Elementary Lansing Field Trip

Activities and How They Enrich the Curriculum: Upper Elementary is studying the United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights this academic year. Each state functions with a state constitution and follows the guidelines established by the federal government. Students will be able to tour the Hall of Justice, Michigan Supreme Court, Museum of Michigan History, and Michigan Capitol. Making connections to the students' everyday world make learning more meaningful.

Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2009
Time: 9:00 am

Departure from Steppingstone: 9:00 am
Arrival at Steppingstone: around 4:15—4:30 pm

Contact Person: Capitol Tours, 517-373-2354
Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center, 517-373-7171
Museum of Michigan History, 517-373-2354

Address: Michigan Capitol, Capitol Square, Lansing, MI

Directions to Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center: Orchard Lake to I-696 West. Continue on I-96 West. Exit east 106B (127/496 exit). Follow I-496 for downtown Lansing to Exit 5 for M. L. King Blvd.

Apparel: Skirts and slacks. No jeans, shorts, or t-shirts.

Lunch: Students need to supply a disposable sack lunch and beverage.

Dismissal: upon arrival at about 4:15—4:30 pm

Parent Conferences Friday, October 9th

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No School Friday Teacher Work Day

Enjoy the long weekend, students, but use part of it to make sure you have completed all your assignments well and correctly so that you can arrive next Monday on top of your game.

Parents, this is an opportunity, not only for some relaxation, but also for your child to catch up if s/he was taken by surprise. We jump right into the curriculum and have no time to waste. Our teachers are conscientious about quality teaching and quality learning. Your child has the opportunity to establish excellent study habits and self-management; here's your opportunity to reinforce them!

While your task has been described above, your teachers will be catching up and planning ahead as well. They will also be preparing for Parent Conferences, which will follow in a couple of weeks.

ADMINISTRATION

Head of School	Kiyo Morse
Assistant Head	Thomas Herbst
Admissions Director	Donna Coffin
Special Programs Director, & Office Manager	Sandra Blay
Business and Facilities Manager	

STAFF

General Assistant, IT Specialist	Jason Roder
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FACULTY

Early Elementary	Carol Powell
Intermediate Elementary	Janelle Schultz
Upper Elementary	Linda Hoff
Pre High School, Faculty Chair	Keiko Morse

INSTRUCTORS

Art	Mary Gage
Japanese	Mieko West
Spanish	Ana Maria Gonzalez

Mandarin Chinese	Hong Lin
Computer	Dr. Reef Morse
Extended Day	Mary Gage
Fencing	Jerzy Radz
Performing Arts	Kathy Nellett

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Vice-Chair	Jenifer Lampi

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Publications Coordinator	JaNele Jordan
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