

Training Tonight: How To “Ask” For Capital Campaign Donations

The News Digest

**Capital Campaign
Strategic Planning**
9 am - 4 pm
SAT, Nov 21st

Parents, you are all invited to attend. It is important that everyone come to give us input. Both parents are welcome, but if only one parent can attend, we would appreciate your attendance. We need your point of view.

Also attending will be Faculty, Staff and Trustees. The more who can attend, the better the outcome will be.

Thanks in advance for your participation!

**NOTICE: Vision/Hearing
Screenings**

Vision Screening will take place on Tuesday, December 1, at 1:30 p.m. for all students in the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th grades.

Hearing Screening will be on Friday, December 4, at 1:30 p.m. for all students in K-4, K, 2nd, and 4th grades. If your child does not come to school on Fridays, you may bring him/her to school at 1:30 p.m. on Dec. 4.

- Page 1 Understanding media and its effects on kids is ***Common Sense***
- Page 1 There’s a ***Capital Campaign Strategic Planning*** meeting coming up
- Page 2 The Early Elementary’s Social Studies class is ***Peaches and Sunshine***
- Page 2 Ms. Morse writes about ***Assessing Learning***
- Page 2 The Intermediate Elementary will be learning about ***The History of Thanksgiving***
- Page 2 ***NOTICE: Vision/Hearing Screenings*** are coming up
- Page 2 Mrs. Hoff went to a presentation on ***Algebraic vs. Non-Algebraic Thinking***, and wants to share what she learned
- Page 2 Last week’s article on Spirit Day missed a few winners, so check out the ***High-Stepping Corrections***
- Page 3 ***Got Talent?*** Show us at Winterfest!
- Page 3 Check out Allison Epshteyn’s article on ***Literary Character Day***
- Page 3 ***Boys and Girls: A Request from the Library Committee*** about that book cart in the Son Room
- Page 3 Jacob Kahn writes about the fencing demonstration last week, in ***Lunging into Spirit Day***
- Page 3 ***Can You Help?*** The Yearbook Committee needs some photos

Training Tonight: How To "Ask" For Capital Campaign Donations

Upcoming Events ...

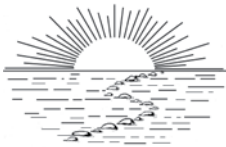
WED, Nov 25
1:30 pm, Grandparents and
Special Guests
Afternoon

THURS - FRI, Nov 26 - 27
NO SCHOOL—Have a
Great Thanksgiving!

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

Email articles to:
jroder@steppingstoneschool.org

cc:
therbst@steppingstoneschool.org



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Spirit Day Awardees Alaina Lurie, Allison Epshteyn, Jacob Kahn, Evan Houdek, and Melissa Wood

Contents

Common Sense	1
Capital Campaign Strategic Planning 9 am - 4 pm SAT, Nov 21st	1
Peaches and Sunshine	2
Assessing Learning	2
The History of Thanksgiving	2
NOTICE: Vision/Hearing Screenings	2
Algebraic vs. Non-algebraic Thinking	2
High-Stepping Corrections	2
Got Talent?	3
Literary Character Day	3
Boys and Girls: A Request from the Library Committee	3
Lunging into Spirit Day	3
Can You Help?	3

Common Sense

Looking for help deciding the movies, TV shows, music, and video games to which you should allow your child(ren) access? One website that offers insight and useful information is www.common-sensemedia.org Check it out.

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Peaches and Sunshine

Ms Powell, Early Elementary

Next week in social studies, we will continue our trek across the USA. Having completed the tour of the Northeastern states, students landed in the Southern states by way of Virginia, North and South Carolina. Students use *World Books* and other resources to complete maps of the states and thereby discover many interesting facts about the states. Once students complete maps and information sheets, they create travel ads for their favorite state and mobiles highlighting state facts.

The most interesting question during our studies has been, "How can we go to all those states at once?" Having toured the east coast once with my family, I was able to trace my route for the students on the map. Our next stops will be "The Peach State," Georgia, and Florida, "The Sunshine State," they want to make it in one day!

To help your child prepare for their "trip," get out the family map and trace the route your family might take if you were touring Georgia and Florida. Have fun, ya'all!

Assessing Learning

Ms. Morse, Pre High School

Next week, students of the Pre High School class will be running tests on two containers of starch solution to determine which one contains an enzyme produced in the human mouth. This is the culmination activity for the unit on the digestive system, and students will need to put all their knowledge and skills to work.

Testing for the enzyme is an example of assessment in which students perform a task. It is a better indicator to a teacher of what the student knows than a pencil and paper test because it shows what a student can do rather than what a student can memorize. A student who can apply knowledge has truly acquired it and will remember it.

The History of Thanksgiving

Ms. Schultz, Intermediate Elementary

In the next Social Studies lesson, the Intermediate Elementary will be diving into one of America's most memorable holidays. Students will learn the facts and myths that surround the "First Thanksgiving" (the harvest celebration of 1621) at Plymouth Colony and will discover the role that historians play in the collection and dissemination of history. Next, students will use their knowledge of the "First Thanksgiving" to create a museum exhibit of their own and complete a quiz after viewing the entire "Investigate the First Thanksgiving" site on the web.

During this technologically interactive and interesting lesson, students will step into the moccasins of Dancing Shoes, a modern-day descendant of the Wampanoag Indians, and Sara, a descendant of Remember Allerton, one of the original colonists who landed at Plymouth aboard the Mayflower. To do that, we will use a projector to display information for students that will enable them to explore different sections of the site as a class.

This lesson will also offer a time to reflect about what we are thankful for and the importance of telling those whom we care about how much we appreciate them.

Let me start. Here's to you, parents! Thank you for your patience, dedication, values, and thoughtfulness. Thank you for your enthusiasm, perseverance, understanding, and loyalty. But most of all, thank you for your support. Without the foundations you have laid, my job would be impossible.

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Algebraic vs. Non-algebraic Thinking

Mrs. Hoff, Upper Elementary

A few weeks ago at the AIMS (Association of Independent Michigan Schools) Conference, I had the opportunity to sit in on a presentation by Greg Tang, an author who writes children's literature about mathematics. His posing question to the teachers in attendance was: Are you teaching algebraic or non-algebraic thinking in your mathematics classes? His belief is that teachers should be teaching their students general rules that apply to many situations.

For example, if a teacher asks a student to solve 25×7 in his or her head, how should the student go about solving this problem? Teachers should encourage their students to begin thinking in groups of 10, or half a group of 10. This is a general rule that makes solving mathematics problems easier to do without paper and pencil. Students should be thinking: 20 groups of 7 are 140, plus 5 groups of 7 are 35. Therefore, the solution is 175. This general rule makes solving the problem so much easier than visualizing 5 groups of 7 is 35, regroup the 3, 20 groups of 7 is 140 plus 30. So, the solution must be 175.

I encourage your students to process mathematics problems in this manner. I believe that mathematics in the upper elementary grades is providing the foundation for the algebra classes that will soon become part of your student's curriculum in the upper grades.

On your next visit to the library, check out some of Greg Tang's books: *The Grapes of Math*, *The Best of Times*, *Math Appeal*, *Math-terpieces*, and *Math Potatoes*. Research indicates that cross-curricular teaching applies, integrates, and transfers knowledge, increases motivation, and improves learning. Reading math based literature helps students learn that math is fun!

High-Stepping Corrections

Additions to last weeks High Stepper Awardees list:

Diego Collazo
Alaina Lurie

Congratulations to both of you for your efforts, and we apologize for the error. Keep it up!



Got Talent?

Showcase YOUR talent at our Winterfest Variety Show! If you have a particular talent, now is your time to shine in the spotlight! Singers, musicians, comedy routines, magic tricks, dancing—YOU name it! Please make sure that you return the flier to Ms. Morse with all the information filled out by November 30, 2009. Auditions will begin that day. Pieces must be performance-ready.

Any questions? Please direct all correspondence regarding this event to Ms. Morse.

Literary Character Day

Allison Epshteyn, age 11

Literary Character Day is usually the Friday before Halloween. On this special day, we dress up as the main character of one of our Power Reading books. We go around and try to guess who everyone else is. We have to guess the name of the person; or, if it's an animal, we have to guess what kind of animal it is and its name. It's very challenging, but a lot of fun to see what other people are dressed up as. There's even a prize for guessing the most characters correctly. This goes on all morning.

In the afternoon, we all go ice-skating at the Farmington Ice Arena. After we arrive, we lace up our skates and quickly eat lunch so that we can head on to the rink, where we skate while music plays. Some of the littler kids use walkers, which helped them get used to ice skating. Other people just hold on to the wall. Most of us were pretty good, though. We skated until 2:30, when we stopped and went back to the school. Then we had recess until our parents picked us up. It was a good day!

Boys and Girls: A Request from the Library Committee

Please, Please, Please put any books you want to donate to our school library on the library cart in the coffee (Board) room. If you leave your name with the books, we will send you a donation letter.

Non-library books are being put on the cart with the returned books – if they are yours, please tell us what to do with them!

Lunging into Spirit Day

By Jacob Kahn, age 13

Every month our school celebrates a Spirit Day. This is a special day when parents visit, snacks are sold, and we celebrate and recognize excellence. We have monthly awards for the following: writer, artist, typist, computer programmer, runners, high steppers and honorable mentions, as well as an award for being In the Spotlight. At the assembly, all of these awards are explained.

However, some things you have to see to believe. Thus, on our last school spirit day, in order to recognize the PHS class' fencing prowess, we held a live display. The students played a game they were all particularly fond of. The class is divided into equal teams and placed on opposite sides of a field. There is a defined no-man's-land in between. The team that has the last fencers at the end is declared victorious. On spirit day, right before all of the parents' eyes, we played this game up to five points and demonstrated our fencing knowledge. On display were our footwork, advancing, retreating, and lunging. We also showed our adeptness with swords, from basic to advanced attacks, feigned attacks, and parries. The display went well and, needless to say, all of the spectators were very impressed with our swordsmanship. We hope to see you next month!

Can You Help?

The yearbook committee is in need of some photos from events that have happened this school year. These events are First Day Celebration, Field Day, Opening Potluck, Fall Kite Week, Career Day, Spirit Day, Literary Character Day, Ice Skating Afternoon, and the Social Studies Expo. If you have any digital photos you would be willing to share, please forward them (on a CD, DVD, thumb drive, or SD card that will be returned) to the front office.

We are also looking for some parent volunteers to take pictures of the coming events. Please keep us in mind. Thanks in advance from your Steppingstone yearbook crew!

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Assistant Head
Admissions Director
Special Programs Director, & Office Manager
Business and Facilities Manager

Kiyo Morse
Thomas Herbst
Donna Coffin
Sandra Blay

STAFF

General Assistant,
IT Specialist

Jason Roder

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Intermediate Elementary
Upper Elementary
Pre High School,
Faculty Chair
AIMS/TSC Representative

Carol Powell
Janelle Schultz
Linda Hoff
Keiko Morse

Carol Powell

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Japanese
Spanish

Mary Gage
Mieko West
Ana Maria
Gonzalez

Mandarin Chinese
Computer
Extended Day
Fencing
Performing Arts

Hong Lin
Dr. Reef Morse
Mary Gage
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Kathy Nellett

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Head of School

Steppingstone School for Gifted Education
A Home of Our Own Capital Campaign

Volunteer Training Session

- WHO:** Lynette Zimmerman
Major Gifts Manager
Coalition on Temporary Shelter (COTS Detroit)
- WHAT:** Ms. Zimmerman will conduct a training seminar for volunteers who plan to solicit gifts in support of the campaign. All parents, faculty, staff and board members are invited to attend.
- WHEN:** Thursday, November 19, 2009 at 7:00 pm
- WHERE:** Steppingstone School
- WHY:** To reach the campaign goal of \$500,000 and to help volunteers feel comfortable and knowledgeable when asking for campaign gifts from businesses, individuals, and organizations

Please RSVP to JaNele Jordan, Campaign Coordinator by November 18, 2009 at janelejordan@hotmail.com.

VARIETY SHOW PROPOSAL

Got Talent? All students are invited to SUBMIT AN **ACT!**

Requested Considerations:

1. Must be performance-ready by rehearsal date: students may not use music, words must be memorized, accompaniment tape must be prepared – if needed – for vocal performances (no words, just back-up music, please)
2. Prepare **ONE** piece – there is a 3 minute time limit
3. Proposal due Tuesday, November 30
4. Auditions start Monday, November 30 – changes to the program will not be permitted after this date

Singing, dancing, recitation, instrumentals, gymnastics, pantomime, comedy, drama, magic, or any other PRACTICED proposal will be considered. Group efforts are acceptable as long as they are memorized, polished, and PRACTICED performances.

CAUTION: Group efforts REQUIRE PARENTAL ASSISTANCE, usually in the form of providing transportation and practice time, 3 to 4 times per week. Parents do NOT agree to a group act unless you can commit to this type of assistance.

Performances do not need to be advanced, but "lip synch" and "ad lib" proposals will not be accepted. Written evaluations will be returned after any performance reviews and/or rehearsals.

1) NAME OF PERFORMER/S: _____

2) TYPE OF PERFORMANCE (i.e., vocal, violin, piano, comedy): _____

3) TYPE OF EQUIPMENT TO BE USED IN ADDITION TO INSTRUMENT (must be supplied by performer): _____

4) TITLE AND COMPOSER/AUTHOR of any piece BEING USED:

Title: _____

Composer: _____

5) NAMES OF ANY HELPERS (i.e., Accompanist, etc) and role:

STUDENT SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

PARENT SIGNATURE _____ DATE: _____

REVIEW DATE/S:

COMMENTS: (see reverse, also)