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**Interim Principal Newsletter**



## **Home of the Dolphins**

**March 1st, 2022**

Geer Park Families:

Hello from your Interim Principal, Mrs. Faraj. I hope March's Parent Newsletter finds you in good health, prosperity, and peace! We hope you have some space in your calendars this month because there is a LOT going on in the month of March and we want our parents engaged in school events as much as possible! Please see the attached school calendar for more information. We will be holding a Parent Education Meeting next Thursday, March 10th from 9:30am-10:30am in the media center. The topic will be "*Effects of the Pandemic on Elementary Children: Practical Strategies for Families.*" We will have special guests from ACCESS as well as highly qualified staff available to facilitate meaningful dialogue with parents. We have a raffle for parents in attendance and all children whose parents attend will also get a special treat. We hope to see you there!

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First, let's talk about what is going on in your child's classrooms. Our committed staff that includes 6 Grade-Level PLC Representatives: Mrs. Klein, Mrs. Hourani, Miss Donoghue, Mrs. Alhusaini, Mrs. Gutierrez, and Mrs. Chisek, have a brief summary as it relates to your child's learning! Check them out below...

**KDG:** *In kindergarten we continue to work very hard with our reading. We have started focusing on word families, which will help with our reading and writing. We have also started having weekly spelling tests. In math we are beginning to work with number bonds. The numbers bonds help us with simple addition. Number bonds also help us to see the whole number and break it apart. In writing we are working on opinion writing. We are stating our opinion and giving one reason to support. In social studies we will begin working on maps and places in our community. In science we are finishing up our learning on weather and seasons. Our next unit will be on forces, which we will explore pushes and pulls. Please continue to read everyday for at least 10-15 minutes.*

**1st Grade:** *In math, First Grade just finished up Module 3 on Measurement. This past week we began Module 4 that focuses on Place Value. To supplement your child's math stamina you can have them go on Zearn at home to improve their fact fluency skills. We will begin unit 7 in ELA that ties into Social Studies This unit focuses on the past, present and future. In writing we have been working on opinion pieces. Our last writing assignment was about the Mo Willems story **Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late**. The students had a lot of fun deciding if they should let the Pigeon stay up late. At home you can discuss your child's opinions on different things and ask them to*

support those opinions with reasons. Please continue to support your child at home with reading **every** evening for 20 minutes. This is a requirement for all first grade students to ensure fluency as well as accuracy in reading. When your child is reading, ask them to tell you who or what the book is about. Also, encourage your child to make connections when reading. This is something we do in class and it helps build comprehension and deeper understanding. Let's continue to foster a love of reading during March is Reading Month!

**2nd Grade:** Students are busy exploring, solving, comprehending and discussing new material. For the month of March, Second Graders are focusing on the following criteria for each subject. In ELA: Reading passages written by authors from diverse cultures and gaining insight into how others view the world with understanding and tolerance. In Math: Solving subtraction and addition problems using standard algorithms with regrouping, as well as solving story problems. In Science: Exploring how water shapes the earth's surface by constructing and using models of mountains to demonstrate how water flows downhill, transforms huge rocks into tiny grains of sand; determine the causes of erosion, and design solutions to problems caused by erosion. In Social Studies: How citizens live in a community and discuss the different types of government and their roles. Additionally, students are using **MobyMax** which is a differentiated learning website to close the gap and provide students with learning opportunities based on their needs.

**3rd Grade:** In reading, we are in the middle of Unit 5-Innovations of Technology. Students are reading about famous inventions such as the telephone and different inventors like Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell. In math, we began Unit 4 last week. Students will learn how to determine the area of a shape. In our weather science unit, students have been graphing the weather and have become experts at identifying the types of clouds in the sky (cumulus, cumulonimbus, stratus, stratonimbus). They are excited to one day see a cumulonimbus cloud, which they think is the coolest storm cloud. Social studies has been focused on the History of Michigan. So far we have learned about the Native Americans in Michigan, the Fur Trade, and the war between the French and British. We will continue to learn about the pioneers who came to Michigan and how we finally became a state. We are excited about our upcoming trip to Lansing on March 23rd to visit our state Capitol and Michigan Historical Museum. We take this trip every year as it relates to our history and government units in social studies.

**4th Grade:** This month in 4th grade students are continuing to practice basic multiplication facts and also learning to multiply larger digit numbers in math. Our plans are to have a 4th grade multiplication competition after spring break. More details and dates to come later this month. 4th graders are also starting a new reading and writing unit where they will explore points of view and writing fictional scenes. In social studies, students are learning about government, The Constitution, branches of government, and the Bill of Rights. Finally, in science, students are learning about sound waves. We'll be doing an experiment on high and low sounds. We've also been discussing how sound is a wave that vibrates the air around us.

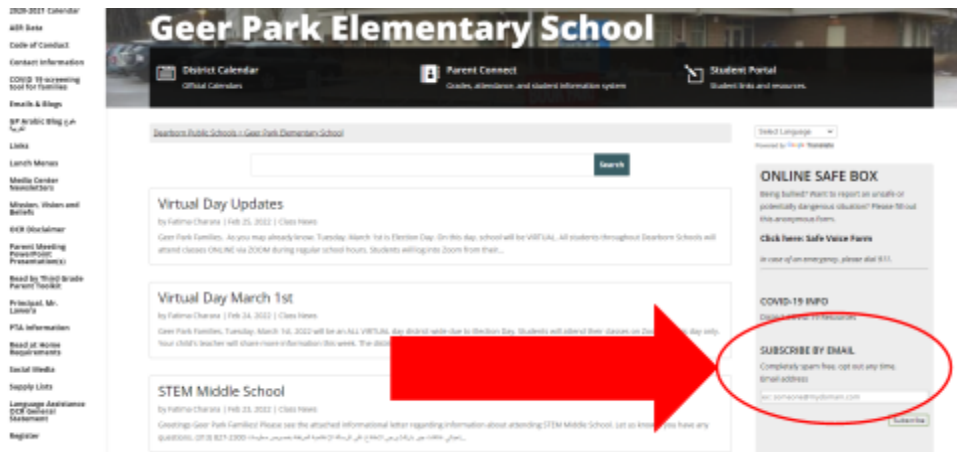
**5th Grade:** Greetings from 5th Grade! While we have spent much time this year on Social Emotional Learning (SEL), we are also making a lot of progress academically! In Math, we continue working on adding and subtracting fractions with unlike denominators. We are drawing fraction models and using multiplication to make equivalent fractions. In addition, we are practicing fractions in word problems. For ELA, we are in Unit 6, which includes reading a variety of literature and focusing on the strategies of comparing and contrasting characters and stories, determining the theme, and using context clues to determine the meaning of words and phrases. Also, we are discussing and writing about our opinions on different topics. In Science, we are exploring a new unit called *Chemical Magic!* In this unit, students investigate the properties of matter by dissolving everyday chemicals to make solutions, and by exploring simple, yet surprising, chemical reactions. Through these investigations, students

begin to build conceptual models for the particulate nature of matter. For Social Studies (U.S. History), we have finally reached the Revolutionary War! We have been following along with Liberty Kids. Ask your child about it! At the end of the unit, students will be working in groups to make a Revolutionary War board game!

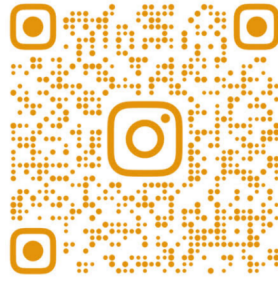
Speaking of our amazing teachers, please be sure that you are encouraging your child to complete the Teacher of the Year nomination form attached here: [TEACHER OF THE YEAR FORM](#). You can also visit <https://www.dearbornareachamber.org/> for more information. Students are allowed to complete 2 nominations. Every year, the Dearborn Chamber of Commerce honors Dearborn educators nominated by their students at an event open to the public at the Dearborn Ford Community and Performing Arts Center. Student nominations are read during the ceremony for the winning teacher and teachers are eligible for well-deserved recognition and prizes! We have had several winners from Geer Park before and look forward to continuing this meaningful tradition.

Next, I would like to emphasize the importance of staying connected to the school community. We all lead very busy lives and with the speed of technology and information, it seems that time passes by even faster each year. However, setting time aside each day and week to touch base with information or news from the school will only take a few moments. There are a variety of ways to stay connected:

1. Sign up for our school blog. Go to [geerpark.dearbornschools.org](http://geerpark.dearbornschools.org). In addition to helpful links along the left of the site, there is a subscription feature on the right hand side if you scroll down. Please visit the site and enter your email address, you will then receive a confirmation email that you must approve. Once you do that, you will be subscribed to our blog!



2. Another way to stay connected is via our building and district social media accounts. If you would like to follow Geer Park or Dearborn Schools on social media, feel free to follow or subscribe to:  
Instagram: [@geer\\_park](#) or scan the QR code below!



**GEER\_PARK**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Geer-Park-Elementary/383738438451611>

- Last, but not least, PLEASE be sure that your child's emergency contact information is up to date with the school. This includes emails, cell phones, and contacts. If you do not speak English or have a family member who supports your child at home such as an uncle, aunt, or older cousin, please feel free to add them as a primary contact as long as they are over the age of 18. We will be sending home this newsletter with your child at the start of each month, but will avoid excessive hard-copy notifications as often as possible to reduce our carbon footprint and impact on our environment.*

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We are planning our Kindergarten Round-Up for Wednesday, March 23rd, 2022. During this time, our Coaches and Kindergarten teachers will be presenting to parents of all incoming kindergarten students. If you have a child who will be enrolled in kindergarten in the 2022-2023 school year, please attend this important event. We present an overview of the services and classrooms that are offered based on the needs of your child. We also prepare parents with a welcome packet that includes important information about how to prepare your child for the upcoming school year and have a sign up for a basic skills screener. We may have the opportunity next year to open a Young 5's classroom. This extra year of early learning for students has now resulted in district data that suggests that children who were enrolled in a Young 5's classroom outperform their peers who were not. More information will be coming soon!

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**March is Reading Month and we are excited and eager to start the celebration of this important month with our students. We have a lot of engaging and meaningful activities planned that include: special guest readers, a Book Drive for families in need, daily themes to motivate a love of reading, Raffle Baskets, and weekly Spirit Days to name a few. We will culminate the month with our annual Literacy Night on March 24th. This is always a fun-filled family event and we look forward to it each year. Reading is important every day of the year, but during the Month of March, it is a great time to remind students that reading is a celebration of words, stories, and lives! The calendar below features all of our exciting events and activities, we hope to see you there!**

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WIDA testing is still ongoing. Thank you to Ms. Charara, Ms. Nasir, and Ms. Mallah for continuing to facilitate that process for our students to ensure that our English Learners are progressing in their acquisition of Academic Language proficiency. Mastering academic language proficiency is essential to success for ALL

students and our teachers are continuously supporting this development across all content areas. You can support this important skill by promoting reading at home every single day for 20-30 minutes and talking to your child about their day in complete sentences, asking them questions to elaborate on, and encouraging them to share their ideas about different things that are happening in your homes and lives in ANY language. WIDA results will be shared with parents in the Fall and will help to guide our instructional focuses.

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We will be doing an inventory of our Book Room at Geer Park. As you know, these books go home with students in their book bag and are leveled readers that help to support growth in reading and mastery of grade level expectations in literacy. During the pandemic, many of these books were never returned. PLEASE go through your child's things in your home and check to see if you have any books that may need to be returned. We are giving students 1 free raffle ticket towards the Literacy Night Prize Raffle Baskets for every single book that they return to school!

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As always, the office is here to support our families. Please feel free to stop by or reach out with questions, concerns, or suggestions. A gentle reminder that instruction starts PROMPTLY at 9am, please be sure your child is on time! We hope to see ALL of our families at Geer Park this month!

Mrs. Faraj