

PLAINS SCHOOL

Newsletter

Principal's News

Submitted by Gina Moulton

Dear Plains Families,

I would like to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Gina Moulton and I have been teaching kindergarten for 18 years, 17 years at Plains. I live with my husband, two children-ages 7 and 10, a puppy, and two old cats. I enjoy surfing in Mexico and can't wait to get back there! To support our Plains school family, I will be stepping in as Interim Principal while Mr. Skala is on leave. We have a special community of teachers, staff, students, and families at Plains and I am thrilled to work with you all to provide support through these challenging times. Please reach out to me if I can assist you in any way. rmoulton@shschools.com

*We will have parent-teacher conferences March 10 th and 11 th . These days will be ½ days for your students. Your classroom teacher will reach out to schedule a conference time.

*Report Cards will be sent home at the end of March.

*Kindergarten registration will take place in April.

We all know that we are facing challenging times. Many people have taken the time to thank teachers, families, healthcare and other essential workers. We can't thank them enough for their dedication to helping others. I ask everyone to take a moment and think about our students. Have we taken the time to thank them? Our little people are going through something that no other children have ever had to do. They are attending school from home. This is new to everyone and challenging, yet our students keep pushing and trying their best. Please take a moment to hug, kiss, and thank your students at home for all of their hard work and dedication. They are amazing!

Sincerely,

Gina Moulton

Pronouns: she, her, hers

Kindergarten News
Submitted by Gina Moulton
Grade Level Coordinator
Tree Song
by Lorraine Hammond

This is my trunk I'm a tall tall tree
In the springtime the blossoms grow on me.
They open, they open.
This is my trunk I'm a tall tall tree
In the summer the breezes blow through me,
I bend, I bend.
This is my trunk I'm a tall tall tree
In the autumn the apples grow on me,
They drop, they drop.
This is my trunk I'm a tall tall tree
In the winter the snowflakes fall on me,
Brrrrr, Brrrrr

In March, classes will celebrate the 100th day of kindergarten with a variety of counting activities. Some classes will work with 100 items and made 100-item creations.

Children

have been counting each day of school and noticing number patterns on the hundreds chart. We continue to practice skip counting, reading larger numbers, and writing numbers. Children will begin breaking numbers apart, finding number partners, and looking for tens within teen numbers.

We will continue to meet for reading groups, study our sight words, and have fun with our Writer's Workshop stories. Classes will also explore the history and traditions of St. Patrick's Day, watch for signs of spring, and study Dr. Seuss and his books.

Parent-teacher conferences will be held March 10th and 11th . Your teacher will contact you and schedule a time to meet.

SAVE THE DATE! Thursday, March 25th at 6:00, we will have a virtual Kindergarten Literacy Night for kindergarten students and families. During this session, we will share tips for supporting your reader at home. We hope you can join us for this interactive literacy night. We will send more details soon.

Grade One News
Submitted by Ashley Macey
Grade Level Coordinator

It is hard to believe that the 100th day of school has come and gone. The children celebrated this milestone with many counting activities. This celebration was one of the numerous events occurring in February. The children also learned about the Chinese New Year and the many traditions and customs surrounding it; Groundhog Day – predicting and estimating what will happen; Valentine’s Day – a celebration of love, friendship and kindness; Black History Month and recognizing the many famous/historic people for their achievements; Dental Health Month and the importance of good oral health; President’s Day, and a well-deserved week off for winter break.

March is a time to welcome the warmer, spring weather. Spring is a season of renewal, rebirth and new beginnings. The days are longer and brighter, flowers are blooming, robins are singing and good moods are all around to celebrate another beautiful season. Things come back to life and invigorate us for the remainder of the year. March is an exciting month especially this year because we will be welcoming some of our students back in person after an entire year!

Midway through the month, teachers will be having parent conferences for the students they may have concerns about. Following this, your child will be receiving their second term report card. While most parents are familiar with the marking system, it can still be a bit confusing. Please keep in mind that it is a grade level expectation that children will be at “M” (*Meets the Standard*) for all items by the **end** of the school year. This means that “P” (*Progressing*) is still an appropriate mark for this point in the year. You may also see the mark of “NA” (*Not Assessed*) on your child’s report card. This means that, although the teacher has been working with the particular skills and concepts as a whole class, individual children have not been assessed. “NA” could also mean that the teacher will be teaching that item as a unit or part of a unit during the last part of the school year. This is often the case for science and social studies units. If you should have any questions about the markings on your child’s report card, please contact your child’s teacher.

As always, thank you for your support.

Counselor's Corner March 2021
Nancy Jessup, LICSW
School Adjustment Counselor

Being a parent can be one of the most satisfying things in our lives. It can also be the most challenging and frustrating. Dealing with a child’s anger among the biggest challenges of parenting. It’s a challenge to allow children to express their angry feelings without letting them be abusive.

I have found, in responding to the behavioral needs of young children, that an important task for us is to help them to learn appropriate ways of dealing with their anger. Children need to learn safe limits to their behavior

for their own security and for the safety of others. They also need to know that their feelings are understood. When a child feels that they are being recognized and that their feelings are acknowledged, this helps them build a healthy sense of self. It's important to communicate to a child that it's OK to be angry, everyone gets angry from time to time; it's what we do with our anger that's important.

One way to do this is to model for our children. We can use "I" statements, such as "I feel angry when..." We can also show them ways to cool down and be able to talk about their angry feelings. Counting to five or ten is one method of calming down; taking three slow deep breaths is another. Sometimes hitting a pillow, pounding clay, or ripping up newspaper helps to vent those angry feelings. It's important to be direct and tell children things such as "We don't hit. Hitting hurts" or "It's not OK to break anything." Sometimes we may need to remove a young child from a situation if they are hurting someone or something. We can let children know that we understand their feelings by saying, "It sounds like you're angry," or "Boy, you look really mad." This helps young children to learn to identify and name what they are feeling; often, they can't articulate it for themselves.. Then, when they have calmed down, you can invite them to talk about what made them angry and help them come up with solutions.

Just like adults, children don't think too well when they are in a rage. They don't listen too well either. That's when we can model the calming down techniques and say to them, "We can talk about this when you're feeling calmer." When a very young child is throwing a tantrum, they may just need an adult there to keep them safe and hold them when it's all over. The force of their own anger can frighten children.

It's not easy for an overstretched parent to always be able to handle these situations calmly, particularly if they occur at inopportune moments, like in the grocery store or on the way out the door. That's particularly true right now during the pandemic. Everyone is stressed. It's important for parents to get the support they need, to talk to other parents who can relate to what it's like. It helps to know that it's something that all parents deal with at one point or another.

Second Step is the violence prevention program that is taught in all the classes in kindergarten and first grade. The third and last unit of the year is "Emotion Management" which teaches children techniques they can use to calm down. This can be reinforced at home. If anyone is interested in learning more about the Second Step Program, please feel free to contact me at njessup@shschools.com. Or you can check out their website secondstep.org where there are informational materials for parents.

WELLNESS CORNER

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINES FROM THE CDC



Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?

No. None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines or COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

There are several different types of vaccines in development. All of them teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. Learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work.

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity (protection against the virus that causes COVID-19) after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and still get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, will I test positive for COVID-19 on a viral test?

No. Neither the recently authorized and recommended vaccines nor the other COVID-19 vaccines currently in clinical trials in the United States can cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection.

If your body develops an immune response—the goal of vaccination—there is a possibility you may test positive on some antibody tests. Antibody tests indicate you had a previous infection and that you may have some level of protection against the virus. Experts are currently looking at how COVID-19 vaccination may affect antibody testing results.

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, a vaccine should be offered to you regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection. CDC is providing recommendations to federal, state, and local governments about who should be vaccinated first.

At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person to person. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long.

We won't know how long immunity produced by vaccination lasts until we have more data on how well the vaccines work.

Both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about, and CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?



Yes. COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19.

Being protected from getting sick is important because even though many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness, have long-term health effects, or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you don't have an increased risk of developing severe complications. Learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work.

Will a COVID-19 vaccine alter my DNA?



No. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way.

Messenger RNA vaccines—also called mRNA vaccines—are the first COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States. mRNA vaccines teach our cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response. The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. This means the mRNA cannot affect or interact with our DNA in any way. Instead, COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work with the body's natural defenses to safely develop

immunity to disease. Learn more about how COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work.

At the end of the process, our bodies have learned how to protect against future infection. That immune response and making antibodies is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.

Is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I would like to have a baby one day?

Yes. People who want to get pregnant in the future may receive the COVID-19 vaccine.



Based on current knowledge, experts believe that COVID-19 vaccines are unlikely to pose a risk to a person trying to become pregnant in the short or long term. Scientists study every vaccine carefully for side effects immediately and for years afterward. The COVID-19 vaccines are being studied carefully now and will continue to be studied for many years, similar to other vaccines.

The COVID-19 vaccine, like other vaccines, works by training our bodies to develop antibodies to fight against the virus that causes COVID-19, to prevent future illness. There is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from COVID-19 vaccination cause any problems with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta. In addition, there is no evidence suggesting that fertility problems are a side effect of ANY vaccine. People who are trying to become pregnant now or who plan to try in the future may receive the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them.

Notes from Shane Harrington Physical Education Specialist

As we enter March and start transitioning students back into the building there are some important things to keep in mind regarding Physical Education. Students must be wearing sneakers on the days they have PE class. Snow boots, dress shoes, or flip flops are not acceptable footwear. Students should also wear appropriate clothing that will allow them to move freely while participating in physical activities. I also request that students with long hair have something to tie their hair back on days that they have PE

For students who are remaining home, this will be a bit of a transition. I ask that you still login to your zoom session at the appropriate time. Students should be prepared for class with any materials that they have been requested to bring. Students should be actively engaged in class and not using the time for eating snacks or completing work for other classes.

If there are any questions or concerns I can always be contacted through Class Dojo or you can email me at sharrington@shschools.com

NOTICE

Non-Discrimination Statement

All students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness, have equal access to the general education program and the full range of any occupational and vocational education programs offered by the South Hadley Public Schools.

Declaración de No discriminación

Todos los estudiantes, independientemente de su raza, color, sexo, identidad de género, religión, origen nacional, orientación sexual, discapacidad o falta de vivienda, tienen acceso equitativo al programa de educación general y a toda la gama de programas de educación ocupacional y profesional ofrecidos por Escuelas Públicas de South Hadley

If you feel you may need special accommodations or assistance as a result of a handicapping condition or limited English proficiency, please call Beth Cooke at the South Hadley School Department, 116 Main Street at 413-538-5072 (hearing impaired fax 413-532-6284) and notify us of your special need.

Si usted necesita alguna adaptacion o asistencia especial debido a algun tipo de minusvalia, por favor llame al telefono 413-538-5072 (fax para personas con deficiencias auditivas 413-532-6284) y notifiquenos cuales son sus necesidades especificas.