

January 2015

# Meadowbrook Elementary

Happy New Year! It is great to be back to school after the break and our calendar is already filling up! Coming up quickly on January 14 at 6:45 in our library is the registration information evening for new parents interested in the Reggio influenced program. If any of you would like to attend to meet prospective parents, answer questions or just show your support you are more than welcome! Kindergarten registration will open on the 15<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

Thanks to the generosity of our PAC, this Friday at 9:00 there will be a performance by Axe Capoeira – a high energy group that will showcase dances, acrobatics and music from Brazil. Everyone is welcome.

Over the next month, the grade four students will be writing the Fundamental Skills Assessment as mandated by the BC Ministry of Education.

The Coquitlam Express hockey team will be visiting our classrooms on January 20<sup>th</sup> to read their favourite books with our students. At lunchtime, they will take on our grade five students in a rousing game of floor hockey.



On **Monday, January 26** there is a Professional Development day – **no school for students**, but our teachers will be working hard!



Our Winter Concert was a big success. Our Grade five MCs were wonderful hosts and the musical performances were very entertaining.

Division three, four and five raised over six hundred dollars with their winter craft fair held just before the concert! The items sold were created by the students and included, gift tags, cards, artwork, decorations and baked goods. This was the culmination of an inquiry project where the students wondered how to become entrepreneurs. They worked to develop business plans, advertising campaigns, and created and sold products to raise money to put on a spring production. As well Ms. Bain has successfully applied for a grant from Artstarts to pay for a professional performer to support these students.

We are waiting for the arrival of 50 new gym mats – Susan Rae, our PAC president was successful in obtaining a grant from Canadian to pay for this much needed equipment!





As we head into the wild weather of January and February I wanted to again emphasize the benefits of playing outside in rain, sun, hail, sleet, snow, fog... our normal weather on the 'wet' coast.

At Meadowbrook our teachers frequently take their classes outside to explore the habitats around our school and to learn to respect the plants and animals that share our space. Your child will spend time outside every day, rain or shine, so please ensure that he/she has both weather appropriate clothing AND a complete change of clothing . (And this applies to all of our students, not just the kindergarten kids!) Hats and mitts/gloves for cold days, hooded rain jackets and boots for wet days and hats and sun-screen for sunny days will all ensure that your child is comfortable and able to take full advantage of our grounds.

## Playing outside:

**Supports multiple development domains.** Nature is important to children's development in every major way—intellectually, emotionally, socially, spiritually and physically (Kellert, 2005).

**Enhances cognitive abilities.** Proximity to, views of, and daily exposure to natural settings increases children's ability to focus and enhances cognitive abilities (Wells, 2000).

**Supports creativity and problem solving.** Studies of children in schoolyards found that children engage in more creative forms of play in natural areas. They also played more cooperatively (Bell and Dymont, 2006). Play in nature is especially important for developing capacities for creativity, problem-solving, and intellectual development (Kellert, 2005).



**Enhances cognitive abilities.** Proximity to, views of, and daily exposure to natural settings increases children's ability to focus and enhances cognitive abilities (Wells, 2000).

**Improves academic performance.** Studies in the US show that schools that use outdoor classrooms and other forms of nature-based experiential education support significant student gains in social studies, science, language arts, and math. Students in outdoor science programs improved their science testing scores by 27% (American Institutes for Research, 2005).

**Reduces Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) symptoms.** Contact with the natural world can significantly reduce symptoms of attention deficit disorder in children as young as five years old (Kuo and Taylor, 2004).

**Increases physical activity.** Children who experience school grounds with diverse natural settings are more physically active, more aware of nutrition, more civil to one another and more creative

**Improves eyesight.** More time spent outdoors is related to reduced rates of nearsightedness, also known as myopia, in children and adolescents (American Academy of Ophthalmology, 2011).



**Improves social relations.** Children will be smarter, better able to get along with others, healthier and happier when they have regular opportunities for free and unstructured play in the outdoors (Burdette and Whitaker, 2005).

**Improves self-discipline.** Access to green spaces, and even a view of green settings, enhances peace, self-control and self-discipline within inner city youth, and particularly in girls (Taylor, Kuo and Sullivan, 2001).

**Reduces stress.** Green plants and vistas reduce stress among highly stressed children. Locations with greater number of plants, greener views, and access to natural play areas show more significant results (Wells and Evans, 2003)



from:

[http://naturalearning.org/sites/default/files/Benefits%20of%20Connecting%20Children%20with%20Nature\\_InfoSheet.pdf](http://naturalearning.org/sites/default/files/Benefits%20of%20Connecting%20Children%20with%20Nature_InfoSheet.pdf)

### **Treat Day Jan 15th!**

Calling on all volunteer buyers/ bakers to help support our after school treat PAC fundraiser.

Many thanks to all the parent(s) that have helped in the past to make this such a successful event - our children love it.

Please contact Michelle at [mish69@live.ca](mailto:mish69@live.ca) if you are able to donate any items . Thank you again for all of your support Michelle



Plan  
ahead

## **Important Dates for Meadowbrook**

**Friday Jan. 9th**

**9am Axe Capoeira Performance**

**Mon. Jan. 12th**

**7pm PAC Meeting**

**Wed. Jan. 14th**

**2015-2016 Parent Info. Night**

**Wed. Jan 14th**

**Hot Lunch Orders are Due**

**Thur. Jan 15th**

**Kindie Registration 9am**

**Thur. Jan 15th**

**Treat Day!**

**Tue. Jan 20th**

**Coquitlam Express Reading/Game**

**Thur. Jan. 22nd**

**Hot Lunch Day**

**Mon. Jan. 26th**

**School Based Pro D Day—School Closed**

**Mon. Feb. 9th**

**Family Day—School Closed**

**Fri. Feb. 13th**

**Assembly**

**Mon. 16—Mar. 6th**

**Gymnastics Equipment in Gym**

**Mon Feb. 16th**

**Kindie's Hearing & Vision Check am**

**Wed. Feb. 18th**

**Kindie's Dental Check 10:45am**

**Fri. Feb. 20th**

**District Pro D—School Closed**

**Mon. Feb 23rd**

**1pm Artstarts Performance**