

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School Courier



Spring 2017 Edition

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1108 W. Fairview Avenue Urbana, IL 61801 (217) 384-3675
<http://www.usd116.org/king>

<http://principalwebster.weebly.com>

Upcoming Events

Sweetheart Dance

By Invitation Only

Tuesday, February
21st 6:00-7:30 p.m.

African-American History Month Program

Thursday, February 28th
9:30-10:30

Science & Innovation Fair

Tuesday, March 9th
6:00-7:00 p.m.

International Potluck

Thursday, April 27th
6:00-7:00 p.m.

Half-Day In-service Early Dismissal

Friday, May 12th
12:45 dismissal

Please plan to pick your child up at King School at 12:45 p.m. or make arrangements with your daycare provider to pick your child up from school or the bus stop on Friday, May 12th at 12:45 p.m.



Message from the Principal

Happy Spring King School Families! I am very proud of my Shining STARS' academic growth. Our students are building upon the skills they learned last semester, and applying that knowledge to their current learning activities. Please ask your child to tell you specific things he/she learns each day.

A strong home-school connection is very important to me. I created the following website: <http://principalwebster.weebly.com> to provide you with detailed information about what your child is learning at school, how you can support learning at home, suggestions for ways you

can support our school improvement goals at home, pictures from school events, etc. If there is anything else you would like me to add to my website, please feel free to let me know.

Students began their investigation into informational writing this month. Students will learn how to read a non-fiction text closely to gather information, and construct an informational piece that communicates what they learned. Talk to your child about what he/she has learned about informational writing.

**In Support of
Academic Success,**

Mrs. Webster

Character Trait of the month: Compassion:

possessing the emotional capacities of empathy and sympathy for the hardships of others.



We are discussing ways to be kind at school. Students can earn kindness coins for random acts of kindness.

Students can use their kindness coins to purchase school supplies at the end of each week for the next few weeks. Thursday, February 16th is Random Acts of Kindness Day at King School.

Ask your child about random acts of kindness he/she did at school. Friday, February 17th is the official Random Acts of Kindness Day; talk to your child about random acts of kindness you can do together as a family.



♥ Sweetheart Dance ♥

Our annual Positive Behavior Interventions and Support/PBIS

Sweetheart Dance will be on Tuesday, February 21st from 6:00-7:30 in the King School Gym. **Attendance to the dance is by invitation only. Any student that does not receive a discipline referral in the month of February will earn a ticket to the Sweetheart Dance.** Each child must have an adult that is 18 years of age or older attend the dance with him/her. Students will not be admitted into the dance without an adult 18 years of age or older. Please bring your cameras or camera phones to take pictures at our Valentine's Day photo booth in the multipurpose room. Please talk to your child daily about making positive behavior choices at home and at school.

Mrs. Webster's Weekend Writing Challenge Excerpts

The January topic was: Our school is named in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Write about important contributions Dr. King made to our country.

Our students captured the essence of Dr. King's legacy in their writing.
These are a few excerpts from January's Writing Challenge.



"Dr. King stood up for our rights." -Leonsa Asari

"Because of him, we can go to the same school." -Hanindya Azhar

"He was an influential American Civil Rights leader who struggled to put an end to racial segregation in public transportation and for racial equality in the United States." -Simeon Bakento

"He had a dream that black girls and boys could hold hands with white boys and girls."
-Daniella Nzinga

"He promoted nonviolence and won the Nobel Peace Prize for his contributions to the peace of the United States." -Kexin "Kitty" Cui

"Dr. King marched with many people. They marched to say no to unfair laws."
-Sin Un "Lawrence" Lou

"Dr. King thought everyone was equal. He had done things to change it. Now, in my school, children are from different countries. We play together every day. We are very happy!"
-Fuming "Allen" Zhang

"He used nonviolence to fight with violence. Many people and Dr. King were sent to jail. But Dr. King kept using nonviolence." -Joy Chen

"Dr. King said that every one should love not hate." -Eduardo Diego

"Dr. King lead for equal rights for black people because black people didn't have freedom."
-Kenyon Dunn

"He wanted every one to have freedom." -Lataya Kirk

"He is best known for his role in the advancement of Civil Rights using non-violent civil disobedience based on his Christian beliefs." -Sarah Elnamas

"The first half of the 20th century was basically split in half. White people and black people both had their own worlds. Dr. King helped change that in a hurry." -Austo Li

"He wanted equal rights for blacks." -Korey Carter-Williams

**King School Students Support Dr. King's Dream
By Being Kind to Each Other!**

Amazing Facts about Your Child's Brain

Submitted by Ms. Cooke

Our brains are more like plastic than cement, so it changes with each new experience we encounter and becomes bigger and thicker. The more creative, educational, and exploratory our experiences, the more our brains grow, and become *smarter*. We have the ability to process even more new knowledge it is called: **Neuroplasticity!**

A big word...but some of our kindergartners can pronounce it and know the meaning. It means that our brains can **change**. We can learn to do things differently and to make better choices. Below are some interesting facts about the human brain. Please read this article with your children.

What size is your brain?

When you make two fists with your hands and put them together, that is the size of your brain.

What are three parts of the brain that can help our students at King School learn?

The three parts of the brain that I teach our students about are: the **prefrontal cortex**, (helps us to think, problem solve and to make plans), the **amygdala** (helps us to identify our feelings and tells us when we are in danger), and the **hippocampus** (helps to remember what we learned).

How is my brain like a grape?

It is made up mostly of water; about 70%!

How does your brain get smarter??

With **practice**! When you learn something new, like a math fact, you make new connections between the message carrying cells in your brain, called neurons. As you practice, the neurons grow dendrites, which look like branches on a tree. Each time you practice, they pick up the message more quickly and more clearly. So each time you have to recall the answer to 6x2, it becomes easier and quicker. However, there are some additional things we can do to help our brains according to some of our fourth graders. We can improve our **diet** by eating more nutritious meals and snacks, **sleep** between 9-10 hours each night, exercise daily (yeah, for P.E. classes at King), and engage in **deep breathing**, which helps us to be more relaxed, or as a 5th grader told me, to be more mindful of the choices we make.

Riddle for your brain: What do you get when you cross a family's vehicle with a family's animal?

(Just trying to guess the answer to this riddle can make your brains grow thicker and stronger.)

Answer: a carpet

Some of the information for this article was taken from:
The Optimistic Classroom

Let's Chill

Written by Ms. Stephanie Cockrell

Positive behavior support is an important part of every child's developmental process. It is our job to help children understand why they are making inappropriate choices to help them understand their behaviors, and teach them preventive strategies that will prove to be useful in everyday life.

Children believe the behaviors they present have a purpose. Although we may not know their motivation, every choice is made with an objective in mind. There are many preventive and reflective strategies that have proven to be effective. Our goal is to move students to a place of self-evaluation, self-calming, and reflection. One method I prefer is allowing students to reflect on their behavior using soothing relaxing colors, and calming pictures. A few minutes in a calming environment can help us become more aware of our surroundings, and allow us time to identify our own behavior struggles.

Calming methods do not always take the place of a consequence; instead, they help students understand and accept the consequences they are given and consider different choices when faced with that challenge again. When the student is ready to reflect, we use that time to reiterate what 'calm' looks like and what method the student may choose in the future.

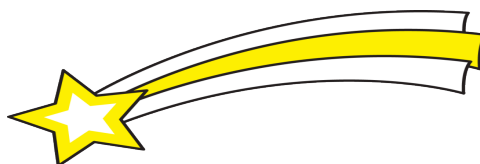
Let's Chill! Let's encourage our children to try these strategies at school: When faced with a challenge that leaves you frustrated, angry or confused, before reacting, step away from the environment, and ask your teacher for a Chill Pass. Take a deep breath. Sit quietly. Self reflect, and take time to think about your choices, and make the best choice. When your children are frustrated or upset at home, they can dim the lights, listen to soft and calming music, relax, and reflect about their feelings. These skills will help our students be successful in school, at home, and, as they move into adulthood, they will prove to be helpful in every area of their lives.

King School's Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports/PBIS Expectations

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

Be Ready



Failure and Flexibility in a Fast-Paced World

Written by Mr. Lake

Who doesn't like to have an immediate answer to a question or the quickest fix to a problem? Who has time in our high speed lives to really struggle with uncertainty, to fail at our first or second attempt, to have to try something again or again? With access to so much information at our fingertips we are able to find quick answers most of the time, so we can move on to the next problem flying at us. The negative side effect of this though is that we are training ourselves to become less patient, less flexible, and less willing to embrace the struggle or failure.

Robert F. Kennedy said, "Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly." What does that mean to you?

To me it suggests that the quickest, easiest answer may be good enough to get by or to get a passing grade or to get me out of a bind, but when I avoid the struggle, I'm avoiding finding the best, the strongest, the longest-lasting solution or becoming the best I can be at what I do.

As teachers, we ALL want the best for our students, your children, and that means encouraging them to embrace the struggle and learn from failure. We don't want them to settle for good enough when we see greatness in all of them.

"What does that look like at school?" you ask. It looks like encouraging students to ask and answer their own questions and find more ways to take responsibility for their learning. It looks like teaching students to think like engineers, who **ask** questions, **imagine** possibilities, make **plans**, **create** and test

solutions, and then find ways to **improve** them. It even looks like Eureka Math, a program that doesn't settle for memorizing facts and spouting quick answers.

We know that the frustration has been real (at school and at home) as we have shifted to Eureka this year. Eureka doesn't look like the math we know from when we were in school. It's not always clean and quick, and it brings failure sometimes. BUT it is training us all to think more flexibly about numbers and how they work. It's helping us learn to see and use more than just one strategy to reach an answer. It's teaching us how to find strategies that are more efficient or work better for us. It's showing us how and why our answers make sense, and it's helping us learn how to communicate that in ways that make more sense to others. When your child faces failure with homework, try these questions:

What else have you tried?

Can you think of a different way?

Why do you think this way didn't work this time?

Let's try again together.

(Modeling your own perseverance is a powerful teaching tool!)

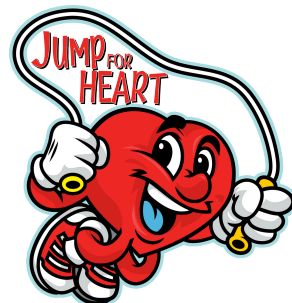
We will get there, and this will become one more thing that prepares our students, your children, for greatness!

Thank you for struggling with us! Let's continue to build more flexibility and patience together as we embrace failure and allow it to fuel success.

Jump Rope for Heart

Submitted by Ms. Manolakes

Mr. Dettlo, our physical education/PE teacher, will lead a *Jump For Heart* Activity in his PE Classes on February 24th. We will be raising money and awareness for The American Heart Association through this activity.



If you would like to donate money, there are many ways you can do

so:

1. Send cash in a sealed envelope to school with your child's name on it
2. Write a check to the *American Heart Association* and send it to the school in a sealed envelope
3. Donate online at www.heart.org/jump (Click on Illinois, select Urbana, then select the first letter of our school's name, M, and then select join team.)

***Students can earn incentives from the American Heart Association for raising money.**

This is a great chance for our King School family to work together to raise money and awareness for a great charity!