



January Newsletter 2008

Jenifer Elementary School

Thadine Wright
Principal

2820 Jenifer School Lane
Waldorf, MD 20603

Wilhelmina Pugh
Vice Principal

Principal's Message

Happy New Year to our Jenifer school family! I hope that all of our families had a restful and relaxing holiday season and that our students are ready for more exciting and challenging learning opportunities.

In order for our students to take full advantage of our instructional program, it is critical that they attend school every day unless they are truly sick. Any absence should be followed by a parent and/or a doctor's note the day the child returns to school.

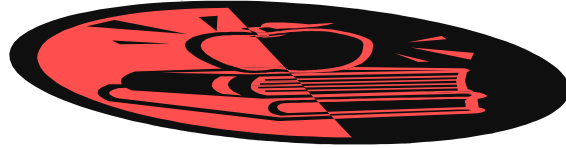
Many of our students are picked up early during the school day which can impact their progress and potentially interfere with the proper assigning of nightly homework. Doctor's appointments during the school day are often unavoidable but every effort should be made to schedule appointments as late in the day as possible.

If a parent wishes to transport a student home from school, they must be in the office between 3:15pm and 3:35pm. Past 3:35pm, all parent pick-ups are handled through our outside car rider line.

Our days are the happiest and most productive when all of our students are in school the entire day. Thank you for your efforts in creating a strong partnership for our children's education.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Cooperation



During the month of January, we will focus on "Cooperation" as the character trait of the month. Parents are encouraged to talk with their children about the importance of working well with others. Some practical suggestions for showing cooperation are: following the teachers' and parents' instructions, doing their share when working in a group and accepting others' ideas with respect.

Important Numbers & Contact Information

Jenifer Elementary School 301-932-9603
2820 Jenifer School Lane 301-753-1768
Waldorf, MD 20603 Fax - 301-374-9496
Charles County Board of Education
P.O. Box 2770
La Plata, MD 20646
301-932-6610

When inclement weather strikes, listen to radio and television, or call:

24-hour information lines:

301-934-7410
301-932-6656



School Closures

January 1st – **No School**
New Year's Day

January 18th - **No School**
Semester Break

January 21st - **No School**
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday



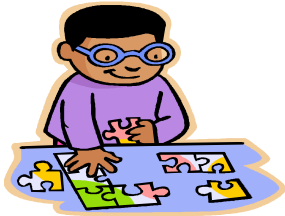
With the New Year comes, new changes to the Health Room. We have two new nurses, Nurse Becky and Nurse Marcia. They are both very excited to join the staff at Jenifer Elementary and to get to know the students. If your child has borrowed any clothing from the health room, please wash and return them at your first convenience. We are also looking for donations of clothing your child(ren) have out grown, we are in particular need of jeans or sweat pants of all sizes. How ever you can help we are greatly appreciative.

Fundraiser

Jenifer Elementary School would like to thank and congratulate Jalyn Anderson in Mrs. Washington's first grade class for being the school's top seller. Jalyn received \$100.00 in cash. Jalyn also won \$25.00 in the money machine and participated in Animal land where she made her very own stuffed doll. A huge Thank You from all of us at Jenifer. We appreciate you, Jalyn.



With the cold weather finally here, please keep in mind that outside morning meeting and outside recess continues when the temperature remains above 32 degrees. Children should dress appropriately for the weather.



Indoor Recess

Winter months often lead to indoor recess days. If your family has any “gently” used board games or puzzles that they are no longer using, please consider donating them to your child’s classroom for indoor recess enjoyment.

The Reading Corner

by Jennifer DeAtley
Reading Resource Teacher



Congratulations to our Top Readers:

November: Ms. Winkler's	Kindergarten	754 books read!
Mrs. Ramsey's	5 th Grade	847 books read!

What Exactly is a Reading BCR?

Is this a question that you frequently ask yourself? Are you unsure of how to help your child with his or her Reading BCR's. If so, here are some helpful hints:

- BCR stands for Brief Constructed Response. This means students need to provide a written answer to a given question. This answer needs to be clear, use text evidence, and show that the student thoroughly understood the text.
- BCR's are given a score of 0, 1, 2, or 3 with 3 being the highest in the intermediate grades. In the primary grades students will be given a \checkmark - , \checkmark , or \checkmark + for their BCR.
- When students answer a Reading BCR they need to:
 - ◆ Answer the question correctly
 - ◆ Include text support – go back to the text and give examples that support or prove your answer
 - ◆ State information and ideas in their own words to show that they have a clear understanding of what was read
 - ◆ Make a clear connection between their answer and the text support.

Ways you can help at home:

- Encourage your child to read for 15 minutes every night.
- Discuss new vocabulary.
- Ask your child to summarize what they have read. You can have your child summarize after a few pages, after a chapter, or upon completion of the text.
- Have your child identify the characters, setting, problem, & solution of a story.
- Have your child list facts they have learned from a nonfiction piece.
- Act out a scene from the story together.
- Visit the local library together.
- Encourage your child to keep a journal or a diary to write about important events in his or her life or to create original stories.

Communicating Like a Mathematician

By Lisa Wehausen, Instructional Specialist

Communication is the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs. Effective communication also must consider the audience and the topic. In mathematics, when students are asked to “communicate” their thinking in writing, they often mistakenly do not consider that mathematicians communicate through the use of symbols, equations with labels, and pictures and try and communicate by writing lengthy sentences.

Consider this math problem:

435 students were taking a field trip to the zoo. Each bus can hold 60 students.

Step A

How many buses are needed if all 435 students attend the field trip?

Step B

Explain how you got your answer.

Use what you know about dividing whole numbers in your response.

Use words and/or numbers in your explanation.

In order to solve this problem, a student would divide 435 by 60 and get a result of 7 R15. Interpreting the remainder, the student would have to reason that because every student needs a seat, 8 buses are actually needed, because if only 7 buses were used, 15 students would be without a seat.

In Step B, a student may communicate their thinking by writing:

I started by seeing if 43 could be divided by 60 and it can't so I knew I had to divide 435 by 60 so I thought about how many 60s are there in 435. I knew that $60 \times 10 = 600$ so it would be less than that so I tried 6. 6 times 60 equals 360 and that wasn't enough because if I subtracted 360 from 435 that would leave me 75 and I could still take out another 60 so then I knew to use 7... etc.

While this response isn't correct, it's not very efficient. So let's look at a more efficient response that says the same thing, but communicates mathematically—using equations, symbols, pictures and so on.

435 students \div 60 per bus = ? buses that are needed

$60 \times ? = 400$

$6 \times 6 = 36$ so $60 \times 6 = 360$

$6 \times 7 = 42$ so $60 \times 7 = 420$ students

Students per bus

Number of buses

435 students attending – 420 students that 7 buses hold = 15 students remaining without a seat. Therefore, 8 buses are needed.

As you can see, the second response mirrors the first response, but it is more efficient and considers the topic of mathematics which uses symbols, equations, and labels to communicate. If you are noticing that your child is writing out a response in sentences, ask your child how he/she could say the same thing, but with using pictures, equations, labels, and/or symbols rather than writing sentences.