E-news is an important tool to keep our parent community informed. Please call the main office at 425/837-5800 if you have any questions about our e-news.

January 16, 2015

IMPORTANT FROM MR. MELLISH: Family Survey
Dear Newcastle Families, Thank you to everyone who has completed our Family Engagement Survey. I really hope the majority of you will complete the survey so we can set goals for the next several years with broad input from our community. So if no one from your family has completed the survey, please use the link below to do so. It is a great opportunity to sit with your children and get their perspective as well on several of the responses! I will extend the deadline to take the survey through January 23rd.

To take the survey click here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Q5MWD3Z

Common Core/Smarter Balanced Assessment
Why we can relax and enjoy the ride...
For the last several years Washington State has been a leader in a national consortium of states forming a set of common academic standards and assessments. This spring, the process will be coming to a head with the Smarter Balanced Assessment for 3rd-8th and 11th grades. This article explores why, amidst the politics, stresses, legislation, misconceptions and occasional misuses of this process that we, Newcastle Elementary, can relax and even enjoy the roll-out of new tests this spring. Okay, I understand that “enjoy” and “assessment” don’t naturally flow together in our minds, but I think we have a great opportunity to approach this test with a spirit of fun and discovery. To learn why and how, please see my blog (click here). ~Rich Mellish, Principal

Game Room
The game room recess option has been a big success so far this year! The room has been filled close to capacity each Tuesday with many students on waiting lists to get in. With that in mind, we are hoping to expand the program to Thursdays as well. However, that means we need some additional parent volunteers who can come in once or twice a month to help run it. Please let me know if you are interested in volunteering on Thursdays from 11:30 to 12:40. Thank you to everyone for making this a successful program. Trent Neugebauer, Dean of Students.

5th Grade Maywood Visits
The calendar may indicate it’s only January but Maywood Middle School is already busy getting ready for our 5th grade students to join them next year. All 5th grade students will visit Maywood in the morning on Thursday, March 26th. Maywood will also be hosting a parent night that same evening from 6:30-8:00 pm. More information will be sent out at the date gets closer.
Please contact Laurie Holmes (holmesl@issaquah.wednet.edu) if your student isn't going to attend Maywood next year.

Highly Capable Program Testing for Second Grade Students
Letters are being sent home with second grade students this week or next with information about the Highly Capable Program. The letter has also been posted on the website and can be found here: Information about the Highly Capable Program for Families of Second Grade Students.

These letters detail the process that will be used to identify Issaquah's "most highly capable" second graders. This process includes the administration of Stanford 10, CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test), and SOI (Structure of Intellect) in your child's second grade classroom. The administration window for these tests is January 26th through March 19th, exact dates and times vary by classroom.

Students who are identified as "most highly capable" will be invited to enter the Highly Capable Program with services through MERLIN or SAGE for next school year.

Health Alerts - Measles in Washington State - Cold and Flu Season
A person with Measles traveled to Sea-Tac airport and visited several public areas in King and Snohomish Counties while contagious. According to the Washington State Department of Health, most people in our state are immune to Measles through vaccination, so public risk is low. People who haven't been vaccinated or aren't sure should contact their health care provider for advice. Please see the Department of Health website for specific news on Measles and immunizations and the full Department of Health Measles News Release.

Cold and flu season is here!
Thorough hand washing is your best defense. Now is the time to review good hand washing practices with your children, and if your diligence has slipped, it is time to recommit. Please take a moment to review the information on our website for preventing the spread of colds, flu, and other diseases.
For more information on protecting your family from the flu, please visit: http://here.doh.wa.gov/materials/protect-family-from-flu.

Dates to Remember
Jan 19th   No School, Martin Luther King Day
Jan 20th   Video Club, 8:00 am
            Chess Club, 3:40 pm
Jan 22nd   Chorus, 8:00 am
            Scratch Code Club, 3:45 pm
Jan 23rd   Math Olympiad, 8:00 am
            Geography Bee, 2:45 pm