

October 10, 2011

Dear Parents,

What an outstanding group of second graders! All of the children are enthusiastic learners, diligent workers, and kind and supportive team members. I am so proud of all the children and appreciate how well they have adjusted to the many responsibilities of second grade and also to the curriculum.

We sure enjoyed all the enriching experiences and visitors during Theme Week last week. We kicked off the week with many hands-on fun and educational activities where the children learned about Ancient China from all the Monica Ros staff members. Throughout the week, we studied China's geography and attractions, learned about Pandas and Chinese language, played with tangrams in math, had special visits from Confucius and Lao Tzu where we learned about their philosophical teachings, made our own fortune cookies, and designed and composed our own dragons with our lineage groups. We also had the enriching opportunity to enjoy special presentations from the Chinese students from Villanova, Emily Ayala from Friend's Ranch who explained how the Ancient Chinese developed citrus, Alice Ramsey who entertained us with her classical Chinese instrument, and Alison Reid who educated us about her adventures in China. Our special week concluded on Friday with a Dragon Parade and Feast!

It's hard to believe we are now entering our seventh full week of school! We have been having fun learning and working hard in the following content areas:

Language Arts: I am very impressed with the tremendous progress I have seen in my students' writing journals. Each student's creative ideas are now freely flowing from their mind/heart to their respective journals with increased accuracy in phonics, spelling, grammar, and writing mechanics. Daily Language Review (DLR) is also progressing nicely. The children are improving dramatically in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and in their proofreading skills. Learning the parts of speech has also been a focus in Language Arts. To date, we have been studying nouns, adjectives, and verbs. We are also enjoying our study of homophones. The students are progressing nicely as "Dictionary Detectives" while learning about alphabetical order and I'm very pleased with each child's progress in this specific area as well. We are working hard as we continue to learn about spelling patterns. I highly recommend the website, **spellingcity.com** for spelling practice. The children did an outstanding job on their first "Brown Bag" Book Celebration presentations. Our second Book Celebration will be assigned later this week. Each monthly "Book Celebration" is assigned to encourage your child in his/her independent reading as well as assisting with reading comprehension, critical thinking, and literary analysis skills. Please remind your children to continue to read at least fifteen minutes each evening and to record the data on their reading logs which are recorded on Fridays. Thank you to Joy Golbere, our first "Mystery Reader" on September 30th! The students had a terrific time analyzing the clues and guessing who our first "Mystery Reader" was. Our class also has also been outstanding mentors to their Kindergarten Buddies each Friday afternoon. It is extremely exciting to observe the second graders in this leadership role and they always look forward to the valuable time shared with their buddies.

Math: Addition and subtraction strategies, odd and even numbers, and place value has been the primary focus. This week, we are beginning to learn about data and graphing. We are working in our math workbooks and also use a variety of math manipulatives to help reinforce the concepts we are learning. Please continue to work with your children at home with math facts. Dice games and flash cards are great resources for practice.

Science: What super second grade scientists in our class! We have been conducting numerous activities to help us better understand plant life. The students have enjoyed learning about different types of leaves, parts of a plant and flower, the respective functions of the plant and flower parts, and the essential components necessary for plants to grow.

Social Studies: We continue our study of “All About Me” and will also be starting our study of “Colonial Life” as we practice and prepare for our class play, “Turkeys Go On Strike” which we are presenting on Thursday, November 17th @ 11:00. Please mark your calendars.

Special Subjects: The second graders continue to do a fabulous job in Art Class with Ms. Fox, Spanish Class with Maestra Massiel, Music Class with Ms. Zonic, and Physical Education with Ms. Oxenham. Just a friendly reminder....our scheduled Library Day is Monday. Please return your library books on or before Monday so your child has the opportunity to check-out a new book each week.

Upcoming Field Trips: The following trips are scheduled: 1. Faulkner Farms – Friday, 10/21 from 9:15 – 1:30 (Parent drivers and chaperones needed) 2. Limoneira – Wednesday, 10/26 from 9:45 – 1:45 (Transportation is provided by bus, but we do need parent chaperones) 3. Santa Barbara Botanical Gardens – Tuesday, 11/1 from 9:00 – 2:00 (Parent drivers and chaperones needed)

Thank you for sharing your incredible children with me. I appreciate your dedication and support in regards to your child’s education and I am thrilled to be your child’s Second Grade Teacher at Monica Ros School.

Fondly,

Kerri Griffiee

