**APS Elementary Wellness Winter Newsletter**

Welcome to our winter newsletter!

As previously mentioned, Roaring Brook and Pine Grove have three Wellness teachers who are dedicated to helping children become better coordinated, and more confident in their own physical abilities. In addition, we help children understand their feelings about themselves, others, and their environment.

Each grade level has one 50 minute class of Wellness per week. The physical education portion is a movement education program and is supplemented by activities involving developmental sports skills. A problem solving approach to teaching is used for class work. This approach allows all children to participate successfully at their own ability level and helps develop a feeling of confidence on the part of the child in performing physical tasks. This in turn helps to develop a positive self-image.

The health education portion is also a critical component that is integrated into the wellness block. Health education is intended to prepare students to value the quality of individual, family, and community health. The program fosters student's self-awareness and develops skills for effective decision-making.

**HIGHLIGHTS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

In grades preK-1 the students continue to work on the important elements of moving in good space and what it means to use proper body-control. A variety of warm-ups to music begins each lesson and students are able to practice gross-motor movements. The theme for the winter months has been directionality, levels, force, flow and time. Individual, partner, and group practice has been explored. Finklehopper the fitness frog has been introduced to our K-1 students. Finklehopper will be visiting your home some time during the school year. Finklehopper will arrive in a bag with instructions.

In grades 2-4 units in Floor Hockey and Soccer have been explored. Students practiced dribbling, passing, control, safety and partner/team strategies. Stationary and moving targets were part of the activities with a focus on personal growth. The students also spent time working on the four components of fitness.

Our Jump Rope for Heart event to benefit the American Heart Association will be taking place the last week in February (2/27-3/3). Look for an email blast and Jump Rope for Heart envelope arriving at your home soon.

**HIGHLIGHTS IN HEALTH EDUCATION**

Burr! It’s cold outside. The onset of the winter season serves as a perfect segue to explore decisions that can keep people physically healthy. Students in Pre K – Gr. 4 began the decision-making unit by focusing on Winter Safety. In addition to student worksheets and activities, additional family information may be found on the teacher websites. To be physically well, one must generate an understanding of our ‘Amazing Body Machine’. Across the grade levels, students are learning about the body’s cells, vital organs, and systems and their need to be fed (nutrition), rested, hydrated, moved, washed (hygiene), and checked to prevent illness. The function of the body’s systems all depend on personal decisions; decisions made as early as elementary school have been researched as forecasters for the health and well-being experienced in adulthood. February’s National Heart Health Month will serve to extend the *Wellness* classroom lessons into the community-at-large. The sub-concepts of physical wellness (nutrition & hygiene) will drive *Wellness* instruction until the arrival of the spring season.

Sincerely,

**Elementary Wellness Team**

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