



# THE PRINCIPAL'S BUZZLINE

Drake Elementary School  
Glen L. Stacho, Principal  
Mary Marconi, Secretary

January 2015  
Edition 4

## Parent/Teacher Conferences at Drake:

Spring parent/teacher conferences will be held at Drake on Wednesday, February 11, 2015 and Thursday, February 12, 2015 from 4:45 – 7:45. Conferences request forms will be coming home in the weeks before conferences. We'll see you there!



I came across this article about Parent-Teacher Conferences from iMom.com and thought I'd share it with you.

## 5 Mistakes to Avoid in Your Parent-Teacher Conference

Parent-teacher conferences are important tools for keeping our children on-track educationally, resolving conflict and building relationships. But more than a few of these meetings jump the tracks and end up unproductive or worse.

Here are some of the common mistakes we parents make that can torpedo our conference time and ultimately, short-change our kids:

- 1. Talking about other children or their performance.** Your child's teacher is legally bound to protect the confidentiality of students. So bringing up or asking the teacher to discuss another child's grades or compare him to your child is out of line.
- 2. Going in with your "Mama Bear" instincts on.** We parents can be very protective of our children at times, and it can make us look and act a little, um, crazy. Remind yourself before you go into a conference that even if there is a problem, it's probably the result of a misunderstanding. Realize that your child's teacher is on your team, and wants to see your child succeed.
- 3. Assuming that your child gave you all the facts.** We're not suggesting that your child may be dishonest (but if she was, it wouldn't be the first time in recorded history). But she *is* a kid. They forget things. They misread people and situations. If you go into your parent-teacher conference with your mind all made up about what has happened and what needs to be done going forward, you may wind up with egg on your face. Listen as much—or more than—you speak.
- 4. Thinking like a 6<sup>th</sup> Grader.** One of the most beloved teachers I ever knew taught 6<sup>th</sup> grade—a year fraught with hormonal changes, emotions, zits and other tragedies. At her first meeting with all of the parents, she would say, "Your children are getting on a hormonal roller coaster, and they can't help it. It's important for you to stay behind on the ground." Meaning that she was counting on the parents to think like adults and *defuse* the drama—not stir it up. So, before you go in, ask yourself if you're seeing things like an adult who knows that "this, too, shall pass," or if you've been dragged onto the roller coaster.
- 5. Refusing to believe that your baby could be wrong.** Even the best kids drop the ball—or the assignment—sometimes. It's part of growing up. If they came into the world perfect, they wouldn't need us, now would they? So don't discount your teacher's take on your child, her academic performance, or her behavior too quickly. Remember—you're seeing them through the eyes of a mother. The teacher is seeing them through a lens that, while not infallible, is probably more objective.

continued . . .

## WINTER SAFETY

As winter weather sets in, safety to and from school and appropriate winter dress becomes an even more important issue for our children. We ask all parents to review the following guidelines with their children.

- ❑ No snowballing at or while going to and from school. A snowball could easily injure someone. Also, throwing a snowball at a car or truck is unlawful and dangerous.
- ❑ Many children are injured yearly by falling on ice or by sliding into the street. Children are discouraged from sliding on any possibly slippery surface.
- ❑ All children should have boots for the sloppy and snowy days, **but should change to shoes in school.**
- ❑ Please remind your children that even though it's cold outside, **DON'T ACCEPT RIDES FROM STRANGERS.** If a student is a walker, they need to go straight to school in the morning and go straight home after school.
- ❑ **OUTDOOR RECESS:** The recreation portion of the lunch hour will be held outdoors whenever possible. For this reason, please be sure your children dress appropriately (coats, mittens, hats, scarves, boots) for the weather. The condition of the play area and temperature with wind-chill are used to determine whether we have indoor or outdoor recess.



## ABCs Of Student Success

**E is for Empathy:** Empathy is a person's ability to identify and feel others' concerns. Parents can help to develop this important virtue in many ways. 1) Let your child know how pleased you feel when he or she behaves in a kind way; 2) Point out positive differences made when children do kind acts, no matter how small; 3) When reading with your child, ask how people in the books feel in their situations; 4) Help your child identify how someone feels and then identify a way to help. **F is for Failure:** Did you know that Abraham Lincoln weathered many failures before he became president? When a child experiences failure – on a test, the ballfield, or anywhere else . . . 1) acknowledge the child's feelings of frustration and disappointment. Those are natural feelings; 2) don't try to minimize the situation because it *does* matter to your child; 3) help your child evaluate the cause for failure and use what he or she has learned to create a new strategy and try, try again.

**Kindergarten Registration:** Parents and guardians of children who will be five years of age on or before September 30, 2015 are asked to register their child for kindergarten. Kindergarten registration for Drake Elementary School students is:

*Tuesday, March 24, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon  
Support Services Center – 15650 Pearl Road (Next to the Post Office)*

Parents should pick up a registration packet at Drake Elementary. The registration forms should be completed and brought to the kindergarten registration. The following records **must be** presented at registration: 1) child's birth certificate; 2) record of the child's immunizations; 3) social security number; 4) proof of residency (i.e. gas, electric, water/sewer bill), lease, purchase agreement, or residency affidavit; and 5) verification of legal custody/guardianship is required if the child is not living with both natural parents. The child does NOT have to attend the registration, but is welcome to come.

\*Anyone who cannot attend this registration time should contact the District Registrar – Sue Kochheiser – at (440) 572-7048 to make an appointment to register their child.



**“Pizza With The Principal”** – Our December lunch winners were: Emma H; Philip S; Kaitlyn R; Nolan B; Anthony B; Kate M; Alex L; Paige B; Emma S; Bhavya A; Sofiya N; Deanna S; Jacob H; Deklyn S; Juliann H; Nick C; Paige F; & Marcus N. These students are examples to all in their displays of following the Drake Way!

**Spring Testing:** PLEASE take a look at the attached page of upcoming State-required testing that will take place in the months of February, March, April and May. Please do all that you can to avoid absences for appointments, vacations, etc. on testing days. These PARCC tests are the new assessments required by the State of Ohio for all students in grades 3-6 at the elementary level.

## Spring 2015 Testing Schedule

Day	Date	Assessment	Grade Level	Administration Time	Start Time
Wednesday	2/18/2015	ELA PBA Unit 1	4-6	75 mins	9:45 AM
Thursday	2/19/2015	ELA PBA Unit 2	4-6	90 mins	9:45 AM
Friday	2/20/2015	ELA PBA Unit 3	4-6	60 mins.	9:45 AM

\*\*\* 3rd Grade NO PBA They will take OAA in Reading.

Tuesday	2/24/2015	Math PBA Unit 1	3	75 mins.	9:45 AM
Tuesday	2/24/2015	Math PBA Unit 1	4-6	80 mins.	9:45 AM
Wednesday	2/25/2015	Math PBA Unit 2	3	75 mins.	9:45 AM
Wednesday	2/25/2015	Math PBA Unit 2	4-6	70 mins.	9:45 AM

Tuesday	3/3/2015	Science PBA	5	75 mins.	9:45 AM
Tuesday	3/3/2015	Soc. St. PBA	4 & 6	75 mins.	9:45 AM

	3/30/15-4/2/15	SLO'S			
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Tuesday	4/21/2015	ELA EOY Unit 1	4 & 5	75 mins.	9:45 AM
Tuesday	4/21/2015	ELA EOY Unit 1	6	60 mins	9:45 AM
Tuesday	4/21/2015	OAA Reading	3	150 mins.	9:30 AM
Wednesday	4/22/2015	ELA EOY Unit 2	6	60 mins.	9:45 AM

Tuesday	4/28/2015	Math EOY Unit 1	3-5	75 mins.	9:45 AM
Tuesday	4/28/2015	Math EOY Unit 1	6	60 mins.	9:45 AM
Wednesday	4/29/2015	Math EOY Unit 2	3-5	75 mins.	9:45 AM
Wednesday	4/29/2015	Math EOY Unit 2	6	60 mins.	9:45 AM

Tuesday	5/5/2015	Science EOY	5	75 mins.	9:45 AM
Tuesday	5/5/2015	Soc. St EOY	4 & 6	75 mins.	9:45 AM

# Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION<sup>®</sup>

January 2015

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## SHORT NOTES

### Read more

A family reading log

is a good way to encourage your youngster—and the rest of the family—to read more. Each day, record the books, newspapers, or magazines you read. At the end of every month, let your youngster tally up the total. Keep going for the entire year to see how much your family can read in 2015!

## DID YOU KNOW?

It may be cold outside, but classroom temperatures can vary. Have your child dress in layers, since he'll concentrate better if he's comfortable.

He could wear a sweatshirt or a sweater over a T-shirt, for example, and add or remove layers as needed.

### New ways to discipline

If timeouts aren't working anymore, consider adjusting your discipline plan. Some parents take away privileges when kids don't follow the rules. For instance, maybe your youngster isn't allowed to go to friends' houses for a few days if she doesn't do her chores, or she can't use the computer tomorrow if she exceeds her time limit today.

### Worth quoting

"I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it." *Pablo Picasso*

## JUST FOR FUN

**Q:** What should you do if you find a tiger in your bed?

**A:** Sleep somewhere else!



## Manage your time wisely

Some children find it easy to get ready for school on time, turn in classwork when it's due, and finish homework with time to spare.

Others rush around and struggle to get everything done. Good time-management skills make the difference. Share these strategies with your child.



### Be realistic

Planning ahead will be easier if your youngster knows how long it takes him to finish homework or practice drums. Encourage him to estimate the time accurately by timing himself on each task for a week. Then, he'll have a better idea of how long to expect for doing addition problems vs. studying spelling words, for instance.

### Say no to multitasking

Your child may think he can watch TV while he reads his social studies chapter, but chances are it'll take him twice as long—and he's likely to miss

important information. Suggest that he see for himself: Have him read one page with the TV on and one page with it off and then tell you about them. He'll probably remember more when he isn't watching TV.

### Break it down

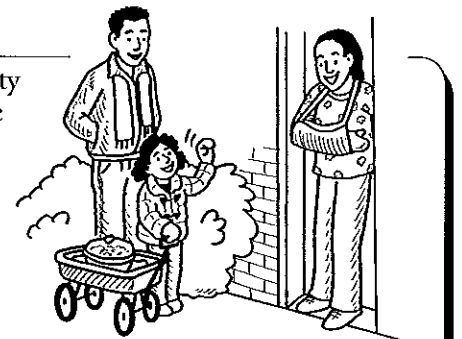
Help your youngster divide projects into chunks and pencil in each step on a calendar (do research, write report, make poster). The same strategy can work for studying and tests. For instance, if he has 30 minutes for a three-part test, he should scan the sections and budget his time for each one.♥

## Be a kid who cares

Caring about others is a wonderful quality to have. Encourage your youngster to make it a habit with suggestions like these:

- If you come across a lost-pet flyer, let your child take a photo of it or write down the phone number. That way, she'll be able to call the owner if she spots the missing pet.

- When a friend or neighbor is sick, ask your youngster to pitch in to help along with you. You might make and deliver a casserole together or babysit during a doctor appointment. Seeing how you care about others—and follow through—will set a good example for her.♥



## Play with science

What do blowing bubbles and jumping rope have to do with science? With these experiments, your youngster will find out.

**Make bubbles.** Let your child create bubbles by mixing 3 cups water,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup corn syrup, and 1 cup liquid dish soap. Then, have her experiment to see if she can make a better bubble recipe. She could try different amounts of the ingredients or add or substitute other items, such as sugar or glycerin (available at drugstores). For each attempt, she should measure the ingredients



used, list the amounts, and blow bubbles. Which recipe makes the biggest, the stretchiest, or the longest-lasting bubbles?

**Jump rope.** How does exercise affect your youngster's heart rate? Help her take her pulse. (She should place two fingers on the inside of her wrist, count the beats in 10

seconds, and multiply by 6 for the beats per minute.) Next, she can jump rope for 1 minute and take her pulse again. What changes? Explain that exercise works out her heart—just like it works out other muscles. *Idea:* She might try the experiment with other family members to see what happens to their heart rates.♥

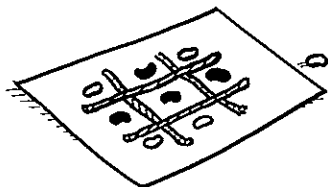
### ACTIVITY CORNER

## Family night—unplugged

TVs, phones, radios—all of these require electricity. Your child may wonder how families had any fun in the old days! Give him a taste of history with this cozy evening “off the grid.”

**1.** Have your youngster turn off the lights, TV, and computers. Then, light candles (place them in a safe spot), and make animal “shadow puppets” on a wall. For instance, link your thumbs together and flap your fingers for a hawk. Can you guess each other's animals?

**2.** No radio? No problem! Play musical chairs or hot potato, and let your child sing “Pop Goes the Weasel.”



**3.** Play games using “low-tech” materials. *Examples:* twigs for pick-up sticks, yarn and two types of beans for tic-tac-toe. Or juggle socks filled with rice and tied with string—who can juggle the longest?♥

### OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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### Q & A

## Handling underachievement

**Q:** My son's grades have started to slide. He has always done well in the past, so I don't understand what's going on. What should I do?

**A:** Start by talking to your son and to his teacher. Since he has done well until now, maybe he's used to school being easy for him. As the work gets more challenging, he may discover he has to work harder or in new ways. And lower grades can be discouraging and cause him to stop trying.

Also, make sure he's not worried about something like changes at home or a bully at school. Learning disabilities and vision problems are possibilities, too, so ask his teacher and his doctor about those.

Once you get to the root of the problem, you'll be able to work with your son and his teacher toward a solution.♥



### PARENT TO PARENT

## Find the good

Recently, I overheard my daughter Rachel and a friend talking about classmates they find “annoying” or “gross.”

Later, I asked Rachel about this. She shrugged and said she doesn't have to be friends with everyone. I think she was surprised when I agreed with her. I told her I'm not friends with all of my coworkers, but I do try to get along with them.

I suggested that instead of gossiping about classmates, Rachel could find one thing she *does* like about each person. Maybe someone she wouldn't invite over to play happens to make a great reading buddy in class.

We've continued to talk about this, and I can see she's making an effort. In fact, it looks like she has a lot in common with her lab partner—a girl she used to think was annoying.♥

