



Our 29th year

NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF January 28, 2019

253 S. Royalston Rd. Royalston, MA 978 249-3505
villageschoolma.org



News and Notes

This Wednesday Kindergarten & 3rd-4th Ice Skating
at Cushing Academy Rink in Ashburnham 9:00-11:30
Bring **bike helmets**, water and snacks. Free skate rentals. Parents are welcome to stay and skate, or watch.

The After School Program is open Wednesday afternoon during conferences

Babysitting Available for Thursday Conferences

Certified babysitters (and 5th-6th graders) Rhea and Clara are available to watch young children during parent conferences this Thursday, at the rate of \$5 per hour, in the lobby of the school. Drop in is fine. If your conference is very early or late, make sure to check to see if they are still here

Conferences This Week

Thank you for being prompt to conferences, so conferences can go the full time.

Open House is Saturday February 9th from 10 to noon

Find the flyers in the hallway - please post flyers in your town. Parents are hosts and bake refreshments for the Open House. There are very few openings left for preschool for next year. If you know anyone interested in the school for next year, for any class, they should contact the school as soon as possible to visit and observe a class.

1st-6th Grade Cross Country Skiing begins this Friday

1st-6th students bring their skis and boots to school on Friday. Please leave the skis by the back entrance and the boots inside your child's cubby. Make sure names are on the skis and poles, because not every child can identify their equipment. We'll leave the school around 1:30 to ski on the property and nearby. Parents are very welcome to join us. If conditions are not suitable for skiing, Rise will let you know by email, either Thursday afternoon, or the latest, Friday morning. Think SNOW!

Preschool

We welcome Kai and his family to the classroom. Now our classroom is full, with fifteen happy, noisy and hungry children. Guess how many eggs Leanne scrambled last week for snack? Four and a half dozen! Thank you to the Farm School for the donation of the eggs, appreciated by the children and adults alike.

Last Tuesday, Brooke visited our classroom and read *On The Day You Were Born* by Debra Frasier. Then Brooke, who is a midwife, talked to the class about the development of a fetus and showed drawings of the different stages. The class was invited to curl up on the rug and pretend they were back

inside their mother's womb. When they were ready they each emerged with a big smile!

We made a new batch of play dough last week and the children have been drawing themselves as babies for their baby books. In science class last Wednesday, Trina brought in coolers of snow and magnifying glasses. After getting a close up look at the snow, they used eye droppers and colored water to decorate the snow. In art on Thursday, Leia had the class paint with colored ice cubes. The melting ice left behind bands of color.

January - February 2019

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
28 8:30 All School Sing	29	30 9-11:30 Kindergarten & 3rd-4th ice skate at Cushing Academy rink Bring helmets and snacks Conferences in afternoon	31 NO SCHOOL Conferences	1 yoga 1:45 1st-6th cross country skiing
4 8:30 All School Sing	5	6 8:30 a.m. Kindergarten Theme Share	 8:45 Reading Buddies 3rd-4th with Preschool	8 yoga Coffee order due 1:45 Cross Country Skiing Parents bake for Open House →

Kindergarten

We continue our *Water and Ice* theme with the story *Koluscap and the Water Monster*, a Native American tale about a monster who stops a river from flowing and who at the end of the story is turned into a small water creature. We'll find out what creature he became, who can be found in many rivers and ponds today. In writing we're adding finishing touches to our recent book-making projects. We're re-reading our work, sharing work with partners, and making final additions and edits.

On Wednesday February 6th at 8:30 a.m. we complete our theme with a Theme Share to which all parents are invited. We'll be singing, dancing, and sharing our work and ideas from the past nine weeks. Don't miss it! In our reading sessions we are practicing Reading Superpowers including *Persistence Power* and *Book Talk Power*.

This Wednesday we're visiting the ice rink at Cushing Academy. Drop off is at 9:00 and pick-up at 11:30. Parents are welcome to stay and skate. Remember to bring along a helmet for your child.

In art last week the class made collage snowmen. In science we made an underwater mural. Each child drew sea creatures and stuck them on a large tissue paper background on the classroom wall. In phonics the class enjoyed making and reading words that ended in 'ay' such as day, may, and way. This week we're listening for long vowel sounds in the middle of words. Last week in math the class completed measuring activities using craft sticks and cubes as units of measure. This week we're working on solving story problems and playing *Racing Bears*. Last Friday afternoon we enjoyed the all-school hike through the woods. It was fascinating to see the ice formations and the stream in flood after the recent rain, thaw and freezeze.

3rd - 4th Grade

Last week the children worked on line breaks and stanzas in their poems. They experimented with what their poems looked like if they were broken up in a different way and even thought about how the shape of the poem could possibly reflect a piece of or the whole subject of the poem. For example, one student wrote about our clock, so he created a circular poem, while another student had the idea of things stacking in her poem, so made her lines look like they were stacked up. This week, we'll start experimenting with poetic devices.

In theme, we read the story *The Great Pesedjet*, which continued the sequence of Ra's creations. In the story, there was a focus on scarab beetles, so we learned about the importance of scarabs to the Ancient Egyptian. We learned what they represented and why they were sacred. The children watched a short video of dung beetles in order to see what the Egyptians saw. They thought the beetles were a riot and had a blast watching them. Then, the children created a multi-framed oil pastel and watercolor of four scarab beetles.

During Wednesday's recess the children tried on their entrepreneur hats and had two businesses at work. Some were creating and selling dessert snow, while others started a tile business. It was fun to watch them at work—planning, creating and figuring out how to run their businesses.

In science, the children worked with circuits. They created different kinds of circuits to light a light bulb and tested what would happen when the wires were joined differently or removed. This week, they'll begin planning their work for Maker Lab. They already have some ideas and are excited to begin.

We are looking forward to our ice skating adventure this Wednesday. Children need to bring a helmet, snack and water bottle. Drop-off is at 9 and pick-up is at 11:30 at Cushing Academy. Parents are welcome to join us. Skates are available for those who need them.

1st-2nd Grade

The children had a blast during our field trip to the Cushing Academy ice rink. It was a first time ice-skating for many of them and they worked at learning how to glide and keep their balance.

We continued to work with the knitting looms last week during theme. The children are doing well, taking their time and learning to be patient when mistakes arise. The slow, rhythmic process is a perfect pairing to winter weather. We also read the picture book *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox, about a boy learning about what a memory is. We shared our own ideas about memories and talked about how winter is the perfect time for sharing stories and memories, especially while doing crafts such as knitting.

In phonics we had a whole group lesson on the letter 'e' and the different sounds it can make, as well as how it works in words when we do not hear its sound. You may hear your child singing 'egg on elephant ê, ê, ê,' or 'earring on eagle ē, ē, ē.' We sorted words that had long e sounds, short e sounds and words with silent e.

In science last week we explored magnets. The children made predictions about whether certain objects, including wood, aluminum foil, a penny and a nail, were magnetic and then tested them. They tested the strength of a magnet to see how long of a paper clip chain a magnet could hold, and they experimented with the different poles of a magnet.

In math the first graders wrapped up our measurement unit by learning about fractions, including halves and fourths. We learned that fractions are equal parts of a whole. This week we begin a new unit on number sense.

5th - 6th Grade

Thanks to the generosity of Cushing Academy, and Josh Vautour, manager of the school's magnificent hockey arena (and parent of kindergartener Auggie), the class enjoyed a wonderful morning of ice skating last Wednesday. The 5th-6th-graders shared the ice with the 1st-2nd graders and it was heartwarming to see how the older and more experienced skaters helped their reading buddies, or their beginner classmates. Everyone skated enthusiastically, and the beginners made notable progress in the two-hour-plus session.

Back in the classroom, the children are well under way with their Science Night research projects. Investigations include germinating beans under various conditions, the most efficient angle of a wind turbine, how quickly people's heart rate returns to normal after exercise, and comparing vitamin C levels in different juices. Everyone worked hard during our first test session, and the children helped each other as test subjects or by working in pairs to help adjust equipment. This week the children will be doing further testing, and next week we'll have a conference in which they each present their project to the rest of the class.

We're very grateful to the adults who once again are helping with individual projects. Physicist Dick Hyland is a long-standing member of the Science Night support team, as is microbiologist Trina Walton. They were joined by math teacher Carol, Will Szal and Karen Walton, and the children greatly benefitted from all their advice and support.

Writing is well under way in our current theme project, in which the children are researching the lives and ideas of five prominent Greek philosophers. As part of the writing project we are including a series of technical mini-lessons, on such topics as writing a good intro, paragraphing and bringing the report to a conclusion. The aim is to have all the reports completed before the February break, and celebrate with a Publishing Party on Thursday February 14th at 8:20 a.m.