



THE BRIGHT SCHOOL

Tuesday Topics Newsletter

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March 9, 2010



Friday, March 12
Sally Foster Free Dress Day

Wednesday, March 17
Spanish t-shirt day

Friday, March 19
3rd Grade Play, 8:15 a.m.

Digital Microscopes, Promethean Boards, NetBooks... A Life of Possibilities

Last week I had the pleasure of accompanying a group of our parents as they toured our refurbished science classroom, outdoor gardens, and greenhouse. A combination of individual donations and proceeds from our Sally Foster Fundraiser have made these changes possible, and it's with the deepest gratitude that I thank our parents for helping to make our science program the best elementary school program in the region.

What moved and excited me the most, however, was watching a group of our students show our parents some of their newfound tools. Mimi Vance, Lili Anne McClanahan, Phoebe Warren, Chapman Peeples, and Shalin Naik enthusiastically demonstrated how to use the new digital microscopes, Promethean Board, and netbooks. They also gave us a tour of the greenhouse which will eventually have solar-powered ventilation panels and water pump for rainwater irrigation. Seeing students confidently and happily engaged—living out our mission to instill the joy of learning in our students—is what reminds me daily that I have the best job in the best school possible.

Under the guidance and inspiration of Kitty McMillan, our students go far beyond the norm in elementary school science education. It's excellent, exceptional, and an example of what we think of as expected at Bright School.

Just this week the Challenger Center called Mrs. McMillan to invite our fifth graders to meet Roger Crouch, a veteran astronaut with two space shuttle flights under his belt (471 hours in space). A Tennessee native, Dr. Crouch has served as a visiting scientist at MIT and a lead scientist for NASA and the European Space Agency. Because Mrs. McMillan and our students have worked with the Challenger Center for years, they chose our students to speak with Dr. Crouch and hear him announce an important event coming to Chattanooga in the near future. Again, this is typical of the enriching opportunities our students have at Bright School.

Opening our students' lives to a world of opportunities...giving them the courage, skills, knowledge, wisdom, and wherewithal to make the most of what the world has to offer is what Bright School is all about.

I'd like to recommend a book to you. Diane Ravitch, a professor at NYU and senior fellow with the Brookings Institution, has written a provocative and insightful examination of education in America entitled, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*. She explores the complex and deep consequences that the "testing" and "choice" trends in education have had on our schools. I think she's on to something in her conclusions, but what struck me the most was the philosophy we share about the purposes of our schools. Basically, she is saying that we should educate children for their responsibilities as citizens in a democracy. But to do this right, all children should have the opportunity to learn in a civil environment, to garner the essential background knowledge of the humanities and sciences, and to move beyond skills to a working understanding of life and how to make things better. I couldn't agree more, and I think Miss Bright would as well.

09 Morgan

Save Books Now for Community Service



Please look through your used books for children's books in good repair. The 4th graders are planning a schoolwide book exchange for the week of the 22nd. Donate 1 book, choose 1 book or donate 5 or more and choose 3! Books remaining after the event will be donated to Northside Neighborhood House.



Congratulations, 4th Grade!
(they win a popcorn a surprise party!)

Keep saving those tops year-round for us!

Parents' Association General Meeting

President Kelly Shikoh presided over a recent general meeting of the Bright School Parents' Association on Feb. 24. Science Teacher Kitty McMillan addressed the group with many thanks for the items purchased for the science program with proceeds from the Sally Foster fundraiser. Attendees toured the remodeled lab, enjoyed demonstrations from 5th grade students and toured the greenhouse.



Summer Funstitute Now Enrolling!

Get ready to blast off for summer fun! Check out all the fun camps at Bright School this summer. Visit the Bright School website to register now. Click the "funstitute" button at the bottom of the homepage.