



# Goosehill Primary School

## Weekly Notes-December 4, 2015



Dear Parents,

An important component of the New York State Social Studies framework for kindergarten and first grade involves teaching children about **diversity**. Here are a few concepts from the framework:

- Children and families from different cultures all share some common characteristics, but also have specific differences that make them unique.
- Diverse cultural groups within the community and nation embrace unique traditions and beliefs, and celebrate distinct holidays.
- Unique family activities and traditions are important parts of an individual's culture and sense of self.
- People and families of diverse racial, religious, national, and ethnic groups share their beliefs, customs, and traditions, which creates a multicultural community.
- Awareness of America's rich diversity fosters intercultural understanding.

Our School Improvement Team (SIT) has adopted the goal of continuing to foster a school culture that celebrates and honors differences among people. Our plans for the year include many read aloud books and discussions, songs, whole school artistic projects, and morning announcements related to this theme.

When teaching children about diversity, we emphasize that all people are the same on the "inside" and have many, wonderful differences on the "outside." We celebrate and respect people's differences in the way they look, dress, speak, and celebrate holidays. Because many of our families celebrate a holiday in December, the children are very interested in the topic. Next week, we will be asking the children to talk with you about your family traditions and holidays and to draw and write about them. The teachers will provide opportunities for them to share their stories with each other and we will display their writing and artwork in our hallways. We will also have a Spirit Day Assembly on Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup> when we will discuss some winter holidays and sing songs representative of them.

Reading books together is a perfect way to start a conversation about the traditions of families that may be different from your own. Of course, there are many, many wonderful books to be found in the library and book stores. Try series books such as *My First Holiday* series by Karen Katz and *Rookie Read About Holidays* to help you explore holidays and traditions around the world.

The faculty, staff, and I wish our families celebrating Hanukkah a joyous week ahead.

Warm regards,

Lynn Herschlein



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