

February 28, 2014

Dear Parents,

Today we celebrated the 100th Day of School! The celebration is an opportunity to recognize the incredible growth the children have made in their first 100 days at Goosehill Primary School. They've learned so much from their teachers! Thank you to Mrs. Kotzky and the kindergarten teachers for organizing a wonderful concert. Thank you to all parents for helping the children to make such creative projects. They were so proud of themselves.

At this time, it also feels like we have had 100 days of winter! The children have been indoors for recess for a long time now. The School Improvement Team's (SIT) goal of enhancing the indoor recess experience has certainly made a positive impact. With the help of our school lunch teachers, I ordered some terrific board games and activities for the recess program. Thanks to all of the parents who donated toys, games, crafts, and building materials. The children are enjoying everything, especially building with Magna-blocks, Lincoln Logs, Tinker Toys, and red Solo cups.

The teachers, staff and I have noticed that the children are having a very positive experience playing some classic children's games with each other: *Trouble, Connect Four, Guess Who? Memory, Operation, Don't Break the Ice* are just a few that they love. First graders are even playing Mancala, the game they learned to play in the Kenya Learning Club. With all that is available to children in terms of electronic games, I thought I would share with you some of the benefits of "regular" games. According to Gwen Dewar, Ph.D. (Parenting Science, 2012):

The benefits of board games for kids? Some are obvious. Kids enjoy playing them, and board games are opportunities for families to play together. In addition, social scientists have argued that games teach lessons about getting along with others. For example, games may encourage kids to consider the concept of rules, practice following rules, and reason about moral problems.

When kids play with older role models they can learn something else, too: How to win—and lose—with grace and good manners Then there are the possible intellectual benefits. Many board games—including the classics, like Chess, Checkers, Connect Four, and various Mancala games --encourage players to detect patterns, plan ahead, predict the outcome of alternative moves, and learn from experience.

I hope you'll consider incorporating games into your family time in the coming weeks, especially since it looks like we may be indoors for at least a few more weeks! If you are looking for something enjoyable to do on Sunday, try the **Yankee Doodle Circus** to be held at the Cold Spring Harbor High School from 1-4 p.m. It promises to be a fun-filled event for all! The information flyer was sent home yesterday and will appear on the website attached to these notes.

Lynn Herschlein