



Thornell Road Star

Thornell Road Elementary, Pittsford, New York

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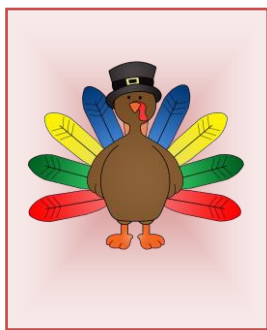
Roger DeBell, Principal

November 2018



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PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE



Dear Parents and School Community,

Last year, Thornell Road and Park Road were the first elementary schools in New York State and among the first in the country to host a chapter of Best Buddies. This year, with the addition of the other three elementary schools, **Best Buddies is now a part of all Pittsford schools.**

As an international non-profit organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement, Best Buddies creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This organization was founded in the late 1980s by Anthony Kennedy Shriver following the legacy of social responsibility and leadership set forth by the Kennedy family. Best Buddies in the Rochester area is sponsored by the Golisano Foundation and is dedicated to ending the social isolation of people with IDD. If you would like more information about Best Buddies, in general, please visit the website at <https://www.bestbuddies.org/newyork/>.



At our school, students in grades 4 and 5, with the assistance of our two advisors, lead planning meetings to organize our monthly after-school Best Buddies activity for our K-5 students. In addition, students, advisors and parents are invited to participate in a number of regional Best Buddies events, including the Friendship Walk, "Champion of the Year" event and the Friendship Ball.

If you would like to have your child participate in Best Buddies at TRE, please contact one of our advisors, Ms. Laura Dellavilla (Laura_Dellavilla@pittsford.monroe.edu) or Mrs. Meghan Hurley (Meghan_Hurley@pittsford.monroe.edu). *At TRE, everyone is welcome and everyone belongs!*

A solid partnership between school and home is critical for the success of our students. As you prepare for upcoming parent-teacher conferences, I offer the following article from the National PTA website entitled, "**Making Parent-Teacher Conferences Work for Your Child**", which has been reprinted with permission from *Education.com*.

"A parent-teacher conference is a time when important people in a student's life can talk about how that student is doing in school. It's a chance for you to ask questions about the class or your child's progress. It is also a time for you and the teacher to work together as a team to discuss ways you both can help your son or daughter.

Whether your child is in elementary, middle, or secondary school, parent-teacher conferences are important. If your school does not schedule regular conferences, you can request them. Teachers need your help to do a first-class job. Together, you can help your child have a great school year.



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Before the Conference

Schedule an appointment: A parent-teacher conference is not the only time when parents and teachers should make contact. Parents may want to schedule a special meeting with their child's teacher for a variety of reasons. If you need to set up an appointment with the teacher, make a phone call or write a quick note to the teacher, and let him or her know if you have particular issues you would like to discuss.

Talk to your child: Find out which subjects your child likes the best and the least. Ask why. Also, ask if there is anything your child would like you to talk about with the teacher. Help the child understand that you and the teacher are meeting to help him or her. If your child is in middle or high school, you may want to include him or her in the conference.

Gather input from others: If your spouse, another care-giving adult, or someone with pertinent information or insight (doctor, counselor, other guardian) can't attend the conference, ask for that person's concerns and questions before the conference.

Make a list: Before you go to the meeting, make a list of topics to discuss with the teacher. Along with questions about academics and behavior, you may want to talk to the teacher about the child's home life, personality, concerns, habits and hobbies, and other topics that may help the teacher in working with the child (e.g., religious holidays, music lessons, part-time jobs, a sick relative).

During the Conference

Establish rapport: As an icebreaker, take notice of something that reflects well upon the teacher. For example, thank the teacher for having made thoughtful notes on your child's homework or for the special attention in helping your child learn to multiply.

Ask questions: Questions you ask during the conference can help you express your hopes for the student's success in class and for the teacher. It's a good idea to ask the important questions first, in case time runs out. The teacher's answers should help you both work together to help your child. If your child receives special services (e.g., gifted and talented programs, speech or occupational therapy), be sure to ask about the frequency of services and your child's progress.

Addressing problems: Parent-teacher conferences are a good time to discuss any difficulties (either academic or behavioral) a child might be having at school. When problems arise, parents will want to:

- Avoid angry or apologetic reactions. Instead, ask for examples.
- Ask what is being done about the problem and what strategies seem to help at school.
- Develop an action plan that may include steps that parents can take at home and steps the teacher will take when the problem comes up at school.
- Schedule a follow-up conference and decide on the best way to stay in touch (phone, e-mail, or letters sent to the home).

Develop an action plan: If the student needs help with a behavioral or an academic issue, you and the teacher should agree on specific plans—that you both will work on—to help your child do better. Be sure you understand what the teacher suggests. If it's not clear, ask him or her to explain. Set up a way to check on your child's progress. You and the teacher can decide how best to stay in touch, such as through phone calls, notes, or additional meetings.

Ending the conference: End the conference by reviewing what you discussed and restating your action plan. This is also a good time to set up your next meeting.

After the Conference

When discussing the conference with the child afterward, stress the good things that were covered and be direct about problems that were identified. If an action plan is in place, explain to the child what was arranged. When an action plan is in place, consider the following: Watch your child's behavior and check on classwork and homework. Ask how the student feels about schoolwork. Stay in touch with the teacher to discuss your child's progress. Express appreciation as progress is made. A good way to promote a continuing relationship with the teacher is to say "thank-you" with a note or a telephone call.

Continuing to keep in touch with the teacher, even if things are going well, can play an important role in helping the child do better in school. When a child knows parents and teachers are regularly working together, the child will see that education is a high priority requiring commitment and effort."

As a reminder, school will be closed from Wednesday, November 21st through Friday, November 23rd for Thanksgiving Recess. In addition, Tuesday, November 27th and Thursday, November 28th are ½ days for K-5 students to accommodate parent/teacher conferences.

Thank you for all that you do to support our students, staff and school community.

Sincerely,

*Roger DeBell
Principal*



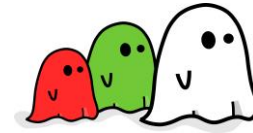


2018 Halloween Parade

With a rainy Halloween day, TRE held its annual Halloween Parade inside this year.

The costumes were varied and the smiles were big as students and staff walked through the halls, with many parents on hand to watch and take pictures.

Students finished their day enjoying treats and fun time with their fellow classmates.



Reading Corner

~ Mrs. Gulisano, Reading Specialist ~

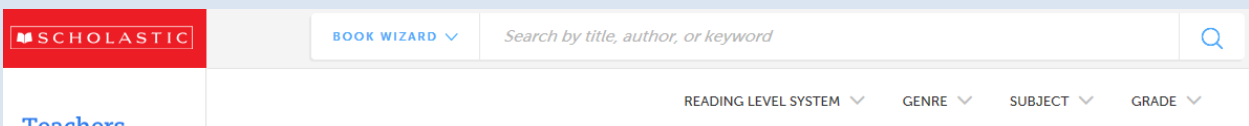
Hello Thornell Road Families,

Have you ever wondered if there was an easy way to search for books that match your child's interests and/or reading level? Scholastic Book Wizard is a terrific resource that can help you do just that! This website allows you to browse for books, narrowing your search by:

- Reading Level (we use Guided Reading Level at school)
- Genre
- Subject
- Grade

Try navigating through this website with your child to include him/her in the decision of which books he/she will read at home. The power of choice is very important. You may even use this website to get book ideas before visiting the library, book fair, etc. Enjoy!

<http://www.scholastic.com/bookwizard/>



You can type in a title if you wish, right where it says Search books, to find out a book's reading level. Or if you want to search for books by subject, for example football, type the topic into the search bar.



Kindergarten News

~Outdoor Learning Experience~



Mrs. Roets and Mrs. Aponte's kindergarten class had their first Outdoor Learning Experience in October. The class hiked to a nearby portion of the Thornell Farm Park Trail to observe nature using their five senses. While on the hike, students used their senses to observe their surroundings. Some of their observations were: "...we heard dried leaves crunching, we saw worms under rocks, we felt rough bark on trees, and we smelled wet dirt smell. We did not taste anything on the hike, but we tasted apples a week ago." The class will hike there again in winter, spring, and one final time in June as summer draws near to observe seasonal change over time. During this Outdoor Learning Experience, students drew pictures and took notes about their observations in their Nature Trail Book. They completed a nature scavenger hunt, used paper and crayons for tree-bark rubbings, and observed and noted the weather conditions. Unexpectedly, they ran into the Mendon High School AP Environmental Science class who were also on the trail making scientific observations! They are now planning to meet up with the APES class on their other hikes this year. 😊



Health Education

~Mrs. Lattuca

- Kindergarten and 1st grade students are learning about medicine and poison safety. These students were surprised to see that some medicines can look like candy! Please ask them the safety rule about taking medicine (only take medicine from a trusted adult).



- 2nd grade students are learning about the dangers of tobacco and secondhand smoke. Ask them what they can do to avoid being around secondhand smoke.
- 3rd grade students are learning about medicine safety, poison safety and the dangers of tobacco use. These students "acted out" ways to show their understanding of how to say "no" to avoid unhealthy choices.



Thank you to all families that participated in our first box tops competition for the year. Together, we raised just under \$600 in box tops! This money will come straight back to the school to fund PTSA projects. It's never too early to begin saving those Tops for the spring competition!

Great job Thornell Road!!!

The TRE STAR is a monthly publication.
We welcome any contributions you may have to
our newsletter! Written content and high
resolution photos would be
greatly appreciated.

Deadline for submission is generally the
first week of the month.

Please send submissions to trestarnews@gmail.com



