

Dear Fifth Grade Family,

Thank you, thank you, thank you is all I can say for all the wonderful gifts you gave to me before and after the winter break. I feel like a lot was given to me this year and I wanted you to know how much I appreciate them. Each item was really special and gave me a nice snapshot on how the kids view me. When I'll use or see one of the those items in the future it always make me smile thinking back on the year we've had. Thank you so much again!

The class and I are already very busy preparing for the first wave of the ISTEP that begins at the end of this month. This also means that we'll be moving away from the Saxon curriculum for a while in order to teach some important concepts that may come up on the test. To help students prepare, we're using some other educational apps to bridge this gap, and I'll be including a short reading assignment for homework each week. I think some of our students are starting to feel the pressure of the approaching test, but I think they'll feel quite prepared when they take it in a few weeks.

Have a great rest of the month!

Mr. Taylor

"If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate children."



# Your Monthly News From Mr. Taylor



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## J.A. - IN - A - Day

On Friday, February 17th, volunteers from our community will be visiting our classrooms to teach the kids about economics. Volunteers usually include individuals that own businesses in the county or are knowledgeable about a particular concept.

The kids really seem to enjoy the activities that go along with the lessons. Activities include skits, drawings, lots of movement, and a few more twists that engage the students in a meaningful way.

This event will run from the beginning of the day until the kids break for lunch.

## Snapshot of Important Dates

- February 19th - JA -In - A - Day & Wear your favorite hat
- February 20th - President's Day
- February 27th - 1st Round of ISTEP begins (We'll start testing on March 2nd)

## Dressing for the Weather

I know it's been strange having such high temperatures lately, but please encourage your child to dress appropriately for school each day.

## Getting Ready for the ISTEP

There are several things you can do to help during the ISTEP week.

- 1) Make sure that your child has a balanced breakfast.
- 2) Make sure your child gets to bed at a decent time.
- 3) Limit video game time to an hour or less each night.
- 4) Talk about the expectations you have for your child before the test each day.

## Days Off From School & E-learning

President Day weekend is here! Our school calendar shows that we are currently scheduled to have Friday, February 20th off. As long as we don't have to cancel tomorrow, we won't have school on Monday.

Also, if we do have any cancelations after February 20th, they will be e-learning days. Students have every thing they need for each e-learning day already downloaded to their iPad. However, if a student does need a paper copy, we can get one to them next week.

## Reading Progress as a Class

Since we've made the move to a digital format, I'm sure that many of you are wondering about our progress this year. I know that my grade book is always available to view but it's not the same as seeing a physical copy of an assignment or a test. So, I wanted to share some data with you.

Our class just took the STAR and Acuity formative assessments and both tests show that our class is right on track. We were supposed to be in a certain range at this point in the year, and we were comfortably in that margin. So, everything seems to be progressing well.

## Van's Family Night

Tonight is Van's Family Fun Night. A paper with details about this event was sent home earlier in the month. Families that come will receive a free gift and will be making a craft together. I'm sure it will be fun evening out!