

EASTHAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CENTER / PEPIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



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Dear Families of Center Pepin Students:

Autumn is in full swing at Center Pepin School and our students have adjusted wonderfully to school routines and classroom expectations. The staff at Center Pepin School thanks you for partnering with us to provide the highest quality educational opportunities for your children. Family engagement is a key factor in helping students and schools succeed. As a parent or caregiver, you can do your part at home to reinforce this important family-school partnership. You can support your child by:

- Setting up a daily routine, including healthy eating and consistent sleeping habits
- Getting your child to school on time, prepared for the day's weather (a spare set of clothes in the backpack is helpful)
- Talking daily with your child about their day
- Reading to and with your child
- Limiting and monitoring TV watching, gaming, social media, and computer time
- Providing a quiet and distraction-free spot for homework; check in with your child about assignments; express high expectations for your child's learning.
- Demonstrating a positive mindset about our school and education to your child

With families and schools working together, student achievement is enhanced, and children are better prepared to do well in school.

We are excited to announce Center Pepin Spirit Week, the week of October 25-29 and we encourage your child to participate.

Monday: Mix and Match Pattern Day- wear stripes, polka dots, zigzags, squiggles, and more. Combine multiple patterns in the same outfit.

Tuesday: Mismatched Sock Day-wear two different colored socks

Wednesday: Hat and Sunglasses Day

Thursday: Center Pepin Pride Day-wear Maroon and White

Friday: Pajama Day

Center Pepin Kindergarteners have been very busy over the last several weeks. In English language arts, they have been listening to stories and making connections to their personal

A great place to learn and grow.

lives. They also have been working on printing capital letters and creating fantastic stories in writing journals that relate to pieces of literature that the class has read. In science, students have been discovering the beauty of autumn and talking about where animals go as it gets colder and how animals adapt to their environment. In social studies, they have begun the *Histories Mysteries* curriculum in which students have become detectives when learning about historical events and artifacts from long ago. Finally, in math, the class has been learning how to subitize (perceive the number of a group of items) numbers 1-5, count numbers up to 10, and utilize 5-frames to assist with counting skills. Next up, kindergarten will be learning about the life cycle of a pumpkin, participating in more hands-on math activities, and learning even more sight words. Happy fall to all!

First grade has been doing a great job settling into their routines. In math, students just finished learning about graphs and charts. Grade 1 learned many new math games that the students had fun playing and they just completed their unit 1 test. The classes finished up their beginning of the year reading testing and are now excited to start working in small groups. The students are enjoying reading the leveled books in their book boxes during silent reading time. Garden classes have started again, and Grade 1 loves being out in the garden and learning about what we have grown.

Second graders have been busy bees as they settle into this second month of school! In math, students are working their way through the first math unit and have worked on addition, subtraction, and graphing. In writing, they have been working on silly stories about animals and younger siblings. The classes have read a lot of picture books as part of their writing lessons and have learned about how the authors of those books get ideas for their writing. Then, they practice getting ideas for writing in similar ways. Second grade has been practicing independent reading skills and have been making personal connections to the stories they are reading. In addition, students are beginning to work in some smaller reading groups and the WIN (What I Need) time is being utilized to further support students in areas where they need extra help or are ready to explore concepts at a higher level. In science, students have been hanging out with Doug who creates the *Mystery Science* videos they all enjoy and coming soon, third grade will be working with the *Histories Mysteries* curriculum and learning about what historians do. Students will even practice being historians themselves. It is an exciting time to be a second grader!

Third grade has continued to work on building community within the classroom and extending those skills into our Center/Pepin community and beyond. In math, students are continuing to practice multiplication by drawing pictures, using tape diagrams, and writing equations for word problems. They have also been identifying unknown quantities and solving for the unknown. In writing, students have been working hard to develop personal narratives with the help of teachers and friends to create rich writing. They will work on adding sensory details and temporal words/phrases to make their narratives more interesting. During science, students have been learning about animals throughout time and how species have changed. The students have been learning how to visualize as a comprehension strategy and use illustrations to help better understand what they have read. Please keep practicing addition and subtraction with your child whenever possible.

In math, 4th grade finished their unit on factors and multiples and are now learning about fractions. Students are using fraction strips to help them get a visual of fractional amounts. They are learning how to compare fractions when they have the same denominators or the same numerators. In writing, each student has selected a piece of writing that they are going to take through the writing process. They are making revisions, adding more interesting words, editing and proofreading, and finally publishing their best work. Fourth graders just started

reading *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan. Right now, they are focusing on finding details from the text to answer questions and support opinions around predictions. In social studies, students are learning why Christopher Columbus has been celebrated on Columbus Day and why many communities are changing the holiday to Indigenous Peoples Day. They are continuing to work on the *Human Machines* Mystery Science unit. Students have made eye models to experience how different parts of the eye work in order for us to see.

It is the mission of the Easthampton Public Schools to create a community where all students feel welcome, accepted, and safe. In order to help fulfill this mission, the district has formed a Professional Learning Community (PLC) comprised of teachers, counselors, and administrators charged with developing age-appropriate resources and lessons for K-4 students to begin talking about topics highlighting the message of equity, access, and opportunity for all. We research and pull from trusted sources like the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Teaching Tolerance, Gender Inclusive Classroom, Facing History and Ourselves, age-appropriate authentic children's books, NewsELA, Scholastic News and others. This month's topic is Indigenous People's Day. This topic is important because it highlights the positive images of Indigenous people. It is through respectful exchange, education, and awareness that students can develop understanding and empathy and find appreciation for and common ground with those around them.

October is National Bullying Prevention Month. As a school community, we are committed to stopping bullying and cyberbullying by increasing awareness. Parents, students, and schools are often worried about bullying. It is a problem and cause for concern but may not be as widespread as many think because the term bullying is often used as an umbrella to describe all kinds of behavior—from a rude comment to a conflict between two people to a one-time physical altercation. In the U.S., 22% of students age 12-18 report being bullied at school and 28% of young people will experience cyberbullying over the course of their lifetime. It is important to distinguish bullying from other unkind, mean, and harmful behavior. Calling someone a name or pushing someone once, being rude or having an argument with someone is not bullying. These situations and behaviors will be addressed, but may have different consequences and/or interventions, which is why the distinction is critical. Bullying may often involve repeated actions or threats, a power imbalance, and the intention to cause harm. Many bullying incidents can be described as identity-based, which is any form of bullying related to characteristics that are part of a person's identity or perceived identity group, such as race, religion, disability, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical appearance, etc.

As one would expect, most bullying takes place when and where adults are not around and as students get older, they do not report bullying to adults. Therefore, it is especially important to help young people learn how to be an ally, which includes supporting targets, not participating, telling aggressors to stop, informing a trusted adult, not judging people, and getting to know them as well as being an ally online. Here are some questions that you as families can use to discuss this important topic with your child:

- Do you know what bullying is? How is it different from mean behavior? Is someone engaging in bullying just because they are mean to you?
- Have you ever experienced mean behavior? What about bullying? Can you tell me more about it?
- Have you ever been mean to someone else? Do you think you have bullied someone before? Please explain.

- What do students do when they see bullying take place in school? What do you do? (ADL.org)

The Easthampton Public Schools are participating in weekly routine COVID-19 safety checks (Mondays at Center Pepin). All families are strongly encouraged to participate. Please sign your child up! Visit www.cic-health.com/consent/ma This is one of the strongest mitigation tools we have to limit the spread of COVID-19 in school.

As we continue to manage the effects COVID-19 has on our school, please know that we are continually monitoring the safety guidelines of the CDC, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and Department of Public Health (DPH) and will adjust as new information becomes available. We urge families to help limit the potential of spreading the virus by having your child stay home if they have symptoms. If a child presents with one of the symptoms in bold, or two or more of any of these symptoms, please keep them home and consider having them tested:

- **Fever (100.0 Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills**
- **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Muscle aches or body aches**
- **Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)**
- Sore throat, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea when in combination with other symptoms
- Headache when in combination with other symptoms
- Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) when in combination with other symptoms

A message from the Easthampton Elementary Parent Teacher Organization (PTO): The Easthampton PTO is a group of parents, guardians, teachers, and administrators who create fundraising events and activities that bring families together for fun and community building. We also raise money for the schools to use for enrichment events like field trips, special guest performances, and teacher appreciation gifts. We welcome volunteers at any level. We just held the first annual Family Fall Event at Maple School on October 7. There was a very exciting BMX bike show and the Easthampton Fire Department generously showcased their ladder truck! Students got to choose one art kit from Valley Art Supplies. Choices included mini canvases and paints, mosaic making, scratchboards, origami, and bat and spider web making. They also got to choose a book from Usborne Books and More. Additionally, all students will be receiving gift certificates for an ice cream cone from Mt. Tom's ice cream! On November 20th from 10 AM to 12 PM, the PTO will be hosting a garden clean-up day at Pepin school. Please consider coming to help remove old perennials, pull weeds and edge the garden, and hang out with fellow PTO families. Bagels and coffee will be provided for volunteers. If you're interested in joining this event, please email Anne Talley, PTO co-chair (atalleybraz@gmail.com). Another way parents can contribute to the PTO is to sign up for Amazon Smile. Just go to your Amazon account and select "Your Charity" near the top of the page. Enter in "Easthampton Home and School Association" and a small percentage of your sales will be donated to our PTO. We would greatly appreciate it! The Easthampton PTO welcomes parents and guardians to join us and we love new ideas. PTO is a great way to enhance your child's school experience and to get involved in a positive way. Our next meeting will be on November 3, from 6:30-7:30 in the cafetorium at Pepin school. Hope to see you there!

Parent conferences will be scheduled either in person or over Zoom on October 21-22. These two days will be noon dismissals for students. October 27th will be a noon dismissal for students. Spirit Week runs from October 25-29. We will have an all-school assembly on Friday October 29th. There is no school for students on Tuesday, November 2nd and Thursday, November 11th.

We encourage you to contact your child's teacher whenever you have questions or concerns or wish to share information regarding your child's progress. Specific expectations will be established by each teacher with respect to assignments and grading. Please refrain from sending in outside food for special occasions. We are always accepting donations of gently used leggings or sweatpants of various sizes. We also accept packages of unused, unopened underwear or socks. These items will be kept in the nurse's office in case our students need them during the day. When picking up and dropping off at Center Pepin, please be mindful of our neighbors. Please do not block the driveways of private residents when parking and do not park in non-spaces. As a reminder, there is no parking behind the residences and businesses on Union Street for school drop-offs and pick-ups. We anticipate your partnership, support, and collaboration in providing the most successful school year for your child. We look forward to working with you toward this end. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school at 413-529-1545.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jill S. Pasquini-Torchia
Principal

Andrea T. McCallum
Assistant Principal