

In the Center



The Sounds of the Seasons

Music is always in the air at Center School! Whether it is the sweet melody of students voices or the sounds of band instruments, one can always find our students making and enjoying music!



Under the direction of music teacher Mrs. Kate Zitnay, our students excel in music. In addition to her weekly music classes, Mrs. Zitnay directs beginning and advanced band as well as directs a choral group at



Thomaston Center School. Did you know that approximately 100 students participate in chorus and more than seventy five students perform in the band?

Each grade level is also highlighted throughout the year. In November, grade six demonstrates their percussion talent in the annual world drumming concert. Grade four entertains us with the annual holiday show in December, while grade five shines in the Memorial Day Celebration in the spring.

The band performs throughout the year in various events, whether through the Zombie Performance at the Haunted Hallways or through our involvement in the Dis-

trict-wide Music Event. Our chorus has also been invited to perform at special functions, including a Community Choral event as well as the St. Jude's Telethon in Torrington.

Be sure to check our website and Power School notices for announcements on concert dates and times. Typically there is at least one major musical event a month! These concerts are open to the public. We hope you and your family will come and enjoy our talents!



Thomaston Center School

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Dates to Remember:

- 12/23/16~ Early Dismissal (12:30)
- 12/24/16-1/2/17~ Holiday Recess
- 1/3/17~ School Resumes
- 1/16/17~ Martin Luther King, Jr Holiday, No School
- 1/18/17~ PAC meeting at 6:30 p.m.; PTA meeting following

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It's beginning to look a lot like Winter!



With the winter weather upon us, it is important to remember that outdoor recess will take place if the temperature is 25 degrees or higher taking wind chill into account. In the event that weather prohibits outdoor recess, students will have recess indoors. Please be sure to remind your children to come to school with the appropriate winter gear including coats, gloves, and hats!

In the event of a delay, emergency early dismissal, or school cancellation, families are notified via Power School. For this reason, it

is important to keep contact information current, including email addresses and cell phone numbers. Local television stations will also be notified. As mentioned in previous updates, families will need to "opt in" to text messages in order to receive reminders from Center School and Thomaston Public Schools, including delay and cancellation messages. In order to do this, simply text "y" to 67587. If you have done this correctly, you will immediately receive a text notice indicating you have successfully opted in. In order to maintain privacy of these messages, the cell phone number needs to be the one

associated with a student whose number is in our Power School system. **If you would like to receive text messages, please be sure to text y to 67587 from your mobile phone.**

Finally, please also be reminded that **if there is a delay it will be a 2 hour delay. If we have a delay, there will be no before school activities. If we have an early dismissal or school cancellation, there will be no after school activities, including Thomaston Center School's band rehearsal and the late bus.**

Thank you for your cooperation and support in this area.

Grade Five News

In writing, we've completed our small moment narratives and there will be a celebration of writing on Friday, December 23rd.

Our study of multiplication in math has been completed and will be moving on to strategies for division. Please continue to have your child practice their fact fluency and math skills on www.frontrowed.com.

5th graders have moved into reading informational text. Students will be reading non-fiction articles, books, and biographies that are tied to the Social Studies explorer projects.

There has been noticeable improvement in hallways and being prepared

since we've implemented our PRIDE behavioral expectations. Students have enjoyed earning time listening to music, dancing, and playing Pictionary as rewards. As the year pro-



gresses, we hope to see continued improvement in these areas.

CT Kid Governor nominee, Nathan Marsh, was recently recognized at the Thomaston Board of Education meeting. He is pictured here with Thomaston Board of Education Chairperson, Mrs. Fainer and Thomaston Superintendent Mrs. Coss.

Lastly, the fifth grade team would like to extend warm wishes for a happy and healthy break. Be sure enjoy time with family and rest up for a busy second half of the year.

Media Center News

This month TCS students had the opportunity to participate in Hour of Code. This is a yearly event that takes place during Computer Science Education Week. Our school participated on Tuesday, December 6th. Coding provides students with an opportunity to foster creativity, logic, and problem-solving skills.

TCS students continue to visit the Thomaston Public Library. We are fortunate to be able to walk to the public library. The weather temperatures continue to drop, and we will resume our visits in January. Please dress your



child for the walk over to the public library. These visits allow your child to take out materials for content area projects, homework, and assignments. Students are also allowed to take out books for their own reading enjoyment. I will continue to keep the public library book bin outside the TCS Media Center door. Students may return their public library books in the bin, and I will return the materials back to the public library.

TCS library overdue notices went home this week. If your child has an overdue book, please remind them to look carefully

for the materials. I would be happy to renew any books that students are still reading.

I am excited to collaborate with our Technology Education teacher, Mr. Craig. This year we will be piloting a 6th grade Invention project. Sixth grade students will be creating their own invention to solve a problem. These projects will give students the opportunity to create and innovate. Stay tuned for more information!

~Ms. Saramanidis, Library Media Specialist

Grade 4 Update

This month students in grade 4 began the third unit in math. This unit focuses on multi digit multiplication and division. We started by investigating the formulas for perimeter and area. Students will soon be focusing on multiplying single-digit and two digit numbers by 10, 100, and

1,000. It is important that students work at home on mastering their basic multiplication facts.

The students were very busy this month preparing for their Winter show with Mrs. Zitnay. "Holiday Windows" which was performed on Tuesday, December 20th. Complimenting their stage performance, students visited the Thomaston Opera House on Thursday,

December 15th to get a behind-the-scenes tour and historical peek at our local gem. This month's team-building took place on Friday, December 16th from 2:00- 2:55. Please remember to remind students to bring proper outdoor clothing for recess during these cold months!

Grade Six Experiences

As a language arts enrichment project, the sixth grade has been practicing a choral reading of *How the Grinch Stole TCS*.

We also have completed our "Simple Man" narratives, and are moving on to memoirs.



Literature groups are in full swing. We have started with literature box challenges where several students had the pleasure of "drowning Lincoln" to discover surface tension.

Moving on to the New Year, we will be jumping into Module Two in Eureka Math. Our students will be manipulating numbers by dividing fractions by fractions. Common

Core has a strong emphasis on truly understanding the process of interpreting the meaning of division. Our students will be working on creating division stories and visual models to go along with the problems.

In science it's all up in the air! We have just completed a lab that proved that air is a gas and can be compressed. Then the students designed experiments that proved air has mass. There were balloons weighed before and after they were filled, and 2 balloons hanging on a meter stick that dipped to the full balloon when the other was popped. We filled up a 60 foot solar tube that rose high above Sanford Avenue field when heated by the sun to prove that warm air is less dense than colder air. Next is layers of the atmosphere and reading the symbols on

a weather map.

In social studies we have learned how to outline to write a research report on an ancient farming village. After the paper is written, (and only after!), the students will create the village and a clay artifact from one of the river valley civilizations. We divided the class up into continents so the students should have a good idea of the similarities and differences of early agricultural societies.



Then it's on to Mesopotamia!

Students Practice Coding

On Tuesday, December 6, 2016, Thomaston Center School students joined millions of students around the world during the week of December 5 – 9 for an "Hour of Code", an event launched in 2013 by Code.org.

The purpose of this event is to provide students an opportunity to learn and practice valuable skills that will help them navigate through the future demands of the 21st century. By participating, students learned computer algorithms, application production, and internet use in a fun way. Students used their Chrome Books and learned to program games through this experience. The Hour of Code helps students develop at their own personal skill level and serves to inspire stu-



dents to keep learning. This event is an extension of the work students are producing in their technology education and library media classes at Center School. The Hour of Code was organized and facilitated by library media specialist teacher, Ms. Melissa Saranidis, and technology education teacher,

Mr. Doug Craig.

This program is a great opportunity for students to learn new skills and may even inspire students to want to choose a career in computer technology. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, it is projected that there will be over 1 million computing job openings by 2022.

According to code.org, the sponsoring organization, 67% of all new jobs in STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) are in computing, yet only 8% of STEM graduates are in Computer Science.



From the Desk of Mrs. Bernier

Students and staff alike are making great strides in learning and applying new instructional strategies. The teachers are working to create and employ meaningful learning targets.

Students are also hard at work, discovering new insights and

learning new concepts. Every moment is truly a learning opportunity; it is an exciting time to be at Center School!

We greatly appreciate your support of our work at Thomaston Center School. We certainly could not be successful with our

fantastic fourth graders, fabulous fifth graders, and sensational sixth graders without your assistance!

On behalf of all of the faculty and staff at Thomaston Center School, I wish you a wonderful holiday season and a 2017 filled with peace, joy and good health!

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The WINTER BREAK is a perfect time to get moving!

Dance and sing to your favorite music, or make up routines such as this one:

On the 12th day of Phys Ed my teacher said to me:

Do 12 jumping jacks

11 awesome air squats

10 total trunk twists

9 awesome arm circles

8 killer crab kicks

7 solid shoulder taps

6 mountain climbers

And a 5 second plank

4 crazy crunches

3 sets of lunges

2 perfect push ups

And a super healthy strong burpee!



News and Notes...



- ◇ The School Store is open for business! Students can purchase pencils, pens, erasers, and other school supplies between 8:20-8:45 a.m. daily.
- ◇ Center School will once again be participating in the Elementary Level Student Leadership Conference at Naugatuck Valley Community College on Tuesday, January 10, 2017. More information will be forthcoming on this program.
- ◇ Students will be taking the winter benchmark tests for the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). Beginning January 19, students will be tested in Math, Reading, and Language Usage.
- ◇ Thank you to the PTA and the volunteers that worked to make this year's Holiday Shoppe a huge success!
- ◇ Our next Character Assembly will be on Thursday, January 5, 2017 at 8:25 am in the TCS auditorium. All are welcome to attend!
- ◇ Many sweatshirts, gloves, and other items are being left behind around

The winter and holiday season is fast approaching! While it is an exciting time of year, it can be one of the most stressful times of year as well. Although you can't avoid stress completely, there are some things you can do to lessen it. Allow yourself some extra time to do chores and shopping, rather than rushing around at the last minute. Include healthy food choices along with all of those holiday treats. Be safe when using holiday decorations, candles, and toys. Stay alert while you're on the road—whether driving, riding, or walking. Make sure you get plenty of sleep. Take time to enjoy your family and friends, but don't forget about yourself! Best wishes to all for a healthy and happy holiday season!



According to the CDC, hand washing is still the single most effective means of preventing the spread of viral and bacterial infections. If soap and water are not available, then a hand sanitizer should be used. Although a hand sanitizer can be used throughout the day, you should follow-up with a thorough and vigorous hand washing when you get the opportunity, to prevent the build-up of the sanitizer.

Reminder to the parents of 6th grade students: Your 6th grader needs to have a state-mandated physical, and updated immunizations, on file in the Nurse's office, before the end of the school year. Time has a way of slipping away from us, so if your child has not yet had their physical, book one soon! If your child has had a physical and immunizations within the past year, send the completed blue, State of Connecticut form into the Nurse's office.



Thank you for your diligence!

Thomaston Center School. As the cold weather approaches, please encourage your child to check out the Lost and Found located in the cafeteria. Some items were claimed during the parent-teacher conference days, but there are items left behind looking for the proper owner!

- ◇ We have been working hard in our Physical Education classes and WIN groups to make ourselves stronger and healthy by working our mind and muscles. The extra time the children have with our WIN program has been a blessing this year. The students have more time to not only have fun, but really take the time to learn why it is important to move. We started a Floor ball unit, which is similar to Ice Hockey, and continue to work on building our muscles for the Fitness test this term. During this holiday season take the time to get out and get moving sledding, snow shoeing, skiing and building snowmen are just a few ways to stay fit in the winter. As John F. Kennedy

once stated, "Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body, it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity."

- ◇ Congratulations to Sophia Coer and Mia Vasquez, winners of the Fire Prevention Poster Recognition Program. Kristen and Sophia's posters will now compete at the Litchfield County Level. This event is sponsored by the Thomaston Fire Department. Thank you, too, to Mrs. Johnston for helping to facilitate this event.
- ◇ Please be reminded that school begins at 8:05 am on regular days of school. Prompt attendance is very important to a student's success! School dismissal is at 3:00 pm daily. Please be aware that changes in a student's dismissal need to be communicated in writing via note or fax. Thank you for your cooperation in this area.



Thomaston Center School...The Bridge to Adolescence