



Harry Lee Cole School
26 Middleton Road
Boxford, MA 01921
978-887-2856
Mr. Brian Middleton-Cox, Principal

The Cole Connection

Dear Candyce,

As a reminder, if your child is going to be absent from school, please call the main office at 978-887-2856 to alert the office staff.

During last week's Professional Development, Dr. Creeden recognized the following staff members that were celebrating milestone anniversaries.

5 Years

Debbie Bates, Speech/Language Assistant
Valerie DeGeorge, Grade 2 Teacher
Alison Salerno, Grade 2 Teacher
Lori Martin, Reading Specialist
Mary Dodge, Secretary to the Principal
Donna Ellis, Substitute Teacher

10 Years

Mojgia Olia, Aide

15 Years

Debbie Connery, Preschool Teacher/Coordinator
Susan Konaries, Special Education Teacher
Lisa Salisbury, Multiage Teacher
Lisa Simmons, Kindergarten Teacher
Alison Barton, Grade 2 Teacher

20 Years

Debbie Cahill, Grade 1 Teacher
Deb Dyer, Cafeteria Monitor
Peggy Russell, Grade 1 Teacher

25 Years

Sue Giovannacci, Kindergarten Teacher
Heather Walker, Kindergarten Teacher
Susan Whitney, Aide

Congratulations to all these dedicated staff members who work so diligently on educating the children of Boxford.

This week during **Morning Meeting**, I will be reading [Amazing Grace](#) by Mary Hoffman. Grace loves to act out stories. Sometimes she plays the leading part, sometimes she is 'a cast of thousands.' When her school decides to perform Peter Pan, Grace is longing to play Peter, but her classmates say that Peter was a boy, and besides, he wasn't black...But Grace's Ma and Nana tell her she can be anything she wants if she puts her mind to it...

Have a wonderful week!

Sincerely,
Mr. Middleton-Cox
Principal, Cole School

Important Cole School Dates

January 31: Audubon Field Trip (Salisbury and Golesworthy)
February 1: Audubon Field Trip (Salerno and Holt)
February 1 and 2: Kindergarten Registration 1:00-2:30pm
February 3: Audubon Field Trip (Cronin and York)

Modeling Listening Skills for Your Kids

Critical listening affects all areas of learning. Focusing on what is important to hear plays a huge part in the success of learning at school. The majority of a student's day is spent listening the teacher, to other students or to audio media.

You, as parents, can model good listening skills for your children and help them to become active listeners. As we converse with others, we can model appropriate listening skills and show kids exactly how to listen. Show that an active listener looks at the speaker in the eye, turns away from the TV, the iPod, the phone, etc. in order not to be distracted while listening. If we are to teach good listening skills, we must be models of good listening. Here are some ideas:

-When your child speaks to you, be interested and attentive. Maintain eye contact. Ignore the phone or other distractions. Ask for his/her opinions regularly. Show that you are genuinely interested in what your child thinks and feels.

-Encourage your child to talk directly to you and you can then model the habits of good listening. Kids are more likely to talk and share when they feel important. Share your thoughts to extend the conversation. Strengthen your child's confidence by reassuring her that you hear his ideas.

-Listen patiently as if you have plenty of time. With a limited vocabulary and experience in talking, kids sometimes struggle through what they want to share with you. Don't let your eyes wander; stay focused on your child talking. Comment on what they are saying as well.

-Try not to cut off your child before he has finished speaking. Listen respectfully as this is the skill you wish for him to acquire. Avoid dead-end, yes/no questions. Ask questions that extend conversation rather than cut them off.

-Watch for your child's non-verbal cues. Look at the expressions on her face, posture, energy level or changes in behavior patterns. Non-verbal communication tells us just as much, if not more, than words do.

You, as parents, play the most important role in building communication skills in your children. Children spend more time with you, their parents, than with any other adult and are influenced by how they see you interacting with others. Parents who listen and converse with patience, interest and attention prove to be the best teachers of listening and give their children the greatest audience in the world!

Jane Bonaventura, SLP

News from Kindergarten

Since arriving back at school after the holiday break, Kindergartners have begun their systematic instructional phonics program. This month students will be engaged in an in-depth focus on the short sound of the letter "a."

Lessons throughout the week alternate between decoding lessons (reading) and encoding lessons (writing.) Students are encouraged to use their fingers to tap out the individual phonemes (sounds) of words and then record them as they are heard. They are also tapping out words and blending them back together. Another component of the phonics program is the reading of simple sentences using combinations of short vowel words as taught and simple sight words. Students will be held accountable for the accurate spelling of these words: a, is, the, has, in, I, on, was, go, to, in their personal writing done in the classroom. You can practice with these words at home as well.



Throughout the beginning of February, the Kindergarten team will be administering many assessments to see where each child is in their learning. The information collected from these tools will help guide our instruction to meet the needs of each student. We look forward to sharing this information with you at your March parent/teacher conference. We appreciate your continued support in and out of the classroom each day.

Reading News

From the ELA Instructional Support Specialist
Donna Morton

At Cole School my experience has been that the majority of our students find reading very engaging and even if they may not find reading easy, they are interested in books and reading. For those students who it is a real struggle to engage in reading, it may be more important than ever to find ways to make reading an activity they will choose to do for their own pleasure. According to recent studies, the difference between avoiding reading, and coming to enjoy reading, may be the difference between future school success and school struggles. Unfortunately for many students who would say they don't like reading, it's because reading seems more like work than pleasure and this is very unmotivating. These children lose the "curiosity and interest" in reading that Kathryn Perkinson, writing for the website, Reading is Fundamental, would say is the "cornerstone to using reading and related skills successfully." What can parents do to engage these reluctant readers? In Perkinson's article, she supports what I have recommended to parents again and again, that, "by far the most effective way to encourage your children to love books and reading is to read aloud to them, and the earlier you start, the better." Perkinson goes on to say that parents should not stop taking the time to read aloud once children have started reading for themselves - again, an idea that I have continually promoted, wholeheartedly. The more a child struggles with reading skills the less likely they are to like reading and once a child loses their desire to spend time with books and reading it is very difficult to change the tide. For these students, the best thing that parents can do at home is to make "reading fun" a top priority. The emphasis should be on making reading time pleasurable and engaging. Of course reluctant readers are armed with a number of reasons they don't like reading, some just like those listed below. (From the website www.rif.org) - Read on for some helpful suggestions for getting around these excuses.

- It's boring. Don't despair if your children have this response to reading that is assigned at school. You can expose them to another kind of reading at home that is related to their interests.
- I don't have the time. Kids are busy. School, friends, sports, homework, television, and chores all compete for their time. Some children need your help in rearranging their schedules to make time for reading.
- It's too hard. For some children, reading is a slow, difficult process. If your child is having a hard time reading, talk with his or her reading teacher. Ask about how you can find interesting books and materials written at a level that matches your child's reading ability.
- It's not important. Often children don't appreciate how reading can be purposeful or relevant to their lives. Parents can take it upon

themselves to find reading materials on subjects that do matter to their kids.

- It's no fun. For some children, especially those who have difficulty reading, books cause anxiety. Even for children with strong reading skills, pressure from school and home that emphasize reading for performance can make reading seem like a chore. Our advice: take the pressure off reading so that your children can enjoy it.

Go to www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/articles/children-who-can-read-but-dont.htm to find a list of 20 Ways to Encourage Reading



Spirit Day and Food Pantry Collection - 2/3

Please see the attached flyer for our Patriots Spirit Day and Food Pantry collection for Friday, February 3rd.

[2/3 Spirit Day and Collection Day](#)

BEST's Women and Wine Event

Don't Miss B.E.S.T.'s of Women & Wine on February 9, 2012, sure to be an exciting evening for the ladies in town! Tickets, which are \$50, include wine tasting, hor' doeuvres, a wine glass favor filled with chocolates and a ticket for the door prize (and rumor has it the door prize is a Louis Vuitton Handbag!). The first 75 ladies to purchase tickets to the event will receive 2 door prize tickets! That is 2 chances to win this beautiful handbag. There will also be great raffle baskets to win, one including a Spa day for 2 at the Wentworth By the Sea Hotel! Tickets went on sale on January 11 and last year this fantastic event sold out, so purchase your tickets now so you don't miss your chance to attend!

The event will be held at the Wine ConnecXtion, 117 Main Street in North Andover from 7:00 - 10:00 pm. Tickets can be purchased online at www.bestforboxford.org or can be purchased via mail with a check payable to B.E.S.T. at P.O. Box 176, Boxford. We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

Mr. Brian Middleton-Cox
Principal, Harry Lee Cole School

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