

Elmwood News

December 2017/January 2018

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Happy New Year to All Our Elmwood Families-may you have a happy and healthy 2018!

[My Child's Grade Card-What do the grades really mean?](#)

This is a critical time of year for growth and development for our young students. They've adjusted well to the beginning of the school year and have now made it through all the excitement of the holidays. As we work through the long winter months it will be important to keep the communication open and consistent between you and your child's teacher. Grade cards will be coming home on January 23rd and we welcome any questions you may have in order to help put your son or daughter's grades in perspective. Although the O, S, and U are defined in percentage, it does not give you information on rates of growth for your child or how your child compares to same age peers. Some questions that could be asked to help with this are: how does my child's grades/scores compare to the class? Compare to the grade level? What was the rate of growth in reading or the individual components of reading? What are the next steps in my child's growth plan for (a particular subject)? Likewise, if you have any questions about our grading system or policies, please don't hesitate to call me or ask your child's teacher.

-Mrs. Daily

[Trail Contributions: Thank You to Our Elmwood Families!](#)

Students were able to raise a total of \$1843.67 from our Penny War and \$746.50 from our Candy Cane sales. All these funds will go towards the materials of our Nature Trail. Currently we are collaborating with the high school wood tech department to construct our Story Book stations (donated by the Junior Service League) as well as for signage for the entrances. Elmwood is continually grateful for all of your contributions and commitment to helping our trail grow for our community and families

Kindergarten Registration

We have opened up registration for kindergarten January 22nd through May 18th. Please stop by the office any time to pick up your child's registration packet during office hours. Children who will be **5 years old on or by August 1st** are eligible for enrollment in kindergarten. Paperwork can also be printed off the Elmwood webpage as well and turned in prior to the last day of school. After the initial registration deadline, all registrations will take place at the Shawnee Schools Central Enrollment Office located at Shawnee Middle School. Once your enrollment forms are returned a screening time will be provided for you.

Kindergarten Screening

Kindergarten screening will be May 23, 2018 for the 2018-2019 school year at Shawnee Alliance Church. Screening times are scheduled once you have turned in your completed registration packet. The items listed below are required for enrollment and must be presented at the time of registration.

- ✓ Student's Birth Certificate
- ✓ Social Security Card
- ✓ Immunization Records (see website for the list of requirements).
- ✓ Parent Identification
- ✓ 2 Proofs of Residency
- ✓ Custody Papers (if applicable)

Family and Community Engagement Project

Elmwood is participating in a grant from SST6 in Wapakoneta which has allowed us to collaborate with community members to improve our communication and physical environment. Thank you to all those community members who participated in the Welcome Walkthrough Survey and for providing feedback to enhance our environment at Elmwood. After viewing all of the feedback, we have prioritized the needs to the following: increasing our signage around the inside and outside of the building, provide more community resources on our webpage and create an online suggestion box. I welcome any other suggestions so please feel free to contact me via email with your suggestions about physical environment, communication, and/or policies/procedures.

Brrrrr...it's cold outside!

Please regularly check the lost and found if your child is missing gloves, hats, sweatshirts and coats. It is located in the hallway by the front office. Students will go outside in snow and/or light rain so please be sure that students are properly dressed.

Q & A for Parents with Struggling Readers

What is blending?

Blending is the skill of joining individual speech sounds (phonemes) together to make a word. While many young learners can learn letter sounds, blending these sounds together can be difficult. Blending actually involves the use of [phonemic awareness](#)

[skills](#) and needs to be explicitly taught as part of a research-based approach to teaching reading.

Why is blending important?

Blending is super important because being able to mentally join speech sounds together to make words helps students to decode unfamiliar words using letter-sound patterns when reading. Difficulties with the ability to blend is a hallmark sign of the struggling reader.

Why do some kids have difficulty blending sounds into words?

Kids who have difficulty blending phonemes (sounds) into words often are lacking in phonemic awareness skills. Blending also requires a student to hold the individual sounds in their mind as the word is created. This ability to hold sounds or syllables on a 'thinking counter space' is uses a student's active working memory.

What to do if your child is having difficulty blending.

Difficulty blending sounds (phonemes) into words reflects a [phonemic awareness weakness](#). Developing a child's phonemic awareness can be strengthened using some simple games. These can be incorporated into your daily teaching time with little effort.

Strategies for teaching blending to struggling readers.

1. Blending Game

Say the word 'mom' slowly, holding each of the sounds for 1-2 seconds 'mmmmooooommmmm'. Have your child:

1. listen to the sounds
2. blend them together tracking with his/her finger
3. Repeat this often using other words.

2. The 'Take Away' Game

The "take away" game is fun game in which kids take sounds away from words. An example is

1. "Say the word sun" (child repeats sun).
2. "Now say it without the sss sound" (un) . . . say the word boy, now say it without the /b/ sound (oy)."
3. You may have to help your child at first. As he or she gets better at this, you can have him or her take away blends (bl, tr) and eventually ending sounds.

3. Elkonin Boxes *(see below for boxes)*

Provide your child with a picture (e.g. a cat) and have them sound out the name while placing chips/pennies, or tapping their fingers for each of the individual

sounds in the word (e.g., /c/.../a/.../t/ is composed of 3 sounds, thus the child would use 3 chips/pennies or taps.)

How to Support Your Child During Reading Instruction

The most effective reading instruction includes modeling followed by guided support.

As you sit with your child, model the correct blending of a word. Start by saying the sounds slowly and continue to guide them by saying the sounds faster and faster until they are able to discern the word.

Tips for teaching blending:

Some letter sounds can be elongated and held continuously: a, e, f, i, l, m, n, o, r, s, u, v, w, y, z

Other letter sounds cannot be elongated or held continuously: b, c, d, g, h, j, k, p, q, t, x

If the sound can be held continuously, hold the sound for 1-2 seconds and blend it smoothly into the next sound in the word. For example, for the word man, say “mmmmaaaannnn”. If the sound can not be held continuously, say the sound once, pause briefly for 1-2 seconds, and then say the next sound in the word elongating it for 1-2 seconds if possible. For example, for the word pin, say “p [1 second pause] iiiinnnn”. It is easier to blend sounds that can be held continuously.

Start instruction with words that have continuous sounds, such as mom, run, van, sun. Gradually add words that have sounds that cannot be held continuously. For example, dad, cat, dog, pop. Some students may benefit from visual supports when learning sound blending skills. Point to the letters while saying each of the sounds slowly. Say “rrrruuunnnn” and point to the letters r, u, and n in sequence as each sound is said. The letters provide a visual support to help the student hold the sounds in memory. Some students may benefit from kinesthetic supports when learning sound blending skills. Drive a small car over each letter (on a card on the table) while saying each sound slowly.

Elkonin Boxes

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Reading Specialists: Mrs. Looney, Mrs. Steidl and Ms. Wimmers

Upcoming Events

January 9	Art Club
January 12	End of 3 rd nine weeks
January 15	No School MLK Jr. Day
January 19	Happy Birthday Mrs. Collins & Mrs. Sprague 😊
January 21	Happy Birthday Mrs. Jones! 😊
January 23	Art Club, Grade Cards Go Home
January 28	Movie Day (2-4 pm) 1 st and 2 nd grade only
January 29	Happy Birthday Ms. Korte-Shaw! 😊
January 31	2 hr delay
February 4	Happy Birthday Mrs. Hernandez! 😊
February 6	Art Club
February 7	Global Kids Play Day
February 8	Happy Birthday Mrs. Welsh 😊

February 11	RIP Ms. Berger
February 14	Happy Birthday Mrs. Davis! ☺ Valentine's Day
February 17	Happy Birthday Mrs. Minter! ☺
February 19	No School President's Day
February 20	Art Club
February 21	Happy Birthday Mrs. Troyer! ☺
February 26	Spring Picture Day
February 27-Mar 1	IOWA testing-2 nd grade
February 28	Happy Birthday Mrs. Hayes! ☺
March 6	Art Club, CogAT testing-2 nd grade
March 7	2hr delay
March 9	Kindergarten Parent Tours (must be signed up)
March 11	Daylight Savings Time-Spring Forward
March 17	Happy Birthday Mrs. Peck! ☺
March 20	Art Club
March 21	Kindergarten Concert for Grandparents
March 22	Happy Birthday Mrs. Beaulieu! ☺
March 23	End of 3 rd qtr
March 26-April 2	No School-Easter/Spring Break
March 29	Happy Birthday Tiffany Looney! ☺

