



# Wider Horizons School

## Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

### DATES TO REMEMBER

12/23-1/6 Christmas Vacation-  
return 1/7

Christmas Holiday Vacation  
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR !!

Geography Bee 1/29

M.L. King Day 1/10

Students work hard making gifts and crafts for their families.



Thank you to all the families who Sent in gifts for the Foster children of Hernando County. They will surely be appreciated as that may be the only things they receive.



Packages from Wider Horizons Families fill up the back of the pick up truck of the Foster Family Association of Hernando County.

Upper level students went to two different assisted living facilities to sing Christmas carols to the residents.



### PARENTS ARE THE PRIMARY TEACHERS

By Domenick J. Maglio PhD.

*A child's education begins at home. Functional parents naturally provide role modeling that is fertile ground for the child's moral, emotional social and educational development. Children spontaneously imitate speech patterns, vocabulary, thinking and the value of continual learning of the parent.*

*In the past families was a cohesive group that did almost everything together. Sitting down to meals, working around the house, recreation, visiting relatives, church attendance were practically rituals for the family. It was the most important social unit in society.*

*Modern parents are often AWOL in crucial areas. Although parents work hard chauffeuring their children to extra curricular activities they miss the exposure to many of the child's important behaviors. Infants are often left in centers to be cared for by "professional" strangers. The majority of parents enroll their children in preschools instead of keeping them at home. Both parents often work long hours and are lucky to spend a few quality moments with their child.*

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## PRESCHOOL

Ms. Wallace & Mrs. Nieves

This week we continue to talk about Christmas around the world. We are also talking about Hanukkah and how others celebrate.

In math, we continue to learn ways to add, like learning to add with our Golden Bead materials. Some of our students are learning how to subtract with Golden Bead materials.

In language we continue to read our Bob Books. We continue to learn our pink boxes which helps recognize letters with pictures. As well as blue boxes that help the students spell the items. Our new students have been learning how to use metal insets of shapes, along with learning sandpaper letters.

In art we are wrapping up our Holliday crafts. This Friday is our last show-n-tell until next year. Hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday!

## PRIMARY

Ms. Finnerty and Ms. Skiff

It is the last week before winter break! The students were hard at work on a variety of holiday themed work. The students were challenged to write a continuation of the Gingerbread Man story we read. They also got to decorate their own gingerbread man to go along with it. While this activity proved to be easy for some students, it was surprisingly quite challenging for others. Not only did the stories turn out beautifully written and original, but the gingerbread men they crafted did too. We are very proud of the children for overcoming their fear and hesitations and in the end succeeding.

We would like to thank our families for their generosity, and making a brighter Christmas for

our foster children this year. Thank you to all the families that came out with us to carol and sing.

We would like to extend a huge thank you for all the thoughtful gifts we have received.

We wish our students and our families a safe and happy holiday season and prosperous and healthy New Year!

## LOWER ELEMENTARY

Mrs. Urbanek and Ms. Russell

Congratulations to Kinsley and Katherine for mastering their subtraction facts 11-20.

Congratulations to Karolyn for moving up onto division facts.

For spelling this week there was a unit test.

The students worked from the tower or language. The second grade class had a lesson on articles and nouns with articles. The third grade had a lesson on contractions.

In math the students learned about measurements and are currently learning and reviewing about 1, 1/2, 1/4, and 3/4 inch. They worked in their booklets, completed applications and geometry cards.

In history the students continue to work on days of the week or months of the year.

In science the students continue to use Montessori materials; they are working on the tree, flower, or leaf.

In geography the students are to finish their landforms, water forms, wetlands, or clouds.

In social studies the students are reviewing the Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest.

## STUDENT EDITOR

Morgan Szabo

The students have been very busy making several different holiday crafts and gifts that they will bring home.

The next book report is written and is due December 17th. Please note, starting January the length of the book reports and compositions will be increasing. To better prepare the students for the next grade, second grade will change from 1/2 page to a full page and third grade will change from a full page to 1 1/2 pages.

Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

## UPPER ELEMENTARY

Mrs. Gutierrez, Miss. Bandini, & Ms. Smith

The entire school enjoyed having our friends and family kick off the Christmas season with our annual Christmas caroling today. This event was a culmination of weeks of practicing our songs.

Parents, don't forget report cards for the second quarter went out today. Please check your child's backpack!

Science proposals went out this week and will be due when we get back from the winter break. Although the Science Fair is held at the beginning of February, those students planning on growing plants or any projects that consist of longer time frames should begin planning and researching for their projects as soon as possible.

Fourth grade students used this week to catch up on the language tower. Students also read Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves to coincide with their spelling and vocabulary this week. They worked very hard and every student is officially halfway through the fourth grade math textbook. Students have reviewed math foundations and will be introduced to more abstract concepts in the third quarter. Fourth grade's next book report is a free choice for the students.

The fifth graders have begun their third quarter curriculum for language and vocabulary. Students also finished their lichen projects and presented their posters this week. Fifth grade's book report will be a book of their choosing.

Sixth graders concluded the unit on pH scale, acids and bases this week. They will make a pH indicator out of red cabbage when we return; red cabbage contains a substance called anthocyanin that changes color depending on whether it is mixed with an acid or a base. They will

test several substances to determine whether it was an acid or a base. Sixth graders are still reading the other half of their book.

The next book report was changed and will now be due on Wednesday, January 15th.

## JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs. Youse, Ms. Wheeler, and Mr. Harrell

This week was a fun and festive one in the Junior and Senior High School room. The students spent a portion of the beginning of the week practicing holiday carols so that they would be prepared for our trip to sing for the residents of Salishan Gracious Retirement Living and Timber Pines. They also delivered the holiday cards they made for the residents. They wore festive attire or garlands and performed the same lineup of songs that they performed again on Friday for our caroling event at school. We are so proud of them for sharing in the spirit of this time of year.

Students exchanged Secret Santa gifts on Friday during a small party we held in our room featuring snacks and seasonal music. It was a nice, positive way to end this year before we all go on the two week holiday break.

The teachers would like to thank all students and families who so kindly and generously sent gifts to school. We are so very appreciative and are touched by every single gesture. We wish all of you a very

IN CASE OF A STORM OR STATE OF EMERGENCY WHERE THERE IS NO POWER - SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED UNTIL POWER IS RESTORED. We follow the public school schedule for school closings.

happy holidays and look forward to resuming school on January 7<sup>th</sup>.

## AFTER SCHOOL

Ms. Brewer / Ms Wallace

This week during circle time, we discussed how different countries and children have different traditions and different ways of celebrating their Christmas Holidays. Most of the children were under the impression that we all celebrate the holidays the same way we do here. For example, in Puerto Rico on Christmas Eve, the children leave out candies and small gifts for the three kings and a bag of straws for their camels. The children are given gifts by the three kings the night before Christmas, so when the children wake up on Christmas Day, they find all of these gifts under the tree.

While in the playground, the children sang "Here Comes Santa Clause" and "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer". They played with all the equipment on the playground. Once inside, some children were given time to complete their homework they were assigned while the rest of the children worked or played with any activity of their choice.

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Many parents take for granted the school is educating their child. This can turn into an educational disaster that can threaten the child's abilities and opportunities to succeed later in life. Parents are the primary teachers. The abdicating of this responsibility is dangerous to society.

Parents are so preoccupied with their own careers that they assume their child is doing well in school since the report cards from early elementary normally indicate he is an A-B student. Often he is granted Honor Roll status. The child usually is a compliant child who stays out of any trouble at home and in school.

This typical child's academic, social and emotional issues are not being adequately addressed. Eventually in the transition to middle school or after a comprehensive state exam the parent becomes aware of a significant two-year or more deficit in one or several academic areas. These problems prompt them to put the child in another classroom setting or school to avoid the stigma of being labeled or held back a grade.

Then reality hits them hard, the mother's tears flow and the child realizes that his inflated grades can no longer hide the truth. The child does not know simple math no less algebra and/or is unable to write a coherent paragraph. The student and parents are crushed knowing their options are not going to correct the errors of the past without a lot of work and pain.

Students being held back or labeled are only the tips of the icebergs. Both the parents and student have to accept they have been delusional. The child has to accept a drastic change in behavior and thinking to have a chance to rehabilitate himself as a student. The parents have to restructure their lives to make a total commitment to assist the child in filling in his academic and work ethic gaps.

These incidents can be drastically reduced if parents would take the time to observe the child's initiative, work habits and become aware of what the child actually knows. Reading the child's reports and essays as well as reviewing math tests enables the parent to evaluate the child's knowledge. Through daily monitoring and questioning the parents must maintain awareness of what the child is learning. There is no excuse for the parents not assessing their child's education.

Modern parents can no longer rely on our dysfunctional education system to take over most aspects of their child's life. We are supposed to protect and teach our children the things they need to know to prosper in life.

Casually leaving our children's education to the schools is not a wise decision. Too many adults are more concerned with their pet's grooming than with their child's education. In school there are many social temptations, many opportunities to take short cuts such as cheating and little follow-up by teachers and administrators concerning academic deficiencies. Parents should more closely evaluate their child's academics, social abilities and skills.

Parents can either shirk their duty to pass on their wisdom suffering the pain of a dysfunctional child or witness the child creating his own success.

The ability of their child to be self-reliant and successful lies primarily in the hands of the parents by training them to have positive habits, skills and values. The parents' focusing on the children when they are young will reap them the satisfaction of participating in their success. The legacy of their children is determined by how well they were able to train them when they were young.

It is not about spending more money on education but parents placing a great value on learning. Parental observation as well as direct involvement with the child's academics and after school activities is powerful antidotes to preventing an inadequate and disabled human being.

*Domenick Maglio, PhD. is a columnist carried by various newspapers, an author of several books and owner/director of Wider Horizons School, a college prep program. Dr. Maglio is an author of weekly newspaper articles, INVASION WITHIN and IN CHARGE PARENTING In a PC World. You can visit Dr. Maglio at [www.drmaglio.blogspot.com](http://www.drmaglio.blogspot.com).*