



# Flower Hill Happenings

Flower Hill Primary • 98 Flower Hill Road • Huntington, NY • 11743 • (631) 673-2050  
Hours: 9:20am-3:40pm December/January 2018

It has been a true pleasure to become your principal at Flower Hill. My first day was on December 1<sup>st</sup> and I had the most wonderful month of December with staff, students and families. I am honored to be part of such a collaborative staff that wants to do the very best for children. Teachers, support staff and district officials have reached out to make sure that I had whatever I needed to make a smooth transition into the principal position. As you know, things at Flower Hill have been great and I have been taking stock of what we have in place and what we want to do even more successfully. I will look for ways to continue to collaborate with staff so that we make this one of the most positive years ever for your children.

Fortunately, I have experience at being a building leader in various settings. The school that I led in Los Angeles was a majority of Spanish speaking students in an economically challenged area of Los Angeles. We worked hard at improving reading, writing and math skills for all students and we made significant gains in all academic areas. I was proud of that, but I was really the most proud that our school became one that staff members wanted to bring their own children to and would often times pull their children out of a more affluent school in other communities so that they could attend our school.

The schools that I led in Framingham, Massachusetts were in settings more like Huntington with a diverse community and more resources available. The school that I was selected to be a principal had a principal that had been there for seventeen years. Some parents remarked that I had very big shoes to fill, and they were right. I worked in collaboration with the staff at making good things great at that school and I was asked to open a new STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) school while continuing to lead the other school. I learned about STEAM curriculum and project based inquiry work. I was the principal of two schools and this was challenging but very exciting at the same time.

I have been on Long Island for over two years and I was serving as the Director of Professional Personnel in the district office of Riverhead. While I enjoyed learning about kindergarten through twelfth grade curriculum and programs, I really missed the day to day life of being an elementary school principal. I can truly say that I feel I am at home here at Flower Hill and I am so very happy and thankful that you have welcomed me here. I hope to continue to look for ways to support you in these great elementary school years with your children for many years to come.

I hope that you and your family have a very happy and healthy new year.

Sincerely,

Ms. Lucia Laguarda

## Upcoming Events @ Flower Hill

Family Connection Night 1/4  
(No Homework)

Martin Luther King Day 1/15  
(School Closed)

Flower Hill Winter Concert 1/17  
@ HHS—7:00pm

Flower Hill PTA Mtg @ 7:00pm 1/23

### DECEMBER STAR STUDENTS

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Briana Marquez Granados; John Dello-Iacono; James Molina Tax; Juliette Creegan; Luke Shanley; Justin Escobar Alvarez; Hunter Kline; Andrea Rivera Rivera; Anne-Myriam Excellent-Mesidor; Harper Cohn; Gianna Parides; Kevin Diaz Portillo; Karly Maldonado; Bryce Gilroy; Lily Greif; Kieran Fox; Mason Crousillat; Gannon Johnson; Mya Mori; Brady LaCosta; Kaci Caceres; Mozhar Durand; Nina Gonzalez; Isabella Palacios; Miller Polak; Elizabeth Sheran and Andrew Guandique

Great Job!!!!



# Kindergarten Highlights



Our Kindergarten students have been real busy during December and January. Our students were super excited to welcome "Buster the Bus" to Flower Hill to teach us about bus safety! The students learned to read signals from the bus driver when crossing the street, as well as the importance to pay attention to the blinking lights on the school bus.

We celebrated the holiday break by creating our annual gingerbread houses! The students had a blast making this fun project. Thank you to all who came to participate in the celebration!

In Math, we finished learning skills in the area of Geometry. We will be moving on to Comparison of Length, Capacity, and Numbers to 10. Our students will learn the concepts through many hands on activities and we will reinforce their skills during math centers.

In English Language Arts, we finished our Unit 3 theme, Nature's Wonders. We will continue right along with Unit 4; The World to Explore. Throughout our Journey's units we continue to focus on many targeted skills such as: Compare/contrast, Drawing Conclusions, Author's Purpose, Cause and Effect, Sequence of Events, and Details.

Throughout the months of December and January, our students will continue to explore the concept of Forces & Motion. Our students continue to engage in many activities throughout the day demonstrating vocabulary, oral speaking skills, and written expression assignments demonstrating their knowledge of this fun topic.

Our students enjoyed learning many Social Studies themes throughout December and January. Civic Ideals, Symbols and Traditions, and What Makes Holidays Special? to name a few. In January, we will learn about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Our students continue to learn and participate in "Acts of Kindness." Our students are able to draw and write, and share ideas about various ways to be kind to others.

Keep up the great work Kindergartners!!!





# First Grade Highlights



Dear First Grade Parents:

It has been a great quarter for us in First Grade! We have completed the first unit in our Journeys reading series and are continuing to Unit 2.

We will introduce various strategies to help students recognize:

- Good readers can retell the important parts of a story in order.
- Good readers use clues from the story to predict what will happen next.
- Good readers identify the main idea of what they read and the details that support it.
- Good readers use clues from the story to draw conclusions about the characters.
- Good readers compare and contrast details from what they read.

In addition to our skills and strategies for reading comprehension we have begun a Writer's Workshop period to help our students enhance and develop their fundamental writing skills. We use prompts and literature rich mentor texts to help show students that detailed writing is the best kind of writing.

We successfully completed Module 1 of our Common Core Math Curriculum and have eagerly begun Module 2. Module 2 focuses on Addition and Subtraction to 20 and an introduction to place value. Moving forward, Module 3 will focus on Ordering and comparing Length Measurements as Numbers. As always, please visit [www.engageny.com](http://www.engageny.com) for any of our materials. We worked collaboratively to present math fluency games to our students and much fun was had by all.

Science has been an especially exciting time as we have completed several experiments on Changes. The students have enjoyed working with partners to observe and conduct changes in solid, liquids and gas activities. As we complete our Changes Unit we will be moving on to Life Cycles.

January we will be a time to renew and set a new focus for our amazing students. We have many 'kindness' activities to celebrate Kindness Month here at Flower Hill, stay tuned for additional information on these activities. As always we thank everyone for their support and continued efforts to help every child succeed.

The First Grade Teachers





# Second Grade Highlights



Second graders at Flower Hill have become immersed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade curriculum. We have learned a lot and are enjoying the year thus far. We are excited to perform at the January Star Student Assembly. We have been learning about how your size and/or age should not stop you from achieving your dreams. We will be turn-keying this lesson to the rest of the school through the use of the fable "The Lion and the Mouse" as well as presenting some inspirational quotes.

We finished up our first unit of Journeys, Neighborhood Visit, and are in our 2<sup>nd</sup> unit, Nature Watch. This unit has provided us with a balance experience of literature and informational texts. We engage in a variety of topics and texts, and have discussions about texts that support language development and knowledge building. We experience a variety of reading formats, including read-alouds, shared readings, paired readings, learning activities and cooperative groups. Some of the skills we have been focusing on include: text and graphic features, drawing conclusions, and main idea and details. The culminating goal of the unit on Nature Watch is to be able to write an informational paragraph about animals from two texts. Our next unit is titled, "Tell Me About It!" We will be focusing on writing opinion pieces based on texts we have read.

In Foundations, we have finished up with Unit 5 in which, we learned how to combine syllables to form multisyllabic words. We also learned the new suffix ending -ful, -ment, -ish, -ness, -less, -able, and en. In unit six, we are learning the v-e syllable which stands for vowel-consonant-e. We will also learn that when the s is between two vowels in a word, the s may have the /z/ sound. Lastly, we will learn that in English words DO NOT end with the letter v. Therefore, the e is there for the v.

In Math, we just finished up with Module 3. In this Module, students were immersed in the base ten system as they built a strong foundation of place value understanding through a concrete to pictorial to abstract approach. We have begun Module 4. This module is devoted to three major areas of work. The first two are building fluency in two-digit addition and subtraction within 100 and applying that fluency to one- and two-step word problems of varying types within 100. Their increased fluency with calculations within 100 allows for word problems to transition from being mere contexts for calculation into opportunities for students to see and analyze the relationships between quantities.

In Science, we are continuing our unit on Matter. We have learned to define matter, identify states/phases of matter, and identify properties of Matter. We have further deepened our understanding of matter by understanding which materials are best suited for a purpose based on their properties of matter and how we can use materials from one object to build another. The unit ends by learning how matter can be changed and what reversible and irreversible changes are.

In Social Studies we completed our unit on Communities. Students learned the difference between rural, suburban, and urban communities through books, projects, videos, and interactive field trips on our Chromebooks. In our next unit, we will be studying Landforms. We are again looking forward to a multi-sensory experience as we study this unit.

The second grade staff continues to encourage all families to check homework folders every night and read often with your child and make sure they are practicing their math facts! Thank you for all you do!

## *The Second Grade Teachers*





# Third Grade Highlights



Happy New Year! The third-grade students had a busy and fun December leading up to the holiday break.

The children went to see the movie *Wonder*, as each class is currently reading, or has read, the book. The students enjoyed comparing the book to the movie and discussing the film's theme of kindness.

Language arts has involved reading non-fiction and fiction texts that utilize various strategies. The children practiced using main idea and details, sequencing of events, and comparing two texts on the same concepts while reading the stories in Journeys unit 2. In addition to the extensive readings, the students wrote opinion and informative essays that were based on those readings. January's language arts lessons will focus on close reading of texts, looking for text based details, and making inferences on what was read.

Math focused on rounding to the nearest 10 and 100 and adding/subtracting with regrouping and decomposing. January's math focus resumes with multiplication, division, and multi-step word problems with numbers 6-10.

Our science unit of study continued with matter and energy. The students will be performing science experiments, using what they have learned about the concepts, in January.

Have a happy and healthy 2018! Thank you for your continued support!!

The Third Grade Teachers





## Fourth Grade Highlights



Happy New Year and welcome back! We hope you had an enjoyable and restful vacation. The fourth graders have settled back nicely into their routine.

December was a busy month. A trip to Garvies Point Museum and Preserve enhanced our social studies unit on The Early People of New York. Another December highlight was the trip to see the movie *Wonder*, which supported our character education program.

In ELA, we will continue to work on main idea, theme, author's purpose, sequencing and making predictions. The students have also been working very hard writing their informational and explanatory essays.

In Science, we have enjoyed hands-on investigations of mystery chemicals. The students are looking forward to getting started on their science fair projects which will coming up soon.

In Math, we are finishing up our module on multi-digit multiplication and division. The students used their knowledge of place value as well as, visual representations to solve multiplication and division problems with multi-digit numbers. Please continue to practice the multiplication and division facts with your child.

The fourth graders have been participating in the G.R.E.A.T program (Gang Resistance Education and Training). The curriculum, taught by Suffolk County correction officers, includes topics such as: Bullying; Decisions and Outcome; Controlling Anger and more. The students enjoy role-playing while learning to make good choices and creating a positive relationship with law-enforcement.

As always, thank you for your continued support at home.

The Fourth Grade Teachers



## Notes from the Nurses Office



Now that we are into the cold and flu season, here are some reminders on how to keep your family healthy.

- Get vaccinated. A flu shot is recommended for everyone over 6 months old.
- Wash hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer. Wash for a full 20 seconds, the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and toss into trash. If a tissue is not available, cover your cough or sneeze with your sleeve.
- If your child is sick, keep them home from school. Your child may return to school only after being fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.

Consult your physician if you think either you or your child has the flu.

Be sure your child is prepared to go out for recess. Please send your child with a warm jacket, hat and gloves. Children need fresh air and exercise; we will be going out as long as weather permits.

Nurse, Julie



## *A note from the Reading Teachers....*

*If you want your children to be intelligent read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales. - Albert Einstein*

### **Expand imagination**

A child's imagination is a powerful and unique gift. Not only is it used in their make believe stories and games it is a key factor in defining the education, career and life they will live.

### **Moral Choices**

Fairy tales teach children that good always triumphs over evil. It instills in the child the desire to be the hero.

### **Develop Critical Thinking Skills**

Children see the consequences of character decisions. They learn what happens to them depends on their choices.

### **Provide Story Structure**

Fairy tales provides an entire story structure in a short story. There is a plot, setting, characters, inciting events, climax and resolution in a short story. Children have an understanding how a story flows and works.

### **Increase Vocabulary and Cultural Literacy**

Through story children are introduced to enriching language and different cultural practices.

### **FUN!**

Wet your child's appetite for magic and excitement. Create wonderful memories curling up with a book. Enjoy the journey of being transported to fantasy worlds where dragons fly, Fairy God Mothers grant wishes, spells are cast, quests transform characters into heroes and everyone always lives happily ever after.



## Greetings from the Flower Hill Library!

Warm greetings from the library!! I hope each one of you had a much deserved break; resting, relaxing, and appreciating family time together. I'm also hoping that with the chilly temperatures some of you were able to cuddle up with a great book!

There have been so many exciting things happening within the Flower Hill; starting with our brand new principal! Mrs. Laguarda has been a kind, supportive, and enthusiastic presence among both staff and students; we look forward to having an amazing year together!

I am getting to know all my new kindergartners and enjoying my older students as they enter the library. A few weeks before the vacation we received over 200 new books; the students were able to "book taste" all the new titles, rotating table to table while making wish lists for books they would like to check out. I also tried a "maker space" project with some of the classes. Maker space is a hands on approach to learning by playing, creating, and constructing varying materials. We had a lot of fun with Legos, popsicle sticks, puppets, cotton balls, q-tips – messy, but fun!!! The students keep asking when we can do it again so I think that was a success ;)

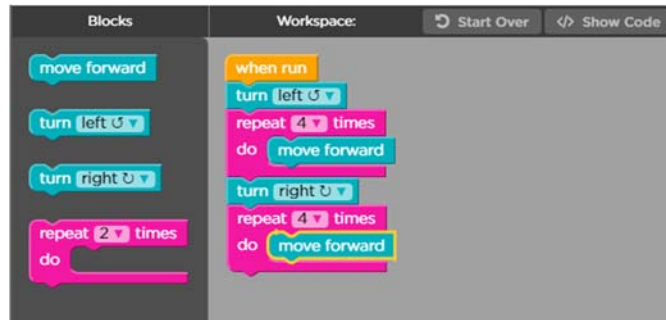
Please continue to encourage your children to read for pleasure – it will only create stronger and eager readers. I am here if you ever want suggestions on appropriate literature. I look forward to the upcoming months; Happy New Year and, as always, happy reading!!!

~Mrs. Caras



Hello from Computer Class!

I am so excited to be part of the Huntington family and to explore the technological world with students here at Flower Hill. We have been working on coding since my arrival in November. Not only is coding fun, studies have shown how coding aids in development of valuable skills. It helps nurture problem-solving skills, logic and creativity. If exposed at an early age, students will have a foundation for success in any 21st-century career path. Coding can encourage a more diverse population of students to embrace concepts that will be used in core subjects and in life.

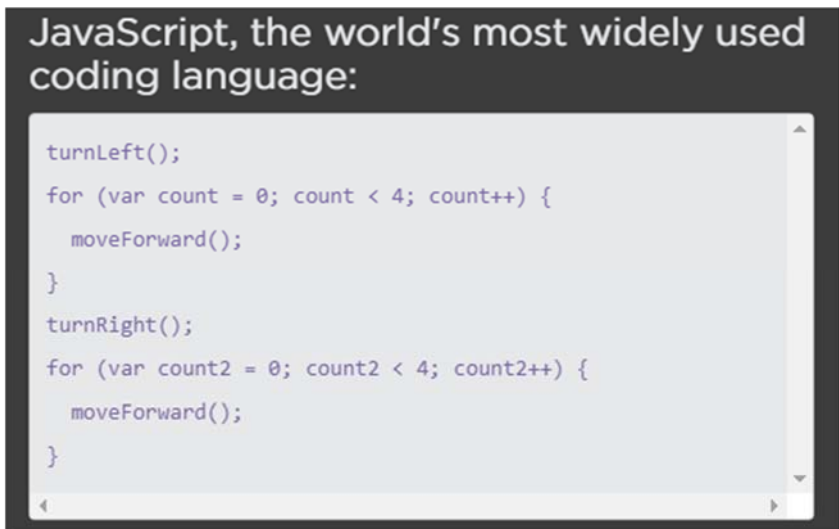


I have found this to be a really fun way to get to know the students. Together we have walked the path of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, repaired trails in Minecraft, helped BB-8 gather scrap metal for ships, animated cartoons and so much more. It is amazing to see what their minds are capable of when presented with a challenge and how classmates come together when help is needed to achieve the next level. I have enjoyed working with them and I look forward for all that there is to come!

*Angela Sementilli (Miss Tillie)*

[hourofcode.com/us](http://hourofcode.com/us)

*'Designed to demystify "code"'*



*"The Hour of Code is a global movement reaching tens of millions of students in 180+ countries. One-hour tutorials are available in over 45 languages. No experience needed. Ages 4 to 104."*