Dear Families,

With the start of a new month, our thoughts continue to be with the families in the county who have recently experienced devastation. As you all know, a tornado caused a great deal of devastation for many of the Essex County community members. Since this happened, the community has come together in a way that is truly inspiring and heart-warming. Community members have helped with donations, cleaning up the affected areas, volunteering in countless ways, and more wonderful examples of helping each other that continue to grow each day. Essex County is truly an amazing community, and we are all fortunate to be a part of such a caring and committed community.

Please know that your child’s well-being is always our top priority. We had counseling support in place at school to assist with the students’ transition back to school, and we will continue to provide support as we move forward. Our staff is an amazing group who is willing to help our families in any way possible. If you have any needs in the coming days and months, or if you know of someone else that we could help, please let us know.

Included in this month’s newsletter is some information about upcoming events at EIS as well as some information about recent events we’ve hosted at EIS. We hope you enjoy reading through the newsletter this month to learn more about the amazing things that have been going on in our school. If you have any questions about our upcoming events or activities here at EIS, please feel free to contact me at any time at hsgiving@essex.k12.va.us or 804-443-3040. Thank you for your continued support!

Best regards,
Heather Gentry
Principal
Wednesday, March 2nd is Read Across America Day! Students all over the country will be participating in various reading themed activities to celebrate the well-loved author and illustrator Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss. Most of us happily recall our most beloved Seuss selection. My favorite was and still is, My Many Colored Days. As a former preschool teacher, I excitedly read this amazing and colorful book to my students, not just during our dedicated Seuss themed week, but many times throughout the school year. Though our EIS students don't read his books as often as they did when they were younger, I hope that they will share their favorite Seuss title(s) with me. Everyone could use a Seuss pick me up every now and then!

Learning in the Library:
February really brought out our students' love for reading and research. Our 5th grade students used both print and online library resources in order to research famous African-Americans for Black History month projects. Seventh grade students and their teachers came in to participate in a fun library scavenger hunt and geography learning stations. Students used their library search skills to locate books and reference materials all while sharpening their Destiny Library expertise. Stations included geography games, books on different countries, cities, and cultures, puzzles, and a website evaluation station. Many other students came in to enter our weekly trivia contest, check out books, and simply read for pleasure.

Spring Book Fair Coming Soon:
Look for more information in next month’s EIS newsletter about our upcoming book fair. Our theme is: Feelin' Groovy Book Fair: Peace, Love, Books! The dates are April 25th-29th. Make plans to volunteer, attend or both!

Happy Reading,
Ms. Latanya Weeden
EIS Librarian
804.443.3040
lweeden@essex.k12.va.us
Each month, students from each grade level are nominated by the EIS staff for exhibiting our behavioral expectations and going above and beyond at our school. From these nominations, our staff members choose a “Student of the Month” for each grade level. For the month of February we recognized the following students as our PBIS Students of the Month:

5th Grade: **Janay Segar**- Janay is an excellent student with an outstanding attitude who exemplifies the Essex Way in every way.

6th Grade: **Madison Nelson**– Madison displays the Essex way, and she is a very helpful and hard-working student.

7th Grade: **Julia Spight**- Julia tries very hard at everything that she does. She is polite, friendly, and always willing to help out. She is an excellent example of how a 7th grade student at EIS should behave.

8th Grade: **Rodrigo Ayala-Amaya**- Rodrigo is polite, and he works hard. He gets along with everyone all of the time. He is a model student.

Congratulations to our Students of the Month for February. We look forward to recognizing the Students of the Month for March and April at the April school board meeting.

Upcoming 7th Grade Parent Involvement Event

Our 7th grade team will be hosting their parent involvement event for students and families on Monday, March 14th. They picked this day because it is Pi Day! You will be able to participate in some fun Math activities through our focus on Pi. Students who return their permission slips will be able to stay after school on this day, work on homework with their teachers, engage in a fun Science experiment with their teachers, and then we ask that parents/family members join us at 4:45 for our fun Pi activity. Please send the permission slip back to school with your child as soon as possible, and we hope to see you on the 14th!
During March, our EIS 8th graders are focused on preparing for and taking the SOL Writing Assessment. Writing is so important to the learning process! AND, writing can be so much fun! Your Literacy and Curriculum Coaches offer the following:

Best ways to support writing at home
How you can help at home: Support your child with these writing strategies.
by: GreatSchools Staff

Follow these tips to support your child’s writing at home.

Provide a place for your child to write.
The area should be an area that is quiet and well lit. Stock the “writing center” with supplies such as paper, pencils and crayons. You can also gather family photos and magazines in the center that can be used as story starters.

Read, read, read!
The best activity to improve writing is reading. If your child reads good books, he will be a better writer. Reading exposes students to general vocabulary, word study and content-specific vocabulary. Through reading, students see a variety of authors’ techniques that they can use in their own writing.

Encourage your child to keep a reflective journal.
This is excellent writing practice, as well as a good outlet for venting feelings. Encourage your child to write about things that happen at home and school. This reflective journal can be used to develop the “senses” of writing. Have your child write about what he saw, heard or felt on a trip or adventure. Provide experiences in your community that will interest your child and spark her writing. Especially encourage your child to write about personal feelings — pleasures as well as disappointments. When reading your child’s journal (only if your child invites you to, of course), share your own feelings and ideas paired with positive feedback about your child’s writing.

Provide authentic writing opportunities for your child.
Have your child write his own thank-you notes, party invitations and letters to family. Let your child make the grocery list. Finding a pen pal for your child would make writing “real.” Helping children make the connection between writing and the “real” world will increase an interest in writing.

(Continued on the next page.)
Be a writing role model.
Make sure your child sees you as a writer. Point out times that you use writing to communicate with others. Discuss authentic writing in the community such as articles and letters in the newspaper, on billboards or in written advertisements. Discuss the purpose of the writing and the target audience. When your child writes, you should write. You can schedule a day of the week that you will turn off the television and share your writing.

Start a vocabulary notebook.
Teach your child new words each week and encourage her to use them. Make it into a game and give points for using the new words. Your child can keep a vocabulary notebook and get rewarded for the number of new words learned. The words will begin to appear like magic in her oral language and writing.

Ask questions.
Always ask your child questions when he writes. Ask specific questions about your child’s writing such as: “How did that happen?” “How did that make you feel?” “Can you tell me more about that…?” “What are some other words you could use to describe…?” Taking time to have conversations with your child is powerful! There are so many benefits gained from talking and the listening!

Help your child publish his/her writing.
Share her writing with others, place it on the refrigerator or encourage her to write for kids’ magazines. When your child’s writing is published in a children’s book, she will be on her way to becoming a lifelong writer and author. Check out these options for publishing children’s work:

Stone Soup
CyberKids

Adapted from http://www.greatschools.org/
A Spotlight on Our New Teachers!
Each month in our newsletter we will spend time introducing our families to the new teachers we have at EIS. To accomplish this goal, some of our student authors will compose articles for you to read as a way to get better acquainted with our new faculty members. These student authors will spend time interviewing our new teachers, then they will compose an article with information highlighting these faculty members. We hope you enjoy their compositions!

Ms. Sara Unrein:

Hello, our names are Jaclyn Suggs, Kathleen Winters, Michalah Beck, Haylee Ferrell, Cristian Weeden, Ryland Conway, Jasmine Studvent, and Endia Ross. We would like to introduce a new teacher here at EIS. Her name is Ms. Unrein, and she teaches band at the intermediate school and the high school. Before she taught general music, chorus, and band. She went to college at Meredith College. She didn’t play any sports growing up, and she grew up in North Carolina. She has been teaching for 6 years. She taught at Lagrange Elementary, Horton Middle School, and Margaret Pollard Middle School. Her favorite hobbies when we’re not at school are reading and watching movies. Her birthday is September 6th. She wanted to teach at EIS to help the band program grow in number and ability. She believes that anyone is capable of learning an instrument as long as they have the interest and the motivation to do so.
Update from our Guidance Counselor, Mrs. Nash

Greetings EIS Family!

I know it seems early, but it is that time of the year to begin planning for the summer. Students thrive mentally, physically and emotionally when they are involved in positive peer groups/activities. Therefore I wanted you to know that various programs are already sending me information in regards to summer camps and volunteer information. Because many of these programs are competitive, it is essential to respond as soon as possible to secure a spot for your child. Below you will find a few summer opportunities for your student. As I receive more information, I will update my counselor page on our website. I hope you find this information useful!!

Ferrum College Summer Enrichment Camp 2016 Ages 9-13 as of July 1, 2016/ Grades 4-7
An exciting opportunity to experience campus living. Students who enjoy learning and are eager to explore new ideas and interests should visit www.ferrum.edu/fcsec.

Lewis Botanical Gardens www.lewisginter.org/support/volunteer/teen-volunteer-opportunities/
The Youth Volunteer Summer Program offers middle school and high school students horticulture experiences working in the Community Kitchen Garden, which harvests food for the Central Virginia Food Bank to provide fresh foods for those in need. Youth Volunteers also work in the Children's Garden and other areas. Apply for the Youth Volunteer Program by filling out a youth volunteer application. Applications are due June 1, 2016.

Virginia Commonwealth University Discovery Program
Discovery is a fun, challenging and creative summer program offering a variety of in-depth experiences in science, technology, engineering, arts and health sciences while experiencing a college setting. Each full-day, weeklong camp is designed to challenge rising 6th through 8th graders to inquire and create as they investigate the world around them. Classes are taught by VCU faculty members, university students and local professionals in university classrooms and laboratories on VCU’s Monroe Park and Medical Campuses. For more information, please contact Shekinah Mitchell at (804) 828-2841 or atsdmitchell@vcu.edu.
Update from our Math Coach, Mr. Risley

WOW Pi !!!

Humans have been calculating and using Pi for longer than 5,000 years! The ancient Babylonians even used it.

What is Pi?

Pi is a number that is created by comparing two numbers- the measurement around the outside of a circle and the distance across a circle.

The measurement around the outside of a circle is called circumference and the distance across the middle of the circle is called diameter. If we take any circle and measure its circumference and divide that number by the circle’s diameter, we will always get about 3.1415.

Try it yourself.

Find a circle- use a paper plate. Measure the outside edge (circumference) and write it down. Then measure across the middle of the plate.

82 divided by 26 is about 3.15384- which is pretty close to the value we use often which is 3.1415. The neatest thing about Pi is that no matter what size circle you use, a paper plate, a hat, a pool... Pi will always be about 3.1415....

And Pi doesn’t end. Here are the first 100 digits of Pi:
3.141592653589793238462643383279502884197169399375105820974944592307816406286208998628
0348253421170679....

Mathematicians thinks that Pi goes on forever, but even they aren’t sure.

National Pi Day is March 14th every year- can you figure out why?
Look at the GREAT things going on at EIS!!!!!

On Wednesday, February 17th, we held our first school-wide parent involvement event at EIS. Students from every grade level stayed after school with their teachers to work on homework, engage in a fun Science project, and then our parents and family members joined us at 4:30. Our students and parents got to participate in a fun scavenger hunt that had them moving around our school, looking at the projects the students have completed, and talking with their child’s teachers. In addition to this, our families received literacy information from our instructional coaches and information on the college application process from Mrs. Nash. When they were finished, all of our students received a prize in the office. We had a GREAT turn-out for this event, and we can’t wait for next year!