



Universal Learning Academy

**PROMOTING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, LEADERSHIP
& CULTURAL DIVERSITY!**



Vol. 6, No. 2

February 2010



The Principal's Message

The second marking period is over and we are already past the half way point into the school year. Our students have been working very hard learning new skills with the help of our highly qualified staff as well as your help and support at home.



Through self evaluation and continuous improvement processes we are doing everything possible to provide our students the best available resources as well as best practice in instructional and delivery strategies to ensure their success. .

24480 George Street
Dearborn Heights, MI. 48127

We use multiple assessment tools to track each student's academic progress. Data from standardized tests such as MEAP, Scantron, ITBS, and ELPA provide us with valuable information on how we are doing; where we are making progress and where improvements need to be made.

We are still waiting for MEAP scores which will determine the school report card; AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress). We have made AYP in all years since we started administering MEAP. We are confident we will make this year as well, hopefully with better proficiency levels.

As we have entered into the second part of the school year, teachers are already preparing students for their transition into the next grade. It is important for us that all students are performing at or above their grade level expectations. We provide many tutorial opportunities for those students who need extra attention.

We truly appreciate your involvement in our school's life and our children education. Please continue to do so by observing the following:

- Stress regular school attendance and coming to school on time and prepared for learning.
- Spend more time volunteering at the school. There are many ways to do so.

Please refer to your Parents' Handbook

- Get involved with other parents by joining the PTC and volunteering for school committees. Helping the school will benefit your child.

- Attend as many school events as possible **and never miss on a parent/teacher conference.** Get to closely know your child's teachers and the principal.

You have shown such involvement throughout the first half of this school year. You have really shown initiative and commitment and have been there for us. **We truly appreciate your contributions to our mutual success.**

Dr. Halim Ahmed
Principal

Main Office

OPEN STUDENT ENROLLMENT Pre-K-6

PERIOD: March 1 - 31st ~ 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Friday, March 5, 2010 ~ 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, March 6, 2010 ~ 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

PLACE:
24480 George Street, Dearborn Heights, MI. 48127

ENROLLMENT LOTTERY

PRE-K - 6: April 30, 2010 at 2:30 p.m.
at 24480 George St. Dearborn Heights, MI. 48127

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS:

- Complete Enrollment Application
- Copy of Birth Certificate & Passport if not a citizen
- Copy of Immunization Card
- Copy of Last Report Card
- Copy of Social Security Card
- Free & Reduced Lunch Application & Proof of Income

For More Information:

Visit or call the School's Main Office

CLASSROOM NEWS

KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten is doing a fantastic job with alphabet letters, letter sounds, and sight words, and some students have even mastered the basics of reading! We have also been practicing our counting skills, tying shoes, and number recognition. As a grade level our students are doing really well on their sight word test! The kindergarteners scored an average of 75% on their sight word test!

We are proud of how far the students have come this quarter with being independent workers! Students can't seem to get enough of Centers, and have become truly engaged in their own learning. They are enjoying the opportunity to be responsible thinkers.

During the third quarter we will continue to work on counting, the alphabet, sight words, leveled reading, and personal responsibility. We will also be starting some new units, such as Community Helpers, and will be focusing more on writing skills.

Please note that students should be trying to sound things out and write on their own! In Kindergarten, we focus on inventive spelling, so the words **DO NOT** have to be spelled correctly. Students will be stronger readers and writers if they are given the opportunities to think things through themselves. Keep up the GREAT work 😊

The Kindergarten Team:
Ms. Deeb (KA), Ms. Shuayto (KB),
Ms. Alghaiti (KC) and Ms. Blazo (KD)

FIRST GRADE

In the first grade classrooms, students have successfully completed the second marking period. These past two months first graders have worked on English, Phonics, Math, Spelling, Science, and Social Studies. We have learned many new concepts. Within each category students have completed homework assignments, tests, and class work. In Science students learned about magnets and will begin learning about Earth's Land and Water. In Math, we reviewed addition and subtraction, number order, patterns, and geometry. In phonics, students learned about the short vowels sounds. In Quarter 3 students will begin learning about the long vowels. In English/ Language Arts students learned and will continue to learn about sentence structure and use what they have learned

about sentences structure to start writing their own stories.

In reading, students were divided according to their DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) level. At the end of Quarter 2, students were tested and given a new DRA level according to their progress. Below is a graph showing DRA levels in all the first grades. In the upcoming months, students will continue practicing using their writing skills in their narrative writing. We are very excited to see what our first graders can accomplish in quarter 3!

Ms. Verdeyen 1A, Mrs. Simmerer 1B,
Ms. Abraham 1C, Ms. Campbell 1D

SECOND GRADE

We are pleased to announce that second grade is making great progress. We have been focusing on different types of themes (genres) of reading and writing. This includes fiction, non-fiction, biography, and autobiography. We have also completed DRA testing for Quarter 2. Our goal this quarter was to have students on a level 18-20 independently, and to have every student on level 28 or higher by the end of the year. Parents, please encourage daily reading at home using grade level chapter books.

In Math, we have mastered plane and solid shapes in geometry, and are wrapping up addition and subtraction with regrouping. These skills will be used in our next unit, which is everyone's favorite...money! In Social Studies, we have wrapped up the unit exploring our nation's history, and will be enriching our knowledge of contributions made by African Americans during Black History Month. We will then move on to basic concepts of economics. Our Science adventures have taken us to the center of the earth, which has been a great springboard for our study of the solar system. Finally, we are pleased to announce that we have begun cursive handwriting!

A special thank you goes out to our students and families for the many generous donations made to the *Pennies for Patients Leukemia Foundation*, to our continuing *Box Tops for Education Program*, to our *Red Cross Haiti Relief Fund*, and classroom supplies in general. 😊

The Second Grade Team
Mrs. Fenton 2C, Ms. Gogue 2A, Mrs. Muhsin 2B
😊

THIRD GRADE

Wow! It's hard to believe that half of our school year is over, and we are well on our way to becoming fourth grade students! We have worked very hard to learn new concepts and have been building on previous ones.

In Language Arts, we have read and written Personal Narratives and Research Reports. Also, we have worked on vocabulary and comprehension, and we will continue to work on these things for the remainder of the year.

In Mathematics, we have worked on rounding and estimating, addition and subtraction, and we are learning our multiplication tables. We will spend a lot of time in the future learning our multiplication facts, as these are skills we must have for fourth grade. Students will need to work on these at home, as well as at school.

In Social Studies, we have studied the early history of Michigan. We will continue to learn about Michigan throughout the year. In addition to Michigan history, we will continue to learn about different cultures and the history of the United States of America.

We are looking forward to our first field trip, and will be needing volunteers. Thank you in advance for your participation

**The Third Grade Team:
Ms. Rains (3A) Ms. Khan (3B) Ms. Wolstencraft (3C)**

FOURTH GRADE

During the second quarter, students worked extremely hard to improve their reading skills in order to succeed on the DRA (a reading test). These results will be used to improve individual progress as readers and in the classroom. Besides working extremely hard on assessments, students learned a wealth of information in the various subject areas.

In science, we learned about living things, adaptations, completed food chains, and had an in-school field trip called Survive and Thrive. In the next quarter we will be learning about the three states of matter while making rock candy and start discussing matter. In Social Studies, students learned about Michigan's resources and economy.

Besides preparing for DRA's, our students wrote compare and contrast essays using Venn Diagrams and the T's, C's and method of writing. We are now in the process of writing personal

memoirs using Genre in a Binder. During reading class, we focused on reading comprehension. As we start our new reading groups, we will continue to focus on reading comprehension and fluency which are skills that will help them in all subject areas. In math class, we started off by reviewing estimating. We have also worked on multiplication, division, and word problems. We will continue to use these various "real world" strategies that will help your children become great problem solvers.

Our planners have helped us stay on track with homework reminders and deadlines. Please continue to take the time to look at your child's planner each day, so that you are aware of what needs to be done at home. Also, please continue to encourage your children to complete their homework and to read on a daily basis so that they may be successful in the classroom. Lastly, we would like to thank all the parents for your continued support!

**The Fourth Grade Team
Ms. Hager, Mrs. Lindsay, Mrs. Bazzi, and
Mrs. Ingram**

FIFTH GRADE

During the second quarter, the fifth graders worked very hard on increasing their comprehension and number sense! This quarter students were also reassessed on DRA (a reading test). These results will be used to improve individual progress in the classroom. Students have learned so much information in the individual subject areas. In science, we continued to learn about force and motion, as well as, introducing the human body systems. We had the opportunity to attend the Ann Arbor Hands-On museum to explore force and motion further! Next, we will continue working on the human body systems. We are looking forward to a visit from the scientists and exploring GOO, GLOBS, and GUTS! In social studies, we completed a unit study on Explorers. We have started learning about the colonies and will continue on into the second quarter.

In mathematics, students were dedicated to learning multiplying and dividing fractions. The next quarter will focus on prime factorization, powers of ten, ratios and percents. During reading we are focusing on reading comprehension. As we continue reading groups, we will continue to focus on comprehension and fluency which are skills that will help with other areas. In writing, students worked very hard on creating mysteries and fantasies. We are currently working on writing

science fiction. We will continue working on narrative writing. Please continue to encourage your student to complete homework and study for tests. With your continued support, we hope to guide your student into a responsible and independent fifth grader! Thank you so much for participating in your child's education!

The Fifth Grade Team:
Ms. Murray, Mrs. Doan, and Mrs. Abbas



The Arabic language teachers encourage students to keep working hard at acquiring their Arabic language reading skills. Students should read Arabic books from the library and participate in buddy reading, in which students get to team up and read for each other. Students also enhance their Arabic writing skills by participating in writing words, sentences, and paragraphs. Students in the Arabic class have been practicing thematic letter writing to each other and the school staff members. The students enjoy the Arabic class learning centers: arts & crafts, listening center, educational DVDs, and Arabic computer software. The Arabic class students will keep working to master their conversational skills by doing group and pair work. The Arabic teachers are thankful to Mrs. Musa, our guest speaker, for the educational activities she demonstrated to our students. Also, Arabic teachers are thankful to Mrs. Sahyouni for her generous support of the Arabic bake sale. The Arabic language teachers are expecting parental involvement in their children Arabic education both academic and extra-curricular. Communication between school and home is essential to a successful school year. We welcome your questions and comments. Arabic is fun and students experience it that way!!

ARABIC DEPARTMENT NEWS.....

****The Arabic language teachers actively participated in the ACTFL convention and workshop in San Diego, California. In this session the teachers shared their successful strategies and methods to help empower educators so they can make teaching Arabic more fun. This session provided participants with instructional strategies which inspired them to be more creative at engaging students in Arabic language learning.



Music News

POSSIBILITIES

Our music students have been working very hard preparing for a musical concert titled "Possibilities," by Theresa Jennings. "Possibilities" is a musical

revue celebrating life and all the possibilities our children have for their futures. It explores dreams for the future, career choices, dealing with everyday life, and more – with a variety of educational music and narration.

The second quarter music concert was Friday, January 29th at 12:00pm in the ULA gym. There will also be two additional concerts throughout the school year. The dates are still to be determined, but they will be at the end of quarter 3 and 4.

Not only have we been preparing for our concert but we have also been learning about many famous composers, different instruments, how to read and notate music, as well as learning to play the recorder and much more. The year is off to a great start, and I am expecting some great things from all of your students!



Pre-K Corner

We've been very busy in Pre-K during the second quarter of school. Our routines are in full swing and we are having a great time learning. In math we are counting numbers and writing them everyday. Each day we write our names by signing in each morning. So far we have learned to write letters A through H and we even know the sounds they make.

Our learning themes are winter, holidays, animal homes, homes, families, friends and community helpers just to mention a few! We even had a visit from a police officer!

We practice sharing, taking turns, working together and doing things independently. In the next quarter we look forward to having more special visitors and field trips as well ☺