

# Wider Horizons School

Working Outdoors to Improve our Landscape



## DATES TO REMEMBER:

4/3-4/6 EASTER BREAK

4/7 Classes resume

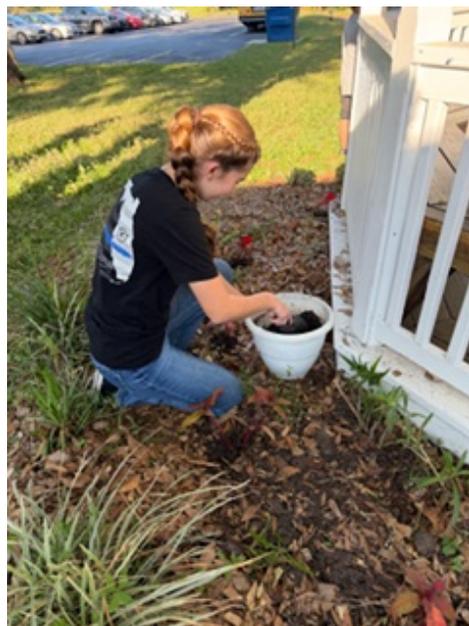
4/13-17 IOWA testing- students must attend!

5/1 Friday Night Live

5/4-8 Teacher Appreciation Week

5/8 Mother's Day visit

*Students in junior and senior high Came to school on Friday ready to work. They moved mulch, planted plants to replace those killed by the winter frost, raked leaves and generally did great landscaping work.*



Thank you to all the parents who came to our parent teacher meeting to hear about how Wider Horizons works.



## EDUCATING WITH TEACHERS HANDCUFFED

By Domenick J. Maglio PhD.

Traditional Realist

Teaching children to learn has become a profession for specialists. As soon as the one room schoolhouse became a vanishing breed, and the consolidation of schools moved them into large school districts, subject specialists started to replace the master teacher who taught all the subjects. These specialized subjects were first introduced in the higher grades. Over the years these highly specialized courses have seeped down into the lower grades with teachers trained specifically in one area. These course area specialties have expanded into non-academic areas such as drugs, sex, divorce, handling money and remediation courses.

Modern education had evolved not only into specialized subject areas but specific ways to teach different and reluctant students. There are special education teachers who are now teaching speech, reading, math, writing, language arts using "innovative" specialized approaches with the latest popular educational fad strategies. Ever increasing psychological disorders for children has become a breeding ground for newly trained specialized teachers.

The concept of a teacher being a generalist, responsible for the overall education of a student has dramatically shrunk in number and status. These teachers have to become proficient in all academic and character aspects of their students.

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## PRIMARY 1

Mrs. Wallace and Mrs. Tejada

Welcome back! We hope everyone enjoyed their spring break. Just a reminder, we are a multi-age classroom. In our classroom, kindergarteners and first graders learn side-by-side, while younger students observe and learn lessons.

In language, students continue to read Bob Books. Congratulations to Sofia and Emmanuel for moving up to the next book. This week we had our annual handwriting contest, and students had the opportunity to show how their penmanship has improved.

In math, students are learning static addition and static subtraction with beads. Some students are also being challenged to work on static multiplication.

In culture, we have left Africa and are now exploring North America with different lessons about animals, puzzles, and more.

Notices went out for our Game Night. We hope to see all of our students attend.

We hope you have a great weekend!

## PRIMARY 2

Miss Finnerty and Mrs. Nieves

Welcome back from spring break. We hope everyone enjoyed their time off.

The primary students did not miss a beat returning to their schedule, and we are very pleased with their ability to jump back into routine. We are beginning to discuss spring and the changing of seasons.

In math, the children are working with a variety of counting

activities. They continue adding, subtracting, and multiplying using the decimal system. In language, students got to write a poem celebrating the start of spring and enter it into the handwriting competition. Based on blind judging, Noah Belavilas won for kindergarten, and Angelica Enaje won for first grade.

In geography, students continue to study Asia. They are realizing that there is quite a vast array of cultures in this continent. We love watching them acquire global knowledge and helping them understand that there are so many countries and cultures in our world. In science, we introduced the ladybug life cycle.

We introduced a lesson about symmetry in nature in sensorial. We culminated this concept with a butterfly symmetry art lesson, in which students worked on their folding skills.

We hope you have a wonderful weekend!

## LOWER ELEMENTARY

Mrs. Urbanek and Ms. Skiff

Welcome back from spring break. We hope everyone had a great, relaxing week. We have now entered into the last quarter of the school year. This is the time to pack everything in, and it will be a very busy last quarter with Iowa testing and FNL.

During the next couple of weeks, the students will be doing work in the morning to help them prepare for Iowa testing. This work consists of math, language, spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Congratulations to Joedaniel, Annabelle, Gabriel, and Nathan for having a perfect reading sheet this week. Congratulations to

Elsie, Kota, and Joedaniel for moving up to the next time tables. Congratulations to Gabriel for moving up to mixed time tables. Congratulations to Bella and Payton for mastering their mixed time tables and moving up to division facts.

In language, the students are working from the tower and doing additional reviews. Second grade is learning about adverbs, while third grade is learning about time and manners.

In math, the students worked on booklets, applications, and measurement  $1/4$  inch. They also reviewed  $1''$  and  $1/2''$ .

In spelling this week, the students wrote their spelling words, created a spelling code, illustrated pictures of their words, and drew stars.

In science, the students continued to work on vertebrates. Some students are working on external, while others are working on internal. They had a lesson on internal and researched different animals of their choice.

In history, the students are continuing to work on Native American cultures and resources. In geography, the students are learning about the 50 states with different facts. In their folders they have 40 states, and they had a test on 30 of them today.

We encourage the students to continue to practice their states and time tables daily.

Have a safe weekend!

STUDENT EDITOR

Gia Betz

## UPPER ELEMENTARY

Mrs. Gutierrez, Miss Bandini, and Mrs. Russell

Upper Elementary has begun preparing for the Iowa Basic Skills Test and will continue practicing through the week of the assessment. These practice sessions provide students with a clear understanding of the test format and expectations, while also helping teachers identify areas that may need additional review. Testing will begin the week of April 13th and will continue until the full battery of assessments is completed. Parents can support their child's success by ensuring they get a good night's rest and eat a nutritious breakfast on testing days.

This week we held our annual Cursive Contest! It was amazing to see how everyone's handwriting miraculously improved. We would like to extend our congratulations to the winners, Kinsley, Liam, and Gianna.

Students had an abbreviated schedule this week in order to practice for Iowa testing. Students were still able to complete their daily math set, language and participate in their history classes.

Fourth graders were assigned a composition where they could create their own superhero or super villain. Students also took this time to focus on completing their language tower work this quarter. In Florida History, fourth graders began their study this week on the causes and results of the Seminole Wars. Book reports are due on Monday, March 30th.

Fifth graders learned about the Great Compromise and the three-fifths clause that the Framers chose to incorporate into the nation's bicameral legislature. In botany, the students planted seeds in a greenhouse to grow herbs, tomatoes and flowers. They also planted seeds in the ground. They are

excited to see which one grows better.

Sixth graders are applying their understanding of kinetic and potential energy as they continue to design, build, and test their roller coasters. They are also enjoying the creative process of developing original superheroes for this week's composition assignment. Next week, Upper Elementary students will use these protagonists to create their own comic books. The next book report will be due on March 30th.

## HIGHSCHOOL

Mrs. Parks, Mrs. Youse, and Miss Wheeler

Welcome back! We hope everyone had a wonderful Spring Break and returned refreshed and ready to finish the school year strong. As we move into the final stretch of the year, we encourage all students to continue working hard and studying so they can finish with grades they feel proud of.

Our high school students read Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, over Spring Break. This week, we spent time discussing the powerful themes and historical significance of the work, and students completed an exam on the text. They have now begun reading The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, where they will explore Franklin's reflections on personal growth, character, and achievement.

Students continue to make steady progress in math. We are pleased with the dedication many students are showing as they move forward in their lessons and master new concepts. Consistent effort and practice remain the key to continued success.

In Health class, students are studying conflict and conflict resolution. They are learning how

IN CASE OF A STORM OR STATE OF EMERGENCY WHERE THERE IS NO POWER - SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED UNTIL POWER IS RESTORED

disagreements arise and exploring healthy strategies for redirecting conflicts in a constructive and respectful way.

Our Biology students have begun an exciting unit on DNA and RNA, learning how these molecules store and transmit genetic information and play a central role in the functioning of living organisms.

As always, thank you for your continued support and involvement in our school community. We look forward to another week filled with learning, growth, and achievement.

## AFTER SCHOOL

Ms. Brewer and Ms. Russell

Welcome back from spring break. During circle time, we decided to review how to behave inside the classroom. We raise our hands when we need something or to ask a question. We walk, not run, inside the classroom, and we keep our hands to ourselves. We use low voices since there is no need to shout to be heard. Most importantly, we always pay attention to the teacher when she is talking, reading, or demonstrating a new lesson. Students should also have fun with their work and treat others the way they want to be treated. The children were very excited to share what they did during spring break.

While on the playground, some children decided to walk like wooden soldiers, while others were zoo keepers chasing animals that had escaped. It was very fun to watch.

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The teacher learns the student's whole range of interests, behavior patterns and different academic endeavors. Some students may have an easier time in language arts while others do better in math, science, art, history or physical education. Each student's unique character and academic profile allows the teacher to better develop a comprehensive, accurate assessment and individualized approach for each student. The teacher's emotional attachment is more intense than a specialist who has limited time with a student.

Teaching is an art that is developed over years of working as a teacher. Any person who is going to excel as a teacher has to learn about their own strengths and weaknesses in a myriad of situations with different types of students. Generalist teachers develop a great self-awareness from being with the same group of students for a number of years. Students are always studying the teachers to figure out how to react around them. This is the reason a beginning teacher usually has wonderful intentions but often steps in minefields due to their ignorance of how manipulative students can be and their own reactions to certain stressful situations. They learn to analyze what responses work more effectively with different types of students. These specific experiences are filed in the memory bank of the teacher to be readily employed as needed with other students of similar temperament and character.

Necessity is the mother of invention and causes many teachers to spend sleepless nights problem solving. This problem solving process when gaining advice from more experienced teachers mentoring them gives a heightened sense to each lesson learned. The series of real life teaching lessons are building blocks to perfect abilities and awareness in specific situations, to practice techniques that work and they are comfortable doing. It is a personal repertoire of methods and reactions to specific situations that will reoccur throughout their careers. These experiences learned and stored help to create a master teacher.

The advantage to this interactional method of instruction as compared to higher education's abstract and generalized book learning is that it takes into account the student and teacher's character. What is more genuine, natural and comfortable for the novice teacher will more likely be spontaneously used in similar situations. The personality and character of the teacher affects what actions are best suited for her in particular situations.

Teachers are unique leaders whose personalities have an immense impact on every decision made in their class. The interactional method of learning is compared to the abstract book form. One is like learning to fly an airplane with the person actually in control of the instrument panel accompanied by an experienced pilot who will prevent any mishaps. In contrast is a student having only a flight manual abstractly telling him what to do.

Becoming a master teacher takes real life experience and someone to be a mentor to guide the person, give insights and suggestions that assist the new teacher. Helpful discussions assist the teacher to analyze and understand the best way for this teacher to react in many different situations. These field-tested options by the individual teacher show her their effectiveness with her particular personality.

As the person matures into a more realistic and aware teacher she realizes she will be more likely to share insights with other teachers. Her teaching of increased awareness and knowledge places the teacher on the path to becoming a master teacher.

Some people may be born to be a teacher but all of them should constantly learn to be better ones. The generalists have greater advantage over specialists to make a difference in a student's life. A master teacher not only knows the subject matter, has self-awareness and always has the opportunity to know each child as an individual not just a number.

*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 a new just published book, entitled, IN CHARGE PARENTING In a PC World. You can visit Dr. Maglio at [www.drmaglio.blogspot.com](http://www.drmaglio.blogspot.com).*