

JFK Weekly Newsletter

Thursday, October 14, 2021 Sara Raabe, JFK Principal

No School Tomorrow

Tomorrow, October 15th, is Vijaya Dashami or Dussehra, which marks the end of Durga Puja and the nine-day long Navratri celebrations. Durga Puja is an annual Hindu festival that celebrates the victory of good over evil as goddess Durga killed demon king Mahishasu. The 10th day is the most important and the day Bhutanese Nepali living in Vermont celebrate with a big meal and Tika. Tika is a mixture of rice and vermillion (a red powder) mixed with yogurt. On the final day of Dashami, the 10th day of Dashain, elders put Tika on the foreheads of younger children and relatives. Whoever gives the Tika, gives blessings for long life, good fortune, big, healthy families, and good luck. The importance of Dasain also lies in the fact that on this day family members from far-off and distant relatives come for a visit as well as to receive tika from the head of the family. It's really a big, happy family reunion. In observance of this day, we do not have school.

The First Six Weeks

This week marks the 7th week of school for the 2021-22 school year. Each year, JFK spends the first six weeks of school "going slow to go fast". This means that we take time at the beginning of the year to explore expectations, routines, and foundational academics with students, and practice, practice, practice. By taking the time at the beginning of the school year to create a strong foundation, it allows the focus to be on engaging academics for the rest of the school year. This works because students and adults know and understand the routines, expectation, and foundational academics and do not need to spend academic time with these things as the year progresses.

The First Six Weeks is part of our Responsive Classroom approach to school. There are 5 main goals for the First Six Weeks:

1. Create a positive climate and a sense of belonging. This important work allows students to feel safe in the classroom, and sets the tone for a positive school year. Students develop a sense of belonging which is essential to encourage them to participate in engaging academics. This is even more vital this year, as students have not had a "normal" school year for the past two academic years.
2. The adults explore the schedule, routines, and expectations with students. This encourages a sense of predictability, which allows students to develop a sense of safety, and enables them to

- focus on their academic learning because these things become second nature.
3. Students are introduced to the physical environment of the school, including the new spaces, and to their learning materials. The expectations for use and care of the physical environment and learning materials is explored and developed by adults and students together, ensuring that students have a sense of ownership and respect.
 4. Adults and students explore how we will learn together during the year. Developing the expectations together and taking the time to practice them helps students to become invested and build excitement for academic learning.
 5. Foundational Academics are taught. Woven into the First Six Weeks of School are academic lessons and practices that set up the foundations for all future academic lessons.

Taking the time at the beginning of the year to create community and common understandings means that we can focus on academic learning as the year progresses, without having to reteach routines each day. This explicit instruction also builds independence for our students, allowing them to function independently without adult intervention. Students must be able to function with autonomy in order to meet high academic expectations.

As a school, we want our students to meet high expectations, develop a strong sense of self, and be able to navigate their own learning while also understanding their part in the community. The time that we take in the beginning of each school year serves as vital building blocks to help our students reach these goals.

Important Dates

Friday, October 15, 2021

No School

Thursday, October 21, 2021

11:00am Early Dismissal

Friday, October 22, 2021

11:00am Early Dismissal

Thursday, October 18, 2021

Picture Retake Day

Thursday, November 18, 2021

11:00am Early Dismissal

JFK Parent Teacher Conferences via Zoom

Friday, November 19, 2021

11:00am Early Dismissal

JFK Parent Teacher Conferences via Zoom

Monday, November 22, 2021

No School

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

No School

Wednesday, November 24, 2021

No School

Thursday, November 25, 2021

No School

Friday, November 26, 2021

No School

Wednesday, December 15, 2021

12:15 Early Dismissal




JFK Elementary

 Facebook

 @WinooskiLearns

 sraabe@wsdvt.org

 802-655-0411

 wsdvt.org

