

Dragon News

Southgate's monthly parent newsletter

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Dr. Bob Smart,
Principal



January 2018



Dragon Notes

Dear Southgate families,

Happy New Year!

2018?! I simply cannot believe we are in the year 2018. Wow! Okay, back to the principal's newsletter. One of our favorite brands and logos is our "reading dragon." I am confident that all dragons are super committed to reading, and as you can see—our Southgate dragon is enjoying an excellent book! Our librarian, Mrs. Cathey, has done a dragonrific job adding many high-interest books to our library! She supports our teachers with many reference books on carts that extend their learning in the classroom. Connecting with our reading mission, our specialists (Mrs. Nevills, technology; Mrs. Bowman, music; and Mrs. Woods, PE), work to integrate literature themes with their teaching. Thank you Dragon Specialists for all you do to make each day a quality experience!

We have a team approach to reading! It's that important! A proficient reader by the end of second grade is better able to transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn." A great website is the Children's Reading Foundation at read20minutes.org. You'll find lots of resources and parent-proven tips to encourage reading. Another terrific resource is lexile.com. One of the assessments we use at Southgate measures each child's lexile range—this is an approximate reading level that can assist you in getting the book that is appropriate for your child's current reading level. Wow, that's a great way to make an informed reading choice!

I've written about how important reading is for continued excellence in children's academics. We ask that our Dragons read 20 minutes per day, and a big thank you for helping your son or daughter set aside time for reading. Your efforts have translated in BIG numbers in minutes read already for this year!

Kindness is a big deal at Southgate! Thank you for your help in our coats for kids and food drive in December. You and your family's generosity can make a big difference for many in our community. Over the last two months we've been working with our students around ideas of community and compassion for others and these events are a wonderful way for students to make a meaningful difference for others. You and your child's efforts have helped to provide warm coats and food during the cold months.

Safety is a powerful predictor of student success. Ensuring a great and safe beginning to our day is very important—that's why you see my team and me out there helping and greeting dragons. Here's how you can help...please pull as far forward as possible to drop off your child. This keeps our traffic moving, and be sure to have your son or daughter exit the car on the sidewalk side. Our parking lot is small, but with all of us working together we can have a safe and efficient process. Thank you for respecting our neighbors' (Kadlec and Davita) parking lots. Those spaces are reserved for their patients. I already am seeing positive differences.

January is a great time to help your child with their organizational skills. Setting up a special place each evening to "dig through the backpack" can lead to some important conversations. Please continue to monitor the assignments and note home. Recognizing your child's performance on assignments and projects is a super way to demonstrate that school is important.

My absolute best wishes for a successful, kind, and wonderful—wow—2018!

Dr. Smart



Automated Attendance Phone Calls

Southgate recently started using an automated system for attendance calls. This system will send out phone calls and e-mails to parents of students whose absences have not been excused. Please note: if you do not call your child in sick before 10:30 a.m. or if your child is checked in after 10:30 a.m., you will receive an automated phone call.

Just a reminder, to excuse your child's absence, you must either call 222-5902 and leave a message or e-mail southgate.attendance@ksd.org. Please include your child's name, room number, reason for absence and date of absence. You may also send a note in with this information when your child returns to school.

When your child is absent or late to school due to doctor's or dentist appointments, we highly recommend you bring in a doctor's note excusing the absence/tardy.

2018 Southgate Calendar



January

15 No School—Martin Luther King Jr Day

22 No School—Semester Break (Possible snow make-up day)

February

9 No School—District Professional Day

14 Happy Valentine's Day

19 No School— President's Day



Attendance Phone Line



If your child will be absent from school or late to school, please call Southgate's attendance line at 222-5902 by 9:00 a.m. or e-mail us at southgate.attendance@ksd.org to excuse your child's absence. Please leave your child's name, room number, the date of the absence and the reason for the absence. Thank You!



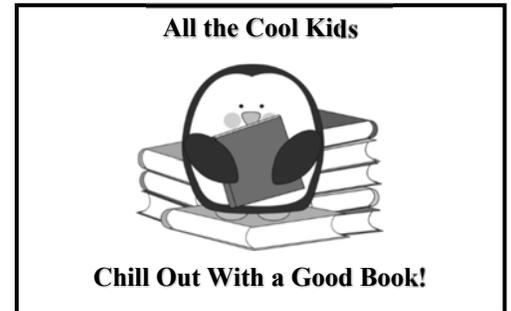
Quote

"Life's most urgent and persistent question is "what are you doing for others?"

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Everyday reminders:

- * Be sure to ask your child daily how their school day was and check their backpack for homework and/or correspondence from school.
- * Please, try to schedule doctor and dentist appointments for after school. If you must schedule appointments during the school hours, please arrange to have your child attend school for part of the day. Your child's attendance is very important!
- * Students should not be arriving before 8:25 a.m. to school if they are not eating breakfast here. We do not have supervision outside before this time. Calls may be made to parents to pick up their child if they are arriving too early.
- * Breakfast begins at 8:10 and student must be in line to eat before 8:25 a.m. to have ample time to make it to class. Students arriving on busses, no matter what time will be able to get breakfast.
- * If you are bringing in birthday treats for your child, we ask that you bring in store bought treats due to other students with food allergies and that you bring them in during your child's lunch or towards the end of the school day.
- * If you have gifts, flowers or balloons delivered for you child, please note that we will hold the items in the office and deliver towards the end of the school day. We suggest that you may want to surprise your child with balloons at home. Students cannot bring balloons onto the school bus.
- * If students bring electronic devices such as iPods or cell phones to school, they must be kept in their backpacks and not taken out during the school day. Items will be confiscated if they have them out during the school day. Parent will need to come to the school to retrieve such items.
- * Please allow yourself enough time when picking your student up for an appointment. We will **not** call your student down to the office early, but will go get them for you when you arrive.
- * If you will be volunteering or chaperoning in your child's classroom, you must have volunteer paperwork on file. Please allow one to two weeks for your application to be processed before volunteering or chaperoning.
- * Reminder to have your child read or read to your child for at least 20 minutes each day! Those readers will be our future leaders!



School Closures & Delays

Kennebec School District may close or delay school in the event of snow, ice or other emergencies. **NEW 3-HOUR DELAY OPTION: To provide more opportunities for the district to hold school, a 3-hour delay option has been added for the 2017-18 school year. This option will only be considered if the district has missed a significant number of school days already.**

Every effort is made to announce closures or delays by 6 a.m. If conditions change after the decision is made to delay school, it is possible that the district may cancel school. We will try to make a final decision by 7:30 a.m., or shortly thereafter. If changed, an updated alert will be sent out as soon as possible. If there is no mention on the district website of delays or closures, schools are running on time. Road conditions in the district can vary depending on where you live. We support a parent's or guardian's decision to pick their child up early or to not send their child to school. Absences will be considered excused with a signed note.

Cold Weather Recess Guidelines

Children can be especially susceptible to the dangers associated with inclement weather. Their youthful enthusiasm often takes over when common sense and safety should prevail. Even if they are cold, wet, or exhausted, they often are not conscious of the potential impact these conditions pose. Southgate staff wants to be sensitive to the dangers inclement weather can pose to our children and establish guidelines regarding outside recess.

Cold temperature and wind chill guidelines are as follows (temperatures include wind chill factor):

- 10 degrees F. above zero or lower – indoor recess
- 10-20 degrees – shortened recess, 10-15 minutes
- Above 20 degrees – normal time
- Below 50 degrees, children should bring a coat out for recess (coats may be left near their classroom doors if they choose not to wear them).

We will use these guidelines and bring students into the gym in the morning to wait for school to start rather than waiting in their lines outside.



Message for Southgate Student
in Room # _____

Name _____

Date _____ Time _____

Messages to Students

Parents it is best to talk with your child the morning before school about changing plans of how they will go home from school. However, we know this is not always possible as situations arise.

We ask that if you need to get a message to your child that you contact the office by 1:50 p.m. We are not always able to get a message to your child immediately and will deliver messages as we can. Getting messages to us earlier in the day allows us more time to make sure your child receives your message.

On Wednesdays, please call in your message for your student by noon.

Thank you for your help with this issue!



attendance
MATTERS