

October 2015

Dear East Hills Families:

Throughout the school year, we work tirelessly to remind our students of the importance of being kind to one another as well as celebrate our differences. Classes participate in Second Step, a district wide Character Education program that teaches tolerance and empathy. Books of the Month focus on these traits as well. In addition, many school wide activities and cultural arts programs are shared with the children so they can see, first hand, the vital impact that kindness has as we work toward making positive choices. While social/emotional learning is at the forefront of our work throughout the year, bully prevention is highlighted during the month of October. October is known as Bully Prevention Month: a time to encourage our children to work together to stop bullying and cyber bullying by increasing their awareness of the prevalence and impact of bullying on all children of all ages. Mrs. Flanagan, our school psychologist, has planned a plethora of activities and events so please be sure to ask your child about ways they can be a friend by standing up as well as standing tall against bullies. One of the main messages she taught the children during a most informative assembly last Friday was: *"We can stand tall against bullying by promising to "speak up," "reach out" and "be a friend" whenever we see bullying."* All students will sign this class promise to stand tall as a kid against bullying. In addition on October 27th, the Character Education Committee has organized Mix It Up at Lunch Day to foster acceptance, teamwork and empathy. On this day, the children will move out of their comfort zones and connect with someone new over lunch and recess.

We have chosen two special books for our Book of the Month. The first book has been chosen in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month which runs from September 15 through October 15. *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*, by Kathleen Krull, is a poignant nonfiction text that teaches our children about Cesar Chavez who was one of America's most inspiring civil rights leaders. Cesar overcame teasing as well as injustices by using his words and proactive actions to make a difference in the lives of migrant farm workers. Our second text is, *The Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade*, written by Justin Roberts. Sally McCabe may be the shortest girl in the school, but she sure pays close attention to everything that happens. Her perspective provides everyone with a new awareness of how their behaviors impact others. One day she stands up and informs all the other students that she has had ENOUGH! It is our hope that your children use these two texts as well as the building wide events as springboards for ways to be proactive in ensuring that our school community is happy, united and kind.

Fondly,
Melissa Krieger
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