

Grahamwood Elementary Happenings

A Shelby County Optional School
Pete Johnson, Principal

Busy Times at Grahamwood

Grahamwood Elementary is one busy school! On top of all the learning taking place, there are always many activities going on designed to increase students awareness of their community and their role as a citizen.

The annual International Walk to School Day is one such event. The walk is held each year to highlight healthy habits. This year an additional focus was on



safety. FedEx and Safe Kids along with the Memphis Police Department were on-hand to discuss safety initiatives and provide role models for students.

At a presentation following the walk, Flo Wallace, Grahamwood's crossing guard who was recently struck by a car while on duty, was recognized by the GPTO. The walk and presentation were featured on several local television news programs.

ESL Night was a huge success again this year.

Nearly 200 parents, students, and community stakeholders attended. They were treated to a musical performance, introduced to the ESL department, a dinner, and a dozen booths hosted by community organizations and school



programs. "This was a great opportunity to display and provide information on all our school has to offer," stated Optional Coordinator Dr. Maxwell.

The Community provides Enrichment Opportunities

The members of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra performed for Grahamwood's K-2 students. The story they performed was *The Curious Garden* by Peter Brown. The was read by 5th grade teacher Rachel Helton. "The students loved the performance and it helped instill in them a life-long appreciation of music," said Orff Music teacher Danyelle Harris.

Parent and UTHSC professor Dr. Choby brought 20 UTHSC students to Grahamwood to educate and discuss the health risks of tobacco with our students. The students participated in interactive demonstrations.

Discussions included questioning the tobacco industries methods in selling its products.



Coming up, we will be participating in Jumpstart's Read for the Record on November 7th. Organized by our librarian, Dani Douglass, Grahamwood will join schools across the na-

tion in reading, *Thank You, Omu*. The goal is to set a new, world reading record.

2019 National Award Winner: Grahamwood!

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation has named Grahamwood Elementary as one of *America's Healthiest Schools*. Grahamwood won a Bronze Medal.

The award is the culmination of having a high im-

pact P.E. program and a cafeteria staff that makes sure our students are fed healthy, well balanced meals everyday.



Congratulations to Cafeteria Manager Ms. Dickerson and P.E. teachers Ms. McCawley and Mr. Martin. Way to go!

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Grahamwood Elementary Dragons

Upcoming Events:

- Half Day for Students
* November 8th: 11:45 dismissal begins
- Veterans Day
* No School: November 11th
- Thanksgiving Break
* No School: November 25th-29th
- Progress Reports Issued
* December 4th sent home with students
- 1st Semester Ends
* December 20th half-day for students dismissal begins 11:45

Did You Know?

- Grahamwood adopters and sponsors include FedEx, Kroger, and Rhodes College.
- Grahamwood has a National Wildlife Federation Certified Outdoor Classroom with a Monarch Butterfly Way Station.
- Grahamwood earned the National Beta Club School of Distinction status.

Grahamwood Elementary School

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Focus On: CLUE Teacher Sandra Broom

Sandra Broom joined Grahamwood Elementary School this year as our newest CLUE teacher and we are happy to have her! She brings 20 years of teaching experience with her. Previously, she has taught kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 7th, and at the college level.

Ms. Broom was born in Meridan, MS and calls Brandon, MS her hometown. At the University of Mississippi, she earned her Bachelor of Business Administration, and a M.A.T. from the University of Memphis.

Ms. Broom and her husband, Paul, are celebrating their 30th Anniversary this year. They have two children, Ashley and Bobby., but no pets. Her hobbies are hiking and reading.

Ms. Broom had thought for a long time that

she wanted to be a teacher. However, once she had children, she became convinced. "I hope to make children love to learn and find out about different things," says Ms. Broom. "I hope to be viewed as a kind and friendly person by the students."

When she was a student, her favorite subject was history, because, "it was about things that really happened." Some of her favorite children's books are: *The Hobbit*, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, and *The Little House on the Prairie* series. "I love children's books," states Ms. Broom, "I collect them."

We are happy Sandra Broom has joined us this year. We know that she will prove to be a valuable educator for our CLUE students.



Grahamwood Elementary School's Vision Statement:

Grahamwood Elementary School is an exemplary, student-centered educational community with an exceptional team of stakeholders who create a nurturing environment where all students achieve academic excellence, exhibit good character, and hopes and dreams are encouraged.

Attendance Expectations:

Please be sure to have your children at school everyday, on time and for the whole day. If your children are missing any part of a school day, our outstanding educators cannot teach them and they are denied the opportunity to learn.

Teacher Spotlight: Mario Diaz

Mario Diaz joined Grahamwood Elementary this year—his 2nd as a teacher for SCS. He spent his 1st year at Willow Oaks Elementary teaching 5th grade. We are thrilled to have him working with our 3rd grade students.

Mr. Diaz is the eldest of three siblings. He has one brother and one sister. He was born in Orange County, California. He graduated from the University of Memphis in 2018 with a degree in Education. He was featured in TeachTodayTN.org and won the University of Memphis' Distinguished Undergraduate Award in Education in 2018.

"When I was in school, my favorite

subject was math because I liked practicing it everyday after school," states Mr. Diaz. Social Studies was his least favorite subject.



Mr. Diaz knew he wanted to be a teacher when he volunteered in high school at Kingsbury Elementary School. "My goal as an educator is to show students love and challenge them with non-traditional, out of the box

teaching," emphasizes Mr. Diaz. His most

rewarding moment is when parents and students "call me the best!"

"My inspiration to become a teacher is Mr. Demmons. He taught me to love reading," says Mr. Diaz. "A big shout out to him!" As far as whom he admires, "I admire my family for all of their love and support."

You would be surprised to know that Mr. Diaz visited Japan this summer before school began. His hobbies are soccer, piano, and no surprise, traveling. If he could change one thing in the world, it would be to help poverty filled countries. As far as pets, Mr. Diaz has a cat named Chancho.

We are glad Mario Diaz joined us at Grahamwood Elementary School and look forward to him sharing his expertise with our students for many years to come!