

Grahamwood Elementary Happenings

A Shelby County Optional School

Pete Johnson, Principal

Keeping A Busy, Productive Winter Schedule at Grahamwood

Grahamwood students are keeping busy this winter with a variety of events.

The annual Scripps National Spelling Bee was held in January. This year's winner was Max Ding (5th grade) in Mr. Birdsell's class with Neha Kodali from Ms. Martin's 5th grade class coming in second. Max qualified to participate in the next round at the University of Memphis. The winner of this contest will advance to the national championship in metro D.C.



Students in 3rd-5th grade are participating in the 2019 Memphis Grizzlies Read to Achieve Challenge. All students are asked to read a book a week until February 22. Participating classes will be placed in a drawing for a chance to attend a special Grizzlies led program at the FedEx Forum.

Grahamwood's kindergarten students just celebrated the 100th Day of School. The students dressed up as they imagined they would look at age 100. In class, they worked



on math problems associated with the number 100 and for art, they created necklaces with 100 beads. A grand time was had by all!

Coach Andrew Martin arranged for #WeDon'tPuff to visit Grahamwood. In conjunction with the Shelby County Health Department, these organizations provided factual information on the harms of smoking. Students engaged in an open dialog format that allowed them to better understand the dangers of smoking.

Also, did I forget to mention that Well Child paid us a visit? At a parent's request, they provided student health screenings.

Optional Application & General Choice Transfers are Open

For the 2019-2020 school year, parents interested in applying for Grahamwood Elementary's 1st-5th grade Optional program can do so online at: www.scsk12.org/schoolchoice. The application process opened on Monday, January 28, 2019 and will continue to be open through summer.

Renewals for current Grahamwood Elementary Optional 1st-4th grade students are in

paper format. You should have received the renewal form, if not let Dr. Maxwell know. To remain in the Optional program for next year, the renewal form must be completed and returned to Grahamwood.

Parents interested in applying for a General Choice Transfer into Grahamwood Elementary School can do so now online at: www.scsk12.org/schoolchoice/.

If you are interested in more

information concerning Grahamwood Elementary's Optional or academic programs, or if you would like to take a tour, please contact Dr. Maxwell.

Thank you for your interest in Grahamwood Elementary School. If you have any questions, you can reach the Optional Coordinator Dr. Maxwell: 901.416.5993 or maxwelldj@scsk12.org

Beta Club Reports by Shelby Thompson

In December 2018, members of Grahamwood's National Junior Beta Club made holiday stockings for the residents of Foxbridge Nursing Home. This nursing home provides care and assists senior citizens living

with dementia as well as memory loss.

The club spread holiday cheer with their festive stockings. The contents of the merry stockings were two hand-made ornaments, tissues, chocolate candy, warm and

fuzzy socks, along with a card with a personalized holiday greeting.

Putting together the stockings brought us joy because they would spread holiday cheer. It was a great and enjoyable experience.

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Grahamwood

Upcoming Events:

General Choice Transfer Opened

- January 28

Optional Application Process Opened

- January 28

Progress Reports Issued

- February 6

Parent-Teacher Conferences

- February 7 from 4-7pm

3rd Quarter Ends

- March 8

Spring Break

- March 11-15

Did You Know?

- Grahamwood offers over 20 extracurricular activities that students can elect to participate in.
- The school has 3 before/aftercare programs: ELOP; After Math Aftercare; & Chinese Aftercare.
- Construction on the gym is set to begin.
- Grahamwood is a 2018 TDOE Reward School!

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Teacher Spotlight: Lindsey Rothenbach

After teaching kindergarten and 1st grade at Knight Road, Lindsey Rothenbach joined us Grahamwood Elementary. She is in her 9th year of teaching and says, "I really love the culture and diversity here at Grahamwood."

Ms. Rothenbach was born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. She earned a B.A. in Psychology at the University of Minnesota and an Elementary Education degree at the University of Wisconsin. If she was not a teacher, she would have studied to be a paleontologist.

When in elementary school, she knew that being a teacher was for her because, "I loved playing school at home." Ms. Rothenbach's favorite subject as a student was "Math, especially Algebra, because I loved solving equations." She also liked the hands-on experiments and dissections that

were a part of Science. Language Arts and writing papers were always her greatest challenge.

"My inspiration for teaching was Dr. Hutchinson, my 11th grade English teacher," states Ms. Rothenbach. "He cared not only about our academic growth but also our character development and community involvement." Today, her most rewarding moment is seeing the growth that each of her students make throughout the year.

When not teaching, Ms. Rothenbach likes traveling, reading, and running. You would be surprised to know that Ms. Rothenbach has a corn snake as her class pet. Her wish for the world is that, "all children are given the same high quality education opportunities"

We are fortunate to have Lindsey Rothenbach working with our students everyday!



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.

Focus On: Principal Pete Johnson

Pete Johnson became Grahamwood Elementary's principal twelve years ago and has served very ably ever since. His classroom background helps him relate to the needs and concerns of students, parents, and teachers.

After graduating from Delta State University, Mr. Johnson began his career as a special education teacher in Mississippi. He then served as an assistant principal for a Desoto County School. Next, he was an assistant principal at Crump Elementary and then principal at Shelby Oaks before his final move in becoming Grahamwood Elementary's principal.

He is an award winning educational leader and role model for teachers.



His vision has led to Grahamwood being a Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) certified Level 4/5 school (the

highest ratings) for the past 5 years. In fact in 2018, Grahamwood earned the coveted Reward School status awarded by the TDOE signifying our school as a top 20% performer for all schools in the state. Memphis

Parent named Grahamwood a 2018 Family Choice Award School. Principal Johnson also received the Tennessee Lottery Educator Award.

Principal Johnson is dedicated to a common sense, practical approach to education where making personal connections with both students and parents are highly valued. "We must create the right setting for learning to occur," says Principal John-

son. "When I was in the classroom, if you came to my class, I'm going to do whatever it takes to get you to learn. This is what I expect from my teachers—high expectations for every student."

Under Principal Johnson, Grahamwood has expanded. This year a 10 classroom addition was built that will provide more space to admit students from our waiting list. Additionally, construction is set to begin on fulfilling the dream of a gym for our students.

When not working hard at Grahamwood, he loves to fish, hike, camp, and travel with his wife and son. In high school, he played football and baseball. Today, he enjoys following all college sports. His favorite children's book is *Oh, the Places You'll Go* by Dr. Seuss.

Grahamwood is truly blessed to have a distinguished educator such as Pete Johnson leading our school!