

January 29, 2010,

Greetings!

Second grade is planning a Celebration of Friendship for Friday, February 11th. It will be our Valentine's party. Students will exchange Valentine cards on this day, but **please do not purchase cards to send in**. Each child will be making cards *at school* for the other members of our class. We will continue to teach a number of different pop-up cards as we flex our creative muscles for a few weeks prior to the 11th. Rather than purchasing cards, please consider sending in materials that our class may share in making cards - we could use things like ribbons, doilies, rubber stamps and colorful stamp pads, lace, or other do-dads that might make for interesting cards. We will have brainstormed ideas for a Valentine's word bank and discussed what a Valentine's card should say. This is a great opportunity for us to focus on the positive pieces each of us brings to the classroom. In pictures and words we'll celebrate the things we value in our classmates - it will be a great day, but an even better experience leading up to it.

The following is a sample of one student's draft from yesterday. It warmed my heart and reminded me of how lucky I am to work with your children.

Dear _____,

You think faster than a cheetah can run! You have the best imagination ever! If everything you imagined came alive the world would be amazing!

Sincerely,

The Mochi rice balls we made last week in our Japanese studies were fabulous. Take a look at the culinary photos we posted on our classroom website. This week Dieterle sensei taught us six new Kanji characters. Ask your students if they remember how to write the words: person, dog, book, tree, woods, and forest - as an extra challenge, ask them to share what they learned about how to write the word Japan in Kanji.

We are just starting a new math unit called *How Many Floors? How Many Rooms?* This unit helps to develop students' ideas about patterns, sequences, and functions and is part of a students early algebraic foundation. The unit four rubric should be coming home in a rubric folder in the coming weeks.

Last week during Reader's Workshop, we worked as a whole group to read a non-fiction text called This Place Is Crowded. After completing this book, each student wrote five *I Learned...* statements sharing information that they gleaned from the text. This was an integrated unit combining our social studies focus of Japan with reading a non-fiction text. Next week the students will begin working independently on an inquiry project. Ms. Hove will join us to get us started. We look forward to choosing a topic of study and learning lots of interesting things!

We've gotten feedback from many parents about our Poetry and Punch date. We realize that the date chosen isn't going to be perfect for everyone. We have tried to accommodate as many people as we can. Thank you to those of you who have shared your opinion. May 21st seems to work best for most families, so plan on spending the afternoon with us! We'll send more details in the spring.

Sincerely,
D. Burton & K. Page