

Dear Cunniff Faculty, Staff and Families,

I begin with a reminder that Picture Retake Day is this coming Friday, December 14. If you were not happy with the Lifetouch photographs that your child brought home, this is another opportunity for your child to take the photograph over. Please note that the class group photo will not be taken over again.

The spring MCAS testing dates for grades 3,4 and 5 have been set. The ELA test will be administered on Tuesday, April 30 and Thursday May 2. The Mathematics test will be administered on Tuesday, May 7th and Thursday, May 9th. Students in grade five will also take the Science, Technology and Engineering component on Tuesday, May 21 and Thursday, May 23. A reminder that since the test is online we do not have flexibility with the opening and closing of the testing window determined above. We therefore discourage any families from taking vacations during this time. Thank you in advance for your help with this.

We are in the process of beginning the Reading Buddies Program. The program involves fifth graders volunteering 45 minutes each week before school (7:45-8:15) in order to listen to a first or second grade student read aloud. I will be introducing the Program to fifth grade students this week and asking for volunteers. This is a great way for fifth graders to earn Community Service Points.

Members of our fourth and fifth grade teaching teams participated in a 90 minute workshop hosted by Ruth Sadler from Facing History and Ourselves. Rose led teachers in a discussion regarding texts that we have added to our library. These include:

- 1) *A Boy of Old Prague* by Sulamith Ish-Kishor
- 2) *The Christmas Menorahs* by Janice Cohn
- 3) *Benno and the Night of Broken Glass* by Meg Wiviott
- 4) *Refugee* by Alan Gratz
- 5) *I Will Come Back For You* by Marisabina Russo

On Friday (December 14) the Young Audiences jazz performance group called Made in the Shade will be our guests at Cunniff. They will be performing for PreK-2 and 3-5. Their performance is titled Jazz: The Roots of American Popular Music.

On Friday, the popular video Frosty the Snowman will be shown during lunch. Students will also receive a small candy cane treat. If you do not want your child to receive this treat, please let me know.

We are also looking forward to our Winter Concert featuring Cunniff musicians and singers. Students will attend the performance on Monday, December 17th. Parents and guardians of students performing will attend on Tuesday, December 18th at 8:35, beginning shortly after drop-off.

The first week of our new entrance procedure was a success! Students have been doing a wonderful job preparing to enter the classroom at 8:15 ready for morning meeting and the school day. Thank you for helping to make this process flow smoothly and efficiently.

Lastly, there is no school from December 24 - January 1, our winter break. We return to school on Wednesday, January 2.

Thank you for being our partners in your child's education.

With warmest regards,
Mena Ciarlone, Cunniff Principal