

February 25, 2011

Dear Parents and Guardians:

February is almost behind us and yet snow and slush remain on the ground. While the snow will surely melt, the playground remains soggy for quite some time. Please continue to send your child to school with boots, extra socks, hats and mittens, etc.

Unity East Elementary School will take the Illinois State Achievement Test (ISAT) beginning Monday, February 28, 2011. ISATs are given to students in third through eighth grades. The ISAT primarily measures achievement in math, reading, and also includes a science test for fourth and seventh grades. The assessment is a snapshot of how children perform as both individuals and as a group as compared to other children in the state. No Child Left Behind Act is a federal law which requires districts and individual schools to meet benchmarks in reading and mathematics each year. The benchmark is called Adequately Year Progress (AYP). Illinois uses the ISAT as the sole indicator of AYP for public schools attended by students in third through eighth grades. Each year the percentage of students required to meet AYP is increased per federal guidelines. This year AYP is set for 85% percent. Scores for both individual schools, and the district as a whole, are reported on the Illinois School Report Card.

Unity East has been preparing for ISAT throughout the year by providing your child with a quality education that includes attention to the Illinois Learning Standards. Additionally, the work doesn't begin at third grade, but rather is more of a scaffold throughout a child's learning experiences beginning with the primary grades. Our staff and students have been working very hard to prepare for testing week. Please support your child by getting him/ her to school on time, encouraging a healthy breakfast at home or at school, providing appropriate downtime to play and burn off extra energy, ensuring plenty of rest each night, and avoiding unnecessary absences.

This semester our Parent Communication Night is scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2011. This evening offers a special opportunity for parents to view their child's growth and accomplishments. Teachers have collected work throughout the year and will showcase the progress of each child with an individual portfolio. Your child will come with you to the event and will have the opportunity to share his/her portfolio with you in the classroom. Your child's teacher will be available to answer questions and share in your child's success with you! **Our Portfolio Celebration will be from 5:30-7:30 PM.**

If you would prefer to have a traditional conference, we also have time set aside for those meetings too. **Traditional conferences can be scheduled with your child's teacher from 3:00-5:30 and from 7:30-9:30 PM.** If you do not request a traditional conference we plan for you and your child to come to Unity East for portfolio sharing from 5:30-7:30 PM.

A few calendar reminders: Casimir Pulaski Day – March 7st – No School; Early dismissal at 11:15 AM on March 17th; No school for students on Friday, March 18th; and Spring Break is March 21st through March 25th.

Thank you to each of you who helped with the change collection for the Carle Development –Haiti Project. Unity East raised over \$800.00 for this endeavor.

Warm regards,

Laura Fitzgerald

