

Newsletter

February 1, 2024

WHAT'S IN THIS NEWSLETTER?

- **Updates** - Parent Teacher Conf, Sports Update, Valentine's Dances, Reading Month
- **Sign-ups** - PT Teacher Meal, Spring Sports, Lunch Volunteers, Winter Needs Drive
- **Profile of the Week** - Eric Kalenze, Curriculum Lead & Language Arts Teacher

TEACHER CONFERENCE MEAL

Nikki Kabat is organizing a meal for our teachers during the PT conferences. The meal will be a variety of apps for them to snack on throughout the day. Click below to sign up!

**SIGN-UP FOR TEACHER
MEAL**



IMPORTANT DATES

Feb 8 - PT Conferences (NO SCHOOL)

Feb 9 - NO SCHOOL

Feb 19 - President's Day (NO SCHOOL)

Feb 23 - Valentine's Dances

Mar 8 - Staff Dev (NO SCHOOL)

Mar 22-29 - Spring Break (NO SCHOOL)

Apr 13 - Annual Gala Event

May 17 - Spring Carnival

**K-8 FEBRUARY LUNCH
MENU**

**9-12 FEBRUARY LUNCH
MENU**



PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Thursday, February 8

8:30 am-6:30 pm

Elementary (K-5) families please sign up for a time with your child's teacher(s).

No appointment needed for secondary conferences. Just stop by to talk to their teachers.

**CONFERENCE
SIGN-UP**



I LOVE TO READ MONTH!

Welcome to a month of **Reading with my Gnomies** as we celebrate, "I Love to Read" month for elementary (K-5). Learning to read is hard, and everyone is on their own reading journey. "I Love to Read" month gives us a chance to show how reading can bring us together and even make us laugh a little!

MYSTERY READER MONDAYS - A mystery reader will arrive to read a book on Mondays! Parents are welcome to sign up for a time slot to read for your child's class.

READING WITH MY GNOMIES TUESDAYS

Each Tuesday, students will gather together at 2 pm to listen to a book read aloud.

K-5 DRESS-UP DAYS!

Feb 6 - Reading is our Superpower! Wear a superhero T-shirt and/or cape

Feb 14 - We love to read! wear Valentine's colors and/or hearts

Feb 22 - Reading JOGS our mind! Wear your best jogging clothes.

Feb 29 - Dress like a book character!



FIRE EXPLORERS PROGRAM

Our 9-12th grade students have an exciting opportunity this coming Wednesday, February 7, to learn more about the Fire Explorers Program. The Apple Valley Fire Department is bringing one of their trucks and some of their fire fighters to explain what this program offers--training in search and rescue, ladder techniques, gear donning, vehicle extrication, CPR, and public education. *In the program, students will learn these skills but will not fight real fires.*

This program is a completely free, meets Sundays from 12:30-2:30 pm, and culminates with a fun event at the MN State Fair where programs compete against each other.

LEARN MORE ABOUT FIRE EXPLORERS

PROFILE OF THE WEEK

Eric Kalenze, Curriculum Lead & Language Arts Teacher

We want to recognize Mr. Eric Kalenze, our secondary Language Arts teacher and Curriculum Lead at FIT, for his contribution to this recent article in [Education Week](#) entitled "[How to Build Students' Reading Stamina](#)." Take a moment to read it! It's a clear example of the excellent academic leadership he provides at FIT Academy.

Mr. Kalenze has been on staff at FIT Academy for 5 years; but he partnered with us back in the design phase of our school as a consultant. His licensure and M.Ed. are from the University of Minnesota in Secondary Language Arts; and he says, "I've spent 15 of my 25 years in education as a teacher, but I've also had experience in coaching, administration, and consultation." He has also written 2 books--[What the Academy Taught Us](#) and [Education is Upside Down](#).



From the design phase of FIT Academy, Mr. Kalenze has played a major role in shaping the educational philosophy and curriculum development. Over the years, he has worked with the

curriculum committee, and says, "This committee's work ultimately led us to select the knowledge-rich and rigorous CKLA as our core ELA material in K-5, and I built a complementary scope and sequence for our grades 6-12 ELA courses. Similar curricular moves have been made in the school's math courses to make sure that some foundational matters (increased fact-fluency, proper time to teach to standards, etc.) are addressed more effectively, and that our teachers have the best tools possible to help their students improve and grow."

When asked what drives him as an educator, he said, "I'm not sure on this one. I just love my job." I think that answers the question well. Thank you, Mr. Kalenze, for your daily investment in the academics at FIT Academy.

If you are interested in more of Mr. Kalenze's work outside the classroom, here are a few other articles:

- ["Why So Many Kids Struggle to Learn," The American Scholar](#)
- ["US Organizer Eric Kalenze Explains Research Ed," Education Week](#)
- ["ResearchED Conference Demonstrates Growing Influence of Teacher Leadership," K-12 Dive](#)



BASKETBALL 23-24 SEASON

We want to congratulate the 5/6 basketball team for their 33-14 win over Groves last night! Way to go Tigers!

The JV team has a tournament at Eagle Ridge Academy for a one day tournament this Saturday, February 3.



SPORTS SIGN-UP

The middle school spring sports registration form has been emailed out to parents and is available below. This is for grades 5-8 for co-ed volleyball, co-ed golf and co-ed flag football. **Registrations and fees are due into the main office by Monday, February 12.** Coaches will contact athletes and parents about practice days and times. Schedules will not be available until the end of February.

The high school spring sports registration form will be emailed out by the end of this week.

MS SPRING SPORTS SIGN-UP



WORD OF THE MONTH: INTEGRITY

*For February, our character word of the month will be **INTEGRITY**.*

Integrity is the practice of being honest and showing a consistent and uncompromising commitment to strong moral and ethical principles and values. Essentially it means doing what you are supposed to, when you are supposed to, and doing it the right way.

Daily demonstration of your integrity can show others that you are someone who can be truthful, trusted to make good decisions, and treat others with respect. Possessing and developing this virtue creates a firm foundation for human flourishing. Individuals do not come into the world with their

integrity fully formed. It is developed over time by learning about the virtue of integrity, witnessing strong integrity in others, and practicing integrity themselves.

At school and at home, we can cultivate integrity by...

- Leading by example to model good character and integrity. Minimize the "do as I say, not as I do" moments when children might be captive witnesses.

- Be specific with your reasoning. Describe with detail proper behaviors and what it looks and sounds like to do what's right. Children are concrete thinkers and when adults use abstract words to describe behavior and actions, they may be left confused by what we say.
- Promote and shine a light on positive examples of good character and integrity. The big screen and literature offer limitless possibilities of characters possessing worthy virtues that we can point out and discuss with our students.

We will never run out of opportunities to demonstrate our integrity at school or at home, and it is important that we put a premium on its place in our school and society. We all have a responsibility to be intentional with modeling and teaching integrity to our students. Our futures and theirs are counting on us.



Young Rembrandts

YOUNG REMBRANDTS: ARTVentures CLUB

This winter, Young Rembrandts artists are in for a treat with a lineup of **ALL NEW drawing lessons at FIT Academy**. For questions, please email Mr. Vang, mvang@fitacademymn.org. Here are the details...

5 weeks of Classes from Feb 15-Mar 14

3:00-4:00 pm

K-5th Grade

Beginners are welcome

\$79

ART CLASS REGISTRATION



JUST A FEW THINGS STILL NEEDED!

Check out the **updated** list to see what is still needed! You are welcome to donate new or used clothing; but **we need specific items in specific sizes** so please click the button to



see how you can help!

[DONATE TO WINTER NEEDS DRIVE](#)



LUNCH VOLUNTEERS!

We would love for you to volunteer in our lunch room! It's a fun way to connect with your kids and other students. You will help students open milk and lunch items as well as clean the tables after each lunch period. Click to sign up!

[SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER](#)



HEALTH REMINDER

We want to remind parents to keep your children home from school when they are ill. As a refresher, **school policy requires students to stay at home if they have had a fever or vomitted in the last 24 hours.**



AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

We offer after-school care again this year from 2:45 pm to 5:00 pm. Open to students in grades K-5. You must enroll by Wednesday, if you plan to use after school care the following week. If you have questions, please email [Jen Iten at jiten@fitacademymn.org](mailto:jiten@fitacademymn.org).

[REGISTRATION FORM](#)



Would you considered leaving our school a review? Your perspective could be helpful in leading other families to our school. Just click above!



We want to invite everyone to join our 2 Facebook groups!

[FIT Academy](#)
[FIT Academy Families](#)

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