

# Big Flats News

## January 2017

*At Big Flats Elementary, we will SOAR together as we explore our “wonders” in a fun and engaging community, where we will inspire each other to achieve anything.*



Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful winter break and are looking forward to the many opportunities that 2017 may bring. One opportunity that I wanted to share with all of our families is that a sample of our fourth grade students will be randomly selected to participate in this year's National Assessment of Educational Progress, also known as NAEP.

Our 4<sup>th</sup> grade students that are chosen will either take a mathematics or reading assessment, as well as be asked questions about their educational experiences that may be related to performance, such as homework and reading habits. Of the students chosen, some will take paper pencil assessments, while other students will take data base assessments which will be taken on provided tablets. Student scores are anonymous and will not affect student grades or academic records in any way. Instead, they will be combined with the scores of other students to produce results that reflect student capabilities nationwide.

I am not aware of any other school in our area that has been chosen to participate, so we consider this an honor to participate in this worthy endeavor. The assessment results are released as our Nation's Report Card and they help the President, Congress, and all of our educators make decisions about how to improve our education system.

If you would like to see questions or results from past NAEP assessments and learn more about NAEP and why it is important for students, check out NAEP on Twitter and Facebook, or visit <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/students>.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Scaptura  
Principal



### Inside News:

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Reading Rockets – Launching new readers - [https://www-tc.pbs.org/launchingreaders/pdfs/tips\\_all.pdf](https://www-tc.pbs.org/launchingreaders/pdfs/tips_all.pdf)

NAEP Information:

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/students>.

### GENERAL INFORMATION:

**Big Flats Office Hours**

7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Monday through Friday

**Office Phone Numbers**

(607) 739-6373

(607) 795-2550

(607) 795-2555 fax

## FRIENDLY REMINDERS:

### ❖ Delayed Start Procedures

As we continue through the winter months, please be advised that the Horseheads Central School District uses a delayed start procedure in addition to school closings. The delay opens school two hours later than normal start time. School ends at the regular time on delayed start days. Morning buses will arrive at your bus stop two hours later; staff will arrive two hours later and students being dropped off at school in the morning should arrive two hours later. **BREAKFAST WILL NOT BE SERVED ON DELAYED START DAYS.** The announcements can be found on our Facebook page, on our District website [www.horseheadsdistrict.com](http://www.horseheadsdistrict.com), or on the local media stations. Radio and television stations that will be announcing the delayed starts and/or school closings are listed on page 4 of the school district calendar. PreK class will begin at 10:30 when there is a delayed start.

### ❖ Snow Days Impact our Schedule

When a snow day occurs and all schools in the District are closed, it changes our six-day schedule. The next day that school is in session is the cycle day that the snow day would have been.

### ❖ Borrowed Clothing? Any Boys Pants?

Reminder: if your child borrowed clothing from the Nurse's office, please wash and return it as soon as possible. Also, we have no extra boy's pants, jeans, or sweatpants in the Nurse's office for boys to borrow. Please see if you have any to donate. Thanks!

### ❖ Guidelines for Classroom Parties

Food for your child's class may include such items as drinks, cakes, or pastries (**please do not bring frozen items**). Also, please check with your child's teacher for approval, and to see if any students in the class have any food allergies, such as peanuts, chocolate, etc.

### Spring New York Assessment Dates (Grades 3 & 4):

**ELA:** March 28 – 30      **Math:** May 2-4

**Grade 4 Science Performance:** May 24-25

**Grade 4 Science Written:** June 5

Take a hint from our snowmen! Students continue to go outside for recess during the winter months. Please be sure that your child has a warm coat, a hat, and gloves/mittens so they can stay warm as they play.



# Main Office Updates:

## Valuable Items in School

Each year over the Winter Recess many of our students will receive gifts that they will treasure. To avoid the possibility of damage or loss of any valuable items, we encourage students to leave those items at home. Please encourage your child to follow our suggestion so that we can avoid any unfortunate situations where items of value disappear or get broken. Thank you for your help.

## Substitutes Needed:

The Horseheads Central School District is seeking applications for substitute teachers, bus drivers, and substitute teaching assistants. For information, please visit:

<http://www.horseheadsdistrict.com/subteach.html>

Human Resources Office: 739-5601, x4211

e-mail: [hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com](mailto:hcsdinfo@horseheadsdistrict.com)

## Absence Notes

We know student absences tend to increase in the winter. Please be sure to send in a blue note so the absence can be marked as excused.

## Changing your Child's Dismissal Plans?

Thank you for helping us to know that students are going home to the correct place each day by using our blue note pads. We acknowledge that changes can occur during the day, which impact your child's dismissal plans. We have seen an increase in calls near the end of the day, and it is often difficult to make these adjustments at the last minute. We ask the parents to call before 12:00 so that we can ensure a smooth dismissal and to keep our students safe. Thank you!

## Principal's Chats

Do you have questions about changes or current trends in education? Mrs. Scaptura hosts her monthly Principal's Chat prior to each PTO Meeting in the library at 6:00 pm. Take advantage of these opportunities to chat with her and get some information. Future dates:

January 3	April 4
February 7	May 2
March 7	June 6

If these times do not meet your scheduling needs, please feel free to call the office for an appointment to learn more.

## Homework

Big Flats Elementary believes homework extends learning, can be a review of skills, and may include written and/or non-written work. The homework assigned for grades 1-4 should take no more than 10 minutes per grade level. For example; first grade should be 10 minutes, second grade should be 20 minutes, etc. Each night parents/guardians should check for homework completion. Individual grade levels, as well as individual teachers, have further specifications to these expectations.

Please note that at Big Flats Elementary we will **NOT** provide homework to students who will miss school for vacations, etc., **prior** to the student's absences. Students will be expected to complete daily reading and a writing journal during these situations.



# Our Falcons SOAR!



In December, Miss Williams and Mr. Sumner participated in a career presentation program at Gardner Road School called Redraw the Balance.



David made good use of our first 2-hour delay!

The fourth grade Winter Choral Concert was a great success, with a standing room only crowd. Congratulations, fourth graders and Miss Walruth.

It's  
okay  
to  
not know,  
but it's  
not okay  
to  
not try.



Students in Mrs. Schrage's First Grade class made structures out of spaghetti and marshmallows.



Mrs. Kamas 1st Gr. class had a Gingerbread Day and made salt dough ornaments and houses out of milk boxes, graham crackers, frosting, and candy.



Third Graders made dog biscuits for the SPCA



## Mark Your Calendars

### Principal Chat

January 3, 6:00 to 6:30 p.m.

### PTO Meeting

January 3, 6:30 p.m.

### CIM Meetings

January 10

### Strings Showcase

January 11 7:00 pm

### Martin Luther King Day

January 16 – No School

### PTO Family Fun Night

January 20 6:00 pm

### Board of Education

January 26

6:00 p.m.—Big Flats Elementary

### Report Cards Go Home

January 27

## SUPPLY WISH LIST FOR THE INNOVATION LAB DECEMBER 2016

Teachers in the Innovation Lab have added a few items to their wish list for this month. They would love to see donations of:

Puffy paint  
 Paints: Acrylic and tempera  
 Sandpaper  
 Air dry clay  
 Beads  
 Wipes  
 Pipe Cleaners  
 Index Cards  
 Aluminum Foil  
 Cotton Swabs  
 Newspaper

Innovation Lab Picture

After sinking in the river the first time, Gingerbread Man successfully made it across on his new raft.



### The Nation's Report Card

Students today take tests for every subject. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), is different in that it compares students across the country so we can see how our educational system is working and what students are learning. Parents and educators alike can see how their student is doing compared to students around the world.

Not every school is invited to participate, nor is every student going to take the test, just a small sampling. This is an opportunity for us to help show the rest of the country (anonymously, of course!) how our students stack up. Our scores will be combined with the scores of other students from other states to produce results that reflect student capabilities nationwide. These scores will help the President, Congress, and all of our educators make decisions about how to improve our education system.

For more information, follow this link:  
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/parents/2012469.pdf> and for sample questions go to:  
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/booklets.asp>



### Reading Tip for Parents: What's "Just Right"?

Children feel confident and competent when they read books that are "just right." But how do you find a "just right" book? Have your child read the back and front cover, and first page of the book. If there are more than five words that he cannot pronounce or understand in context, the book may be too challenging. Be supportive about finding a more perfect fit. Choosing the right book will help your little reader feel successful.  
<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/more-reading-resources/reading-tips-parents>

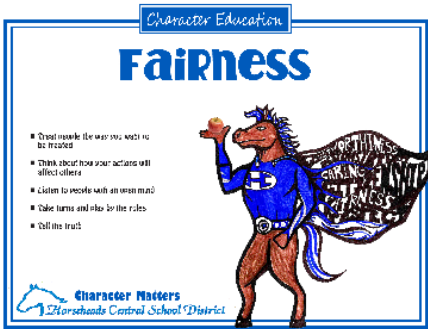


# BIG FLATS

ELEMENTARY

543 Maple Street  
 Big Flats, New York 14814-9707  
 607-739-6373

Elizabeth Scaptura, Principal



### Encourage FAIRNESS:

Play by the rules ◊ Be open-minded  
 Take turns and share ◊ Listen to others  
 Treat people fairly ◊ Don't take advantage



### Follow Us on Facebook and Twitter!

Keep up with last minute announcements by liking us on Facebook! We post classroom activities, school reminders, emergency closings, and all sorts of interesting facts and photos. Check us out daily!

### Dignity Act Coordinator

The Dignity Act Coordinator (DAC) for Big Flats Elementary is Elizabeth Scaptura. Complaints regarding discrimination, harassment, or bullying of any student should be referred to Mrs. Scaptura at 607-739-6373.



The Dignity Act Coordinator for the Horseheads Central School District is Judith Christiansen. Mrs. Christiansen may be reached at One Raider Lane, Horseheads, NY 14845, or 607-739-5601 x4211.

The Horseheads Central School District offers educational programs without regard to actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression). Inquiries regarding this notice may be made to Judy Christiansen, Title IX and DASA Coordinator, or Kim Williams, Section 504 Coordinator, Horseheads Central School District, One Raider Lane, Horseheads NY 14845, (607) 739-5601.





# Big Flats Elementary School Parent Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1  <b>HAPPY★NEW★YEAR</b>	2 NO SCHOOL	3  6:00 Principal Chat 6:30 PTO	4  6	5  1	6  2	7  3
8	9  4	10  CIM Meetings 5	11  CSE Meetings 7:00 String Showcase 6	12  1	13  2	14
15	16 NO SCHOOL  MLK Day	17  3	18  4	19  5	20 End of Marking Period 6:00 PTO Family Fun Night  6	21
22	23  1  Kdg. Registration	24  2	25  3	26  4  6:00 BoE Meeting— Big Flats	27 Report Cards Go Home 5	28
29	30  6	31  1		<b>FAIRNESS</b> Play by the Rules Take Turns and Share Treat People Fairly	Be Open-Minded, Listen to Others Don't Take Advantage of Others	



# TIPS Preschoolers

for parents of

Read early and read often. The early years are critical to developing a lifelong love of reading. You can't start reading to a child too soon! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- u **Read together every day.**  
Read to your child every day. Make this a warm and loving time when the two of you can cuddle close.
- u **Give everything a name.**  
Build comprehension skills by playing games that involve naming objects. Say things like, "Where's your nose?" Or touch your child's nose and say, "What's this?"
- u **Say how much you enjoy reading.**  
Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him or her. Talk about "story time" as the favorite part of your day.
- u **Read with fun in your voice.**  
Read to your child with humor and expression. Use different voices. Ham it up!
- u **Know when to stop.**  
Put the book away for awhile if your child loses interest or is having trouble paying attention.
- u **Be interactive.**  
Discuss what's happening in the book, point out things on the page, and ask questions.
- u **Read it again and again.**  
Go ahead and read your child's favorite book for the 100th time!
- u **Talk about writing, too.**  
Mention to your child how we read from left to right and how words are separated by spaces.
- u **Point out print everywhere.**  
Talk about the written words you see in the world around you. Ask your child to find a new word on each outing.
- u **Get your child evaluated.**  
Please be sure to see your child's pediatrician or teacher as soon as possible if you have concerns about your child's language development, hearing, or sight.

*"Reading Rockets: Launching Young Readers" is a five-part television series on PBS. See [www.pbs.org/launchingreaders](http://www.pbs.org/launchingreaders) for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future with reading strategies that work.*



# TIPS for parents of Kindergartners

Play with letters, words, and sounds! Having fun with language helps your child learn to crack the code of reading. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- u Say silly tongue twisters.**  
Sing songs, read rhyming books, and say silly tongue twisters. These help kids become sensitive to the sounds in words.
- u Read it and experience it.**  
Connect what your child reads with what happens in life. If reading a book about animals, relate it to your last trip to the zoo.
- u Use your child's name.**  
Point out the link between letters and sounds. Say, "John, the word *jump* begins with the same sound as your name. *John, jump*. And they both begin with the same letter, J."
- u Play with puppets.**  
Play language games with puppets. Have the puppet say, "My name is Mark. I like words that rhyme with my name. Does *park* rhyme with *Mark*? Does *ball* rhyme with *Mark*?"
- u Trace and say letters.**  
Have your child use a finger to trace a letter while saying the letter's sound. Do this on paper, in sand, or on a plate of sugar.
- u Let your child choose.**  
Even easy books are ok. Allowing your child to choose his or her own books builds confidence and independence.
- u Play sound games.**  
Practice blending sounds into words. Ask "Can you guess what this word is? *m - o - p*." Hold each sound longer than normal.
- u Watch my lips.**  
This may feel odd at first, but ask your child to watch your lips and mouth while you speak. Have your child think about how his or her own lips and tongue move. Say, "Can you feel how your mouth moves the same way at the beginning of the words *mouse, mom,* and *man*?"

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# TIPS First Graders

for parents of

Give your child lots of opportunities to read aloud. Inspire your young reader to practice every day! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

- u **Don't leave home without it.**  
Bring along a book or magazine any time your child has to wait, such as at a doctor's office. Always try to fit in reading!
- u **Once is not enough.**  
Encourage your child to re-read favorite books and poems. Re-reading helps kids read more quickly and accurately.
- u **Dig deeper into the story.**  
Ask your child questions about the story you've just read. Say something like, "Why do you think Clifford did that?"
- u **Take control of the television.**  
It's difficult for reading to compete with TV and video games. Encourage reading as a free-time activity.
- u **Be patient.**  
When your child is trying to sound out an unfamiliar word, give him or her time to do so.
- u **Pick books that are at the right level.**  
Help your child pick books that are not too difficult. The aim is to give your child lots of successful reading experiences.
- u **Play word games.**  
Have your child sound out the word as you change it from *mat* to *fat* to *sat*; from *sat* to *sag* to *sap*; and from *sap* to *sip*.
- u **I read to you, you read to me.**  
Take turns reading aloud at bedtime. Kids enjoy this special time with their parents.
- u **Gently correct your young reader.**  
When your child makes a mistake, gently point out the letters he or she overlooked or read incorrectly. Many beginning readers will guess wildly at a word based on its first letter.

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# TIPS for parents of Second Graders

Find ways to read, write, and tell stories together with your child. Always applaud your young reader and beginning story writer! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

## U Tell family tales.

Children love to hear stories about their family. Talk about a funny thing that happened when you were young.

## U Create a writing toolbox.

Fill a box with drawing and writing materials. Find opportunities for your child to write, such as the shopping list, thank-you notes, or birthday cards.

## U Be your child's #1 fan.

Ask your child to read aloud what he or she has written for school. Be an enthusiastic listener.

## U One more time with feeling.

When your child has sounded out an unfamiliar word, have him or her re-read that sentence. Often kids are so busy figuring out a word they lose the meaning of what they've just read.

## U Invite an author to class.

Ask an author to talk to your child's class about the writing process. Young children often think they aren't smart enough if they can't sit down and write a perfect story on the first try.

## U Create a book together.

Fold pieces of paper in half and staple them to make a book. Ask your child to write sentences on each page and add his or her own illustrations.

## U Do storytelling on the go.

Take turns adding to a story the two of you make up while riding in a car or bus. Try making the story funny or spooky.

## U Point out the relationship between words.

Explain how related words have similar spellings and meanings. Show how a word like *knowledge*, for example, relates to a word like *know*.

## U Use a writing checklist.

Have your child create a writing checklist with reminders such as, "Do all of my sentences start with a capital? Yes/No."

## U Quick, quick.

Use new words your child has learned in lively flash card or computer drills. Sometimes these help kids automatically recognize and read words, especially those that are used frequently.

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# TIPS Third Graders

for parents of

Read about it, talk about it, and think about it! Find ways for your child to build understanding, the ultimate goal of learning how to read. The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

**U Make books special.**

Turn reading into something special. Take your kids to the library, help them get their own library card, read with them, and buy them books as gifts. Have a favorite place for books in your home or, even better, put books everywhere.

**U Get them to read another one.**

Find ways to encourage your child to pick up another book. Introduce him or her to a series like *The Boxcar Children* or *Harry Potter* or to a second book by a favorite author, or ask the librarian for additional suggestions.

**U Crack open the dictionary.**

Let your child see you use a dictionary. Say, "Hmm, I'm not sure what that word means... I think I'll look it up."

**U Talk about what you see and do.**

Talk about everyday activities to build your child's background knowledge, which is crucial to listening and reading comprehension. Keep up a running patter, for example, while cooking together, visiting somewhere new, or after watching a TV show.

**U First drafts are rough.**

Encourage your child when writing. Remind him or her that writing involves several steps. No one does it perfectly the first time.

**U Different strokes for different folks.**

Read different types of books to expose your child to different types of writing. Some kids, especially boys, prefer nonfiction books.

**U Teach your child some "mind tricks."**

Show your child how to summarize a story in a few sentences or how to make predictions about what might happen next. Both strategies help a child comprehend and remember.

**U "Are we there yet?"**

Use the time spent in the car or bus for wordplay. Talk about how *jam* means something you put on toast as well as cars stuck in traffic. How many other homonyms can your child think of? When kids are highly familiar with the meaning of a word, they have less difficulty reading it.

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