

From the Desk of the Principal
Issue 3
April/May 2015

Dear Walker Families,

As we begin the month of May it feels like the school year is winding down. Yet, the Walker staff and I are carefully planning for next year already—thinking about our school improvement process, grouping students for classes, and preparing for the many celebrations that are to come before summer. As a colleague once told me, “At this time of the school year, things don’t wind down...they wind up!” The entire Walker staff and I have appreciated the great parent support this year while working together to create meaningful learning experiences for our students to grow and have fun!

Math In Focus

On Tuesday evening at Elm School (7pm), you are encouraged to attend a special parent session on "Math in Focus" - the K-5 math resource we are implementing in our D181 schools starting in 2015-16. This event will be an interactive and engaging opportunity to learn about the materials through games and other hands-on activities. A similar event will be repeated in the fall, but if you want to learn more about "Math in Focus" before the summer, this is a great opportunity. I hope you are able to attend!

Walker teachers are attending some initial professional development training with Math In Focus April 27 – 29. We will have substitute teachers during these days as full grade levels are attending the training.

PARCC (EOY) Testing

As you probably know by know, PARCC *End of the Year* (EOY) testing begins April 29 and continues through May 8 at Walker. For this round, students in grades 3-4-5 will take a total of three tests: two in Math and one in English Language Arts. To minimize the impact on our school schedule, we have decided to administer these tests during regularly scheduled Math and Reading blocks throughout this window (Make-ups to follow, as needed). Please see you child’s grade level communication for further details.

As a reminder, students are welcome to bring gum and water for the three days of testing, if they’d like. Because this round of testing is shorter than the Performance Based Assessments in March, we will not provide PARCC Survival Packs. As always, please help your child do his/her best by getting a good night’s sleep, eating a healthy breakfast, and having a positive attitude about the testing.

PARCC EOY SCHEDULE

Wednesday 4/29

Grade 5 - Math 1 (9:45 - 11:15)

Grade 4 - Math 1 (1:30 - 3:00)

Thursday 4/30

Grade 3 - Math 1 (9:45 - 11:15)

Grade 4 - Math 2 (1:30 - 3:00)

Friday 5/1 - No testing

Monday 5/4

Grade 5 - Math 2 (9:45 - 11:15)

Grade 3 - Math 2 (1:30 - 3:00)

Tuesday 5/5 - No testing

Wednesday 5/6

Grade 5 - ELA 1 (12:20 - 1:50)

Thursday 5/7

Grade 4 - ELA 1 (12:20 - 1:50)

Friday 5/8

Grade 3 - ELA 1 (9:45 - 11:15)

More iPads at Walker

Thanks to the support of our Walker families and strong fundraising efforts this year, including the Orange Ruler event in the fall, the Walker PTO helped to purchase 65 new iPad Minis for our students to begin using this year. We felt like the power of a fundraiser was to show our students what their hard work afforded them at a time in which they could benefit. Therefore, the PTO and Walker collaborated to purchase a class set of iPad Minis (including a charging cart) to be checked out by teachers as they'd like, 2 more iPads for each class room to be used for small group instruction, and 12 additional iPad Minis to be flexibly used throughout the building for project work at grade levels. We have also purchased protective cases and applications. The newly purchased iPad Minis have been available for use since our return from spring break.

If you have questions about the PARCC assessments or your child's progress at Walker, please contact your child's teacher and let me know if I might assist further. As always, thank you for your investment in your child's education!

Eric Chisausky
Principal