



The Prospect Hill School Principal Note

"An International Habits of Mind Learning Community of Excellence."

In this issue of TBN: Social-Emotional Learning Goal #1

To build a peaceful classroom and school-wide community through the implementation of practices that foster safe and respectful behavior and promote self-awareness of social behaviors. (*Thinking Interdependently*) **Pillar 3 – Social Emotional Development**

Building a Peaceful Classroom and School

In September of 1787, the Founding Fathers, with the support and assistance of the Founding Mothers, signed the most influential document in our American history, The United States Constitution. Each September this event is commemorated throughout the nation as Constitution Day.

At Prospect Hill, Constitution Day was observed as the springboard to launch our goal to build peaceful classrooms and a peaceful school. These are indeed very lofty goals, and will be a work in progress for some time. Here is how we started, and a blueprint forward as we work to make this vision become a lived reality at our school.

Our K-5 students engaged in a developmentally appropriate lesson about peaceful classrooms. The children were asked to consider the characteristics of a peaceful classroom, what it would

look like, sound like and feel like, engendered in their own classroom community. Their emerging understandings and discussion paved the way to form and sign their own Classroom Constitution, a class commitment in words meaningful to them to build a peaceful classroom.

We will host Town Meetings this year as we forge ahead to link our effort to build peaceful classrooms with building our vision of a peaceful school. The children will be asked to consider the distinctions between a peaceful and non-peaceful school. They will be asked to envision what Prospect Hill School would be like if we achieved our vision, what a peaceful school would look like, sound like and feel like to anyone who visited our building. They will be asked to recognize the ways that building a peaceful community begins with each individual and a willingness to engage in collective action. They will be asked to identify how we can become dependent on one another to accept responsibility for achieving peaceful classrooms and a peaceful school. They will learn what it means to be a good school citizen.

In a column in the New York Times (Op-Ed October 4), David Brooks writes about citizenship. “The citizen enjoys a sweet reverence for all the gifts that have been handed down over time, and a generous piety about country.” “Out of this sweet parfait comes a sense of a common beauty. There’s a sense of how a lovely society is supposed to be.”

If you wish to share some meaningful thoughts, please avoid social media and write the author directly at Rlimato@pelhamschools.org. We all benefit from a thoughtful and respectful conversation with one another, most especially when we disagree.

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