

Student Achievements

- Our fourth grade students at Breton Downs tried their hands at being entrepreneurs by creating and running their own businesses. Through this experience, students learned about the resources required to create a product or service, the various methods of production, the concept of supply and demand, and how to manage their funds wisely. After selling their product or service at a school mini-market, our 4th grade students earned and donated more than \$420 to *The Power of Education Foundation*.
- This year first grade students researched, created, and presented animals at the first grade zoo. The whole school community, as well as families and friends, came to listen to these well-prepared animal experts. The PTO supported a trip to Binder Park Zoo to aide in the research and observation of their selected animals.
- Our second grade students learned about economic concepts and how they relate to the family and community. They made their own food for a restaurant that they planned called the *2nd grade Café*. The students worked on the menu, went shopping for the ingredients, and made all the food. They also worked at the restaurant in various positions such as chef, cashier, server, or greeter. While developing the restaurant, students learned the economic terms of consumers, producers, budget, income, want, needs, goods, and services. Students also learned how products are made and how they travel to the store for the consumer.
- Third grade students at Breton Downs had a new experience this winter when they visited Camp Henry. Students spent a beautiful, snowy day at the camp learning about the natural world, as well as participating in activities that required teamwork to complete the task. It was a fun day for all!
- One special event that the kindergarten students participated in was the annual "Snow Show." Family members were invited in December to a program that highlighted poems and songs students learned in class. A favorite was the poem, "Chubby Little Snowman." Students used motions as they recited aloud to an enthusiastic audience. The event ended with an opportunity to celebrate reading and writing accomplishments while enjoying refreshments in the classroom.
- Our fifth grade students held leadership positions throughout the year at Breton Downs. From serving as safeties, planning and leading the Holiday Workshop, helping the community on *Day of Kindness*, and organizing and conducting Field Day, fifth grade students applied the leadership training they gained at Camp Miniwanca in the fall.

Student Activities (Athletic, Drama, Music, Arts, etc.)

- On January 18, 2016, we celebrated Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with a school-wide program that included songs, videos, and student presentations. In the morning Bright Star Theatre presented a performance entitled, *Black History Hall of Fame* to our kindergarten through 2nd grade students and *The North Star* to our students in grades 3-5. The actors were outstanding and portrayed many famous African-Americans throughout history.

Since the weather was too chilly for us to go outside, the whole student body and staff participated in a Silent Walk from 2:00-2:15 p.m. inside Breton Downs. After our Silent Walk we celebrated Dr. King's message at an assembly and highlighted how all of us can do small things and make a difference in the world. Mrs. Cheryl Radecki and the 5th grade safeties received the "Making a Difference Award" for their kindness and care they show our students every day.

- Breton Downs students participated in DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) during the month of March. This is a time where students drop everything they're doing, grab a good reading book, and read. Our students enjoyed the "extra" reading time they received. Some of our bulletin boards also had March is Reading month activities. The bulletin board located near our small conference room contained 15 illustrations from children's books. Students filled out a form and named the title of each book. Another bulletin board contained childhood photos of each staff member and the title of their favorite book from their childhood.

- Our 4th and 5th grade choir participated in the Melodies in March concert with the combined elementary choirs singing *Gypsy Rover* and *Drill Ye Terriers*. In the finale all choirs sang *The East Grand Rapids High School Alma Mater* and *Like the Beat of the Drum*.
- The Breton Downs school play, *Alice in Wonderland, Jr.*, had over 220 participating students and was directed by MaryBeth Timmer and Breton Downs staff member, Michael Woodward. In order to have a successful play, parents volunteered their time by sewing costumes, painting backdrops, and creating props. It was an enjoyable event for students, staff, and parents.
- Science Fair: This year 4th grade students are using the Van Andel Institute's NexGen Inquiry interactive science journals. NexGen Inquiry is a cloud-based tool that has many features that encourage data analysis and critical thinking. Students are using the QPOE model to guide their investigations and easily capture, organize, analyze, and present investigation data. Students will present their findings at a school-wide science fair in May.

Partnerships/Collaborations

- For four years, Breton Downs has been working closely with the Power of Education Foundation (PEF). The PEF is a global, non-profit organization that has built a primary school in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The Power of Education School has 146 children and they go to school approximately 21 days per month. Our students have helped support this school and their students by participating in special activities and fundraisers throughout the school year. Students raised money for the PEF in the following ways:
 - Kindergarten - Words for Workbooks - read sight words for penny/each
 - 1st grade - reading for a penny per minute
 - 2nd grade - donated “tips” from the 2nd grade restaurant
 - 3rd grade - yard clean up service
 - 4th grade - Economic units - students donated proceeds from their mini-market
 - 5th grade - will be having a “book sale” in May

This year the money raised will be used to buy books for our friends in Haiti.

- Our Breton Downs students raised over \$1,600 for Hearts of Gold! This year all proceeds from Hearts of Gold went to supporting Ele’s Place, a healing center for grieving children. Together, the East Grand Rapids community raised over \$65,000 for this worthy cause. As part of the celebration and fundraising event, Dr. Cannon dressed in a bulldog costume and danced on the roof of Breton Downs.
- Through the financial support of the Breton Downs PTO, our students in kindergarten through grade 5 were able to watch a movie in the Dome Theater. The Dome is 16 ft. x 16 ft. wide and reaches 10 ft. tall. Developed by Rice University and the Houston Museum of Natural Science and with the support of NASA, the Dome Theater provides students with the opportunity to view a program focused on **S.T.E.M.** (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics). Our students watched movies entitled *Dinosaurs*, *Cardboard Rockets*, *Moons*, *Habitat Earth*, and *Molecularium*.
- Twice during the school year, our students participated in a *Mix It Up lunch*. A national campaign launched by Teaching Tolerance over a decade ago, *Mix It Up at Lunch Day* encourages students to move out of their comfort zones and connect with someone new over lunch. On these days students were asked to sit at a lunch table according to their first letter of their first name and by their birthday month.
- Breton Downs Elementary held a Veterans Day Assembly and we had over 30 veterans join us on this special day. Lt. Colonel Graham, who attended Breton Downs and graduated from EGRHS and West Point, was our featured speaker. He discussed his life in the military. It was important for the Breton Downs staff and PTO to make this day special for our veterans.