From the Desk of the Elementary Vice Principal
Marie Stuart

We’ve passed the 100 day mark in the 2012-2013 school year with a long list of achievements and successes! During the past few weeks, I have enjoyed speaking with staff and students thanking them for their accomplishments and reinforcing school expectations, safety & attendance. It is hard to believe that the 2nd trimester ends in a few short weeks.

In February, Caring is the character trait of the month. We encourage our students to show their Character and spirit (Vokee) by wearing their spirit wear for the awards assembly on February 22. Please read the article in this newsletter detailing ideas to help build character and reinforce caring at home.

As we near the third trimester, it is a timely opportunity to remind you of the value of good school attendance. Most importantly, consistent attendance, timely arrival, and participation at school are essential to student learning, and establishing good life-long habitats. We appreciate your support and efforts to arrive on time for students to get to class without interrupting the flow of learning for him/herself and others, and also to minimize conflicts with school due to medical appointments and family events.

The WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) Visiting Committee will be on our campus March 3-6, as part of our school’s accreditation process. To help us prepare for the WASC visit we have designated Wednesday, February 20 as a minimum day with dismissal at lunchtime: 3-5:11:30 AM, K-2: 11:45 AM. Please make the necessary arrangement for the early pick-up of your child.

Join me in cheering on Lina Kafadarian from 5MO as she moves onto the Los Angeles County Scripps Regional Spelling Bee on Saturday, at Reed Middle School at 5:30 PM. Good luck Lina!

Thank you for your partnership, trust, and support!

OPEN HOUSE
I hope to see you all at the Open House on February 2. This year, the elementary classrooms will be open from 10:30 – 12:00 and student work will be on display. Students will take their parents through their educational journey thus far. Teachers will be available to answer questions about their programs, but, please remember, this is not a time for conferencing with the teacher. Conferences can be scheduled for a later date. Additionally, children must be in the company of their parents at all times.
CLASS SIZES IN K-5

Prior to the Open House and Registration for 2013-2014, the School Administration would like to bring to your attention the school policy regarding class sizes in the Elementary Division:

“Organization of classes will be in two (2) sections per grade level in grades K-5, with a maximum of 25 students per section; a third section will open only when there are 10 applicants on the wait list for a given grade level.”

SICK STUDENT POLICY

Every year, during the flu season, the school brings to your attention the school policy regarding keeping children home when and if they catch the flu.

Please follow the following steps regarding the spread of the flu recommended by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention):

⇒ **Teach your children to wash their hands** often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub. You can set a good example by doing this yourself.

⇒ **Teach your children not to share personal items** like drinks, food or unwashed utensils, and to cover their coughs and sneezes with tissues. Covering up their coughs or sneezes using the elbow, arm or sleeve instead of the hand when a tissue is unavailable.

⇒ **Know the signs and symptoms of the flu.** Symptoms of the flu include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit, 37.8 degrees Celsius or greater), cough, sore throat, a runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea.

⇒ **Keep sick children at home** for at least 24 hours after they no longer have fever or do not have signs of fever, without using fever-reducing drugs. Keeping children with a fever at home will reduce the number of people who may get infected.

⇒ **Do not send children to school if they are sick.** Any child who is determined to be sick while at school will be sent home.

For more information, visit [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov), or call 1-800-CDC-INFO for the most current information about the flu.

For all health related issues, contact the Nurse, Mrs. Ozhen Hakobyan, via e-mail ohakobyan@agbumds.org or by calling 818/883-2428, ext. 118.
100TH DAY OF SCHOOL!

Tuesday, January 29 was the 100th day of school! To commemorate this day the Kindergarten through 2nd grade teachers planned many exciting activities for their students including Kindergartners dressing up as a 100 year old person, creating pop up art with 100 pieces of tissue paper, counting by 10’s to 100 and creating a “book” to accompany that concept, creating a 100 cube tall tower, watching online stories where the characters count to 100 and most importantly meeting Zero the Hero and hearing a story read by Mrs. Donsker about the 100th day of school. First and second graders gathered 100 signatures, counted out 100 pieces of food, and learned to count to 100 in various ways.

How exciting for us to have witnessed our talented students present the musical “Under the Sea”, as part of the Showboat Musical Theatre, on Friday, January 25th! Under the direction of Ann Monahan and Mrs. Anette Besnilian, our students brought their characters to life through their colorful costumes and beautiful voices! A special thank you to all our supportive parents and technical staff for helping to create a musical hit! We appreciate the support of all those who attended, especially the teachers who came to applaud their students.

SCHOOL SAFETY UPDATE

Thank you to LAPD for their continued support and coverage of our school. They have been on and around the campus for the past two months. Please note, while they are here, they will be enforcing all parking and traffic laws.

You should have received your parking pass in the mail last week. Please make sure it is visible when you enter the campus.
**GOT CPR?**

We do! Thanks to Dr. Gabriel Aslanian, AGBU MDS board member, all elementary teaching staff and yours truly are CPR certified! On Saturday, January 20 Dr. Aslanian trained the 20 staff members on CPR, basic resuscitation, and the Heimlich maneuver. Thanks so much to Dr. Aslanian and the staff for giving up their Saturday morning for this valuable training. We are fortunate to have such dedicated staff and board members!

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**AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT CLASSES**

The after school enrichment classes have gotten off to a great start. Here's the schedule of the classes and room locations for your reference. Reminder: The after school enrichment classes are from 3:30—4:30. Students must be picked up by 4:30. Any students not picked up at the classroom will be taken to the daycare room and parents will be charged $5.00.

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<th>Wednesdays</th>
<th>Thursdays</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lego Robotics (Science Lab)</td>
<td>Science Explosion (3J)</td>
<td>Iron Chef (Science Lab)</td>
<td>Chess (Music)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Math Magic (K-Roy)</td>
<td>Captivating Kids (Auditorium)</td>
<td>Young Architects (4N)</td>
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**VARTANATZ / PAREGENTAN: FEBRUARY 7**

Armenian teachers are teaching the students about the significance of Vartantz and Paregentan. On February 7th, they will also be spearheading the following event for all students:

- 8:30 am - Der Shnorhk in the Auditorium
- Morning Recess - PTO will have Hadeeg for all students
- Lunch - Café 08 will prepare an Armenian meal
- 2:35pm - Activities in Gym
I am excited to announce that on January 30, we held our very first Student Council meeting! Two representatives and one alternate from grades 3 – 5 met to form the council, and to receive information on how to run for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian. Elections for offices will be held on Friday, February 15. The elementary Student Council will plan spirit days and other school activities for all K-5th grade students. What an exciting time for the students!

Please join me in congratulating the very first student council representatives:

**Mrs. Jibilian – 3J**
- Michael Vakian
- Anahit Malumyan
- Marc Ghotanian - Alternate

**Mrs. Kechoumian – 3K**
- Sofia Gevorgian
- Ashley Kaloustian
- Vana Soghomonian - Alternate

**Mrs. Marley – 4Ma**
- Pateel Kamakian
- Anthony Assatourian
- Anahit Cholakyan - Alternate

**Mrs. Nahapetian – 4N**
- Marc Arslanian
- Virginia Khachatourians
- Nicholas Mihranian - Alternate

**Mikaelian 5Mi**
- David Kafadarian
- Emilie Besnilian
- Maneh Begi - Alternate

**Momjian – 5Mo**
- Nikko Philips
- Nikita Tanielian
- Jordan Hazarian Alternate

**Oghoorian – 5O**
- Arman Begi
- Natalie Kochumian
- Raffi Clark - Alternate
- Leanna Kesenci - Alternate
ELEMENTARY AWARDS ASSEMBLY

At the Friday assembly on January 25, Mrs. Stuart awarded certificates to thirty-six KN - 5th grade students who were selected by their teachers for best exemplifying the character pillar of FAIRNESS. Here are a few ways the students demonstrated FAIRNESS at school. “He understands and demonstrates the importance of sharing, taking turns and helping his friends.” “She never takes advantage of her friends and is always there to give a helping hand.” “He demonstrates a good understanding of fairness and sportsmanship on the playground.” “She takes turns, shares and treats her classmates fairly.” “He shows fairness in taking responsibility for his actions and not blaming others.” “She believes everyone should play with each other and to never say no to a person when they want to play with you.”


Thirty-three students were also awarded the HYE VOKEE certificates on Friday for promoting the Armenian spirit at school. Congratulations to the following students for demonstrating their Armenian spirit! KN: Aliya Cherian, Julian Forberg, Gacia Hazarabedian, Andre Kassabian, Jayden Khanlian, Eleni Zohrabian; 1st: Raffi Abrahamian, Christina Asadurian, David Bedikian, Andrew Grigorian, Michael Grigorian, Elle Hazarian; 2nd: Yvette Amirian, Emilina Astaryan, Lory Kankababian, Nicole Shahinian, Grace Tavidian; 3rd: Sofi Davityan, Mark Ghotanian, Kiana Heftvani, Liana Lalikian, Magen Mansurian, Vartan Tokajian; 4th: Daniel Baghdasarian, Anahid Cholakyan, Tiffny Sarafian, Andrew Shaninian; 5th: Kiana Aslanian, Arman Begi, Raffi Clark, Kristina Kaprielian, Derrick Khodabakhshian, Andrew Mikayelohlu.

Character Counts at A.G.B.U. Manoogian-Demirdjian School

February’s Character Trait: CARING

TRUSTWORTHINESS RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY FAIRNESS CARING CITIZENSHIP

CARING: Be kind • Be compassionate and show you care • Express gratitude • Forgive others • Help people in need

Caring involves concern, empathy, kindness, charity, and love.

1. Concern for others’ well-being is the willingness to be there for them. This is shown when we become so involved with the well-being of others, that it seems as if our happiness depends on theirs.

Activity Idea: A Loving Friend: Read Aloud The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein. Ask your family to list ways that the tree cared for the boy. Have them think of ways the boy could have cared for the tree. Create a “giving tree”. Cut out circles of paper to represent the fruit of the tree. On each circle, have children draw a picture of someone behaving in a caring way. Hang the fruit on the tree for all to see. Source: Spotlight on Character: Plays That Show CHARACTER COUNTS!
2. **Empathy** is sharing another person's feelings and emotions. Empathy involves feeling an emotional response to the pain and pleasure of others.

*Activity Idea: A Thousand Words (Recognizing Points of View)*

There is an old saying: "A picture is worth a thousand words." Explain that part of caring involves empathy — seeing another's perspective and feeling what he or she is going through. Take time to look at real world examples or photos for this activity. The purpose is to look at other people with compassionate eyes. Imagine their lives, thoughts, dreams, fears. Invent a story for them. To do so, you have to care about them. Choose one or more photos, or real life people that provoke an emotional response. Choose images in which the emotions of the person are not overt (screaming, crying, laughing, etc.) and their mood or situation is ambiguous. Look at a picture and describe it in a thousand words.

*Source: www.charactercounts.org*

3. **Kindness** — A person shows kindness by being sympathetic, generous, or charitable and by generally doing good.

*Activity Ideas: Strive for Five — Challenge kids to choose 5 people they can help in some way. For example, they may choose to play with someone new, help a person who has fallen, say thank you to the lunchroom workers, etc. Or, instead of doing something nice for 5 people, change it to doing 5 kind things a day. Don't be surprised when "Strive for Five" becomes a desire to help in more than 5 different ways! Source: ilovethatteachingidea.com*

*Activity Idea: Compliment Bag — Learning to give compliments is one way to develop a caring character. Share about times you have received compliments and how it felt. Then give each family member a brown lunch bag and index cards. Have each person decorate the bag and write his or her name on it. Throughout the week fill out compliment cards for family members and put them in their bag. Encourage everyone to write specific compliments about positive acts rather than just nice comments about appearance. Ask how they feel after reading them. Discuss the importance of giving positive compliments and sharing feelings of appreciation. Source: Developing Character When It Counts — Grades 6-8, 1999*

4. **Charity** — Charity is the voluntary giving of comfort, time, support, money, or other help to people in need. To be truly charitable, a person gives for the sake of making someone else's life better and not for praise or gratitude.

*Activity Idea: Family Service Project— Have your family identify a need in the school or community and develop a plan to help. This might take the form of a book and magazine, making hats and blankets for newborns, canned food or toy drives for a charity, or another project that displays care for others. December is the perfect opportunity to find ways to help out. Have your family help at a homeless shelter, food pantry, nursing home, daycare, or help a particular family in need. Source: managedmoms.com*

5. **Love** — Love is the tender feelings of attachment or affection we have for other persons.

*Activity: Caring Coupons (Great Gift Ideal) — Make a book of "caring coupons". Use the link for sample coupons and have kids make their own book. Tell them to think of caring acts that their parent(s) would appreciate. Have them list these acts on the coupons. For example, they might make a coupon redeemable for one dish washing job. Or they might commit to keeping the TV or stereo off one morning so their parents can sleep in. And let's not leave out yard work and extra house-cleaning chores! Even a good hug and kiss will do. When they've completed their coupons and stapled them together with a creative cover, suggest that they save their books for a special occasion (e.g., Christmas, a parent's birthday, anniversary, Mother's/ Father's Day, etc.).


(Source: managedmoms.com)

The Character Counts program reinforces the Six Pillars of Character. All character traits will be introduced and discussed during the school year. Classroom lessons, activities and presentations reinforce the character focus each month. Students will be recognized monthly during Friday assemblies for exemplifying these traits.