



THE SHOOTING STAR



Sarasota Academy of the Arts

May 21, 2018

2017 - 2018, Volume 5, Issue 35

Principal's Corner

It's so hard to believe that this is the last week of 2017-18. Next weekend will be the last parent newsletter I will be sending out. I heard a speaker at the Sarasota Military Academy graduation refer to the "lasts" the seniors were experiencing as they finished up their final year of high school and it made me think of the "lasts" I am experiencing as the retiring principal of Sarasota Academy of the Arts. This past week I presented promotion certificates to the kindergartners and first graders. What a group of exuberant learners - I hope they continue to grow and learn as much as they have this past year. 97% were on level for math and 92% were on level for reading at the end of the year as measured by their i-Ready scores. Not only did they grow academically, but they exhibited the good character traits we look for in our students. Mrs. Curulla and Mrs. Lopez can be proud of the work they and their students did this year. They are a delightful group of children. Thank you parents for sharing them with us and allowing us to be a part of their education.

This week I will present promotion certificates and diplomas to the rest of the students. Monday during the day we recognize the third and seventh graders and the eighth graders at graduation Monday night. Tuesday we have the assemblies for the fourth and fifth graders followed on Wednesday for the second and sixth graders. Regrettfully, I will miss the second graders' awards because I have to attend the "last" Charter Principals meeting at the district office that morning.

We also used the i-Ready to monitor the growth of the 2nd through 8th graders in reading and math. As a school, the students moved from 44% to 64% on grade level in reading and from 36% to 69% on grade level in math. At the K-5 level, the growth was more significant; Kindergarten and third grade had 100% on level in both reading and math. Overall, 75% of the K-5 students are on level in reading and 82% are on level in math. Congratulations to the students and their teachers on this improvement. In the past there has been a strong correlation between the i-ready and FSA scores, but we will have to wait until June to see if it works out that way again.

I mentioned last week our increased use of the arts to both deliver lessons and allow the students to show what they have mastered. So much research today shows the importance of the arts in education. We certainly think it is true here at SAA. Congratulations to all of the students who participated in the spring musicals and the spring visual arts show and to the teachers who taught and encouraged them.

Don't forget all of the field trips this week and the field day on Thursday. Remember that there is no school lunch served or aftercare on Thursday. And NO SCHOOL Friday.



Upcoming Dates:

Be sure to check the SAA Calendar on the school website frequently as that has the most current information!

Monday, 5/21/18

- 7:30am Yearbook Distribution
- 8:00am SAA Board Mtg.
- 8:00am 3rd Grade Awards
- 1:00pm 7th Grade Awards
- 3:30pm Yearbook Distribution
- 6:00pm 8th Grade Graduation
- 8:00pm MS Dance

Tuesday, 5/22/18

- 8:30am 4th Grade Awards
- 11:00am 5th Grade Awards
- 6th Grade to Kennedy Space Center
- 7th Grade to Busch Gardens

Wednesday, 5/23/18

- 8:30am 2nd Grade Awards
- 1:00pm 6th Grade Awards
- 4th Grade to Sea World
- 5th Grade to Universal
- 8th Grade to Universa

Thursday, 5/24/18

- Last Day of School for Students
- Lunch / Field Day
- NO AFTER CARE!



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There is an extra called meeting of the Governing Board on Monday, May 21. The annual meeting to which any and all are invited is scheduled for Tuesday, June 12. You will receive a reminder in case you want to attend.

As I said, I will send my last newsletter next weekend. You will start receiving information and newsletters from Mrs. Korwin after that. Watch for a request from her for your input soon. Have a great final week of school.

Cecilia Blankenship

Principal

Notes from the Music Department

The last of our five spring Broadway musicals was Friday night when our amazing middle school students presented *Footloose* at the Players Theater. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the elementary and middle school students for their incredibly hard work this year when they presented a total of eighteen shows! I would also like to recognize the tremendous effort and dedication of Bryan Egan who, together with a talented and hard-working group of parents, built an enormous amount of scenery for these shows and worked the backstage crew for all of the productions. Never was that work more apparent than in *Footloose* where an entire house of flats and furniture, church/town hall scenes with eight benches and a huge podium, and multiple other big scenes had to moved off and on many times during the show. Under his direction, a group of students, teachers, and parents did this seamlessly. From all the students who performed and from me in particular, we thank you for all the the work you did for the music department this year.

I would also like to thank Vanessa Russo for her brilliant choreography in *Footloose*. I have worked with many choreographers in my 56 years of performing and teaching and she is undoubtedly the best I have ever known! Our SAA students are so lucky to have her amazing talent in teaching them how to dance and move on stage.

Lastly, I would like to thank the teachers and parents who worked above and beyond the call of duty to chaperone rehearsals and work in many phases of the productions. Teachers frequently worked beyond their duty day to chaperone the students and help with costumes. Parents built scenery, chaperoned rehearsals, washed costumes, worked in the costume house, and ran errands. Parent Melissa Robinson worked more than twenty days fitting students in costumes and taking pictures of them for the playbill and yearbook. Thanks for taking off all those days of work for our students. They say it takes a village to raise a child. It takes the help of a village to put on the kind of productions that we do and fortunately for our children, we have that village at SAA. Under the leadership of Cecilia Blankenship, our principal, SAA's Musical Theater Department has had the opportunity to thrive. We will miss you very much and wish you well in your retirement. It was a great year!

Julie McHugh

Last Day of School - Field Day!

We are very excited to be doing a Field Day on Thursday, and will be serving lunch beforehand. We have all sorts of activities planned where we will need volunteers to help with lunch, field day activities and the bounce house!

Here is the link to sign up . . . <http://signup.com/go/ahEUTes>

Thank you so much!