

DEEP RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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Upcoming Events

- **January 2nd - DRES students return from December Break**
- **January 7th - DRES PTO Meeting : 7:00 PM in the DRES Library**
- **January 11th - Science Fair "Intent to Investigate" Forms Due**
- **January 16th: DRES Winter Choral Concert - 6:30 PM in the DRES Gymnasium**
- **January 17th: DRES BOE Meeting**
- **January 18th : Early Dismissal (1:00 PM) for Teacher Professional Development**
- **January 21st: NO SCHOOL - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday**
- **January 22nd: DRES Winter Band Concert - 6:30 PM in the DRES Gymnasium**
- **January 24th: Choose Love Movement Parent Information Night - 6:00 to 7:30 in the DRES Gymnasium**
- **January 30th: "Spirit to Overcome" Assembly sponsored by the DRES PTO**

The Choose Love Project Informational Panel Evening Event

As you may well know, Deep River Elementary School has adopted The Choose Love Project Enrichment Program for the 2018 – 2019 school year. The Choose Love Enrichment Program is a program for students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. It is an evidence-based social and emotional classroom program that teaches and promotes the choice of love in any circumstance. The program focuses on four important character values, which consist of Courage, Gratitude, Forgiveness and Compassion in Action. The ultimate goal of the program is that children learn that Choose Love means "Choosing to live a life with Courage and Gratitude, practicing Forgiveness, and being Compassionate individuals. Being able to Choose Love promotes their resilience in challenging times." (www.jesselewischooselove.org, 2018) Furthermore, children learn how to be responsible for themselves and how to respond in different situations.

Thus far, the program has had a terrific start here at Deep River Elementary School. In order to better educate parents regarding the program that their children are learning about and utilizing during their school day, we are offering an informational evening for parents.

Aspects of the evening will include:

- Program Overview
- Sample learning tools and ideas that parents can learn about.
- "Make and take" opportunity for parents to create tools and/or resources from the program to utilize at home.
- Informational Panel, which will include DRES teachers, DRES social worker, Laura Kaspro, Tri-Town Representative, and our DRES Principal, Christian Strickland.

This evening will be held on Thursday, January 24 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the DRES School Gymnasium. Flyers to sign up for the evening will be sent home with students. If you should have any questions or concerns regarding the evening you may contact Angela Hruska (ahruska@reg4.k12.ct.us) or Andrea Ricci (aricci@reg4.k12.ct.us).

Please come and learn more about The Choose Love Enrichment Program! We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,
Angela Hruska and Andrea Ricci

THE DRES STEM Day

On December 20th DRES hosted our third annual STEM Day and it was outstanding! Multiple community members who work in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math came to the school and presented various workshops with all of our students. The day concluded with an outstanding presentation on the *Forces in Motion*. DRES would like to thank all of our volunteers who came and helped make this such an incredible day for our students. Also, we would like to thank our DRES PTO for their help in organizing and supporting this event. With the success of this day you can be sure to see it again next year!

HELP WANTED! SCIENCE FAIR AND INVENTION CONVENTION JUDGES NEEDED!

Are you, or someone you know, involved in a science or engineering field? Would you be willing to volunteer to be on our judging panels of our Science Fair and Invention Convention the morning of March 1st? If so please contact our front office so that you can be added to the list. We are looking to build two panels to judge each event with adults in our community who work in these fields. Please consider being a part of this great event at DRES!



THE 2019 DRES SCIENCE FAIR

The Annual DRES Science Fair is getting underway. This has continued to be an exciting and successful event. Like last year, our Science Fair will also run in connection with the Grade 5 - 6 Invention Convention. Both activities are sure to put on an amazing showcase for all our young scientists and volunteers.

Materials for the science fair were sent home on Thursday, December 20th. The materials are banded to be grade level specific, so we ask that parents read them over carefully with their child. For students in grades 5 & 6, Invention Convention materials have also been sent home. While students may opt to do both we ask that parents have an active discussion with their child before making this choice based on personal schedules. Each packet of information will have an "Intent to Investigate" permission slip attached to it. If your child elects to participate, the form must be brought back to your child's teacher by January 11th.

On February 28th, our evening showcase will be held, during which students will bring in their finished work for display at DRES and family members can see all the entries on display. Parents and family members will be able to come in and view all of the entries into the Science Fair and Invention Convention at that time. The students' experiments will continue to be on display on March 2nd when all DRES students will be provided the opportunity to come in and view the displays during the school day. Also at this time our two panels of judges will come in to evaluate the students' work in both events. All students who participate will receive a certificate of recognition.



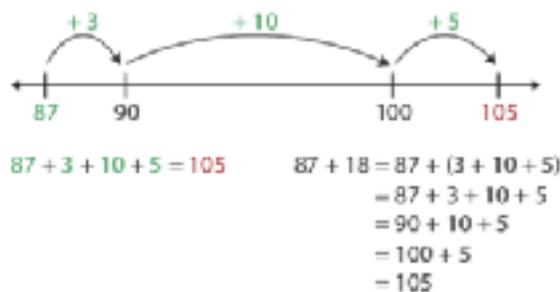
From the Math Coach: Using the Number Line to Add and Subtract

Number lines are used frequently in all grade levels. Initially, the number line is used to represent numbers in order. Students can use this model to learn counting by 1s, 5s and 10s. As they progress, students learn strategies for using the number line to add and subtract. The open number line allows students to place a starting point as they see fit according to a problem.

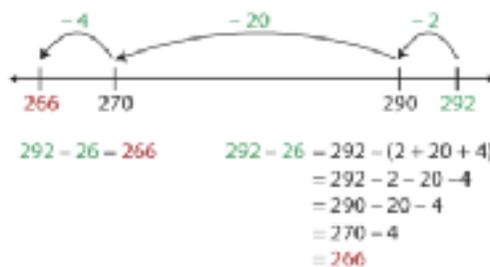
The model below is an example of how students can jump forward by breaking a number apart to solve an addition problem.



As students get older, they learn to decompose addends and use “friendly” numbers to jump forward.



Students can also model subtraction on the number line by jumping forward from the smaller number to find the difference, or count backward from the larger number to arrive at the solution.



While the traditional algorithms for addition and subtraction are important, they are taught after students understand the concepts of adding and subtracting and have been exposed to a variety of models. This isn't really “new math,” but just a different way of approaching problems. Next time you work with your child on math homework, perhaps he or she can show you an example of how the number line is being used at that grade level.

-Jill Shakun

D.R.E.S. Students are Super Problem Solvers!

You may have seen the Super Problem Solvers packets come home last week. The Super Problem Solvers program is being implemented to encourage students, parents, and teachers to discuss the ways in which they are thinking critically and creatively to solve problems students encounter.

All Region 4 schools have adopted a Critical and Creative Problem Solving initiative as a part of the district wide strategic plan. In this plan one of the three District Priority Strategies was to, "Operationalize a three community, unified focus- Pre-K to 12- on critical and creative thinking for solving difficult problems (CCPS)..." Critical and creative problem solving is an imperative skill for all individuals regardless of age.

Developing these skills over time will help students to be more successful as they mature. The world is changing and developing and just learning content will not prepare students for their futures. As stated in the article "Preparing Critical and Creative Thinkers" by Donald J. Treffinger "Students who are competent in not only the basics of content areas but also the basics of productive and creative thinking will be lifelong learners, knowledge creators, and problem solvers who can live and work effectively in a world of constant change."

In order to help students learn and grow as critical and creative problem solvers, the Region 4 Professional Development Committee created a progression of Critical and Creative Problem Solving Rubrics to be used K-12. Each month the Super Problem Solvers will focus on one aspect of that rubric, helping students to focus on the individual steps that will help them to become critical and creative thinkers. Students will have an opportunity to fill out a form to share what work they have done to solve a problem using these strategies which will then be submitted to classroom teachers. These submissions will be shared and celebrated on a bulletin board in the hallway outside the office.

December's focus was on students finding all the important information necessary to solve a problem and explaining why that information is important and necessary to solving the problem. This enables students to critically examine the problem they encounter in order to best develop a list of possible solutions. January's focus will be on finding more than one way to solve a problem, enabling students to think creatively about their problems in brainstorming multiple possibilities toward solving their problems.

In his article, Treffinger states, "Creative thinking involves searching for meaningful new connections by generating many unusual, original, and varied possibilities, as well as details that expand or enrich possibilities. Critical thinking, on the other hand, involves examining possibilities carefully, fairly, and constructively—focusing your thoughts and actions by organizing and analyzing possibilities, refining and developing the most promising possibilities, ranking or prioritizing options, and choosing certain options." Utilizing the CCPS rubric developed by Region 4 and focusing on individual components of this rubric will enhance students' abilities to solve complex problems they encounter in their lives.

-Mrs. Vicino and Ms. Tenbrunsel

Article Source: (<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/summer08/vol65/num09/Preparing-Creative-and-Critical-Thinkers.aspx>)

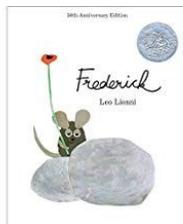


Media Minute
Karen Macaione
Media Specialist



Coding

During the week of December 3, all students took part in The Hour of Code. Students learned that coding was writing step-by-step instructions that tell the computer what to do. The students used arrows and loops to write algorithms. They developed and used many Habits of Mind. The students needed to persist, think flexibly, and strive for accuracy when completing their coding tasks. They did a wonderful job. If you would like to try some of the activities go to: <https://hourofcode.com/us/learn>.



Habits of Mind:
Thinking Flexibly

Frederick, the field mouse sat on the old stone wall while his four brothers gathered food for the approaching winter days. The other mice felt that Frederick was not doing his share of the work, but when the food ran out, Frederick saved the day with what he had gathered. [Google Books](#)

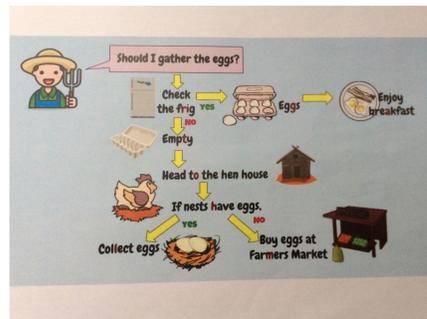


Breakout EDU

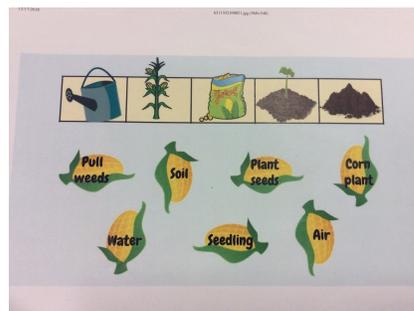
Intermediate students took coding one step further. They completed digital breakout EDU on the topics of algorithms and sequencing. Students had to

continue using Habits of Mind to complete their puzzle and break the lock. Students applied past knowledge to new situations, questioned and posed problems, and thought independently.

How would you solve these?



Hint: Look at the letters.



Hint: Look at corn.



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