



# School in the Woods Field Notes

## January 2020



### Dear Parents:

We hope that all of you enjoyed a warm and peaceful holiday with your family. We are sure many special moments were shared and hope our naturalists had opportunities to explore the natural world and spend time wondering. Thank you all so much for your generous contributions to the REI gift cards. We are incredibly appreciative of your thoughts and kind acts.

Winter is an especially exciting time at School in the Woods. In January, we will be exploring Native American cultures and Colorado history. Building on the experience of the amazing chautauquas performed by our naturalists, each student will learn and perform a Native American story this month. Our resident storyteller, John Stansfield, visits us again to conduct an exciting workshop on Native American storytelling. You may want to ask your naturalist why we are learning and telling these stories during the winter season.

Our naturalists did such a phenomenal job performing their chautauquas for their classmates. It was amazing to see how they transformed themselves into “their” naturalists. We all became more intimately acquainted with many American naturalists from the past two centuries. The knowledge each student gained, plus the incredible speaking experience, will provide for special memories and contribute toward their increasing self-confidence. We continue to see each naturalist conduct themselves with a greater level of responsibility and independence. This becomes even more important as we begin the second half of year together and get closer to Spring Field Projects.

During the first part of this month each student will be creating a pine needle basket similar to those traditionally made by some Native American tribes. We have started on this special annual project and will continue each afternoon through next Friday. This project involves patience and dedication, allowing our naturalists to get a better sense of how much work it was for Native Americans to create utilitarian items they needed for survival. Encourage your child to put consistent and dedicated effort into this project that they will be proud of for years to come.

With the New Year having arrived, we will be encouraging our naturalists to think of the 2020 resolutions they may have made and how to get a good start on them in the second half of the academic year. We always encourage our students to come up with a personal goal and a naturalist goal for this New Year. Take time to talk with them about how they may want to create change in their lives and how they might better themselves, their communities, and the world around them. You may want to ask them how you may be able to support them with their goals.

Our students are honored to be SITW naturalists and feel especially proud of their knowledge and deeper understanding of our world and its processes. Urge them to continue to wonder and strive to learn as much as they can during the remainder of our year together in the woods. Spring Field Projects will allow them

to go into depth about one of their favorite natural science topics. See SFP volunteer information below.

Encourage your naturalist to wonder about what is happening at School in the Woods now that winter has arrived. With the changing weather, what might be occurring at our Wicketown, in the forested areas, meadow, and out near the pond? Have them describe how our ponderosa forest has changed with the seasons.

### Typing Practice (IMPORTANT)

This year our school purchased a site license for Type to Learn, a high-quality typing practice program. **Our Account Code is 2C8JD6. Enter username=6-digit student ID and password=1234.** We are asking that each of our naturalists spend at least 20 minutes practicing a minimum of three times per week. Their writing skills are improving, but most are struggling with their keyboarding skills. Given all the requirements that students will have for writing that is typed, including all state CMAS testing, having proficient typing skills is imperative. If they prefer to use other online or purchased typing programs, they are free to use those, as long as they are using their home keys and appropriate typing skills.

### Future Naturalists

It's hard to believe that our school year at School in the Woods is half over! Already, we are receiving inquiries from parents who are considering our school for the 2020-2021 school year. If you know of a third grader in District 20 who would be a good candidate for our school, please mention it to that child's parents and encourage them to attend the Choice presentation and our Open House. Many parents in our district do not know about School in the Woods. Your personal recommendation is the most valuable information prospective parents could possibly have.

On Saturday, January 25, we will have our Choice Presentation about School in the Woods from 9:00 am to 10:00 am at Edith Wolford Elementary School. It will be followed by an Open House at SITW from 10:15-11:15. This will give interested students and their parents a chance to see the school and meet the teachers. The deadline for Choice School Applications for the 2020-2021 school year is 4:00 PM, Friday, February 28. Application information will be available at the presentation, at District 20 Central Registry, and on the Academy District 20 web site. Please watch for a SignUp Genius email to help us out that morning.

### Next School Year

All School in the Woods students will automatically be reserved a place in fifth grade at the school where they attended third grade. If you wish for your child to attend any school other than where he or she attended third grade, you must complete a Choice Enrollment Application by Friday, February 28, 2020.

### Box Tops – Thank You!

We have just received our latest check: \$260.00! Thank you so much for every single Box Top sent in and/or receipts scanned.

**We are so excited to be back together with our naturalists!**