



Seasons Greetings from Scottville Elementary! I hope this month's newsletter finds our families healthy and looking forward to some much needed family time over the holidays.

Christmas is an exciting time for our families and the children. The excitement has been building over the past week as the children have begun to work on Christmas crafts and are looking forward to their class parties. As I spend time with the children this time of year they love to tell me about their Christmas elves and some of the mischief they've been causing in the middle of the night. I assure them, the elves at our house have been doing the same things. They also share some of the exciting plans they have for break as well as some of the items they're hoping they get for Christmas. Tech devices are usually at the top of the list (Cell Phones, Playstations, Kindles/Tablets, Nintendo Switch etc...)

I've recommended in the past that parents read the book, Parenting Generation Screen, written by Jonathan McKee if their K-2 children have access to tech devices...even if it's just mom or dad's phone for a short time each day. I still have a few copies if anyone is interested (they'll go to the first parents that reach out). The book focuses on connecting and preparing our children for the "digital world" they are exposed to when they get online. The author begins the book with a fitting analogy. "Dad, can I have the keys to the SUV?" This question may not sound unusual if you have older children, unless it's coming from a ten-year old. He goes on to ask the readers if their ten year old asked them this question, how they'd respond. The obvious answer would be "no" as the child is much too young and hasn't had any training to learn to drive a vehicle. He points out that no parent would give their child the freedom to take the car at that age...but a majority of parents do give their children a dangerous amount of freedom when they give them a phone or device.

There's also a growing amount of research around social emotional learning, mental health as these needs are at an all time high in the United States. Recent studies are beginning to look at how extensive time on tech devices can negatively impact brain development in our young children. We've learned that a child's brain isn't fully developed until they reach their late teens to early 20's. Many of the crucial milestones in the development of the brain occur prior to school age up through their elementary years. These devices can potentially have a negative impact on this development and have a lasting unintentional impact throughout life.

Tech devices are popular gifts each Christmas and yes, that even includes cell phones for some children this age. As parents we're constantly pressured into giving our children access much too early because "all my friends" have one. Also, technology has changed the way our children communicate with each other making it even more difficult to avoid giving them access when they are too young. My intent is not to be the "Debby Downer" but would suggest that we all reflect on the importance of the things I shared above. Technology will continue to evolve and the demand for young children to access the online world will grow. The best thing we can do is educate ourselves so we can make informed decisions about when our children are ready for this responsibility and how to prepare them for what they'll encounter. Limiting time on technology to a short time each day and constant supervision while they're online is essential. Parenting is more challenging today than it's ever been and we're all in this together. It's important to know we can all lean on each other when we need help or advice as we navigate these challenges. Please feel free to reach out to me any time with questions or concerns.

In closing, I'd like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and happy New Year from your Scottville Elementary family!

Sincerely,  
Mr. Etchison

# Mason County Central Elementary

## CONTACT US

231-757-4701

School hours:  
7:30 Am - 4:00 PM

# JANUARY

## NEWSLETTER



### REMINDERS

- Doors open at 8:10. Please do not drop students off early. There is NO SUPERVISION at this time.
- If your student arrives at 8:25 or after they MUST be signed in at the office.
- Please call the office by 2:00 to make changes to end of day arrangements.

Cold weather is here! Please send students in appropriate cold weather gear. They need coat, hats, boots, and gloves,

## CHRISTMAS BREAK

NO SCHOOL

December 20th-January 3rd

**Students return January 4th**

## 02/16 MidWinter Break

Friday, Feb. 16th 1/2 Day

Dismissal @ 11:20

Monday, Feb. 19th NO  
SCHOOL

thank you

## MERAKI COFFEE

FOR A MEMORABLE DAY OF SMILES AND HOT COCOA FOR ALL OF OUR LITTLE SPARTANS!

CONGRATULATIONS TO MRS. MILLER'S CLASS FOR DONATING THE MOST PRESENTS! THEY WILL ENJOY A CLASSROOM PIZZA PARTY!

OUR SCHOOL WAS ABLE TO DONATE 243 GIFTS TO TOYS FOR TOTS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

Which side of the penguin has the most feathers?

A: The outside!



Meraki Koffie

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