Principal’s Message:

It’s hard to believe how quickly this school year is going by. Our students continue to work hard and enjoy many wonderful activities within our school community. Every year schools are given report cards from the State of Connecticut. Mackrille School was recognized as a School of Distinction, Category 1. The state will be visiting Mackrille classrooms on December 8 in honor of our achievement.

I would like to thank everyone that made our Merriment Festival, Book Fair and WHEAT collection a success. This month we will be collecting toys for the Yale New Haven Toy Closet.

We had our first award ceremony in November. Students from each classroom were honored as Student of the Month, Creative Genius, Science Rockstar, Reading All-Star, Excellence in Music and Classroom Athlete. Congratulations to all the students honored last month!

Regular school attendance is very important to success in school. To help ensure that your child has the best opportunity for success, please make sure he/she is in school and on time everyday. Should they need to be absent, please call the attendance line.

If any parents or family members are interested in being a lunch aide at the school, please call Amanda Murillo. Lunch times for the students are from 11:30-1:40. We are always looking for parents and families to be involved with lunch and recess. Remember that the weather is colder, so please dress your children accordingly. We will continue to go outside for recess. We will stay in if the weather is extremely cold. If your child is need of a coat, hat or gloves, please call the school.

The Mackrille Staff would like to wish everyone a very Happy and Healthy Holiday season! As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please make an appointment, call or email me.

Taryn S. Driend
MATH FACT FLUENCY: MORE THAN JUST SPEED AND ACCURACY
By Shelley Gray

Math fact fluency is often considered to be a quick and accurate recall of facts. However, it’s important to note that fast and accurate does not mean that a student is fluent. Fact fluency is about much more than speed and accuracy. When a student is truly fluent, he is accurate, flexible, efficient, and uses appropriate strategies. Let’s discuss each one of these so that we really understand what fluency means.

ACCURACY
Accuracy means the correct answer.

EFFICIENCY
Efficiency refers to a quick recall of a fact. Typically, we look for recall within 1-3 seconds; however, a recall may take longer with more advanced thinking strategies.

FLEXIBILITY
In my opinion, this is the most important indicator of fluency, but it is often the one that gets the least amount of attention. Flexibility means that students are comfortable thinking about a problem in more than one way and can build connections and relationships between facts. For example, a student might show flexibility if he understood that to solve 8×6, he could use 4×6 and then double it. Using the CRA Model, Concrete (using hands-on manipulatives) Representational (draw representations) Abstract (digits and symbols), is essential for helping students visualize math so that they can become flexible thinkers.

APPROPRIATE STRATEGY USE
Appropriate strategy use means that the student selects a strategy that makes sense for the problem. The tendency to see fluency ONLY as quick and accurate recall results in many of our students’ failure. It creates gaps in students’ understanding that can hinder them as they progress through school. Rather than math becoming an exploration, it becomes a monotonous, seemingly irrelevant routine of memorization.

FACT FOCUS BY GRADE LEVEL
Kindergarten - addition and subtraction within 5
Grade 1 - addition and subtraction within 20
Grade 2 - addition and subtraction within 100
Grade 3 - multiplication and division facts 0-12
Grade 4 - multiplication and division facts 0-12