



5th Grade students Santiago Montoya (left) and Jennifer Quiceno (right) work hard at Drumlin Farm during the school's recent Community Service Day in October.

Excel Students and Staff "Change the World" During Community Service Day in October

On Tuesday, October 30th, over 200 Excel Academy students and over 20 Excel staff members embarked on a mission: to change the world through a full-day – and subsequently, a life-long – commitment to community service. Students and staff members were matched up with over 10 regional organizations in need of support, including the Esplanade, the Belmont Sanctuary, Alewife Reservation, Drumlin Farm, the Pine Street Inn, and Cradles to Crayons. Students prepared for each trip by learning about the problem or issue each organization is attempting to address. Upon returning from each trip, students reflected on the actual impact they had made. Our students received numerous compliments from the sponsoring organizations. For example, one representative wrote: "I just want to thank you for volunteering through Boston Cares and let you know that your students are amazing...your group was the nicest, best behaved group we have ever had at the Esplanade. They worked extremely hard and maintained positive attitudes throughout." Community Service Day was part of Excel Academy's larger Community Service Program. All Excel students are required to complete Community Service hours during the school year. Expectations increase with age; 8th grade students must complete 10 hours of independent service before June.

Upcoming Schoolwide Events

Mon., Nov. 26th-Thurs., Nov. 29th: PREP Auctions

Thurs., Dec. 20th: Quarter 2 Progress Report Distributed

Friday, Dec. 21st: 11:30am Dismissal

Monday, Dec. 24th-Tuesday, Jan. 1st: Winter Vacation

Wednesday, Jan. 2nd: Students Return to School

A Note from the Principal

Dear Excel Academy Families:

Although the temperatures outside are dropping quickly, our students' and teachers' energy has certainly kept the hallways and classrooms of Excel Academy warm this winter season. In addition to all the hard work teachers put in *during* the regular school day, they put in countless hours *afterschool* as well. Here's a snapshot of all the activities that took place recently – *after* the final bell of a regular school day:

- Ms. Lisle, Ms. Coyle, and Ms. Martin teaching a specialized literacy program to groups of ~10 students.
- Girls basketball practice with Ms. Fraker.
- A voluntary academic support center – filled to capacity – with Ms. Dankleff
- A mandatory HW center for students struggling to regularly complete assignments, managed by Mr. Guerin
- An optional English study session with Ms. Moskowitz and an optional math tutorial with Ms. Foulke and Ms. Lisle.
- Regular Homework Club for students who struggled on the previous night's homework, as well as detention with Mr. Habetler for students who had made poor behavior choices the prior day (only 3 students!)
- Lots of peer tutoring in the Community Circle area
- Excel Alumni working with Ms. Saltonstall
- 7th graders working on the Internet with Ms. Lederman
- Several students receiving Instructional Support from our Learning Specialists, Ms. Long and Mrs. Reynolds
- And of course, numerous teachers working vigorously in their offices to prepare the following day's superb lessons.

We have a quite a team here at Excel. I hope you share my appreciation of their efforts. Have a safe and happy holiday season!

-Mr. Given



6th Grade English teacher Mr. Pangburn leads students on a tour of Harvard University

Many Enrichment Options Offered for Winter Session



Here is a complete listing of the Enrichment offerings for the winter session: Arts and Crafts, Boys Basketball, Computer Programming, Girls Basketball, Hip Hop Dance, Ice Skating, Indoor Soccer, Radio, Song Writing and Performance, Spanish Lessons, Step Team, Swimming, Theatre, and Yearbook. This Enrichment session will last until March 14th, at which time students will select their Enrichment choice for the final (Spring) session.

Current Academic Topics of Study

5th grade

English: *Freedom Walkers* & vocabulary in context

Math: Division (including algebraic concepts)

Science: Plants!

6th grade

English: *Number the Stars* & vocabulary in context

Math: Decimals and Percents

Geography: Asia and Europe

7th grade

English: *The Outsiders*

Math: Ratios, Proportions, and Percents

Science: Newton's Laws

8th grade

English: *The House on Mango Street*

Math: Algebra (e.g., combining like terms)

U.S. History: Civil War Research Papers

Congratulations to the winners of the November Building Block Challenge:

5th Grade: Montserrat 5

6th Grade: Harvard 6

7th Grade: Tufts 7

8th Grade: Roger Williams 8

These four homerooms have won the "Teacher Challenge" as their prize. December winners will earn a pizza party at the end of the month.



Students in the Ultimate Frisbee Club pose for a photo at Constitution Beach Park.

Upcoming HS Placement Events

Dec 8th (8:30am) – SSAT exam at Excel Academy

Dec 14th – All Catholic School applications due to Ms. Fraker. Teacher recommendations and applications will be mailed by Ms. Fraker to the respective schools.

Please see Ms. Fraker with any questions.

PREP Auction Winners!

Here is a sampling of winners from the school's most recent PREP auctions:

Trip to the New England Aquarium with Ms. Lewkowicz and Ms. Lederman: Vanessa Dao, Jasmine Sakhta, Kassandra Boada, Fernando Martinez, and Jean Atehortua

Trip to the Museum of Fine Arts (and lunch) with Mr. Pangburn: Estephania Cayetano and Joslin Hernandez

Trip to a Boston College vs. Harvard University Hockey Game (and dinner) with Ms. Martin and Ms. Morgan: Daniela Pelaez, Carolina Diez, and Katheryne Correa

Trip to New England Patriots game with Mr. Habetler: Axel Lopez, Hossam Hamdan, and Karlmichael Camaso