

## Letterland Presidential Campaign Report

Since Election Day was approaching, we wanted our students to understand the election process. Our school is a polling place for the county. We wanted our students to understand why people in the community were coming in and out of our school. So, we tossed around ideas on how to get them to understand the concept. We decided to use the characters in Letterland because our students are familiar with each Letterlander and their characteristics. We also thought it would help make our students more excited about Letterland and its characters.

We decided to let each of the four classes nominate two characters to campaign. We then let the students create a campaign poster. These were displayed in the Kindergarten hallway. We then contacted our Superintendent to skype with us as Harry Hat Man. He did this last year and enjoys interacting with the children. We decided that since we were voting on a president that it would be a good idea to have him campaign for Harry Hat Man. We could not leave out the other characters; we did not want the vote to be swayed, so we asked several staff and community members to dress up and candidate as the other nominees. These included the principal as Annie Apple, assistant principal as Talking Tess, EC teacher as Sammy Snake, secretary as Peter Puppy, two local college students as Golden Girl and Kicking King.

Persuasive speeches were written to emphasize each characters sound and presidential qualities of each candidate. Students came together in the library and we skyped with each candidate. Some of the candidates took questions from the students. A polling place was established, similar to the one in our school, and students voted one-by-one, using a secret ballot. The ballots were counted by Kindergarten teachers and Golden Girl won!

We integrated literature, social studies, and mathematics. Students graphed when class nominations were made to see who had the most nominations. Students made comparisons. Literature included, Grace for President, Duck for President, If I Ran for President, and many others. Students learned to make character judgments by deciding who would be a good candidate. For example, Red Robot would probably not be a good candidate because he steals things. Vocabulary introduced was: vote, election, campaign, poll, president, more, less, compare.

Students enjoyed the process. Several parents commented during parent/teacher conferences on their child's enthusiasm about the project. Students were excited to hear that Golden Girl had won and they received gallons of green ice-cream as promised in her campaign speech.

Next year, since it will be an actual presidential election year, we hope to expand it to include grades K, 1, and 2. We are hoping to let each grade level campaign for one of the candidates to incorporate political parties.

Tammy Taylor.....Kindergarten teacher  
Michelle Moffitt.....Kindergarten teacher  
Mary Beth Bowman.....Kindergarten teacher  
Tonya Ward.....Kindergarten teacher  
Dr. Steve Stone.....Superintendent - Harry Hat Man  
Vickie Sproul..... Principal - Annie Apple  
Adrienne Dula.....Asst Principal - Talking Tess  
Genene Pitts.....Receptionist – Peter Puppy  
Sara Beth Metzger..... EC teacher – Sammy Snake  
Meagan Moffitt.....Golden Girl  
Cole.....Kicking King