

October 26, 2007

Dear Second Grade Parents,

Second Graders will be leading an exciting project during the month of November. Along with 750 NYC Public and Independent Schools they will be participating in a Penny Harvest, sponsored by the organization Common Cents. In a nutshell, students collect the thousands of “idle pennies” that sit in jars, under couch cushions, and on top of dressers throughout the city. Last year schools collected more than 200 tons of pennies- \$638, 852.84! Second Graders will bring in any pennies they can find at home (and perhaps beyond) and will be visiting all of the Lower School classrooms to tell students about the project and to solicit their help.

The money collected is then donated to organizations throughout the city to support a whole myriad of projects aimed at improving the quality of life for the children and adults in the city. For example, at my last school money was donated to the local soup kitchen and Habitat for Humanity. Second Graders will be discussing some of the ways people’s needs are not met and learning about the organizations that address those needs. If we collect roughly \$1,000 in pennies we will be awarded the opportunity to decide where that money will go.

The math involved in the project is also perfect for Second Graders. They will count hundreds of pennies, grouping them first in groups of ten and then gathering the tens into groups of 100. They will see what \$10 and even \$100 looks like in pennies. They will determine how far away they are from \$1, \$10, and \$100 at given points. They may even weigh some pennies. Did you know that 167 pennies weigh one pound? They will graph the results of the harvest, and may find foreign coins, old subway tokens, and perhaps even some misplaced arcade tokens!

I look forward to coordinating this Community Service/Math Project with the Second Graders and welcome your questions. The harvest begins officially on November 1st. Until then, keep your eyes open for “idle pennies.”

Dawn Wheatley
Lower School Math Specialist