November 12, 2013

Dear Families,

Today your child is bringing home a solar light to keep and use over the next four weeks, as we participate in a product development trial with a Ft. Collins company called diviPower, a company devoted to bringing clean solar light to Africa. diviPower works with the non-profit Solar Aid to distribute lights through an affordable micro-credit program.

Our participation will provide valuable input to diviPower and provide our children with opportunities to learn about life in Sub-Saharan Africa, the power and benefits of solar versus kerosene lighting, as well as solar technology. As we end the weekend with stories of destruction and survival in the Philippines, I am reminded of the power of experience and personal connection with ability to build empathy. I know that our children will grow in understanding and empathy as they learn about and imagine life in rural Uganda.

As part of this trial, children will be responsible for:

1. Using their lights at least once a week, for any amount of time
2. Charging and using their lights using a personal solar panel
3. Completing homework each week learning about Africa, the impacts associated with clean lighting & solar technology, as well as journaling about thoughts and ideas.
4. Students will bring lights each Tuesday, along with “payment coupons” to have their lights recharged upon payment. It is ok to remind them about this responsibility as their light would be a valuable family possession and parents there would also remind their children to bring payments and lights.

I invite you to make this a family affair and see what life might be like with only one light at your disposal.

While we hope the lights are returned in good working order and make their way to Africa, there is no liability associated with loss or damage.

Some things to know about the lights:

1. Lights will not work if payment is not recorded as they contain a microprocessor that is enabled via Bluetooth in the classroom.
2. Children may bring their lights on Wednesday if they forget to bring them on Tuesdays. After Wednesday, lights may not be recharged until the next Tuesday.
3. Lost coupons cannot be replaced as we are participating in a simulation. Coupons *can* be replaced for the following week’s payment. Children should treat the coupons like money.
4. The lights have 3 settings: high (holds a charge for 4 hours); medium (holds a charge for 10 hours) and low (holds a charge for 30 hours)
5. The lights will flash 1-5 flashes to indicate the charging power.

Five flashes indicate the strongest charging. They are fully charged in approximately 5 hours in direct sunlight.

Lights will be returned to diviPower during the week of December 17.

Thanks for helping to support this illuminating experience. Wishing you evenings full of family fun around your tiny solar light.

Lauren