**Sample Parent Letter**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are thrilled to inform you that our class will participate in a national-standards based program called The Walking Classroom.

The Walking Classroom is a national award-winning nonprofit program that capitalizes on the favorable link between exercise and cognitive function — children improve their physical, mental, and academic health as they walk, listen, and learn!

The program is simple: Students take brisk 20-minute walks, as a group, while listening to custom-written, kid-friendly content that is aligned with academic standards. Each “WalkKit” audio device is preloaded with STEM-related educational podcasts, including a Science Career Series featuring scientists from the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences! A Teacher’s Guide, filled with a lesson plan and comprehension quiz to support each podcast, allows us to effectively discuss, review, and assess comprehension of the podcast content after the walk.

Podcast topics range from biographies of famous doctors and scientists to hurricanes and geographic formations, and each podcast begins with a brief health literacy message. Additionally, character values are woven throughout the program (honesty, respect, integrity, perseverance, etc.) . For example, a podcast about the continental divide begins with students in the podcast talking about how exercise helps improve your mood, and then the podcast transitions to a discussion about the continental divide. Discussion questions at the end of the podcast encourage students to consider how similar to where precipitation falls along the continental divide determines in which direction it will flow, student actions and behaviors will determine how other people respond to them. All podcasts contain the three basic components: health literacy topic, main academic content topic, and a focused character value discussion question.

The Walking Classroom provides our class with a trusted source of academic content presented in an innovative and engaging manner. Students return from their walks in better moods, more focused, and more likely to engage in post-walk discussions**.** Teachers regularly report that students retain the information better and demonstrate better behavior and engagement in the classroom after using The Walking Classroom. Additionally, The Walking Classroom provides our class with an innovative tool to meet the needs of students with alternative learning styles. All while walking and having fun!

We hope that you will join us sometime on one of our walks! Please visit The Walking Classroom’s website at [www.TheWalkingClassroom.org](http://www.TheWalkingClassroom.org) for more information and to see videos of the program in action.