



THE COTTONWOOD CONNECTION

COTTONWOOD ELEMENTARY

FEBRUARY 2009

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE BY KAREN MARBERGER

10% for the Future: This school year with the support of our PTA and School Community Council, our school has worked to reduce our paper consumption by 10% to become a "greener" school and do our part to help the environment. As you may know, a few of the ways we reduced our paper consumption this year are by creating an email parent list to send notices electronically, posting information on our school web page including the school PTA newsletters, PTA Reflections and Science Fair project information instead of copying many packets to send home and encouraging teachers to post a class calendar on our web page to let parents know about monthly events and also communicate with parents by email. We have more than achieved our goal for this year and greatly appreciate your support of this worthwhile goal for our environment. We will continue to look for ways to reduce our paper consumption as a school but still keep parents informed of school and classroom activities.

Parent Email List – Emergency Communication: Recently our school experienced a power outage but the power was restored before the start of school. This provided an opportunity to review our emergency communication procedures and how we could use our parent email list to communicate possible emergency information. In the future, we will send out a parent email as early as possible to inform parents that the school will be closed due to an emergency such as a power outage or heavy snowfall or will have a late start. So, if it is possible (you are not affected by a power outage), check your email before the start of school if you are concerned about a possible emergency that may affect the school. Hopefully, we will not have a need to use this but, just in case, this is another way that we can inform you quickly about a school emergency.

Kindergarten Registration/Orientation: It is now time to register upcoming kindergarten students for the next school year. We have posted a registration form on our school web page, www.graniteschools.org/el/cottonwood and did send letters home with students. Our kindergarten orientation will be held on Tues. March 25, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. for parents and kindergarten students. Please let your friends and neighbors know about this as our kindergarten enrollment is critical to our school. Our kindergarten program provides an

excellent reading foundation utilizing the Open Court basal reading program as well as developmentally appropriate curriculum in other academic areas as determined by the Utah State Office of Education. Our school enrollment does determine the number of teachers we are able to keep at the school. We hope that those parents who may be deciding which program to select, will support the Cottonwood Elementary kindergarten program which we feel provides an excellent academic experience for our students in a neighborhood school setting.

School Community Council: Just a reminder that our School Community Council will have two vacancies next year. The deadline for any interested community members to declare their candidacy for nomination to the School Community Council is approaching. A form is posted on the school web page which must be returned to the school office by February 3, 2009 for consideration. An election will be held during the Spring SEP conferences. Any interested patrons who will have students enrolled in the school next year and are willing to commit to a two-year term with monthly meetings, please complete the candidacy form and return to the office by the above date.

School Calendar: Our School Science Fair is rapidly approaching. Many students are working hard on their projects. We hope to increase student participation this year and greatly appreciate all those parents who are supporting this worthwhile project with their students. As was mentioned last month, our school Geography and Spelling Bees were held in January. The Geography Bee winner is Preston in fifth grade and the Spelling Bee winner is Maggie in 6th grade. Congratulations to all the students who participated in these school activities. (For security reasons, we don't post student last names on our web page.)

~Karen Marberger
Principal



FEBRUARY

- 2/6 Short Day 1:05
- 2/10 PTA Board Meeting 10am
- 2/12 School Wide Service Project
- 2/13 Science Fair Registration
Forms Due to Teachers
Short Day 1:05
- 2/14 Happy Valentines Day!
- 2/16 NO SCHOOL
President's Day
- 2/17 Science Fair Set-up and
Registration
- 2/18-19 Science Fair Judging
- 2/20 Science Fair walk-through
8:45am to 12:45am
Short Day 1:05
- 2/23 Science Fair Awards Assembly
2:30pm

MARCH

- 3/5 Short Day 1:05
- 3/6 NO SCHOOL
Teacher Work Day
- 3/10 PTA Board Meeting 10am
- 3/11-12 SEP Teacher Conferences
- 3/13 Recycling
Short Day 1:05
- 3/16 Oly Jr Spring Concert 7pm
- 3/17 Happy St. Patrick's Day!
- 3/20 Short Day 1:05
- 3/23-25 Teacher Appreciation
- 3/24 Maturation Program
6:30pm Girls - 7:00pm
- 3/25 Kindergarten Orientation 9:30a
- 3/26 Kindergarten Program
- 3-27 NO SCHOOL
SEP Comp Day

SCHOOL WEB PAGE



Visit:

www.graniteschools.org/el/cottonwood/ See teacher pages with emails, upcoming events, the school calendar, PTA information and a link to the online grading program and more. Let us know what you think.

ATTENTION:



**SCIENCE FAIR
BOARDS ARE AVAIL-
ABLE IN THE
SCHOOL OFFICE
FOR ONLY \$2.00**

(That is a great price!)



January

Look for totals next month!
Keep saving box tops, Cream o
Weber lids, aluminum & paper.
It all helps.

From the PTA Parent Newsletter:

Developing Your Child's "Super-Ready" Literacy Skills

The National Institute for Literacy's Early Literacy Panel just released its "Developing Early Literacy" report. The report identified essential early skills and abilities important to later literacy development. It also found that parent involvement had a significant impact on measures of oral language skills and cognitive abilities.

The findings and recommendations inspired Liza McFadden, president of the Volunteer USA Foundation, to compile this "To Do" list of actions to help children become "super-ready" for school.

Finding #1. Alphabet Knowledge

"Alphabet Knowledge" is the knowledge of the names and sounds associated with printed letters. I think of this finding as if my kids were wearing superhero costumes while becoming "masters of the alphabet." Their job: to learn the name of every letter and the sound each letter makes. My job: to switch on the TV closed-caption option so words are part of my child's every TV experience; to point to the beginning letter of words and make the sounds of the letter.

Finding #2. Phonological Awareness

This finding says super-ready kids have "phonological awareness"— which means they have the ability to distinguish words and syllables, independent of their meaning. It's critical that children truly hear the sounds in words and play with these sounds. It means reading fun poetry like Dr. Seuss books and singing songs like "Clap, Clap, Clap your Hands" where children clap to syllables.

Finding #3. Rapid/Random Order Learning

By age 5, super-ready kids must be able to instantly identify letters, numbers, colors and objects in "rapid" and "random order." So it's not just knowing the numbers one to 10 in order—it's important to recognize them quickly in any order.

Finding #4. Writing Skills

Super-ready kids need to be able to wield powerful pencils. While most of us spend lots of time reading bedtime stories, I'm not sure we've been as conscientious about writing skills. Specifically, at age 5 children should be able to write their own name and write any letters that are called out. One idea is to have your child write their name in all their books.

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COTTONWOOD ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY OF CARING STUDENTS

February 2009

Kindergarten:

Campbell B- McCracken AM
Tessa B - McCracken PM

1st Grade:

Morgan T - Amott
Madeline J - Mahas
Lincoln M - Van Frank

2nd Grade:

Zach S - Homer
Anna F - Larson
Lansing J - Phillips

3rd Grade:

Mitchell D - Heiss
Nathan J- Jordan
Jake H - Pixton

4th Grade:

Gage F - Fraser
Caitlyn B - Gilchrist
Paige V - Munson

5th Grade:

Megan R - Nistler
Allie W- Ross
Sydney K- Wagstaff

6th Grade:

Allie D - Burgess
Maddie R - Williams

Albertson's and Smith's Helping Our School

If you shop at Albertson's or Smith's and Smith's Market Place why not sign up online to be a community partner for Cottonwood Elementary. Once you are registered, every time you shop with your Savings Card at Albertsons or Smiths, they will give back a small percentage to our school for your child's classroom to use on

supplies, fieldtrips & other class activities determined by their teacher.

It is free and easy to do. Just sign up online and shop as you normally do with your Store Savings Card.

ALBERTSONS

www.albertsons.com click: Preferred Savings Card, click: In the Community, click: Community Partners, click: Shop-

pers Login, have your preferred savings card ready to type ID number.

SMITHS & SMITHS MARKET PLACE:

www.smithsfoodanddrug.com click: Earn & Learn, enter school or organization #80732. Have your Fresh Values Card ready to type in ID number.

IT ALL ADDS UP!!



Science Fair is Coming!

This year the Cottonwood Science Fair will be on February 17 - 20. Those wishing to participate will need to have their forms turned in by Friday, February 13 to their teacher. The Science Fair packet will be available this year on line on the school web site. This packet contains the participation form and district rules as well as information on how to do a science fair project and ideas for getting started. Please email Tina Seastrand at dseastrand@q.com or call 272-9270 with any questions.

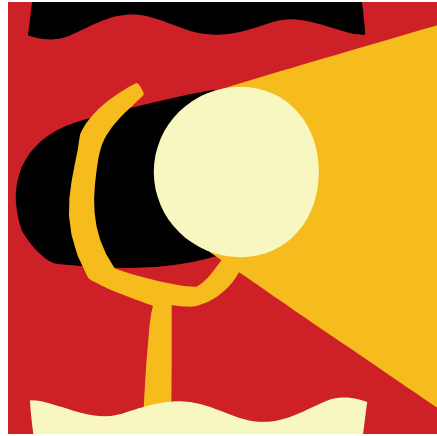
Continued from page 2:
(PTA Parent Newsletter)

Finding #5. Phonological Memory

This finding is a doozy; researchers call it developing a child's "phonological memory." Simply stated, super-ready kids have great recall and we know how they love to "retell" their favorite stories.

Previous reading research suggested parents read to their kids 20 minutes a day. If you've been doing this, you're ahead of the curve! But the takeaway here is that simply reading doesn't get us all the way there.

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT



MS. AMOTT 1ST GRADE

Ms. Amott has been teaching for 18 years. 2 years have been taught at Cottonwood elementary. Her favorite things to do in the summer are: reading, traveling, and gardening. Her favorite thing about teaching is to see all children happy to learn things they did not know. Her favorite books are: *Oh The Places You Can Go*, books by Patricia Pollaco, and *Endless Step*. Ms. Amott's favorite restaurant is Luganos.

MISS BURGESS 6TH GRADE

I have been teaching school for six years. I went to BYU college and grew up in Sandy, Utah. One of my favorite things to do is to travel (especially Egypt). I lived in Brazil for a few years. I enjoy playing with my nieces and nephews. I love to read and teach PE. Being outside is another thing I really like to do. One of my favorite subjects to teach is science. Last of all I love to teach. Miss Burgess loves to eat chocolate with her fellow 6th grade teachers!

MISS NISTLER 5TH GRADE

Miss Nistler has a 2 year old daughter and has been teaching for 3 years. She was born in Westminster, California. She likes singing, dancing and hanging out with friends. Most of all she loves to play with her daughter. Miss Nistler's favorite restaurant is the Olive Garden and she enjoys watching American Idol! This summer she had a great time wakeboarding.



CONGRATULATIONS to the following students who won awards at the Olympus Council level of Reflections: (They were judged against students from all of the elementary schools that feed into Olympus High School)

Award of Excellence

Photography:
Ashley C and Zack H

3D:
Dan R

Theatre:
Jenny F

Honorable Mention

Photography:
Maren M and Andrew M

3D:
Elizabeth M , Sophie W
and
Duke S

Film/Video:
Anna P

Literature:
Kate R and Heather C

Those winning Awards of Excellence will go on to the next level of judging at the Granite District Level—good luck!

Great job to all of you -
WOW!

“COTTONWOOD CARES” SERVICE DAY”

“Cottonwood Cares” Service Day

Thursday, February 12 will be “Cottonwood Cares” Service Day. Instead of doing several small service projects throughout the year, the PTA has designated this day as a day of service for the whole school. Students will donate one recess period, and use their time to work on a project that will show someone else they are cared about. The gym will be set up for classes to come in during designated times to work on a project that is “hands on” for each age-group. Some students may be asked to donate a dollar or two, and we hope that they will earn this money themselves so they can feel responsible for the project.

The service projects for each grade are:

- Kindergarten-** Making art kits for patients at Primary Children’s Hospital and doing a stuffed animal drive
- 1st Grade-** Making valentines for residents of the Cottonwood Creek Retirement Center
- 2nd Grade-** Donating books with a personal letter to 2nd Grade students at Western Hills Elementary
- 3rd Grade-** Decorating food delivery boxes and collecting donations for the Utah Food Bank
- 4th Grade-** Making bag lunches for homeless individuals
- 5th Grade-** Making bracelet kits for patients at Primary Children’s Hospital
- 6th Grade-** Making knot blankets to be donated to YWCA domestic violence shelter

Students will also have the chance to help make thank you banners for the local fire and police departments from the entire school!

A huge thank you to teachers for their support, and to members of the service committee for their efforts in making preparations for this fabulous day! Students will be hearing more about the details for their project the first part of February. Questions? **Contact Sarah Bradley at 278-9491.**



Parents of 6th Graders...

As you may or may not be aware, Olympus Jr. High has a standardized dress code (meaning that students wear designated colors, with no logos, to school). State law requires continual parental support of this policy, through a vote every three years. This is the year for the vote, which will take place during Parent Teacher conferences on March 3 and 4 from 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.. Parents of next year’s 7th grade students are encouraged to come to the Jr. High during these times to vote (one vote per family).

Prior to the vote, an informational forum will be held on Thursday, February 5 at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr. High auditorium. Written and verbal input will be taken to assist the Jr. High Community Council in finalizing details before the vote.

There are also two positions open on next year’s Community Council. Applications are available in the Junior High’s main office if you are interested. Community Council is a wonderful way to be involved and requires just one meeting a month. Applications are due no later than Feb. 17th.

We look forward to having next year’s 7th grade students at Olympus Junior High and desire their parents to be as informed as possible regarding school policies.

The OJH Community Council