

Little Cardinal Press

Earlham Elementary February Newsletter

Hello parents/guardians,

We have just completed another month of school and we couldn't have asked for a better month with the weather outside. We have just hit 60 degrees with our outside temperature, wow! The month of February is upon us and there is so much going on in the elementary. We will be taking the Iowa Assessments for grades 3-6th grade. The 2nd trimester is coming to an end which means parent/teacher conferences will be here at the end of the month. Remember to check the outside temperature prior to your child leaving for school to make sure they have the proper clothing. With this crazy winter we have been having it's hard saying what the temperature is going to be outside. Have a great month of February!

Sincerely,
Jason Hammen
Pk-6 Principal

Kindergarten Registration for 2012-2013 school year

We will be having our parent meeting for next year's kindergarten class on Thursday, February 9th at 6:00 PM in the school's auditorium. This is an informational meeting about the two programs that are offered at Earlham, pre-kindergarten and traditional kindergarten. Parents need to bring the child's original birth certificate and a copy of immunization records for the registration portion of the meeting.

Iowa Assessments Testing

The students in grades 3rd-6th grade will be taking the Iowa Assessments (formally known as ITBS) during the days of February 6th-10th. The tests will be over reading, written language, math, social studies and science. Please make sure that your son or daughter is well rested and has a good breakfast each morning during the testing week.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

The second parent/teacher conferences are at the end of this month. The conferences are February 23rd and 28th from 4:00-8:00 pm. Conference reminders will be coming home with your child on Friday, February 3rd.

Elementary Fundraiser

On February 8th, the elementary will be participating in the magazine sales fundraiser. This is the only fundraiser that the elementary is participating in this year. Your child will be bringing home information about the fundraiser and how you and your family can participate. This is not a door to door fundraiser. Thanks for supporting the elementary in this fundraiser!

Pre-K/Kindergarten News

The kindergarteners are 100 days smarter! We celebrated 100th day on Friday, January 20th with a day full of interesting and exciting activities. We got into the spirit of the celebration by making glasses and crowns to wear throughout the day and we enjoyed reading books about 100th day celebrations. We wrote "When I am 100 I will be..." and added our own illustrations of what we think we'll look like when we are 100. These are displayed in the hallway, so make sure to take a peek at them next time you stop in for a visit. Math was full of counting to 100 in many ways and a highlight was the making and eating of our fruit loop necklaces.

Winter has been full of interesting units. One of our favorite units featured author Jan Brett. The students did a wonderful job writing an opinion piece relating to which book they thought was the best. Story props helped with story retell and the students really understand story elements (characters, setting, and main events) now.

We are looking forward to a fun-filled February full of celebrations. Parent Teacher conferences are around the corner and we are excited to share our growth with parents!

First Grade

First graders have been working very hard on writing reports. The children have learned how to take notes on a web. The children then had to organize the information that they gathered into a logical sequence. They worked off of their webs to write a rough draft. Students edited with a classmate and then also with their teacher before writing their final drafts. The first graders loved researching and thought it was so awesome to learn about an animal or planet of their choice.

On Friday, January 20th the first graders celebrated the 100th day of school. They read stories and sang songs about the 100th day, wrote 100 words, wrote what they would do with \$100, and made fruit loop necklaces of 100 fruit loops. It was great celebrating the children being 100 days smarter!

For large group reading the children have been learning about amazing leaders. Some of the individuals that we studied were Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. Students used these texts to discuss how these leaders were the same and different, worked on asking and answering questions, main idea and details, and summarizing.

We've been working on adding -ing and -ed to words, short vowel sounds and final e. Make sure to ask your child the difference between Bossy e and Sleepy e. They are becoming quite the experts at it!

Second Grade

In January, the second graders learned to identify and count money during math. The children are expected to know the names of the coins, their values, and count groups of coins and dollars. The second graders used dollars, quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies. They are now practicing telling time to five minute intervals on analog and digital clocks. The students also need to identify each time as a.m. or p.m. Continue to practice at home so your child can memorize addition math facts with sums to twenty.

Our Lead 21 reading series unit is about seasons and weather. Students read fiction and nonfiction stories to understand how weather and seasons affect their lives. They looked for patterns in the seasons and how life changed during the seasons. They read about how severe weather happens and how meteorologists predict the weather.

We connected what the students were discussing during reading with our science unit about the moon. Students learned what causes day and night. They saw how the tilt of the earth as it orbits the sun caused the different seasons. They participated in experiments with the surface of the moon and its landforms. In February, second graders will learn about and observe the phases of the moon.

Mrs. Burrig, Mrs. Schnell, and Mrs. Schmidt

News from the Portable Press

Winter has finally arrived which has quickened our steps between the portable and the school building. Since our last post our students have continued to show growth in their multiplication mastery. Mrs. Hamilton has shared a math tip with us that covers the following: if your child knows that any number times 0 is 0, the nines magic trick, and if he/she can count by 1's, 2's, and 5's then he/she already knows 80% of the multiplication facts. If you take a few extra minutes each night to focus on the following facts in addition to facts already mastered this would definitely make a big difference. These facts include: 3x3, 3x4, 3x6, 3x7, 3x8, 4x4, 4x6, 4x7, 4x8, 6x6, 6x7, 6x8, 7x7, 7x8, and 8x8. We have begun weekly fluency probes on multiplication facts. We will update you more on this at parent teacher conferences.

LEAD 21 poses this question, "What makes someone a hero and what kind of impact a hero can have on the world?" We have enjoyed reading biographies from past and present, which have included Martin Luther King Jr., Clara Barton, Wilma Rudolph, and Cesar Chavez. Students have enjoyed discovering what qualities a hero possesses, and how these heroes have made an impact on our world. Students have selected a famous person from history and will write biographies based on those people. This unit has really enriched our students' perspectives on various historical events and time periods.

"Just say no to alcohol and drugs" has been our hot topic during our science unit on staying healthy. We hope our classroom discussions have created a dialogue at home about making healthy choices for your body.

We're bringing the year of the dragon out to the portable. Please ask your child what his/her zodiac symbol is. We look forward to ending our China unit with a Chinese feast.

Fourth Grade

Fourth grade explored the stars this month. Mr. Adkins visited our classrooms with a Power Point lesson on the Smart Board. We learned about the brightness scale for the stars and special constellations to explore. We visited the star lab with Mr. Adkins to learn about the Greek and Roman stories about the constellations that we can observe in Iowa. We visited the star lab again to learn the Native American stories about the constellations. Students made a promise to observe the sky whenever the clouds disappear and it gets warmer. Thanks, Mr. Adkins for all the knowledge you shared with us.

Division is our next major challenge in Math. Parents, please sit down with your son or daughter and have them show you how they can divide. We also finished a big unit on two-digit multiplication. Keep practicing multiplication facts and division facts. This will make fractions easier when we start that unit.

We are becoming writers. We wrote color poetry using our senses. We are writing a research paper about a famous person from that person's point of view. We wrote an opinion paper using facts to support our opinion. We also will present speeches at our wax museum on Friday, January 27.

Fifth Grade

In 5th Grade writing, we have really been focusing on students learning how to produce clear and coherent pieces. Our core focuses on three types of writing: narrative, informative, and opinion. So far this year we have concentrated on teaching students how to prepare, organize, and write narratives of which many of you have probably read on our Writing Blogs. We recently moved on to teaching students how to use research to write an informative paper. This process began with students reading about emigration to America in their Lead 21 books. After modeling how to use power notes to organize information, students moved on to using an interactive web-tour of Ellis Island. They added this information to their power notes before they were able to begin writing. All students are writing a piece on the history of Ellis Island for this assignment. For our next informative paper, students will have a choice of topic and we hope to place these on our blogs. To really do well on this assignment, 5th graders must integrate some core standards such as: introducing the topic clearly, using details to develop the topic, using transitional words and specific vocabulary, as well as providing a concluding paragraph. Our students have become very familiar with rubrics that remind them of these expectations and use the rubrics to assist them in their writing.

Sixth Grade

Sixth grade Social Studies classes have finished up studying early Greece and its history. From here we went to Italy and studied its civilization and culture. Our final project for Italy is working with mosaic tiles. We worked on finding facts and opinions which worked perfectly with our reading skills for the last couple of weeks.

The last couple of stories that we read for Reading worked on the skills of finding facts and opinions in both fiction and nonfiction readings. The most recent story is working on finding generalizations.

For Language, we are working on pronouns--subjective, objective, and possessive. We also worked on finding the antecedents so we could show agreement between it and the pronoun that replaces it. The last skill is the indefinite pronouns.

In math, we are exploring the world of ratios, proportions, and unit rates. We have been using the grocery store, maps, and scale drawings to help us with these concepts. We will be moving on to probability and percents in the near future. Remember to practice math facts and to check over your child's math work at night because it helps reinforce concepts that are taught at school. Also on Monday and Wednesday mornings, I have study groups for anyone to come to. Please let me know if you would like your child to attend and I can get you signed up. ~Miss Harper~

We're lighting up and getting our motors running in science class as students investigate electrical circuits. Students will identify the essential components of an electric circuit, identify conductors and insulators, compare closed and open circuits, draw schematic diagrams to represent both series and parallel circuits, and communicate the results of their investigations.

From Ms. Waugh....

Technology Through The Years...

50th - 40th Century BC --- Caveman <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharp stones to carve drawings into cave walls• Paints created from powdered minerals, animal blood and fat• Stone knives and flint spearheads	11th - 15th Century AD --- Medieval England <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extremely expensive books• Bone/ivory stylus on wooden tablets with green/black wax coating• Abacus	1950s – 1970s --- Mid 20th Century <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First vacuum tube-based computers introduced in 1946• Nibbed pens still popular• The first electronic calculator• Microprocessors led computing boom
5th - 4th Century BC --- Ancient Greece <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wooden stylus on a waxed tablet• Abacus	1800 – 1900 --- Victorian <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mechanical calculator became commercially successful in 1851• The first commercially produced typewriter became available in 1870• Ink wells and steel-nibbed pens for writing• Blackboard and chalk	2000s --- Today <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Four out of five students own laptops; others use desktop PCs and tablets• Internet-based study from home on cloud networks• Mobile platforms supported, utilizing phones

PE

Kindergarten and 1st Graders are learning all types of fun balances and stunts in PE. Students are performing balances like tripods, a variety of rolls, and partner stunts like the “back-to-back get up” and “wringing the dishrag.” We also do animal movements which the kids really get into! Activities like these are great for flexibility and strengthening muscles, especially the upper body.

2nd and 3rd Graders are also doing Stunts and Tumbling. We are doing fun balances like the tripod and headstand, stunts like cartwheels and round offs, and are cooperating to perform partner balances like the Double Bear and the Lighthouse. Students will be working in groups to develop a Tumbling Routine to show to the class!

4th - 6th Graders are hoopin’ it up in the gym, learning and improving dribbling, passing, defending, and shooting skills in our basketball unit. We are learning shooting games like Knockout, PIG, and Around The World which can be played anywhere (with a basketball hoop of course) with anybody. We are also playing large group games that develop all of our basketball skills like Sideline Basketball and 3 on 3.

Remind Students to Wear Tennis Shoes to PE to win the Golden Shoe Award!

Guidance

It seems like the year is flying by in guidance. Kindergarten is beginning the second section in our curriculum, which is learning how to manage the emotions that we have. First grade is learning about the “I” statement and using it when talking to our friends. In second grade we have been talking about making good decisions. Third grade is working on problem solving. Fourth grade is learning about Rosa Parks and the civil rights movement. Fifth grade is quickly moving through our alcohol unit in their curriculum called 411. Thank you to the West Des Moines Police Department for letting us use this curriculum. Sixth grade is beginning their career exploration which will continue on for quite some time.



Congratulations to Mrs. Filkins' and Mrs. Ory's classrooms on winning the Box Tops/Soup Labels contests! Each classroom got to enjoy a pizza party and the support from all of you will fund great things for the elementary. Box Tops and Soup Labels will continue to be collected at the school office and around town soon - be watching for those buckets and please help by clipping each item neatly when you donate them.

PIE is preparing for our annual school Carnival coming up on March 2nd! Many of you have already ordered raffle tickets but be watching for more order forms on the website plus elementary students will be getting them sent home just prior to the event (at which time you can also order game tickets). All tickets will be on sale at the Carnival as well but remember pre-ordering means you don't have to fill out the back of each raffle ticket - we will print them! Plus new this year - you don't have to be present to win!

For games we will be bringing back some of your old favorites – the cake walk is back plus last year's hit Minute To Win It. A Silent Auction is also being assembled with great service items being donated.

Altogether, we hope to make this our most successful effort ever as the elementary is no longer doing their catalog and magazine fundraisers and the funds raised from this event support ALL of Earlham schools.

6 GREAT raffle prizes this year - don't forget to get your tickets!!!!

I-pod touch

Kindle Fire

\$200 Visa Card

Xbox with Kinect and a game

Waterpark stay (Ramada Inn in DM)

Local Business package worth over \$200!