

# Thornton Elementary Parent Newsletter



**Mission: Engage Every Student Every Lesson Every Day**

**Vision: Thornton Elementary exists to collectively advance students' learning and achievement through strategic and intentional action. We will prepare students for success by nurturing their social development and accelerating their academic performance.**

**October 2009**

## Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Community Members:

Our year is off to a fabulous start. We have all programs in place and up and running. Hopefully, you received the information about our new Model I program to address the more specific needs of students in literacy. This took some time to put into place after looking at data and students currently at Thornton Elementary School. Interventions have begun, we have 26 students being seen for additional guided reading time with our interventionist and this will be rotating every six weeks based on the progress of students and additional student needs. At the time of this publishing all grade levels will have completed their first rounds of data discussion to focus on the progress of students on a regular 6 week cycle, as well as implementing new materials targeted at Second Language Learner needs. We have 13 teachers teaching Oral Language Development using our new On Our Way to English materials which is in English and was created by the same company who developed Literacy by Design for English only learners. There is a good alignment between both programs. Students learn the same literacy concepts that also align with our Learning Essentials and standards. The OWE materials provide more visual supports and better background explanation. We will have some on display at Coffee and Conversation and at Literacy Night, October 29<sup>th</sup>.

Speaking of **Literacy Night** it is that time of the year again. Last year was our first ever celebration of Literacy. We had a tremendous turn out. We served over 500 students and their families. We hope this year will just as big. It will be held on **Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-8:00**. There is no school the next day so we think you can rest up after having so much fun. Here are a few of the highlights:

- Theme: Leap into Literature
- Author and Story Tellers will be here to share their stories
- Food
- Fun activities to share with the whole family
- Free Books

You will also be receiving additional information during parent teacher conferences on October 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> about our plan for literacy night. Please mark your calendars.

Our PBS(Positive Behavior Support) Team has been working to put into place more ways students can be identified when they exhibit:

Positive Behavior

Always being prepared

We are making good decisions

School Pride

Hopefully, you have been receiving the PAWS awards at home or students perhaps your child has collected enough to turn them in for prizes on Fridays. Either way we want to recognize our students' good choices.

As part of our on-going efforts to support our mission and vision, especially the part about "nurturing students' social development" we have implemented a new character trait program entitled Peace4Kids. This program targets 15 Character Traits:

Caring	Self-Control	Service	Cooperation	Courage
Honesty	Goal-Setting	Humanity	Patience	Perseverance
Respect	Responsibility	Self-Esteem	Gratitude	Integrity

These traits will be taught throughout the year and will become behavior expectations around our school. Each class has a period of time called the gathering where they discuss these traits and talk about how students are doing working on these skills. Our school atmosphere has become even better since we implemented this.

When students do have difficulty, our Specials team will be holding a Kids Court on Mondays and Fridays from 7:50-8:20 to help mediate student to student concerns. A problem solving format will be used to help students determine options and select a plan toward getting along with others. We hope this will provide an alternate to office referrals and also serve as an educational experience, helping students to develop skills for future use.

Thank you again for all your support. If you wish to know more any one of the programs mentioned briefly, please do not hesitate to call me or come to one of our Coffee and Conversations on the first Friday of the month, (2<sup>nd</sup> Friday if there is no school) and I will be happy to tell you more.

Yours,

Carol A. Sorvig,  
Principal

## FYI

- **Communication Progress/Chain of Command:** When a parent expresses a concern it is district and school policy to respond to this issue within 24-48 hours. Please contact your child's teacher first. If unresolved to your satisfaction, contact the administrative team. If you do not feel satisfied at this point the district executive directors can be reached for an appeal process at 720-972-4000.
- **Thank you for up-dating your contact information.** Many of you have stopped by the office lately to update phone numbers or address or emergency information. This is helpful when trying to send out our auto-dialer with monthly information, as well as for emergency situations that arise.
- **Absenteeism-** when calling your child in with flu like systems, please let us know if your child is experiencing a fever with cough or sore throat.
- **Falling Grades:** When a child's grades decline from a C to D or D to an F during the course of the trimester. Notice to parents will be provided within 5 school days through a conference, telephone conversation, auto-dialer message, weekly email or written report sent home.
- **If a child is not working up to potential:** Parents will be informed with sufficient time to correct when a child is not working up to potential. Conferences may be a good time to do this. This also applies to character trait areas on the report card.
- **Uniforms** Thornton Elementary School is an academic dress enforced school. It is part of our expectation that all students wear the appropriate attire. This includes tops of White or Burgundy polo tops and Khaki or navy blue pants.
- **Math Night Thank you-** We had a great turn out for our first Math night on Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. This was for intermediate students and their families. Thank you so very much for showing how much you care about your children's education. This is the number one factor in how successful your children will be in school. Our next math night for primary students and their families will be Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **Thornton Elementary Calendar of Events**

- Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>-NO school for students-Teacher work day
- Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup>-Conferences 3:30-7:30 pm-Students attend regular classes
- Friday, October 16<sup>th</sup>-Conferences 10:00 am-6:00 pm-NO school for students
- Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> 6:00- 8:00 School Improvement Team
- Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup>-Literacy Night, 5:00-8:00 pm
- Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup>-NO school for students-Teacher comp day
- Next Newsletter goes out Monday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Following is a summary of what grade levels are going to be covering in the upcoming month: (4<sup>th</sup> grade summaries will be sent home in their Grade Level newsletter)

### **Kindergarten**

Subject and Content to be covered:	How this will be assessed:
Literacy: Students will be able to identify 6-12 letters and letter sounds.	Teachers will observe during reading and writing conferences.
Math: Students will learn to count from 0-21.	Teachers will ask students to count during calendar time.

### **1st Grade**

Subject and Content to be covered:	How this will be assessed:
Reading Thinking Like a Scientist with comprehension strategies of Creating Images, Determining Importance and Asking Questions	Students will be assessed using informal assessments, oral and written assessments, and reading conferences one on one throughout the year.
Writing Personal Narratives and Science Journals	Students are assessed on their writing in journals and assignments daily, as well as writing samples throughout the year.
Math Unit 2 - Number Grids and Lines, Math Boxes, Telling time, pennies, nickels, coin exchanges, problem solving, number models and compliments of ten.	Student progress is monitored each day through oral and written assessments, informal assessments (exit slips and class discussions), as well as a written assessment at the end of each unit.
Science The Moon	Students will be assessed through observations and informal assessments throughout the unit

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

Subject and Content to be covered:	How this will be assessed:
Reading: Asking Questions and determining importance.	Rigby Unit test Ongoing assessment during independent reading
Writing: The writing process involving the ability to gather ideas and prewriting.	Observation during differentiated writing instruction.
Math: Addition and Subtraction	Exit slips, observations during games and independent work, unit assessment
Science/Social Studies: The moon and the sun.	Identify the different shapes of the moon and how the sun moves.

### **Grade 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Subject and Content to be covered:	How this will be assessed:
Reading: Infer and synthesize Vocabulary development around cultures	Formal assessment and ongoing assessment during independent reading
Writing: Ideas, problem and solution	Observation during differentiated writing instruction
Math: Adding and subtracting whole numbers	Exit slips, observations during games and independent work, unit assessment
Science/Social Studies: How are communities similar and different?	Exit slips, <b>feedback from families</b> , interviews

## 5th Grade

Subject and Content to be covered:	How this will be assessed:
Reading: Our students will be using questioning to help them understand what they are reading. They will identify appropriate text sections and make relevant questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Guided Reading groups</li> <li>✓ Independent reading conferences</li> <li>✓ End of unit theme and progress test.</li> <li>✓ See rubric below</li> </ul>
Writing: Students will practice using good writing traits: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation. We will focus on these traits through writing and publishing poetry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Independent writing conferences</li> <li>✓ Published poetry books</li> </ul>
Math: Students will focus on three topics: estimation, computational procedures, and data analysis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ EDM checklist</li> <li>✓ Summative assessment</li> </ul>
Science: Students will be learning about Electricity and Magnetism and the forces that are involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ End of unit theme and progress test.</li> <li>✓ Extended response questions</li> <li>✓ Constructed response</li> <li>✓ Performance assessments</li> </ul>

Level of Proficiency	Proficiency Descriptors
<b>(4) Advanced</b>	I consistently find appropriate places to ask sophisticated questions in my work in reading, writing, math, science and social studies.
<b>(3) Proficient</b>	I consistently find appropriate places to ask questions. I ask a variety of detailed questions related to the text.
<b>(2) Partially Proficient</b>	I find some appropriate places in the text to ask questions. My questions are usually on topic but sometimes I am repetitive.
<b>(1) Unsatisfactory</b>	I sometimes find appropriate places in text to ask questions. My questions are not always directly related to what I'm working on.

- Assessments and grading standards are applied consistently to students of similarly demonstrated ability.
- Assessments are based solely on demonstrated student progress and achievement of reasonable and clear standards." (No grades based on behavior).
- Our team (or your teacher) encourages students to persist in their assignments so that adequate progress and good growth can be achieved