

# The Pony Express

February 29, 2008

Rita Ashley, Principal  
Tara Sublette, Vice Principal

**Elizabeth Smith**  
ELEMENTARY



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## Award Assemblies

March 4th  
8:15 am 1<sup>st</sup> grade

March 6<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 am 2<sup>nd</sup> grade

March 7<sup>th</sup>  
8:15 am 3<sup>rd</sup> grade  
9:00 am 4<sup>th</sup> grade

## Principal's News

Elizabeth Smith is focused on student achievement. We are very appreciative of parental support!

Use this process when working at home to assist students with problem solving.

1. Read the problem twice
2. Say it in your words
3. Collect important data
4. Choose a strategy
5. Analyze the problem
6. Find the solution and show your work
7. Check your work
8. Write your answer in a complete sentence

Strategies that can be used to problem solve:

1. Make an easier problem
2. Guess and Check
3. Make an organized list

4. Work backwards
5. Use logical reasoning
6. Make a table
7. Look for a pattern
8. Draw a diagram or picture
9. Act it out or Use Manipulatives

Research shows that real life situations are the most effective when teaching problem solving. Cooking, shopping, managing allowances, distance traveled, schedules involving time, and using graphs and tables are some opportunities for students to problem solve. Involve your child in problem solving experiences in your everyday life and watch their skills improve.

## Vice Principal's News

We are just beginning the 5<sup>th</sup> six weeks! There are many exciting events planned in the next few weeks.

We will recognize student success on March 4<sup>th</sup> through March 7<sup>th</sup> during the Awards Assemblies. Please attend if possible and let your child know how proud you are of his/her accomplishments.

The Third and Fourth graders will be taking TAKS tests on March 5<sup>th</sup> this year. The third grade will take the Reading TAKS, and the fourth grade will take the Writing TAKS. Please provide these students with encouragement, along with lots of rest and a healthy diet.

The Library will be holding its Spring Scholastic Book Fair from March 10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup>. Please come and celebrate the joy of reading! Funds raised help us to purchase needed books for the library.

Public Schools Week is March 10<sup>th</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup>, as well. E. Smith will hold its Open House on March 13<sup>th</sup>! Come to Open House and see all that the students have been accomplishing!

Remember as always that the school day begins at 8am. The students must be in their classroom when the 8 am bell rings.

## Kindergarten News

We are having a fantastic time in Kindergarten! We have many new things to learn and explore in the fifth six weeks of school. We are learning about Texas and creating some fun projects for Open House. We will also be focusing our studies on zoo animals, pond life, and eggs. In math we will begin addition and subtraction! Our new sight words are: on, this, yes, no, they, and good. Please continue working with your child at home on these words.

## First Grade News

What an exciting time in first grade! We are having "oceans" of fun! Come down our hallway, and you will see divers swimming in the dangerous shark infested waters. The divers have written stories about all the important things they have learned in first grade this year. They have learned some amazing things.

## Second Grade News

### Happy Travelers

Second grade is deep in the jungle, immersed in learning about the Amazon Rain Forest. Each second grader is becoming an expert on a rain forest animal. Each child is preparing a research paper about his or her chosen animal, and with their parents' help, are making a scale model of the animal to be displayed in the rain forest in our hallway. During art class, the students have already sketched and are now painting a mural showing all the layers of the rain forest as

## Third Grade News

This is a busy time of year in third grade! We will enjoy taking a class trip to the Mansfield ISD Natatorium to practice water safety in the indoor pool during the second week of March, and to the Ballpark in Arlington on March 25th.

We will be taking the reading portion of the TAKS test on March 5<sup>th</sup>. We have been working on strategies in class and know that your child will do their best. Remember to help them get plenty of rest and good nutrition on the days before the tests are scheduled and give them lots of encouragement! They are ready!

We will continue to focus on math: learning about probability and statistics, graphs, and patterns and tables. The Math TAKS will be on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Please

Also, please keep your calendars open because Open House is March 13<sup>th</sup>. We would love all of our families to come and see the wonderful projects we have been creating! Keep up the hard work!

Please come to Open House on March 13<sup>th</sup>, and let your oceanographer give you a tour of their underwater world. They will be able to name the four oceans of the world, identify the body parts of the whale, and so much more! Come enjoy the fun in first grade!

background for our team exhibit. Be sure to stop by the second grade hall during Open House. It'll be wild!

After our rain forest adventure, we will be going on a trek across the USA. We will visit each of the seven regions and learn what makes that region unique. Our families will also be involved in this unit by helping us send a flat version of ourselves to a friend or family member that lives in one of these seven regions. When those are returned, we will learn more details about each area.

continue to go over any missed problems with them at home to facilitate their learning.

We will integrate our Science units (magnetism, habitats and the needs of living organisms, and Earth's resources) into Reading as we focus on Non-fiction. Later in the six weeks, we will enjoy a "chocolate" novel unit. We will also begin working on the classificatory style of writing- exploring the positive and negative aspects of a topic.

In Social Studies, we will learn about the Economic system, including free enterprise. Our trip to the Ballpark in Arlington will reinforce our learning about goods and services, supply and demand, spending and saving, and budgeting.

## Fourth Grade News

Peace has been restored on Mysterious Lane! The mystery of the stolen Krabby Patty formula has been solved. After all the incriminating evidence was reviewed and presented, the Transformers finally admitted to committing the serious crime. For punishment, they were banished from the community.

Fourth grade has been working extremely hard preparing for the Writing TAKS test that will be given on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Please help your child by

making sure that they have a nutritious breakfast and are well rested the day of the TAKS test.

Fourth graders are learning many important subjects. The Texas Revolution is a main topic in Fourth grade. In Science, we are learning about the human body, and the systems it contains. Many Fourth graders can name all the bones found in the body. We are also studying measurement in math, including the customary and the metric systems. **WARNING!** Robots are coming March 6<sup>th</sup>. **BE PREPARED.**

## Librarian's Lore

There is reading going on in the E. Smith library! Be sure to drop in March 10<sup>th</sup> through the 14<sup>th</sup> when the library holds its Spring Scholastic Book Fair. It will be open every day during school hours and on Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup> during Open House. Purchase a book for your student or for one of your student's teachers. All teachers will have a Wish List of books that they would like to have for their classrooms located outside the library. Please help support both classroom reading and the E. Smith Library.

The Reading Counts program is progressing at full steam ahead! Students are collecting charms each time they reach the grade level goal. Help support your student in reaching these goals, and promote a life long love of reading.

## From the Nurse

**What are some of the ways to keep your student healthy at school.**

1. *Get a good night's rest.* Children in elementary school require a minimum of 9 hours of sleep, with the range being 9 to 11 hours. Frequent night awakenings can also affect a child's mood during the day. In addition, sleep/rest can be affected by medicines, natural events such as stormy weather, caffeine, hand-held games, and watching TV after hours.
2. *Eat a nutritious breakfast.* Allow enough time in the mornings before school to sit down to a healthy breakfast. Cereal, oatmeal, farina, even toast with peanut butter and milk

## Extra From Mrs. Sublette

### Strategies for Increasing Positive Behavior

1. Be patient and allow student time to respond
2. Make activities fun and interesting
3. Offer kind words of encouragement
4. Look for teachable moments
5. Show respect for the child
6. Maintain high expectations
7. Use a calm voice
8. Describe desirable behavior

will each help the student's day start off right. If you are in a hurry, remember that the cafeteria at school serves breakfast from 7:30 to 8 am.

3. *Stay home if you are sick.* A fever of 100.0 or above will be sent home from school. Any medications needed at school require a parent's written permission.
4. *Wash you hands frequently.* This is still the best way to prevent the spread of germs.
5. *Participate in some form of daily physical activity.* Playing outside, biking, playing soccer, ballet, gymnastics, and walking are all examples of physical activities.
6. *Give Positive Praise and Encouragement.* Start off the day with words of encouragement. It fills the students up with pride.

## “Sporty” Stallion Stats

First, let me thank all of the students, families, and friends that helped us raise money for the American Heart Association during our Jump Rope for Heart/Hoops for Heart fundraiser. We have exceeded our school goal and therefore, some very lucky students during our JRFH assembly on 5/2/08 at 9:15 am will get to throw some pies in the coaches faces!! We will also be crowning the king and queen of JRFH/HFH.

Also please mark your calendars for these important dates:

Field Day will be May 16<sup>th</sup>

4<sup>th</sup> grade Field Day will be May 30<sup>th</sup>

This six weeks we will be conducting fitness testing in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades. Results will be sent home with your child's report card at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> six weeks. In all grades, students will be doing a rhythm unit, and will also be developing their juggling skills. Don't forget...GYM stands for Get Yourself Moving!

Sincerely,  
Coach Cain, along with Coach Gowins and Coach Grant  
Physical Education

## From the PTA President

Welcome Spring!!!!

We are entering Spring with lots of PTA activities left to participate in with your student. We are having a Spring Dance on Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Watch for details! Muffins for Mom is coming in May—date to follow. Yearbooks will be delivered soon. Field Day is coming!! Please watch for all of these dates.

Thank you to Christina Tirone for chairing our Valgrams this year. Thank you to Misti Wood for being our PTA Volunteer of this month!!! Thank you to Julie Jovais for organizing our Morris Brothers Program. Thanks to all our students and parents for supporting our popcorn/pickle day every month. We are raising about \$300 every month!!

April is election time for the Executive PTA Board for next year. Watch for details and please consider giving your time next year. It is minimal effort for big rewards!!! You do not have to have prior experience to become a Board Member, just a willingness to help support your school!!

Lori Marquardt  
PTA President

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## From the Sketch Pad

With Spring quickly approaching, art projects will be brightening up with flowers in the larger than life style of George O'Keeffe. Classes will also be studying “form” in order to create three dimensional artworks. Also, for the third and fourth grade students, parents will soon have the opportunity to purchase merchandise that displays their own student's artwork through the Square One Art Company. There will be more information to follow from Square One Art.

Debra Clarke  
Art Teacher

## When A Child Reads...

There are a lot of things you can do to help your beginning reader. Remember, reading should always be fun--- so relax and enjoy! A frustrated reader is a reader who is not going to take the necessary risks to improve his/her skills. A reader is like an athlete. The more a child reads, the better his/her reading becomes.

Above all, praise your child's efforts. Each “mistake” is another chance to learn! Each success, no matter how small, is a building block toward his/her future success as an independent reader.

Mrs. Thompson  
Reading Specialist