

Johnson Elementary

Thunderbirds

December 2013 Newsletter

Important Dates!

PTC Meeting 6pm - JES Libray	Wednesday Dec. 11
PTC Financial Meeting 6pm - JES Library	Wednesday Dec. 18
End of 2nd Qtr.	Friday Dec. 20
Box Top/Campbell Label Collection Day	Friday Dec. 20
Winter Break - No School	Monday Dec. 23rd - Monday Jan. 6
Student's return to School	Tuesday Jan. 7

HAPPY NEW YEAR

A yellow starburst graphic with multiple points, positioned above the word 'NEW' in the 'HAPPY NEW YEAR' text.



Johnson Elementary School

December Message from Mrs. Pierce



Thank you, Johnson parents!

93% of you attended parent teacher conference in October!

PLANNING AHEAD

Johnson Elementary prides itself on making every minute with every student count in their day-to-day education. We strive to provide a continual learning environment for your child and work to minimize interruptions that impede the educational process of your child. We appreciate your efforts to provide the maximum learning environment for your child by communicating with them at home on issues such as who will be picking them up after school, items that require their attention before and after school, information that they need to remember. By ensuring that you have communicated with them at home before school, you will be allowing them to focus on their education while they are at Johnson Elementary. We completely understand that you will need to call the school every once in a while if there is an emergency or when plans change after your child has left for school.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE JES TEACHER OF THE YEAR NOMINEES!

JACKIE BENSON	KYLE SAVOY
AMANDA BRAATEN	LARRY STRUBEL
TANYA COLEMAN	NORA WALDOW
JOHN KING	JENNIFER WOLFE
DEBORAH ROBUCK	PATTY CASEBIER



JES is implementing a program called *i-Ready Diagnostic* that will provide our students with an innovative diagnostic assessment. *i-Ready Diagnostic* helps teachers to effectively assess their students and then provide individualized instruction based on each student's unique needs. *i-Ready Diagnostic* assesses the following skill areas:

Reading

- Phonological Awareness
- Phonics
- High-Frequency Words
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension

Math

- Number and Operations
- Algebra and Algebraic Thinking
- Measurement and Data
- Geometry

i-Ready Diagnostic begins by giving students an adaptive assessment in reading or math. An adaptive assessment is a test that automatically adjusts the difficulty of the questions according to each student's performance in order to determine his or her abilities in reading or math. Before your child begins the assessment, it's important to set appropriate expectations. *i-Ready* is a very different kind of test that presents students with questions that can be both too easy and too hard. It is designed to do this until the assessment finds exactly the level at which the student is performing. Therefore, your child will certainly see some items above his or her level. Encourage your child to independently complete the test to the best of his or her ability, and know that it is okay to get questions wrong.

Each time a student gets an item incorrect, he or she will be presented with a simpler question until the diagnostic finds the grade level at which the student is performing. The assessment efficiently assesses students across multiple grade levels, allowing for identification of root causes of students' struggles or for identification of areas where a student is ready for further challenge. This information will then provide the teacher with a "road map" to instruction.

For more information on *i-Ready Diagnostic*, please visit the Curriculum Associates website at www.CurriculumAssociates.com.

CHANCE TO WIN

Fill out this ticket and return to the office for a chance to win a \$10 gas card.

Name _____ Phone # _____

Student(s) name _____

Something you learned from the newsletter _____

Kindergarten News

The school year is going way too fast.

December will be a busy month. We will be testing all the students on their DRA level, which stands for Developmental Reading Assessment. We are so proud of how our students have grown. We realize that it is because of the reading time you have spent with them at home and the time at school with us. A big thank you to all the parents!

We will be doing the movie, Polar Express, during the month of December. We will read the book, act it out and watch the movie. And the really fun part is that we all wear our pajamas! Notes will be going home with the details.

Thank you,
The Kinder Team



First Grade News

Dear Parents,

The 34th annual First Grade Thanksgiving Feast was another huge success. Thanks to all for helping make it a memorable occasion for our students. The children feasted on roasted turkey with freshly made cranberry sauce, sweet potato casserole, fruit salad, corn, corn bread and home-churned butter. The first graders all participated in the preparation of this meal and they shared the meal dressed in home-made Native American and Pilgrim costumes. They also designed and created pattern place-mats which they kept as a memento of this special day.

During the month of December we will be testing the students to see all of the wonderful progress that they are making in reading and math. Students will also be tested on their High Frequency Words. As you know, the First Grade goal is to have all students master these words before Christmas break.

We are also looking forward to our Annual Cookie Exchange in December which wraps up our unit of study on Christmas Around the World. We wish all of our families a joyous holiday season.

First Grade Team



Second Grade News



Dear Second Grade Families,

Second Quarter is quickly coming to an end. With only three weeks left in this quarter, we have many challenges and academic goals still to accomplish. Please ensure that your child arrives to school on time and every day. This will provide the best outcome for your child to grow.

Reading and Writing:

In Literacy, our students will be exploring how stories work. The students will be focusing on Understanding Story Grammar, Identifying/Understanding Literary Devices, and Identifying/Using Text Features. In writing, students will be exposed to expository writing where they are learning the format of informational text.

Mathematics:

In Math, we will begin Unit 5 which will entail 3-D and 2-D shapes. Kids will develop the concepts of point and line segment, identification of polygons, knowledge of 3-D shapes, and recognition of symmetry.

Social Studies:

In Social Studies, all second graders will learn about holiday traditions around the world. They will study customs from the countries of Germany, Sweden, Great Britain, and Israel.

Thank you for your support and partnership in meeting the academic needs of your **child**.

Second Grade Team

Ms. Coleman, Ms. Holcom, Mrs. Waldow and Mrs. Wolfe

Third Grade News

December Greetings from Third Grade!

With Christmas break just three weeks away, we know the kids are excited for the holidays. Remember to continue encouraging **at-home reading** and **math fact practice** daily. Here's a little about what we will be looking forward to learning in December:

Reading and Writing:

In our upcoming unit for reading we will concentrate on how GREAT READERS understand how stories work. This includes understanding story grammar, like identifying the main idea and the setting in a story. It also includes identifying and understanding the characters.

With the commitment by Johnson teachers to incorporate word study into our daily instruction, we are kicking off the use of Words Their Way in third grade. Ask your child about word sorts and the activities he/she is completing each day.

Math:

We're headed into Unit 5 where we will concentrate on place value with larger numbers. This means we'll be building an understanding of the value of digits in the ten-thousands place...all the way to the millions place! We'll even begin exploring decimals.

Thank you for your continued support in your child's learning. Happy Holidays!

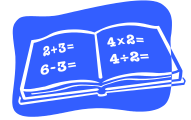
Mrs. Casebier, Mrs. Crosby, Mrs. Head, Mrs. Kiehlbauch

Fourth Grade News

The fourth graders have completed geography and the study of Colorado's 3 regions. We are now focusing on the history of Colorado and its first inhabitants.

In math we are learning the different algorithms (Partial-Sum, Partial-Product, Traditional, Lattice, FOIL), that can be used to solve multiplication problems . We are also learning about decimals, the metric system, Powers of ten, and exponents.

In December, our math focus will be strongly based on multiplication. It is VITAL that students learn their multiplication facts with automaticity.



Division and fractions follow soon.

Way to go to all the fourth graders who are keeping up on their reading logs. We have tweaked our spelling format a bit to include the Words Their Way program that addresses each students individual spelling/phonemic needs.

Have a safe and wonderful holiday season.

The Fourth Grade teachers,

Mr. Steck, Mrs. Ganskow, Ms. Reyes, Mrs. Riley

Fifth Grade News

The 5th grade has been up to many fun and exciting things this month. Students just finished up their Fictional Narrative stories in anticipation of our new writing resource called Write Habits. The 5th grade will also be implementing a new spelling system with more information to come in December.





December in the Library

***The Giving Tree** – our annual canned food drive begins **MONDAY**, December 2nd, and goes through **WEDNESDAY**, December 18th. We will accept any canned, boxed or bagged food items in the library. Each child who brings a donation will get to hang an ornament on our tree! Last year we collected enough food to help 14 of our Johnson families who needed support to get through the Winter break! Our Johnson community is so compassionate and eager to help!

***Late and missing books** – I will be sending home overdue notices again in December; please double check to make sure your child's books are being returned in a timely manner! We will try to have ALL library books turned in before Dec. 20th, and then we'll start fresh to check out books once we return in 2014!! Thank you for your help!

Did you know.....

You can help Johnson Elementary by...



1. Shopping at Office Depot and telling your cashier to apply your sale to Johnson Elementary.
2. Clip Box Tops and Campbell Soup Labels
3. Register your City Market Value Card (form available @ JES)
4. Clip & Save TYSON Chicken labels.
5. Enter the codes found on COKE products at www.mycokerewards.com or send them in & PTC will enter them.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

BY JEAN GRANBERG

Your children are fortunate to be participating in the Second Step social emotional curriculum here at Johnson. One of the main concepts that is taught and learned at the beginning of the school year is Empathy. Empathy is being able to identify, understand, and respond in a caring way towards others and recognizing their feelings. Empathy is the foundation for helpful and socially responsible behaviors, friendships, cooperation, coping, problem solving, all of which help students be successful in school. Take some time to discuss this concept with your child!

The lost and found located in the Gym is overflowing with coats, backpacks, lunch boxes and many other miscellaneous items. Please claim your items before Winter Break. Items not claimed will be donated to charity.



Sport Stacking Tournament Results

2nd Grade

3,3,3

1st Place - Christopher Vargas-Gomez - 4.33 sec. - Johnson

2nd Place - Kiandra Liles - 5.0 sec. - Johnson

3rd Place - Jonas Maxwell - 5.52 sec. - Northside

3.6.3

1st Place - Christopher Vargas-Gomez - 5.58 sec. - Johnson

2nd Place - Kiandra Liles - 6.4 sec. - Johnson

3rd Place - Rachel Robuck - 7.86 sec. - Johnson

Rapid Fire

1st Place - Christopher Vargas- Gomez - 2.94 sec. - Johnson

1st Grade

3,3,3

1st Place - Jose Gomes - 4.9 sec. - Northside

2nd Place - Brekin Hutto - 5.25 sec. - Johnson

3rd Place - Osmar Encarnacion - 5.65 sec. - Johnson

3.6.3

1st Place - Brekin Hutto - 6.69 sec. - Johnson

2nd Place - Maythe Sandoval - 9.8 sec. - Northside

3rd Place - Osmar Encarnacion - 10.36 sec. - Johnson

Rapid Fire

1st Place - Jose Gomes - 5.59 sec. - Northside

Kindergarten

3,3,3

1st Place - Reggie Evans - 5.75 sec. - Northside

2nd Place - Ava Berwanger - 6.81 sec. - Northside

3rd Place - Emmy Maxwell - 8.08 sec. - Northside

Rapid Fire

1st Place - Reggie Evans - 4.94 sec. - Northside

2nd Place - Ava Berwanger - 5.8 sec. - Northside

3rd Place - Jasmine Gutierrez Hernandez - 7.96 sec. - Northside

Sport Stacking Tournament Results

5th Grade

3,6,3

- 1st Place - Kory Bradley - 10.06 sec. - Johnson
- 2nd Place - Josiah Lopez - 12.96 sec. - Johnson
- 3rd Place - Dominick Thornton - 13.58 sec. - Johnson

Cycle

- 1st Place - Kory Bradley - 3.78 sec. - Johnson
- 2nd Place - Josiah Lopez - 4.61 sec. - Johnson
- 3rd Place - Dominick Thornton - 5.51 sec. - Johnson

Rapid Fire

- 1st place - Carolina Rosales - 2.62 sec. - Northside

4th Grade

3,6,3

- 1st Place - Mario Suarez - 4.55 sec. - Johnson
- 2nd Place - Kevyn Izaguirre - 4.58 sec. - Northside
- 3rd Place - Luca Fields - 4.83 sec. - Northside

Cycle

- 1st Place - Luca Fields - 14.03 sec. - Northside
- 2nd Place - Kevyn Isaguirre - 14.69 sec. - Northside
- 3rd Place - Devon Hardin - 16.55 sec. - Johnson

Rapid Fire

- 1st place - Miles Maxwell - 2.85 sec. - Northside

3rd Grade

3,6,3

- 1st Place - Aaron Simpson - 6.3 sec. - Oak Grove
- 2nd Place - Jennifer Gutierrez - 6.84 sec. - Northside
- 3rd Place - Lily Berwanger - 7.03 sec. - Northside

Cycle

- 1st Place - Jennifer Gutierrez - 24.15 sec. - Northside
- 2nd Place - Grace DeJulio - 25.68 sec. - Johnson
- 3rd Place - Kaden Griffiths - 27.50 sec. - Johnson

Rapid Fire

- 1st place - Sandier Gaxiola - 2.62 sec. - Northside

School Motor Intervention

School motor intervention (administered by a physical or occupational therapist in our school district) is considered a “related service” to children who have IEP’s (Individual Education Plans), which means they are receiving special education. Our purpose or goal is to assist the child to be able to better access his education. We must first evaluate the motor skills the student has, and then outline the strengths he demonstrates, as well as the needs he has. We use the skills he has to help develop further skills which will help him access learning. Motor intervention is related to learning in several ways:

First and foremost, motor assessment may ‘bring to light’ underlying problems which affect school performance.

Strength and stability – In order for the student to be able to sit erect at his desk, the student needs strong trunk muscles (abdominal and back extension); in order to hold a pencil maturely, use appropriate pencil pressure and make steady lines for pencil accuracy, he needs strength in his shoulders (or ‘shoulder girdle,’ as the muscles surround the shoulders are called) for “proximal stability,” and hand strength for mature pencil grasp to manipulate objects in his school environment.

Visual perceptual skills (demonstrated by the ability to copy Lego, block, or cube designs, assemble puzzles) are needed to develop the ability to write in a left to right pattern, keep letters within a small line space, keep letters sitting on the line, keep appropriate spacing between letters and words, and be able to use appropriate size relationship of letters (tall letters tall and short letters kept at the middle ruled line.). Visual perceptual skills are also important for reading in a left to right sequence. Visual memory helps to remember how letters should be formed; visual discrimination to differentiate how different letters are alike or different; visual sequential memory to recall how to spell words, especially sight words; visual figure ground to be able to pick out symbols and words from a page filled with letters and numbers.

Body awareness – So student will not bump other kids in line and can keep his body to himself, moving through an obstacle course without bumping or tripping over objects, know body parts, or to be able to assemble a potato head.

Bilateral integration and coordination demonstrates the skill to be able to cross midline when reading or writing across a page and cross the “+” and “x,” beginning on the left side of the page. This includes the ability to reach across midline with opposite hand, developmental stroke direction of top to bottom, left to right, and counter-clockwise stroke direction, moving in diagonal strokes with a pencil. This ability is also demonstrated by being able to lie on your back and coordinate movements of arms and legs to make “angels in the snow,” creep “commando style” across the floor moving opposite arms and legs together, drawing a “lazy” horizontal 8 on the board using both hands at once, bounce and catch a ball with alternating hands.

Other areas addressed by school motor intervention are : addressing sensory differences to improve focus of attention by deep pressure (“heavy work”), integrating their ability to tolerate a variety of sensory input and environmental stimuli to stay focused on work despite distraction of sights and sounds, and strategies to improve focus and attention.

We do not specifically teach handwriting or typing per se, but we work to improve underlying causes of poor handwriting and provide strategies or accommodations to be used in classrooms. We provide adaptive devices such as specific pencil grippers, “wiggle” cushions, weighted belts or vests, special paper, specific exercises which can be performed in class (such as pulling sport tube before hand writing) for some students.

We may also work on developmental skills which need to be in place as pre-requisites for a child to be able to draw shapes, make left to right, top to bottom, counter-clockwise strokes in order to be ready to begin writing skills. Developmental skills can include equilibrium and righting reactions. Effective motor development requires skill in all areas listed. If a child misses a developmental step, his reading and writing can be later impacted.

Thus school motor intervention can help students work individually or in small groups to develop basic skills which are pre-requisites to developing their ability to read and write and to focus on school related tasks.