

3rd-6th Fireweed Academy Newsletter

April 13, 2015

Culture Theme

Three weeks ago we began theme group rotations giving students an opportunity to consider "culture" through a variety of lenses. In Stephanie's theme groups, students are exploring cultural legends that help explain observable natural and social phenomena. We are specifically reading about Legends about the Reasons for the Season. We are also researching scientific evidence and using simulations to uncover the facts behind the seasons.

Guests

Last week we had Sheryl Sotelo as our guest as we continue STEM in our school. Students built simple circuits to illuminate their culturally themed drawings, Bottle Racers powered by pressurize air and motor propelled fans, and wiggle bots (I will let you child explain that to you!) Thank you Sheryl and a special thank you to Jan Middleton for volunteering.



Stem Club

Calling all students! Math club resumes in Stephanie's room on Mondays from 3:15-4:15, however... Stephanie is transforming Math Club into Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Club. Students are invited to work on and get help on homework for the week. Also we will have materials available for building ROVs, Hovercraft, and battery operated wiggle bots, robotics and more! Last week the students helped me to build a Tinker Table for testing our bots!



Assessment Update - AMP Testing Began Last Week

Beginning next week, all 3rd-5th graders will be participating in the Alaska Measures of Progress assessment for Language Arts and Mathematics. The following is a brief explanation of Alaska's new standardized assessment tool. The following information is from the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (<http://education.alaska.gov/>).

Alaska Measures of Progress (AMP) is the new Alaska assessment for students in grades 3-10 statewide. It replaces the Standards Based Assessments (SBA) that students took in previous years. AMP is aligned to the new, rigorous standards set forward by the state. Like the SBAs, students will take the AMP test each spring to help determine their progress over the course of the year. The test has two sections or subtests, English language arts and math. Each section will take most students between 90-120 minutes, but there is not a time limit. Because there are new standards and a new assessment, AMP scores will not be comparable to SBA scores.

If you are considering the right to refuse that your child test, the required form is attached to this newsletter or can be picked up at school (table between David's classroom and Kris's classroom).

Open Enrollment

We are done with Open enrollment. However, I am still missing a few form for student who I suspect are indeed coming back to our school. If you have completed a form, please call me at 235-9728. That said, we are not full in every grade so please continue to let our friends and neighbors know that we have space for the FY16 school year. Thanks-Janet

Class Notes

The culture theme offers up some interesting and potentially delicious avenues for investigation. Fifth grade math class is looking for one more bread machine so that we can put our fraction skills to work baking bread. We are also still looking for expert advice and supplies for making root beer (bottles, caps, capper) and yogurt as part of our science explorations. Drop off or send in supplies in Kris's 5th/6th classroom (102).

Fundraisers - **IT IS THE FINAL WEEK FOR GETTING YOUR RAFFLE TICKETS FOR TWO GREAT PRIZES.**

The 6th graders are selling raffle tickets that have two terrific prizes! One is Dinner for 2 at the Homestead Restaurant, www.homesteadrestaurant.net (\$150 Value and donated by Rick and Sharlene Cline) and the other is a Halibut Charter for 1 from Ofishial Charters, www.ofishial.com (\$260 value and

donated by Austin Ceccarelli's parents). Each ticket is \$5 or 5 tickets for \$20. The drawing will be held Friday April 17 at noon in Big Fireweed's Room 102 (Kris Owens room).

******PLEASE NOTE** Our Soup Lunch fundraiser scheduled for this Friday has been postponed. Stay tuned for the new date! BUT THE RAFFLE DRAWING IS STILL ON!

FROM THE DISTRICT “Each school day, more than 1,200 KPBSD employees do all that they can to provide a quality education to our district’s students. A part of this work is our continuous improvement process that requires us to regularly evaluate our practices so that we can in turn, make the necessary changes to help our students find success. An intricate piece of our improvements is our professional development for our certified staff. With the need to do more for our staff in this area, for the past two school years we designated six school days as minimum days—with a 90 minute early release for students, while staff works a maximum day in order to deliberately devote time to collaborate and collectively address the learning needs of our students. Now that you are familiar with these shortened student school days, we want to receive your feedback on them. Please complete these questions, and provide your optional comments. Thank you very much for your time.” – Sean Dusek, Superintendent

The direct link is: <http://bit.ly/KPBSDParentSurveyMinimumDays> and a link will also be added to the community interest section on the KPBSD homepage and in the KPBSD website in section: Students/Parents > Surveys at some point Tuesday evening.

This link will be available April 1-24, 2015.

Upcoming 3-6 Dates: Mark your calendars!

- April 17th - Soup Fundraiser POSTPONED-stay tuned for a new date
- April 17th- Raffle Drawing at 12 noon in Kris's room