



Coyote Editions March • 2011

Administrative Team

The third quarter is complete on March 4th. Parent/Teacher Conferences will begin on Wednesday, March 9th, so please look for information on times and schedules from classroom teachers. We look forward to seeing everyone Thursday, March 3rd, for an emergency PTA meeting at 6pm. Science Night is March 22nd, come and explore. Collier has a **TWITTER account**; please follow us on Twitter at Collier_ES. The most current school information is posted and updated hourly. This will be the most up to date for Collier news!!! AIMS is less than 30 days away (April 11-15) please support your children and emphasize the importance of this high stakes test. Also, please remember for your child's safety Identification will be required when picking up or visiting our school grounds.

HAVE A GREAT MONTH!!!

Important Dates to remember for this month: **March 2011**

- 3-2 Dr. Seuss Birthday
- 3-3 Spring Pictures
- 3-3 Emergency PTA Meeting/Collier Café 6-7 pm
- 3-8 Board Mtg./ULC Building 6-8 pm
- 3-9/11 Parent Teacher Conferences (Early Release Days)
- 3-14/18 Spring Break
- 3-22 Science Night /Collier Café 5-7 pm
- 3-24 Town Hall Budget Mtg. Collier 6-7 pm
- 3-29 Special Board Mtg./ULC Building 6-8 pm
- 3-31 Talent Show/Collier Café 6-8 pm

Look forward to seeing all of you at all the upcoming events!

****Ms. Pitts, Principal ♦ Miss Hill, Assistant Principal ♦ Ms. Eastep, Dean of Student****

Kindergarten

The kindergartners are getting ready for first grade! They are doing great with their sight words. There are quite a few that can already read all 100 words. Keep up the good job at home.

The students are still working on blending sounds into words and segmenting words into sounds to become better readers and writers.

In math, the students are beginning to learn about measurement. The kids will use things like blocks, string and rulers to measure with. They are also counting by 10's and counting to 75 right now.

The students are also beginning to write great stories! They are all wonderful writers and have great imaginations. They have learned how to write stories with beginnings, middles and ends.

Thank you to all the parents of kindergartners and all that you do. We truly appreciate all of you!

First Grade

Thank you to all of the parents who showed up for Fluency night. We are starting the new fluency piece in our homework the first week of March. If you were unable to attend fluency night, please contact your child's teacher so you can learn how to help your child improve their reading fluency and comprehension.

In reading we are learning how to read and spell words with ow, ou, words that end with y, and long o words. In writing we are learning all about writing using the 6 traits and the writing process. We are also focusing on cause and effect. In Social Studies your child is learning all about American Symbols. We finished our graphing unit in math and we are working on shapes and patterning this month. We look forward to seeing all of you at parent/teacher conferences!

Second Grade

Reading: The theme of our unit we began in reading last week is *Neighborhood News!* The students can really relate to living in a neighborhood, but they are also learning about things they may not have experienced in their own neighborhoods: a play about children, community members and a policeman, who solve the mystery of missing articles in Pine Park; and this week, how a retiring letter carrier (42 years on the job) and those who loved him on his route say "goodbye." The purpose of the unit is to not only help students learn, but to help them discover that members of a community are connected in a variety of ways. They see that each person in a community plays a unique part in making that community special.

Our focus last week was reviewing and recognizing that stories have narrative elements – setting, characters and a plot. We can also identify problems, important events, and solution in stories. Many of the classes enjoyed acting out the play "The Pine Park Mystery." This week, we are focusing on comparing and contrasting narrative elements in stories we have read. Our comprehension focus is sequencing and summarizing – a strategy that you can help them with at home in any book they may be reading.

Last week we introduced prefixes /re/ and /pre/. This week we work on contractions / 'll, n't, and 's/. Next week we introduce vowel digraphs: /oo/ew/, and /ui/.

Theme and topic-related books that you might want to consider checking out at the library as a supplement to our reading:

It Takes a Village by Jane Cowen-Fletcher

Kimako's Story by June Jordan

Homeplace by Ann Shelby

Detective Dinosaur Lost and Found by James Skofield

Somewhere in Africa by Ingrid Mennen and Niki Daly

No Mail for Mitchell by Catherine Siracusa

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY



HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

Writing: This month the focus has been on writing summaries and narratives. Second graders learned how to read informational text and then summarize what they learned. We focused on writing 5-sentence paragraphs: a topic sentence, three detail sentences, then a final closing sentence. Then, we used what we learned in reading to help us write fictional narratives. Our stories have characters, setting, and plot – everything that we just discussed in *The Pine Park Mystery* and *Cool Ali*, two stories we just finished in our reading series. Always encourage your students to write over long holiday weekends and breaks. You would be amazed to see what they will write for you if you ask!

Math: In math we have been learning how to tell time to the minute mark, and the kids had fun using mini clocks to learn this concept. We also worked on looking at shapes and their characteristics (sides, corners, symmetry, etc.). The students folded many different shapes to find out if they had a line of symmetry. In class we also took some time to learn about measurement. We used rulers to measure the length and width of different objects. The students learned about capacity and reading a thermometer to find the temperature. Our 2nd graders sure were busy this month in math!



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Social Studies: Collier students are leaders in learning Social Studies! All of the second grade students learned about mail delivery by reading the story "Good Bye, Curtis". Mrs. Casillas' class knows the law! They are learning about the three branches of government and completing a unit on President's Day. Wouldn't it be wonderful if one of our second graders became president? Mrs. McCalpine's class is on the map! We are studying the parts of the globe and cardinal directions. Collier second graders are headed in the right direction!

Science: Second graders have been studying the digestive and respiratory system in science. Our goal has been to know the name of the major parts of each system and be able to tell what their functions are. We learned about our lungs and our diaphragm, and about oxygen and carbon dioxide. We studied about the job of our mouth and teeth, our esophagus and stomach, and don't be surprised to hear your little one tell you about the job of the small and large intestine – perhaps in more detail than you wanted! ☺ Come to science night to have fun with hands-on activities that demonstrate the parts of each system.

Third Grade

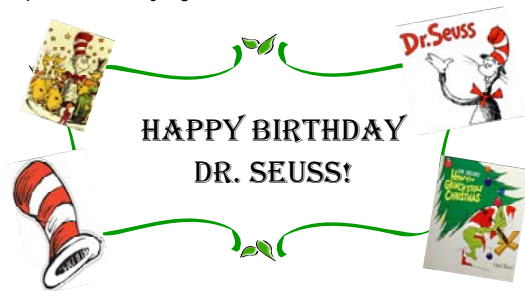
Language Arts: In our Language Arts Block, students have been studying many different concepts. The students have been learning about fact and opinion, context clues, and cause and effect. The students have also been working on comprehending expository non-fiction stories.

Writing: The students have been writing personal narratives, how to papers and expository writing. In grammar, the students have been learning about verbs.

Math: In math class, the students have been learning about vertex-edge graphs, input/output tables, probability, and area and perimeter.

Science: The students have been learning about categorizing vertebrates (animals with backbones) and learning different facts about mammals. The students have also been learning about the solar system.

Social Studies: In social studies we are learning about famous African America people, and studying current events.



Fourth Grade

Greetings from the 4th grade team! The AIMS test is fast approaching and our 4th graders are working hard to reach all their goals. Core subjects will be tested and students are learning test taking skills to ensure they are prepared.

Math: Students are learning the order of operations and the communicative, distributive, and associative properties of multiplication. Students will also be reviewing past mathematical material in order to master all 4th grade standards.

Reading: Students are reviewing sequence. This standard dives in to the chronological order of events in a selection by using time order words and other unstated clues. Ask your student to sequences their events from the day.



Science: The world of 4th grade science is reviewing the Scientific Method. Students will also be learning about vertebrates, invertebrates, electricity and magnetism as part of Physical Sciences. A large amount of time will be spent on science standards. This is a fantastic opportunity for them to understand the scientific world around them.

Social Studies: In Social Studies 4th graders are learning Spanish Influences on Native Americans, and about the Missions of Arizona. Spend time with your student reading non-fiction science based books. Students at this age are fascinated with this interesting topic.

Friendly Reminders: Every Friday the Spelling contract is due in their reading class. On Monday your student should turn in their reading log. This reading log is an ongoing document that is to be filled out over the week.

Fifth Grade

DIBELS is a system for tracking your child's progress in reading. At the 5th grade level, each teacher is tracking your scholar's ability to read fluently on a weekly, biweekly or monthly basis. This is called the ORF, or test of Oral Reading Fluency. Essentially, each student is asked to read a text that he or she has never seen before. They have 60 seconds to read as quickly as they can and are expected to self-correct if they notice that they made a mistake. For example, if the text shows "his" and the student reads "her," the student should rapidly say it correctly and move on. After the minute is up, students share what they remember from the text without being able to see what they just read.

Our kids really like to do their best on these ORF tests and show progress. One quick way that you can help them at home is by having them read something to you from one of their books (a page they haven't read yet) or even something appropriate from our local free paper: West Valley View. Just time them for one minute and note any mistakes made. You can then quickly go over the words that they missed, and then challenge them to reread it and beat their previous score. All of this can all be done in less than five minutes and will help to prepare your scholar to read more effectively in the future. Please do this on a regular basis with your child and watch them smile as they maximize their progress. By the way, your child could also sometimes practice this with other siblings, too.

The end of the 3rd quarter is rapidly approaching. Please make sure that your student is doing his or her best every day in order to succeed. Building speed with accuracy with multiplication and division is always a good thing to work on daily.

Thanks for caring; thanks for sharing!

Sixth Grade

Social Studies: In social studies we will be spending the month on our Greek Unit. Students will be doing a small research project after spring break for this unit and a rubric will be given at Parent/Teacher conferences and before break.

Reading: The last week of February students continued to use their Reading Strategies in the Reading Selections. Ask them about the biographies that they learned about. We will have a Reading Benchmark test in the month of March. Also, we will have Spring Break the week of the 14th of March, so we will be steadily working and practicing for the upcoming AIMS. Students will be turning in their 3rd quarter book report on the 3rd of March.



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Writing: As we near closer to AIMS, sixth graders need to continue to focus on the writing process. Also, I will now only be available after school Tuesdays or Thursday and most Fridays. If a student needs additional assistance in writing or grammar, I will do my best to let your child know in advance. We will continue to work on strengthening their writing skills. We will still be focusing on persuasive writing and fine tuning their skills for their future and for AIMS. As always, we will be spending a lot of time on grammar and editing as these are crucial skills necessary for your child to become a great writer. Expect your child to have homework 2-4 times a week. Please remind your child to write their first and last name, their block, and the date on all assignments, as well as, to turn it in on time. As we are wrapping up third quarter and heading into fourth quarter, encourage your child to do their absolute best so they can gain the knowledge they need to be successful!

Math: The students have been learning about Geometry and Measurements. The students have been doing well. The 6th grade students have an added class of Math Interventions four days a week. The Math Intervention class has replaced the Reading Intervention classes that the students have been attending. Each core teacher individually teaches the students a much needed strand in order to be successful on the AIMS test. The students rotate to a new core teacher every week.

Science: The students have been working hard on their Science Fair projects. Please join us for the Science Fair this month. Your child has been learning about Earth's water sources. In March, they will be studying weather. They will be discovering how warm and cold fronts effect the Earth. They will also be researching hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods.

Your child brings home their homework around 2 times a week. Please check with Home Logic to see your child's grades. Also, your child brings home a grade summary sheet from their teachers every 2-3 weeks in case you do not have access to the internet to check Home Logic.

Seventh Grade

Science: In 7th grade students are beginning to study Earth Science. The students will begin by looking at rocks and minerals. They will be identifying the different characteristics of rocks and minerals, how they form, and how they are important in our everyday life. The students will be doing a couple labs, where they are given rocks and minerals, and they will try to identify them.

Science Night is quickly approaching and the 7th grade students will be placing their science projects in the science fair. Their final science projects are due February 28th, and science night will be March 22nd. I'm looking forward to a great science fair this year. I hope to see you there!

Social Studies: In Social Studies we are beginning to discuss the events surrounding WWI. There are several projects that we will be doing. I will be sending home a letter informing you of these projects that will be done either at home or in class.

Language Arts: Students are excited to "show what they know" on the reading and writing portions of the AIMS test. We are working every day to prepare for the important test. Students are focusing on persuasive, expository and functional text. So, encourage your child to read the newspaper every day. As for AIMS, I am confident that students are prepared to meet and exceed the standards!

After testing, students will be reading The Outsiders. They will be reviewing many important elements of literature from the school year. For example, we'll be practicing making predictions, making inferences, and identifying and explaining character traits.

Math: This month in 7th Grade Math we are getting prepared for AIMS. We are about to finish up Geometry and move onto an in-depth review of 7th grade standards. Soon we will have our 3rd quarter Benchmark Test. Please help me stress the importance of getting a good night's rest and eating a good breakfast. Collier's 7th grade Math students have consistently scored among the highest in the district on their Benchmark tests. I am looking forward to that being the case this quarter as well!

Eighth Grade



Science: The 8th grade scientists have completed their Physics Unit and are now learning about Genetics. We are studying how our cells duplicate and pass on our genetic information, and how that makes us who we are and look the way we look!

Math: In Math, students are building momentum toward the end of the 3rd quarter and beyond. The algebra students are just about finished with their study of Linear Equations, and have seen examples of their applications in business and technology. We soon will begin study of exponential functions. Meanwhile, the pre-algebra classes recently completed their investigations of the Pythagorean Theorem, including its use in solving real-world problems. They are now digging into the measurement of area and volume in various geometric figures such as pyramids and spheres. All students will have earned a well-deserved break come mid-March!

Language Arts: Students will be learning reading strategies of drawing conclusions, determining cause and effect, making inferences and sequencing. They will learn how to connect reading strategies to everyday life. Students will learn that reading is not always about a book, but about life! Students are also going to the standards and preparing themselves for the AIMS test.

Social Studies: Students are examining the 1960's and 1970's of the United States of America. People's view of the nation and the government changed. Some believed that the United States had lost its position as the economic and political leader of the free world. Yet, the American system of constitutional government worked and survived.

Physical Education

Mr. Harmon: Hello, all Collier parents! It has been a great month of physical education in Mr. Harmon's class. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders have been reviewing all the skills they have learned this year through station work. The 4th and 5th grade students have been learning Frisbee skills and are starting to learn ultimate Frisbee. I am really impressed with the progress your students have made over the last few weeks. The 6th grade girls have been learning and playing Team Handball. The 7th and 8th grade girls have been working on Floor Hockey, Flag Football, Team Handball and Softball.

Mr. Teer: Mr. Teer's K-2 students have been working on jump rope skills and have shown a lot of improvement over the past 2 weeks. The 3rd-5th grade students have also been working on jump roping, and have been focusing on a variety of rhythm skills and group activities. The 6th graders have been playing capture the flag, which they have really enjoyed. They have been focusing on chasing, dodging and fleeing. They also have been working on their throwing and catching skills. The 7th and 8th graders just finished a soccer unit. They learned the rules and played a lot of competitive games.



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Technology

In the technology lab, we will do a lot of fun and educational activities in the last couple weeks of the quarter. First and second grade students will continue to use educational websites (multiplication.com, mathplayground.com, brainpop.com) to learn math and language arts. These interactive websites will help students learning new materials in a fun and interactive environment. In the month of March, third to eighth grade students will be working on Microsoft PowerPoint presentations and Publisher projects. We use many interactive educational websites to keep it light and make it fun, so the students will want to return to the sites on their own time. Students will naturally want to talk to each other as they review the site and find things that are of interest to them.

Art Classes

Art criticism is an organized system for looking at and talking about art. The purpose of art criticism is to get the viewer involved in a perception process that delays judgment until all aspects of the image have been studied. Learning art criticism also gives each viewer the confidence to discuss a work of art without worrying what other people might think. Please visit www.alver.tumblr.com to see artwork from our Collier students. This site contains pictures of artwork completed in 07-08, 08-09 and 09-10. I hope to update this site soon, highlighting school year '10-'11.

Music Time

Hello Collier parents and students! The school year is moving along well in the Collier Music Program. Our First and Second Grade students have been focusing on new activities to explore the use of voice (singing, speaking, etc). In February, almost all our Third Grade students earned their "White Belt" in the Recorder Karate Program. By earning their White Belt, students demonstrated their ability to play the notes B, A, and G and play the song, "Hot Cross Buns." Our Fifth and Sixth Graders have been working on song writing using GarageBand and the digital music lab. One of the most exciting events this month is happening with our Collier Coyote Choir members. On March 26th several of our Seventh and Eighth Grade Students are invited to participate in the District Honors Choir Event at La Joya High School. Make sure to stop by La Joya at 2pm for the Honor Choir Performance, featuring our many talented singers.

Band

As we are approaching the end of the third quarter, we have been busy here at the Collier Band Department. Our advanced students are preparing to audition for the district honors band and choir concert. This event will take place on Saturday, March 26th, at La Joya High School, and will feature some of our district's finest musicians. A letter was sent home with your students about the upcoming event and audition. Our beginning band shows amazing improvements every week, and I cannot wait to see them shine again at our spring concert, which will be taking place on Thursday, May 19th! A reminder to parents, please make sure your students are practicing at home. They are required to take their instruments home on a daily basis (students have been instructed not to leave their instruments at school), and should be practicing at least 100 minutes a week if they are a beginner, and at least 150 minutes a week if they are a middle school student. Thank you for your continued support!

Gifted

Fourth Grade E.P. students have embarked on a simulated trip across the United States. Students are working in teams of three to plan a trip that stays within a \$9,000 budget while exploring the unique characteristics of the U.S. They will visit many diverse sites along their planned route and will prepare projects to communicate interesting facts they discover. They are most excited about getting to write checks in order to pay for things along the way. Throughout this journey, students will practice and apply math, reading, writing, and oral presentation skills.

Counselor's Corner

Have you heard about *Kids At Hope*? Collier is a *Kids At Hope* School. We believe that: "All children are capable of success, NO Exceptions!" Avondale was the first city in the USA to adopt the *Kids At Hope* belief! Ask your child if they can recite the Student Pledge that we say together every morning as our school day begins. If you are wondering just what this "Hope" is all about, please visit their Website: <http://www.kidsathope.org>. Hope is not a little thing. The dictionary defines it as an "expectation of fulfillment or success". Used as a verb it's what keeps us going in times that are difficult or stressful, or seem beyond our control. You have hopes for your children, what are they? Have you ever shared those hopes with each of your children? How about sharing your own hopes for your future? Give it a try. There is a saying that goes like this..."Hope Springs Eternal."

Our Collier Essentials for the month are:

Collier Students:

- ❖ *Stop And Listen To The Pledge of Allegiance Whenever They Hear It*
- ❖ *Teach Younger Children By Their Example*
- ❖ *Are Careful With The Words They Use*
- ❖ *Have Dreams For Their Future*

Medical Minute

IT'S TIME FOR SPRING!

It has been a difficult horrible February. High fevers, allergies and congestion. This plague is still upon us; even your Nurse has been affected. Please keep children home if they have had a fever the day before. They must be free of fever without medication for 25 hours before coming back to school. The same applies to vomiting and diarrhea. Allergies are still bad, so make sure your children use their asthma medicine properly.

It is going to drop in temperature soon, again- so keep those little ones in at night. Night air is bad for asthma.

Stock up on the Over the Counter medicines such as cough medicine with DM, allergy eye drops and allergy nose spray. Generics are always fine and all of this will help. I cannot stress enough good hand washing and the use of antibacterial gel, please spread good hand care throughout your family.

Safety Tip

Behind motor vehicles, bicycles are tied to more childhood injuries than any other consumer product. So, take some time to brush up on ways to keep your children safe on their way to and from school.

