



Mrs. Ness' Notes

October 9, 2023

Enrollment: 510 students + 8 Shared Time students
K-84, 1st-92, 2nd-80, 3rd-90, 4th-80, 5th-84

New Staff: Welcome to our new Elm Creek Elementary staff!

- Angela Adelman, School Social Worker, Fridays
- Jina Bloor, School Psychologist, Mondays and Thursdays
- Jim Bregel, Custodian, afternoons
- Tyler Danielson, Resource teacher, AM
- Kerri Dorn, Center-based Special Education paraprofessional
- Jessica Ellingson, Behavior Intervention teacher
- Tammie Golio, 1:1 Resource paraprofessional
- Daniel Gregory, Resource teacher
- Tori Helgeson, Center-based Special Education teacher
- Michelle Humphrey, Student Services Coordinator
- Miller Lamotte, Vocal Music teacher, AM, 5th and K
- Tara Lewis, 2.5 hours/day Resource paraprofessional
- Erin Myhrer, English Language Learner teacher, AM
- Tikkia Osborne, Special Education Building Coordinator
- Ashley Reed, Registered Nurse, contract
- Nicole Robers, Center-based Special Education paraprofessional
- Meghan Ward, 3rd grade teacher

Safety and Security:

Drills: As part of each school's safety and security plan, we must have five fire drills, three lockdown drills, one severe weather drill, and two shelter in place drills, each year. We had two fire drills and one lockdown drill in September, and one fire drill so far in October. I am extremely impressed with how well students have conducted our fire drills. Students were able to evacuate the building in a little over one minute!

Elm Creek Twitter and Instagram Pages: Please join us on our Elm Creek Elementary twitter page @ElmCreekElem or on our Instagram page at <https://www.instagram.com/elmcrekelem/?hl=en>.

DARE: Each year 5th grade students have 14 lessons about peer pressure, bullying prevention, drug resistance, responsible decision making, etc. These lessons are taught by Maple Grove Police Officer Slawson. The program concludes with a DARE graduation ceremony. In addition, Officer Slawson teaches 5 lessons to each fourth-grade classroom and 4 lessons to each second-grade classroom. We appreciate this partnership and the life-long lessons our students are learning. This Thursday, 6 DARE officers will be delivering lessons in 2nd, 4th, and 5th, grade as these officers learning how to teach DARE curriculum.

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APEX Fun Run-The APEX fun run was a success. Students did an outstanding job completing laps, with numerous students running over the goal of 36 laps. Many, many thanks to our generous families who supported the APEX run that raised **\$47,593**-the most ever raised! These funds support PTO events and extra school activities. For more specific information on how the funds are used, please visit: <https://ecepto.org/> and scroll to the bottom where it says treasurers report.

MCA state test results: Individual Student Reports (ISR) for students that completed the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) or the Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS) tests in spring of 2023 are now available in Parent VUE, under the documents tab.

The report includes your student's overall score and performance level in each test subject and the average scores for students at the school, district and state level. Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments are taken by students in all public schools in grades 3-8 and 11 on mathematics, in grades 3-8 and 10 on reading and grades 5, 8 and once in high school on science. To learn more about your students' results review the document, [What Families Need to Know about Using MCA and MTAS Results](#).

Coffee with the Principal: I like to connect with families in several ways to gather feedback and be available to answer questions. One way is to offer coffee with the principal. The next coffee with the principal will be Monday, October 23rd from 10:30-11:30 a.m. at Annabelle House in Osseo. I will host these get togethers monthly from September 2023-May 2024 at various times and locations. A flyer with dates for the year was sent out in Peach Jar.

Mexico Project: We are in our eighteenth year of *Students Connecting through International Service*, an exciting leadership/service-learning project that includes a trip to Tucson, Arizona. Five elementary schools: Basswood, Elm Creek, Edinbrook, Oak View, and Park Brook, select fifth grade students to take part. These six students will attend meetings, conduct a school supply drive in their own school, and then travel together to Arizona to deliver the supplies to the Mexican students at the border. After the trip, the six students will create and present a video report to each of their schools and to supporting organizations. Local business and community groups will pay all trip expenses for the six students. Congratulations to **Isaac Wagner**, who is Elm Creek's representative this year.

VOLUNTEERS-- We have 148 active volunteers as of the beginning of October, and they have logged 505 hours so far this school year! Volunteers have helped in classrooms, served lunch with our cafeteria staff, helped out during kindergarten lunch, prepped projects for teachers, watered gardens, shelved books in the media center, worked on laminating trimming, helped out at the Apex Fun Run, planned PTO meetings and much more. On behalf of students and staff, THANK YOU!!!

Tears and Cheers: Thank you to the PTO for hosting our annual Tears and Cheers. This is an opportunity, on the first day of school, for kindergarten parents to gather in the Media Center to meet the PTO and get to know other kindergarten families.

Student Council: Melissa Elias and Melissa Uecker work with students in 4th and 5th grade as part of our student council. They met with the returning 5th graders student council members to decide how many fourth graders will be added to student council. 5th grader student council members will be doing announcements in October for anti-bullying month. Our first spirit day is October 18th-Wear Orange for Unity Day.

Birthday Lunches: One day during the end of each month, a table is set up in the lunchroom. Students who have their birthday during that month can have lunch with the principal and will get ice cream. Students who have birthdays in July and August will celebrate in June.

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Pumpkin Run: Melissa Elias and Sara Yonak will host our annual Pumpkin Run the week of October 23rd. Students are excited to run, and they do such an excellent job! Melissa and Sara purchase 50 pumpkins, thanks to PTO funds, to hand out to winners of the Pumpkin Run, on Friday, October 27th. It is fun to see the students faces when they pick up their pumpkin.

Recess: I've received some questions about recess and when students can go outside. The general practice is that students will go out to recess every day unless the temperature, or wind chill, is below zero, or if it is raining. Please have your child dress appropriately with the knowledge that they will be going out to recess daily. Thank you.

Kindergarten News: Kindergarten is busy learning the routines and rules of school. We had fun in September with color days and dressing in the color of the day. We have learned how to be safe on the bus. We are practicing our letters, sounds, and numbers. We look forward to books and projects around the theme of Fall in the coming weeks.

Library News: The library is busy with lots of books being checked out and returned. Joan Magnuson is introducing a lot of online resources like Flipster (online magazines), MackinVia (ebooks) and our new subscription to Comics Plus (online graphic novels). More information about accessing these online resources from home will be coming soon.

There is a Minnesota state book award program for K-2 called The Star Of the North Student Book Award and for 3-5 grade called the Maud Hart Lovelace Student Book Award. K-2 reads all 10 books during media time and votes for their favorite and 3-5 graders can read any of the 18 nominated books. If 3-5 graders read and record 6 of them, they will earn an invitation to the Maud Hart Lovelace party in April. It's a great way to broaden their reading. The books are just starting to come in to get started. The Scholastic dollars are a huge help in ordering these books (from book fair profits).

Conferences: Conferences will take place on October 10th, 12th, and 17th. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with your child's teacher about your child(ren). We value learning about your child from you so that we can make this a wonderful year for them! Make some time to visit the Scholastic Book Fair in the Media Center during conferences on October 10th and 12th. The book fair is organized by our PTO, and we appreciate all the volunteers who help to run it!

Eastman Nature Center: Eastman Nature Center field trips are scheduled for all K-5th grades. We applied for a transportation scholarship through Three Rivers Parks last spring and most of our transportation costs for these field trips will be covered. Families will need to help cover the \$5/student Eastman fee.

Eastman Field Trip dates are:

3rd grade – Oct 31, Nov 3

4th grade – Dec 12, 14

Kindergarten - Apr 17

1st grade – May 15

2nd grade – May 22

5th grade – June 4

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Dates to Remember:

October 10th, 12th, 17th: Parent/Teacher Conferences, 7:50-8:30 a.m. and 3:40-7:00 p.m.

October 10th and 12th: PTO Scholastic Book Fair

October 18th: Unity Day, wear orange

Thursday/Friday, October 19th-20th: No School, Education Minnesota Conference (MEA)

October 23rd-27th: Pumpkin Run

October 23rd: Coffee with the Principal, Annabelle House, Osseo, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Thursday, October 26th: Picture Day

October 30th: October Birthday lunch table

October 31st: 3rd Grade field trip, Mr. Dylong's class and Mr. Ockuly's class to Eastman Nature Center

November 3rd: 3rd grade field trip, Ms. Ward's class and Ms. Wyman's class to Eastman Nature Center

November 3rd: 4th grade field trip to Feed My Starving Children

Tuesday, November 7th: No School for students, Staff Professional Development Day

November 10th: PTO Turkey Bingo (6pm - 8pm)

November 14th: PTO General Meeting (6:30pm – 7:30pm), Elm Creek Media Center

Thursday, November 16th: Picture Retake Day

November 17th: Coffee with the principal, Elm Creek Media Center, 10-11 a.m.

November 23rd and 24th: No School, Thanksgiving break

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