



## Mrs. Ness' Notes October 8, 2024

**Enrollment:** 567 students + 8 Shared Time students  
VPK-28, K-101, 1st-83, 2nd-94, 3<sup>rd</sup>-80, 4<sup>th</sup>-94, 5<sup>th</sup>-87

### **Safety and Security:**

**Drills:** As part of each school's safety and security plan, we must have five fire drills, two lockdown drills, two secure drills, one severe weather drill, and one hold drill, each year. We had two fire drills in September, so far. 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/elmcreekelem/?hl=en>.

**DARE:** Each year 5<sup>th</sup> 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 in-training DARE officers will be delivering lessons in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade as they practice how to teach DARE curriculum.

**APEX Fun Run-**The APEX fun run was a success. Students did an outstanding job completing laps, with numerous students running well over the goal of 36 laps. Many, many thanks to our generous families who supported the APEX run that raised **\$51,268**-the most ever raised! These funds support PTO events and extra activities for students at school. 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 2024 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](#).

Elm Creek Elementary's overall 2024 MCA results are **64.6% proficient in Math** (MN State math average is 42.8%) and **55.7% proficient in Reading** (MN State reading average is 47.8%).

**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 28<sup>th</sup> from 10:00-11:00 a.m. at Annabelle House in Osseo. I will host these get togethers monthly from September 2024-May

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2025 at various times and locations. A flyer with dates for the year was sent out in Peach Jar, with reminders sent monthly.

**Mexico Project:** We are in our nineteenth 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 **Teague Long**, who is Elm Creek's representative this year.

**VOLUNTEERS--** We have 191 active volunteers as of the beginning of October, and they have logged 493 hours so far this school year! Volunteers have helped in classrooms, served lunch with our cafeteria staff, helped during kindergarten lunch, prepped projects for teachers, watered gardens, distributed food bags to students, worked on laminating, helped out at the Apex Fun Run, planned PTO meetings and much more. On behalf of students and staff, THANK YOU!!!

**Every Meal Bag:** Elm Creek Elementary partners with Advent Lutheran Church and Every Meal program to provide free, non-perishable food item to families. Food goes home in student backpacks 1-2 times per week. Every Meal offers 5 food bag options tailored to different dietary preferences. There are no eligibility requirements to participate. Families can sign up using the paper form that went home to all students, or an electronic form that went to all families in a Talking Points message.

**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. We had more kindergarten families participate this year than we ever have had before!

**Student Council:** Melissa Elias and Melissa Uecker work with students in 4th and 5th grade as part of our student council. They are meeting with the returning 5<sup>th</sup> grade student council members to decide our first spirit day on Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>- Wear Orange for Unity Day/Anti Bullying. They just collected over 20 applications of current 4<sup>th</sup> graders who are interested in joining student council. They are currently in the process of going through those applications and will announce new 4<sup>th</sup> grade student council members soon.

**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.

**Pumpkin Run:** Our Physical Education Teachers, Mrs. Elias and Mrs. Yonak, will be hosting our 18<sup>th</sup> annual Pumpkin Run the week of October 21<sup>st</sup>! With PTO funds, the PE teachers get around 50 pumpkins from Nelson's Nursery in Zimmerman to hand out as prizes to students. Two students per class will win a pumpkin! Students have opportunities to win other prizes as well! It's so fun to watch the excitement when students get to pick up their pumpkin.

**Recess:** We have had so many beautiful weather days for recess this year! Do you have questions about recess and when students 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.

**Library News:** Elm Creek students love to read! Since the first day of school, the library has circulated almost 3,000 books already! We are staying very busy with lots of book checkouts and library lessons for all grades. (Except for PreK, which will start in October.)

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The 4th and 5th graders had the opportunity to sign up to “adopt-a-bookshelf” in the library, showing that they are eager to take care of the library space and show responsibility. They have been doing a great job keeping the shelves organized.

Many 5th graders signed up to be producers for ECTV, and we have been working hard for four weeks doing daily news announcements. Our news studio was not up and running right away, so we had to figure out alternative ways to create and share the news - but the 5th graders showed amazing creativity and resiliency. We now have full use of the recording studio, and the 5th grade producers are very engaged with creating the morning announcements.

We will soon start exploring the Minnesota Youth Reading Award book nominees. Students in K-2 will read the Star of the North nominees and vote on their favorite, while students in 3-5 will read and vote for the Maud Hart Lovelace nominees. These books are always a huge hit!

**Conferences:** Fall Conferences are taking place on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>. 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. 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-5<sup>th</sup> 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. We value our partnership with Eastman Nature Center that allows each grade level to spend time outside learning. If you haven’t been to Eastman Nature Center as a family, I encourage you to visit. 😊

Eastman Field Trip dates are:

3<sup>rd</sup> grade – October 22, 24 (Adaptations)

4<sup>th</sup> grade – Dec 10 (Outdoor Survival)

Kindergarten – May 7 (Better Homes & Habitats)

1<sup>st</sup> grade – May 9 (Animal Life Cycles)

2<sup>nd</sup> grade – June 2 (Pond Study)

5<sup>th</sup> grade – June 3 (Geocaching)

### **Dates to Remember:**

**October 1<sup>st</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>:** Parent/Teacher Conferences, 7:50-8:30 a.m. and 3:40-7:00 p.m.

**October 1<sup>st</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>:** PTO Scholastic Book Fair, 3:40-7:00 p.m.

**October 10<sup>th</sup>:** DARE Officer Training with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms

**October 16<sup>th</sup>:** Unity Day, wear orange to unite for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion

**Thursday/Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>:** No School, Education Minnesota Conference (MEA)

**October 21<sup>st</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>:** Pumpkin Run

**October 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Third Grade, Dylong/Ockuly, field trip to Eastman Nature Center

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**October 24<sup>th</sup>:** Third Grade, Ward/Wyman, field trip to Eastman Nature Center

**Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup>:** Picture Day

**October 25<sup>th</sup>:** Disney Day-Dress like a character from Disney

**October 28<sup>th</sup>:** Coffee with the Principal, Annabelle House, Osseo, 10:00-11:00 a.m.

**October 29<sup>th</sup>:** October Birthday lunch table

**Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>:** No School for students, Staff Professional Development Day

**November 6<sup>th</sup>:** 4<sup>th</sup> grade field trip to Feed My Starving Children

**November 12<sup>th</sup>:** Picture Retake Day

**November 12<sup>th</sup>:** PTO Meeting, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Elm Creek Media Center

**November 15<sup>th</sup>:** PTO Turkey Bingo (6pm - 8pm)

**November 16<sup>th</sup>:** School Choice Fair, 9 a.m.-noon, Osseo Senior High School

**Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup>:** Picture Retake Day

**November 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Coffee with the principal, Elm Creek Media Center, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

**November 25<sup>th</sup>:** November Birthday lunch table

**November 27<sup>th</sup>:** No School for Students. Mark Reporting Day.

**November 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>:** No School, Thanksgiving break

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