

Great Oaks Elementary

Gecko News

2009-2010 THIRD EDITION

NOVEMBER, 2009

PRINCIPAL'S DESK

We have many special events scheduled during the month of November, including the Scholastic Book Fair hosted by our wonderful librarian, Clarissa Grindle. When you are up here for the book fair, you will notice that we have a wide variety of reading materials available. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for English Language Arts and Reading were revised last spring, and the new standards are now in place. Students are expected to read and understand both fiction and non-fiction texts including: myths, folktales, fables, mysteries, historical fiction, poetry, biographies, newspaper articles and more. Our library has an excellent collection of books for your child to check out, and the book fair will have books from all genres as well. Hopefully your child will connect with at least one type of writing that will encourage him or her to become a life-long reader and learner.

In the spirit of giving, several community service and service learning projects are or will be underway during November and December. We appreciate your generosity and support for these special projects that help our students become responsible citizens.

I look forward to seeing you at one of the many upcoming events.

Jana Stowe, Principal

UPCOMING EVENTS

- November 11: Veterans Day Ceremony @ 8:15 A.M.
- November 11: Early Release Day – School ends at 12:45 P.M.
- November 12-13: City of Austin Pedestrian Safety Program for K-2
- November 13: Choir Field Trip to Southwestern University
- November 13: Book Fair Preview
- November 14: Parents Night Out at Lifetime Fitness
- November 16: Book Fair Preview
- November 16: Chick-fil-A School Spirit Night starting at 5:00 P.M. 620 Location
- November 17: Book Fair Sales
- November 17: Pallick & Ching Classes to the RR Serving Center
- November 17: Holiday Luncheon for TWC, Kindergarten, 2nd and 5th Grade Classes
- November 17: 3rd Grade Trip to for Theatre Production at the PAC

- November 17: Reflections Awards Ceremony for GOE Participants 6:30 P.M.
- November 18: Pattern Nation Program for K-2 8:30 and 9:30 A.M.
- November 18: McBride and Parker Classes to the RR Serving Center
- November 18: Site-Base Advisory Team @ 3:15 P.M. Science Lab
- November 19: Haji, Day, Gillen Classes to the RR Serving Center
- November 19: Choir Concert @ 6:30 P.M.
- November 23: 3rd Grade Pioneer Day at GOE
- November 24: Kindergarten Fall Festival at GOE
- November 25 – 27: School Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday!
- December 1: PTA Executive Board Meeting 6:30 P.M. in the Library

PTA UPDATE

Yearbooks are now on sale!! They are \$22.50, full color and include individual pictures of the students as well as great collages of each grade. The deadline to order your Gecko's yearbook is Friday, December 4th. Cash or checks made payable to Great Oaks Elementary can be put in the envelope that came in the Wednesday folders. This year yearbooks can also be ordered using a credit card online at www.myyear.com. There is a \$1.85 convenience fee for ordering on line.

Programs for kids: Several events are coming up for the children, outside of the multitude of field trips that the PTA helps finance. Pollyanna Theater will be here for all grade levels, followed by The Magic of Science in December for the 5th graders. A perennial favorite, Darden Smith, will be working with our 3rd and 4th graders right before the winter break.

Parents Night Out: Our next Parents Night Out at Lifetime Fitness will be Saturday November 14th. Registration forms are in the e-folder and must be turned in (with payment) the front office at school by Tuesday November 10th.

Student Directories: Student Directories are being printed and will be sent home next week (November 9-13) with your student. There may be a very limited number of extras. Please contact Rhonda Hormuth at 238-8250 or rhondah@austin.rr.com if you are interested in purchasing one.

Clothes Closet: The Clothes Closet is off to a great start this year! Please remember to keep us in mind when you are cleaning out your closets. The gently used clothing is greatly needed to benefit families within our district. The Clothes Closet is also in need of new socks and underwear, all sizes. You can drop your donations off in the wooden chests in the front entryway to the school. If you have any questions or would like to help, please contact Becky Thomas at beckythomas@austin.rr.com or 388-8985.

Safety: One our primary missions as PTA is to promote the welfare of our children and youth. Be aware that signs are now posted prohibiting cell phone use in the school zones.

Karina Bolger, PTA President

COUNSELORS' CORNER

We greatly appreciate the U.S. Department of Justice - Drug Enforcement Administration for providing a red ribbon for each student and staff member during Red Ribbon Week.

Classroom guidance lessons are being taught on the subject of "conflict resolution." Second and third grade lessons were completed last week, fourth and fifth grade lessons have begun, and kindergarten and first grade lessons will begin in a few weeks. We encourage you to ask your child to share what they have learned about resolving conflicts.

If you or someone you know would like to become a mentor at Great Oaks, please contact Maria Rivera at 464-6862. It can be a wonderful way to get involved and make a positive difference in a child's life.

Martha Robinson & Maria Rivera, Counselors

BOOKMARK THIS

The book fair preview days are on Friday, Nov. 13th, and Monday, Nov. 16th. Sale days are Nov. 17th and 18th. Please check out the library web page and the book fair link to find out more about the book fair. You can find the volunteer schedule, the class schedule and even the link for Scholastic Featured books. Teachers will place their preferred books from their wish lists in a box in the library. This is a great opportunity for you to find gifts for your child's teacher. Each box will be labeled with the teacher's name to make it easier to find. Students and parents will be able to check out library books until Nov. 11th and then again once the book fair is over on Nov. 20th. Thank you for supporting our book fair. We are so excited to see you there!

Mrs. Grindle's Teacher Web Book Fair Link

<http://teacherweb.com/TX/GreatOaksElementary/Grindle/apt16.aspx>

Clarissa Grindle, Librarian

NURSE'S NOTES

Pertussis Vaccine Information: Pertussis rates in Williamson County continue to rise above the national average. It is believed adolescents and adults are contracting the illness more readily as their immunity from childhood acquired pertussis vaccine (DTaP) has faded. Our infant population is at greatest risk for severe complications of pertussis and even death. This year all 7th grade students in Texas are required to have obtained the newer Tdap vaccine (a tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid and acellular pertussis). Tdap was formulated in 2005 for use in persons aged 11-64 years of age. Adults & adolescents that have not previously received a Tdap vaccine *and* it has been at least 2 years since receiving a Td (tetanus and diphtheria booster), should talk to your health care provider about receiving a

dose of Tdap to provide this pertussis immunity. Tdap vaccine is **highly advised** if you are considering becoming pregnant, or have/anticipate close contact with an infant < 12 months of age, i.e. family members, child care providers, and health care providers.

Illness/Flu Report: Since the first day of school, the nurses in the district, along with the help of the office staff, have been collecting the illness information reported by parents/physicians, tracking illness activity seen, and reporting all confirmed cases and influenza like illnesses. Overall, I am pleased to report, our illness/flu numbers have been relatively stable. Based on our daily attendance rates, clinic visits of ill students, and reported illnesses, we are doing pretty well so far at GOE. We have not increased much above our average, even during our worst weeks, with some weeks below average. The last few weeks we have been seeing more of a stomach virus than anything else. That said, please continue encouraging frequent hand washing/use of hand sanitizer, reminding of cough/sneeze etiquette (covering with an elbow), and keeping yourself and/or your child home when sick. I know the teachers and staff here at GOE will continue in these efforts as well. I also hope you have been able to take advantage of the district's free flu clinic opportunities or have already received flu vaccine elsewhere. As we get supply, RRISD hopes to provide free H1N1 vaccine as well. Please continue to watch for announcements by email, posted signs, and also on my webpage, Nurse Notes.

Looking for a Charitable Contribution for 2009? Make-A-Wish Foundation grants wishes to children with life-threatening medical conditions. As a pediatric nurse, I have witnessed firsthand how this organization can offer hope, strength, and joy to ill children and their families. If you would like to learn more or refer a child, please check out their website.

Tammy Petronzio, RN

Round Rock Independent School District is an equal opportunity employer and provides educational programs and services which do not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, creed, religion, disability, gender, ethnic or national origin, or against any other legally protected group. RRISD prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities and, upon request, will provide reasonable accommodation for individuals with a disability.