



HUSKY H WLER

Principally Speaking...

Assistant Principal, that is.

Phyllis Spain, Principal

Adam Rupert, Assistant Principal, 7th Grade

Paul Harper, Assistant Principal, 8th Grade

Dear Ereckson Family,

What a wonderful first semester we have had. It is hard to believe that 2009 has come to a close and we are already into the spring semester. You should be very proud of all the accomplishments your children have made so far. From athletics to academics and everything in between, our students have performed exceptionally well and have represented Ereckson and our Allen community beautifully.

We hope you have taken a moment to celebrate the successes of this past semester. The bar has been set high, and our children continue to meet or exceed expectations in all areas. Once again, our Band and Orchestra competition results were phenomenal. Robotics once again finished as one of the very best and our advanced academic groups represented EMS in exemplary fashion. Football and Volleyball both ended their seasons successfully and we have now started Basketball and Cross Country.

Ereckson Middle School recently received national recognition for its accomplishments as one of the highest performing middle schools in Texas by the National Center for Educational Achievement (NCEA). NCEA used two measures in their analysis for this recognition: growth and career readiness (CCR). Ereckson received national recognition in 4 of the 5 areas NCEA measures. What an amazing accomplishment. Congratulations students, parents, and staff!!

We want to personally thank you for all you do to support your children and the school. It is obvious that your efforts are making a positive impact on the performances of your children. As we move further into the spring semester, please help your children remain focused and spend quality time preparing for their exams and upcoming TAKS testing (see dates below).

Thanks so much for your continued support!

Put it on the Calendar...

7 th TAKS Writing	March 3
8 th TAKS Math	April 6
7 th TAKS Math	April 27
8 th TAKS Reading	April 7
7 th TAKS Reading	April 28
8 th TAKS Science	April 29
8 th TAKS Social Studies	April 30

PTA Parent Programs

A great big **Thank You** to *Tacone Flavor Grill* for donating food for the PTA program Jan 12 with thanks as well to the high school student volunteers: Brook Burgess, Ariam Macias, Kyle Clark, Lindsay Adams, Cedric Bandoh, Hannah Darnell, & Meridith Crawford.

You are all so appreciated!

Upcoming PTA programs:

Cyber bullying

March 12, 8:30-10:00 - Room D130

EMS Reading Department

Ondria Gerard Gadd, Department Chair

From The 7th grade Reading Department:

On-level Reading classes are now involved in a nonfiction unit which includes such topics as: the sinking of the Titanic, Eleanor Roosevelt, Jackie Robinson, and early immigration through Ellis Island.

Though the focus is now on nonfiction, everyone is becoming very excited for our next (and last) novel unit, The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordin which begins on February 15. Students who didn't purchase their own copy of the novel will get one from the Ereckson library.

Pre-AP Reading classes are currently exploring the role of mass media in our society. Our world is saturated with media, and we are receiving messages all day long without even realizing it. Every advertisement serves a purpose, (to make money) and not everything we see and hear is the truth. Can we really trust our eyes? Students will examine commercials, print ads, the internet and billboards to establish what exactly is being sold and to whom. They will begin to evaluate different levels of realism, learn how media shapes our understanding of history, and identify product placement as a form of hidden persuasion. We will also explore the rise of the "celebrity culture" and reflect on the differences between heroes and celebrities. From sensationalized media and propaganda to subliminal advertising and even urban myth, this unit makes for great dinner-time conversations.

Orchestra News

Mrs. Cimbalo

Our winter concert on Dec. 3rd and our concert for Chamber Orchestra (4th period only) and 6th graders on Jan. 26th were wonderful! The orchestras did a great job!

Eighth graders performed with Lowery Freshman Center orchestra members at the annual 8th grade Orientation for HS orchestra on January 28 at LFC.

The EMS Orchestra students organized a spare change drive so that our 3 orchestras could donate to the North Texas Food Bank this past holiday season. Students collected \$237.00 in hopes of making a difference this holiday! Way to go orchestra students! You are awesome!

Next performance for **Chamber/Sinfonia** Orchestras will be Pre UIL March 30, 2010 held at Lowery FC, 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. Exact performance times for each school will be announced on the website. We will also have a professional photographer there for individual and group photos. Information about these and prices will be available in March.

Next performance for **Concert Orchestra** will be announced soon. It will be a performance at the Victoria Gardens this spring for the residents and hopefully one other retirement home nearby.

Students in Chamber, Sinfonia and Concert Orchestras along with select band students will be combining forces this spring to participate in the 6th Annual Pops Orchestra. (This year's group will be a full orchestra.) Forms and entry fees were due to Mrs. Cimbalo on January 22nd.

Always, check out www.allenorchestra.org for the latest news AND there is a link to the EMS Orchestra website there as well!

Skills for Living

Mrs. McKay-Fairley

Spring is upon us!



Wow! I can't believe we are half way through the school year. Where has the time gone?

We have been so busy in Skills for Living that the time is flying by. The fourth 6 weeks is all about self-esteem, self-awareness, goal setting and organization. The "Who Am I" scrapbook was due the end of Jan. During the fifth 6 weeks we will start the food unit and a 5 day rotation through different stations set up around the room. Students will practice their cooking techniques with the making of many different recipes. Cinnamon twist will be our first lab; chocolate chip cookie bars, pancakes and syrup, fruit pizza, fried rice, pretzel and pizza are just some of the items we will be making.

Our Spring Fling will be March 30th for students, parents and faculty to enjoy.

We will have Chef Robinson visit us some time in the spring to enjoy watching and tasting his wonderful recipes and techniques. **Our baby project will also begin in March.** The purpose of this activity is to teach the students about the responsibility involved with caring for a child. Students will carry the baby to and from school and after school hours. They are responsible for the complete care of the baby. The doll will be treated as if it were a real child.

Students will undertake one more project this semester. **The sewing projects will begin around mid April and be part of the final at the end of the semester.** The sewing project will enable students to learn how clothing items are made, fads and fashion as well as the color wheel. Students will construct their own pair of pajama pants, where they will see an item of clothing made from beginning to end.

Counselor's Corner

Rena Perez 7th grade

Kim Harding 8th grade

Happy 2010!! On the horizon are many important activities, events and dates. Get your calendar and pen ready as we get this busy season started!

Registration is around the corner. Here are the dates:

Rising 9th graders (students promoted to the 9th grade)

- Parent meeting #1 February 2nd at LFC at 6 PM
- Parent meeting #2 February 8th at LFC at 6 PM
- February 11th and 12th --Lowery Counselors/Staff will provide registration presentations to rising 9th graders during the school day. Look for this very important paperwork to come home with your child on those days! **ASK THEM FOR IT!!!!** Rising 9th graders will register for classes at home with the information they received at the presentation.
- February 11th - 26th - On-line registration opening and closing dates.

Rising 8th graders (students promoted to the 8th grade)

- February 15th - Counselors will provide registration presentations to all students during the school day.
- February 25th - Parent meeting at Ereckson, 6PM. The counselors will provide detailed instructions on how to register on-line. Students' Skyward login id's and password will be handed out. Students will register on-line from home.
- February 25th - March 12th - On-line registration opening and closing dates.

Testing dates for TAKS are;

- March 3 - TAKS Writing 7th
- April 6 - TAKS Math 8th
- April 7 - TAKS Reading 8th
- April 27 - TAKS Math 7th
- April 28 - TAKS Reading 7th
- April 29 - TAKS Science 8th
- April 30 - TAKS Social Studies 8th

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, Please do not schedule doctor, dentist, orthodontist, or any other kind of appointments on these days. State law requires that all students pass TAKS Reading and Math at grade eight to be promoted to grade nine. Seventh graders not passing TAKS reading or math will be placed in a strategies class in 8th grade.

First Semester Grades are in. Remember, to be promoted, a student must pass language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies with a grade average of at least 70 or above on a scale of 100. Consult with your child's teacher if you have questions about their grades.

Please have patience with us as we attempt to meet everyone's needs during this very busy time. Also, check our webpage for more information. We are looking forward to seeing you at the registration meetings.



Regular family meals result in better eating habits for adolescents

Good eating habits can result when families eat together. In the March/April 2009 issue of the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, researchers from the School of Public Health, University of Minnesota report on one of the first studies to examine the long-term benefits of regular family meals for diet quality during the transition from early to middle adolescence. In general, the study found adolescents who participated in regular family meals reported more healthful diets and meal patterns compared to adolescents without regular family meals.

Data were drawn from Project EAT, a population-based, longitudinal study designed to examine socioenvironmental, personal, and behavioral determinants of dietary intake and weight status among an ethnically diverse sample of adolescents. Young adolescents completed classroom surveys and a questionnaire in 1998 and 1999 when they were about 12 to 13 years old (referred to as Time 1), and then completed a further round as middle adolescents five years later (Time 2). The study sample included 303 male and 374 female adolescents.

Regular family meals, defined as five or more meals together per week, declined over time. Sixty percent of youth had regular family meals during early adolescence compared to 30% during middle adolescence. Having regular family meals at both Time 1 and Time 2 was associated with greater frequency of consuming breakfast and dinner meals and increased intakes of vegetables, calcium-rich food, dietary fiber, and several nutrients including calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron, and zinc five years later. An important finding is that although adolescents with regular family meals at both Time 1 and Time 2 had better diet quality, on average, overall dietary adequacy was not achieved for the entire study sample. These findings are consistent with current national consumption data that identified dietary intake of fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, potassium, magnesium, vitamin E, and dietary fiber as problematic for this age group.

Researcher Teri L. Burgess-Champoux, PhD, RD, LD, states, "These findings suggest that having regular family meals during the transition from early to middle adolescence positively impacts the development of healthful eating behaviors for youth. Findings from the current analysis, in conjunction with similar findings from a longitudinal analysis of older adolescents transitioning to young adulthood, strongly suggest that regular family meals have long-term nutritional benefits...The importance of incorporating shared mealtime experiences on a consistent basis during this key developmental period should be emphasized to parents, health care providers, and educators."

Want more information? Go to:

<http://www.physorg.com/news155810451.html>

Special Populations

Laurie Schaefer

Welcome to the 2nd semester! It is so hard to believe that Spring is just around the corner and we will soon be in the final stretch of the 2009-2010 school year!

Students receiving services through the Special Populations department have been very busy preparing for upcoming state assessments! Testing simulations begin the first week of February. Data from these simulations will be used to ensure the student receives the appropriate version of the TAKS test as well as correct accommodations. It is very important that they get a good night's rest and a healthy breakfast! They have also been active participants in a variety of extra-curricular activities such as Band, Orchestra, Choir, Theater, Athletics, Robotics and Game Club, just to name a few!

As we begin to enjoy warmer weather, it can often be difficult for a student to stay focused on their academics! Please be sure to use the Skyward system to check grades and upcoming assignments. If you ever have any questions, you may contact the student's Case Manager or ESL teacher for assistance.

It is our pleasure and privilege to work with your students! Go Huskies!

This month the spotlight shines on...

Betty Jo Frank

- **What do you do at EMS?**
 - I am based in the Learning Lab. Though I do go into different classrooms to help students.
- **How long have you been in education?**
 - This is my 10th year.
- **What are you looking forward to this year at EMS?**
 - Believe I've already found it. Working with wonderful men and women who really have a heart for teaching children.
- **Where are you originally from?**
 - Akron, Ohio
- **What do you like to do when you are not at school?**
 - I enjoy reading, playing games and spending time with my nine grandchildren at our lake house. We like to go boating, jet ski riding and swimming.



For all your Ereckson Middle School Info
Check out:

<http://www.allenisd.org/erecksonms>

OR

www.erecksonpta.org