

Panther News

December 2011 &
January 2012

Lone Star Elementary

Dr. Anastasia Washington, Principal
Mariah Gaskins, Assistant Principal
Edward Dutton, School Counselor-Extended Day Director



Principal's Message



Happy December! I can't believe how quickly this year is flying by! I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving, and quality time was spent with family, friends and some relaxation. The next several weeks tend to be frenzied and hectic, and my hope is that we will help our children slow down and enjoy every minute.

Helping children mature and make positive progress requires the adults in their lives to celebrate the growth and gains they have made. As you meet with teachers for conferences, help us to find the sparkle within your child to keep them learning and achieving. Conferences are an important time. You find out how they are progressing and share information that will help us know them better. There are many things we have no control over during the school day, but we can surely celebrate growth in what our kids are doing.

We so appreciate the support we experience with our parent community. Without you, our students could not be successful. I am above all thankful for each teacher and dedicated staff member on this campus. Every day they deal with challenges of every sort, maintaining their professionalism and loyalty to every student in our building. Their enthusiasm is to be commended.

Our School Improvement Team and staff will update our School Improvement Plan (SIP) in January. The SIP is designed to help all students achieve to grade level standards. Teachers use information from the FCAT, State assessments, report cards and benchmark assessments to write measureable goals in reading, writing, science and math. All the goals are articulated, meaning that they build on each other from one grade level to the next. The overall goal is to have all of our students' proficient on all the district standards, as well as on state tests. Our school improvement plan includes specific action steps and regular monitoring to reach each one of these goals.

Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida is just around the corner! The theme for this year is "**Take the Lead and Read.**" During the week of January 23-27, 2012, our district is being challenged to reach a goal of 20 million minutes of reading in one single day along with other districts in the state of Florida. On Monday, January 23rd, LSE faculty, staff and student body will read for an additional 20 minutes during the day to celebrate Literacy. This will be a fun-filled week of many activities and guest readers in our city. We hope that you will support as we work to reach our goal. Additional information will be sent home after we return from break.

We appreciate that families are working hard to get their children to school on time. However, some of you will be receiving a letter of notification for extensive tardies and/or unexcused absences. It is very disruptive to our office as well as our school system. We have had more than 25 a day, which is not acceptable! Please do everything you can to leave a few minutes earlier to ensure a timely arrival. Thank you for working with us to ensure class begins on time with very few interruptions.

Have a Blessed Holiday Season and Happy New Year to All!!!

Anastasia Washington

Calendar of Events

- Dec. 1** -Student Council field trip to Selva Marina
Dec. 5-9 - Holiday Shoppe (call for times)
Dec. 7 - Early Release
Dec. 14 - School Wide 'Polar Express Day'
(dress in your pajamas!)
Dec. 15 - Student Council field trip to Atria/Castaway Island Preserve
-1st grade program @ 7:00
Dec. 16 -5th grade to AMC Theatre/Regency court for lunch
Dec. 19-Jan. 2, 2012 - Holiday Break

Jan. 1, 2012



- Jan. 11** - Early Release
Jan. 13 - Dental Van
Jan. 16 - No School-Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
Jan. 19 - 2nd grading period ends
- SAC meeting @ 7:30am
Jan. 20 -Planning Day (no school)
Jan. 23-27 -Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!!!!
Jan. 24 -2nd/3rd grade Parent Night (6:00-7:00pm)
Jan. 25 -Early Release
Jan. 30 -Report Cards go home

**Meet Ms. Aimee Kimball:
Lone Star's Teacher of the Year!**

How long have you been in education?
This is my seventh year in Duval County and all have been here at Lone Star Elementary.
What are your hobbies/interests?
I enjoy reading, scrapbooking, photography, shopping/fashion and painting.
If you could give students one piece of advice, what would it be?

Find something you are good at and continue to develop it. Always be positive and never give up!

Do you have any hidden talents?
I am good at karaoke and I am also a competitive scrabble and card player!
What goals do you have for Lone Star?
My goals for Lone Star are to help continue to maintain our 'A' status, make AYP in all areas and continue to show Duval County how awesome we are!

Message from the Superintendent Importance of Reading

As we prepare for the upcoming Winter break, it is important to keep in mind that the school year will be halfway over once students return in January. For teachers, students and parents, as well as guidance counselors and administrators, this means that final FCAT exercises will be in full swing and juniors and seniors will be wrapping up SAT and ACT exams and narrowing down their college acceptance letters and admission applications.

As we head into the Winter break, I'd like to challenge everyone who comes in contact with a student—from parents and grandparents to pastors and business leaders—to encourage them to read and support *Read it Forward Jax!* We can help spread the word about this unique reading initiative by asking, "What are you reading?" Board members and I recently held a *Read it Forward Jax!* Community conversation at the Deerwood Park Chick-fil-A to facilitate conversations about the importance of reading and discussed ways the community could help students improve literacy skills.

It is my heartfelt desire to see our students' value reading beyond the classroom. This can be accomplished by having books handy when traveling to visit relatives, running errands, sitting in a waiting room, or when waiting for a favorite holiday dessert to come out of the oven. Research shows that when students read at or above grade level, it has a positive impact on their overall academic performance. We want our students to be recognized among the best and brightest in the state as well as the nation, but it will take an entire community effort to accomplish this goal.



*Meet Ms. Connie Mickelson:
Lone Star's School Related Employee of the Year!*

How long have you been in education?

This is my 24th year in Duval County. I spent 4 years at Arlington Heights and the rest have been here at Lone Star Elementary.

What are your hobbies/interests?

I enjoy reading, crafting and crocheting.

If you could give students one piece of advice, what would it be?

Look for the funny things in life and always laugh!

Why did you pursue being the Box Tops, Campbell's and Tyson labels coordinator?

I saw valuable resources that we could use to improve student learning! I was bothered how they were just being tossed out.

What goals do you have for Lone Star?

My goals for Lone Star are to help continue to maintain our 'A' status, just like Ms. Kimball!

NEW SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

Students in kindergarten, first and second grades must score 54 percent or higher on the state reading test called F.A.I.R. in order to be promoted this year. Students who are retained based only on this F.A.I.R. assessment will be required to attend an intensive summer reading program for a minimum of 25 of the 29 instructional days. There are three administrations of F.A.I.R. and the second administration of the F.A.I.R. test begins this month. Do you know your child's score? Please contact your child's teacher for current scores and make sure you stay abreast of their results.



FCAT 2.0-NEWS TO KNOW

Education Commissioner Gerard Robinson submitted recommended achievement level and cut score changes for FCAT 2.0. On the next page down, you will see the previous developmental scale scores and the new proposed changes to be approved in December. As you can see, there is a significant difference in each level. The Commissioner said, "Our state has long-established high expectations for our students. As we move forward, it is vitally important that students are well prepared to move to the next level, whether it is continuing their K-12 experience, a postsecondary education or a career. Our students' ability to compete in an ever-changing global economy depends on the expectations state leaders set for them and the learning opportunities provided by schools. I have complete confidence in the capabilities of our teachers and students to meet these challenges."

As changes occur, the teachers and staff at Lone Star Elementary continue to strive to do the best for all children to succeed. We will achieve success as we work together!

Cut Scale Scores 2011-2012

FCAT 2.0 Reading developmental scale scores (140 to 302) for each achievement level:

Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
3	140-181	182-197	198-209	210-226	227-260
4	154-191	192-207	208-220	221-237	238-269
5	161-199	200-215	216-229	230-245	246-277
6	167-206	207-221	222-236	237-251	252-283
7	171-212	213-227	228-242	243-257	258-289

FCAT 2.0 Mathematics developmental scale scores (140 to 298) for each achievement level:

Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
3	140-182	183-197	198-213	214-228	229-260
4	155-196	197-209	210-223	224-239	240-271
5	163-204	205-219	220-233	234-246	247-279
6	170-212	213-226	227-239	240-252	253-284
7	179-219	220-233	234-247	248-260	261-292

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

Lone Star Elementary School
Ms. Anastasia Washington, Principal

SHORT NOTES



Ticket, please!

If you want to limit your youngster's TV time, try this idea. Every week, give her seven slips of paper. Each is good for an hour of television. Remind her to plan ahead. For example, if she wants to watch a two-hour movie on Saturday, she'll need to save an extra ticket during the week.

Be there!

Regular attendance in elementary school sets up a good pattern for your child's entire school career. Show him that school comes first by trying to keep days off for illnesses and family emergencies. Also, schedule routine doctor and dentist appointments for after school or over school breaks.

Better concentration

Looking for a fun way to improve your youngster's concentration? Try this quick game. The first player makes one motion, like clapping or spinning around. The second person copies him and adds another movement. Continue adding new motions until someone forgets the sequence. The last player to get it right starts a new game.

Worth quoting

"Life doesn't require that we be the best, only that we try our best."
H. Jackson Brown Jr.

JUST FOR FUN

Teacher: Name one important thing we have today that we didn't have 10 years ago.

Brian: Me!



Study smarts

From a history test at the end of each month to a spelling quiz every Friday, studying is a skill youngsters will need throughout their years of school. Help your child study with these tips.

Start a habit. Encourage your youngster to treat studying as a daily assignment, not just something he does the evening before a test. For example, he might study 15 minutes every night for a spelling test on Friday. After he finishes his regular homework, he can spend a little time reviewing his notes and handouts.

Tackle textbooks. When your child has a chapter to study, have him "preview" it to increase his understanding. He should glance over headings, graphics, and photos and go to the glossary to look up boldfaced words. *Tip:* If he finds a section hard to grasp, he could read a picture book on the topic. For a science unit on matter,



for instance, he could try *What Is the World Made Of?* by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld.

Mix it up. If your youngster reviews information in several ways, he'll be more likely to remember it. He might use colored pencils to copy each spelling word or math fact onto a separate index card. Then, he can shuffle the cards and study them in a different order each time. For extra reinforcement, suggest that he spell each word or recite each fact aloud.♥

After-school chats

"What's in your backpack?" Greet your child with this question, and you'll discover a lot about what she does in class.

- Set aside time each day to go through her papers. Try to do it first thing after school when her day is fresh in her mind.
- Look over your youngster's work together. Help her feel proud by making a specific comment about something she's done. For instance, if she shows you a picture she drew in art class, you might say, "The gray sky and big waves look just like our rainy day at the beach."
- Have her talk through math problems or science experiments to show you what she's learned. She might explain how she finds the perimeter of a triangle or why ants dig tunnels, for example.♥



A recipe for respect

Ava listens quietly when her teacher talks. Ben claps for each performer at his piano recital. These children show respect for others. Here's how you can encourage your youngster to do the same.

Demonstrate

Your child will learn respectful behavior by watching the way you treat others. When she makes a mistake, for instance, gently tell her what she's done wrong—and out of earshot of others. Also, let her see you respect ideas and beliefs that are different



from your own. For example, point out that you're happy a friend is voting in an election even though you each favor a different candidate.

Notice

When you see your youngster acting respectfully, let her know that you've noticed ("I like the way you asked your sister before borrowing her sweater"). Your words and attention will encourage her to show respect in the future.

Tip: If you see disrespectful behavior on TV (a child rolling his eyes or talking back to a parent), tell your youngster that isn't okay in real life. Then, ask her to be on the lookout for respectful actions by characters. How many can she spot before the program ends? ♥

ACTIVITY CORNER Paper bag city

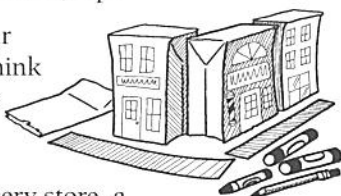
Let your child create his own 3-D community. He'll practice map skills and learn about urban planning as he decides where to put the buildings in his town.

Materials: paper lunch bags, newspapers, crayons or markers, black construction paper, scissors, tape

Have your youngster think of buildings to include, such as a

bank, a grocery store, a school, a library, and houses. He can make them by drawing doors, windows, and signs on flat bags (on the side without the flap). For every bag he decorates, have him stuff a second one with newspaper. Then, he should open each decorated bag and slide it over a stuffed bag so his "buildings" will stand up. For the roads, he can cut black construction paper into strips and tape them together.

Finally, have your child lay out his roads and arrange his buildings alongside them to make his very own town. ♥



Q & A

Bullying: The bystander's role

Q: My child came home from school upset because kids were picking on a classmate and wouldn't let her play with them. What advice should I give my daughter?

A: Tell your youngster that her classmate was being bullied—and that she has the power to help stop it!

There are several things she can do. She could start by standing up to the bully and saying something like, "That's not nice." Then, she might ask the child who is being bullied to join her in a game or school project.

Also, remind your youngster to report bullying to a teacher or other adult when she sees it. Let her know this is not tattling, but a way to help someone who is being hurt. You can explain: "Asking an adult to help a child who is being bullied is like asking the nurse to help a child with a scraped knee." ♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Thinking games

Between school, errands, and activities, my family spends lots of time on the go. I decided to use some of it for "thinking games."

I taught my kids a game my parents used to play with me, called "Would You Rather?" I offer two options and ask which they prefer and why. For example, I might say, "Would you rather live near the beach or the mountains?"

My son came up with a game he named "Three Favorites." Someone picks

a category (outfits, movies), and we all tell our top three choices. My daughter thought of "What Doesn't Belong?" We take turns naming items and asking the others to explain which is the odd one out and why. The kids especially like this game because there can be more than one "right" answer. For example, when I named "owl," "ostrich," and "eagle," my daughter said, "Ostrich, because it can't fly."

My son's answer was, "Owl, because it hunts at night."

Now they want to play all the time. I'm glad because we're having fun—and they've gotten better at thinking through their ideas. ♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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