

# LONGS CREEK ELEMENTARY

Newsletter 2011-2012  
Volume 2

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## From the Trail Boss



I cannot believe we have finished our first semester here at Longs Creek. It has been a great experience and I am looking forward to all of the learning and activities that spring will bring us. I took some time over the break to walk through the halls and all of our classrooms looking at the hard work that has taken place. Your students are very impressive and have a lot of great artifacts hanging in their classrooms, on the outside bulletin boards and in their respective content notebooks. I encourage each of you to ask them about their science journaling and how they are making connections across the curriculum areas.

January is the perfect month for parent conferences. The purpose is to re-establish communication and to solidify the team concept about your child's learning. We do have early release days scheduled in February for conferences, but please don't wait if there is a concern you would like to address. We will be hosting a parent information night about STAAR very soon. This will be another avenue for us to help answer questions that you and your family have about the states new test being unveiled this year.

Mr. Forde and I continue to greet many of you and all of our students daily in the foyer. Please feel free to stop by and say hello at any time. The afternoon dismissal time is a great time for us to make connections also. We split the campus and share outside duties to better serve the needs of our school community. Thank you to our NEISD police officers for directing our traffic daily. It was a large endeavor for just one officer and having two has made a huge difference in drop off and pick up.

A huge thank you to all of our families who so generously donated coats and toys for our sister school! We also donated a very substantial contribution to our local food bank. This holiday season was tough for many families across the city, Longs Creek Student Council and PTA did their all to assist those in need.

Dawn Organ  
Principal



Glenn Forde  
Assistant Principal

# Gym Shorts

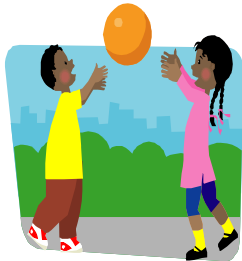
The state mandated Fitnessgram assessments were administered to grades 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>. We've been told the results will be sent home in a new format this year.

Coach Talbott and Coach May attended the Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (TAHPERD) Convention held in Dallas, TX this year. These annual conventions provide continuing education sessions for all sports, fitness, health, dance, and recreation activities. The exhibitors provide instruction on both old and new fitness equipment, teaching equipment, and supplies for teaching. Coach Talbott was honored to be selected to share a training session entitled, "OMG! All Day Field for K-5<sup>th</sup>". Coach Talbott also represents NEISD and Longs Creek as a committee chair on TAHPERD's American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart. One of the American Heart Association's expenditures on health education includes providing training sessions at TAHPERD Conventions.

Master Dudley from the local Kung Jung Mu Sul martial arts studio, came to present special lessons during Physical Education classes to reinforce how to show respect and maintain self control.

During January and February, students in all grades will be learning routines for the "NEISD PE Showcase" held in March. Longs Creek will be performing one routine per grade this time. Due to increased number of schools participating, Longs Creek will share a floor quadrant this time. Our performance date is Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at Virgil T. Blossom Athletic Center inside the Littleton Gymnasium. Coaches are allowed to select a maximum of 24 students per routine. If your child receives an invitation letter from the coaches, a reply will be requested in 48 hours. If after 48 hours, there is no reply we will have to pick another child for the spot to ensure the performance group has plenty of time to prepare together.

Some of your children may have mentioned Coach Talbott is having a baby. This is a fact. The wonderful Ms. Chris Jeppesen, will be her long term substitute starting about April 16<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Jeppesen is a retired certified Physical Education Teacher who taught Middle School Physical Education mostly at NEISD's Krueger Middle School for her 30+ years.



We would also like to thank the PTA and everyone supporting the PTA fund raisers. Due to your efforts, some of the money raised has been used to order new wireless microphone systems for the gymnasiums.

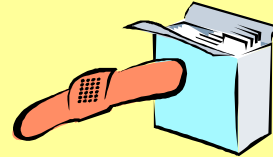
~Coach Talbott & Coach May~

# Nurse's Notions

With the New Year upon us, many people make a resolution to try to make healthy changes in their lives. Here are a few simple tips on how to make a healthy choice every day.

- Eat 2 to 3 cups of vegetables a day
- Eat 1.5 to 2 cups of fruits a day
- Get 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night
  - You should watch less than 2 hours of TV a day
- Make sure that you engage in some sort of physical activity for at least 30 minutes a day.

Candace Henri ~ Longs Creek Nurse



Keep on Clippin'!

Turn in 100 Box Tops,  
earn a BOX TOPS

Spirit Stick!



Gettin' Ready to Go!

We have been busy this past nine weeks!! We have been learning our letters, numbers, shapes and colors!! During centers we have been doing math, letter and number stations. The upcoming nine weeks will be very busy as well. We will be talking about Winter and turn our room into a Winter Wonderland. We will also be talking about the Rodeo and farm animals!! Come by our room and see all our wonderful artwork!!

RSG Team

# Music Notes

Wow! Did we just blink and the fall semester is done? Longs Creek students finished 2011 in style! The All-Stars had a fantastic winter concert for the entire school and for their parents. On December 9<sup>th</sup> All-Stars attended the Holiday Music Festival at the San Antonio International airport. We had over 20 families and friends from Longs Creek in the audience. Many compliments were given to the students from the airport employees and the festival planners.

Polar Express was performed by our Kindergarten students on December 16<sup>th</sup>. It was an amazing show. Pajamas, hot chocolate, and festive singing were experienced by all who saw the Polar Express. Thank you to our parent volunteers who gave their time and talents to help the show be a success. Special thanks to Gloria Scott, Tracie Martin, Colleen Chapman, Dolores Cardenas, and Courtney Rawe. Our new wooden signs for the Polar Express were made this year by Mr. William Pylant; the pictures will last for years and we will always remember his talent. Ms. Kathy Lopes, our wonderful music specialist, hand painted the wooden signs made by Mr. Pylant. Her artistic skills are amazing!

2012 brings many musical opportunities to our students. Fifth grade will attend the San Antonio Symphony on Thursday, Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Second grade will be preparing a fantastic show for the March 6<sup>th</sup> PTA meetings. Finally, 4<sup>th</sup> grade will attend the San Antonio Symphony on Wednesday, May 16<sup>th</sup>. We strive to present various musical opportunities for Longs Creek students. We appreciate our parents and the many volunteers that make the music department a joyful place. We are grateful for a strong PTA presence at Longs Creek and we are thankful for all the things our PTA does to benefit all the students at our school.

Musically yours, Mrs. Ruth Garcia & Ms. Kathy Lopes



## PTA News

### Texas PTA Honorary Life Membership Awarded!

Every year the Texas PTA presents a Life Membership to individuals for their outstanding service to children and youth. This Honorary Life Membership is one of the highest honors that may be presented.

This award is given to an individual who

- Has gone the extra mile for our children.
- Is a valuable volunteer.
- Is an exceptional teacher dedicated to education.
- Is a committee member who shares his/her resources and expertise for the benefit of all children.

The Longs Creek PTA is proud to present this award to...

Ann Cantu  
Patty Garza  
Coach Michele May

Congratulations Ladies!





# Book Worm from the Library

Happy New Year, Longs Creek parents and students!

A big thanks to all of our Longs Creek families for supporting our Holiday Book Fair and thank you in advance for supporting the upcoming magazine sale. Both the book fair and the QSP magazine sale raise money so that we can bring wonderful authors, illustrators and storytellers to visit our students. Money from these fundraisers is also used for reading programs at Longs Creek including the **Texas Bluebonnet Award** and the **100 Book Challenge**.

Voting for the **Texas Bluebonnet Award** will take place at the end of January. The 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students have been busy reading the books nominated for this award. The books that are nominated each year expose students to a wide variety of genres such as fantasy, science fiction, realistic fiction and also poetry. Those who read at least 5 of the 20 books will be able to attend our Bluebonnet Voting Party on January 26. Ask your child how many Bluebonnet books he or she has read!

The **100 Book Challenge** is a new reading program we have created to promote reading with the Kinder, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders. The students are being challenged to read 100 books by the end of the school year! Kinder and 1<sup>st</sup> graders can read the books independently or with a parent. 2<sup>nd</sup> graders should read books independently for the challenge. When students reach their goal of 100 Books they are recognized with their picture on the 100 Book Challenge wall and they also receive a book and special spirit stick!

Countless studies have shown that the more books children are exposed to and the more they read, the better readers they become. The **Texas Bluebonnet Award** and the **100 Book Challenge** are just a few of the ways we strive to develop excellent readers at Longs Creek.

## Online Resources

Are you looking for safe places for your child to go to on the internet when needing information? All students have access to excellent online research resources from home...courtesy of NEISD and Longs Creek. These internet based resources include World Book Encyclopedia and Biography Resource Center. You can access these sites at home by logging onto the Parent Portal (<https://portal.neisd.net>), where you will find a link to the Library Portal .

Passwords for these resources are not needed when accessed from the Parent Portal. The websites can also be accessed from the Library link on the Longs Creek website but the following passwords are then required.

## Username and Passwords

### Worldbook Encyclopedia

Username: longselem

Password: creek1

### Kids InfoBits and Power Search

Username: lcreekes

Password: lcreekes

### Biography Resource Center

Password: San10063

### TumbleBooks (online storybooks)

Username: neisd

Password: neisd

Tanya Ray  
Longs Creek Library



The holidays are a great time to learn about family traditions and unique customs around our world. We have enjoyed so many stories, folktales, art activities and shared new experiences and celebrations with each other.

Mexico, Holland and Germany were highlighted as unique and interesting destinations to find holiday celebrations and surprises. The students had the opportunity to hear from other kindergarten teachers as they rotated to a different classroom for a visit. Customs Around The World is a favorite and busy time in kindergarten. Our annual Polar Express presentation is another favorite of Longs Creek students and teachers. It was a day of excitement with the

kindergarteners singing and acting out the story and the entire school participating by wearing pajamas. Hot chocolate was served and we had a wonderful memory-making time.

We look forward to the New Year with anticipation and excitement, for all the great learning to come. Happy New Year Longs Creek family!

Kinder Team

# KINDER NEWS

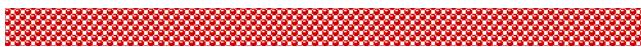


## 1st Grade News

What a great time we are having in first grade! A huge thank you to all of the parents who volunteered their time for the Carnival, Red Ribbon Week and the Field Trip to Madison. The kids really enjoyed these events and we could not have done it without you. We also appreciate all of the parents and loved ones that came out and showed their support at the Fall Carnival. November provided us the opportunity to show our appreciation for the sacrifices made by all veterans. Special thanks to all of the men and women who have served or are serving that came out on Veteran's Day. We were honored to have the chance to say, "thank you" to each of you.

We have had tons of fun this nine weeks and learned a lot along the way! In science, we began with a unit on seasons and weather. Then we switched to maps, Indians and Pilgrims where we learned about the first Thanksgiving, and we are currently wrapping up our unit on matter and holidays. During word work we have been focusing on making words, word families, short vowels, digraphs and blends. We have completed our review of the words from last year and have learned many new word wall words. Thank you for continuing to study the word wall words and read with your child every night. In math we have covered: adding and subtracting numbers, using number sentences, patterns in numbers and problem solving. Writing Workshops are in full swing and the creativity is amazing. Our focus in writing has been on beginning sentences with capital letters, putting space between words and ending each sentence with punctuation. We appreciate all of the support we have received from parents and are grateful for the relationships we have built with our students and parents. We are looking forward to another nine weeks of learning and fun!

First Grade Team



## 2nd Grade News



The holidays are here and the second 9-weeks is flying by! In Math we have been focusing on Probability and Graphing. We did some fun probability activities with spinners and made a probability line in class. We took several surveys of our classmates, and then graphed our results. We used both bar graphs and picture graphs, and then worked on interpreting our results. In Social Studies, we are now learning about our local, state, and federal government. The students are doing a great job recognizing our mayor, governor and president. We look forward to creating and voting on a classroom motto as we continue this unit on the framework of America's government. In Science we just wrapped up our unit on Matter. We had so much fun exploring solids and liquids and identifying all of their properties. Hopefully you had a chance to observe your child's science notebook. There, you could see all of the cool things that we have been doing in class. We will begin learning about the wonderful world of weather when we return in January! In writing we had a great time on our Tasty Tuesday, creating a recipe and then writing about it. We all look forward to another Tasty Tuesday in the New Year. We are moving on to identifying and using adjectives our writing, which should be evident on our 2<sup>nd</sup> Tasty Tuesday critique. In reading we have spent time exploring specific habits of good readers. We're now beginning an exploration of the conventions of nonfiction books. We are moving into reading and responding to longer passages, so encourage your child to read chapter books!

Second Grade Team

Greetings Parents from Third Grade!

In Math, we completed our unit on organizing data, probability and statistics. Students worked on categorizing data, making meaningful statements regarding data and using data to create other displays (lists, tables, bar graphs, pictographs, etc.).

In Social studies, our focus was on immigration. We learned about immigrants and why they came to America. After this unit students can describe why individuals move from place to place, how events and individuals have changed communities and the importance of immigration to our nation.

In Science, we studied types of energy. We performed hands on experiments exploring mechanical energy, light energy and heat energy. Observations and results from the experiments were documented in our science journals. We will continue our work in our science journals as the year continues.

In Reading, we are working very hard to get the students to think at a deeper level and be successful. Students have used a variety of text materials to identify text features that would aid in understanding and comprehension. Students have also used predicting, sequencing, and summarizing to help with understanding. Since the STAAR test will be more demanding, our students should be reading for extended periods of time at home. This year we will continue working rigorously to develop deeper levels of thinking and understanding.

We are looking forward to making this a successful year! ~ Third Grade Team

# Third Grade News



# Fourth Grade Team

Fourth grade has a wonderful group of writers in the making. In Writing we have been working on improving our compositions. Our students have the foundation to write a magnificent piece that is well organized and written so eloquently it paints a vivid picture. We are adding voice, personality, and have seen our kernels pop with so many great stories. WOW! What a difference that makes and their papers have improved so much! We also have introduced personal narratives and expository writing. Fourth graders have really turned into junior editors. They have been working on grammar, spelling, editing, and revising. We want to make sure all of our papers are top notch every single time.

In Social Studies we have been learning about Native Americans who lived in Texas long ago. We have reviewed four different tribes and explored their cultures and discovered that where they lived had a great impact on their resources. Students have compared and contrasted the differences and similarities in each tribe. Our fourth graders have really made a connection from their present day life to the history of Texas long ago.

In Science 4<sup>th</sup> grade have been doing lots of new and exciting experiments. Your children have really been observing, recording, and hypothesizing like real scientist. We have observed the effects of weathering and erosion. Students have discovered that soil is such a great resource. We made Chia Pets and planted radishes in a controlled setting while recording our findings and gathering data. Our classroom has really turned into a lab during Science. Science has really been hands on, and the students have been loving it!

In Math we have completed our place value and number concepts unit. Fourth graders should have all of their multiplication facts 0-12 memorized by the end of the year. Our next unit is multiplication and division. If their facts are memorized, this unit will be much easier for them. Check with your student – can they recall all of their facts? We have already introduced fractions and decimals, place value, and have a five day problem solving power point every week. Our students are really taking apart each problem and evaluating how to solve within a group setting. They collaborate and teach others different strategies to their own solutions. It is a wonderful experience to work side by side with your classmates. Students are gaining valuable insight from their peers.

Reading is so vital to so many other subjects and we ask that you continue to encourage your children to read. Students have been working on inferencing; we use our background knowledge and text clues to draw a great conclusion. Fourth graders have read many interesting new stories and have made wonderful connections. We just had a field trip to Madison High School and saw a play on a book we read in class, James and the Giant Peach. It's amazing to see the interpretation they created in their own minds compared to an actual play. They were very excited and we continually promote a variety of reading material that will challenge them to develop their literacy.

We have been working hard, but having fun in Fourth Grade. Now we are looking forward to finishing our last half of the year in style!

Fourth Grade Team

# Fifth Grade News



Hello to all Fifth Grade parents. Can you believe the year is half over and your child is almost a middle schooler? The Fifth Grade team is working very diligently to prepare the kiddos for the demands, responsibilities, and expectations of middle school.

The STAAR Test - which is replacing the TAKS Test - is right around the corner. "STAAR" stands for "State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness". The Math STAAR Test is on Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> and the Reading STAAR Test is on Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>. We will be working very hard to prepare each child to be successful on each test.

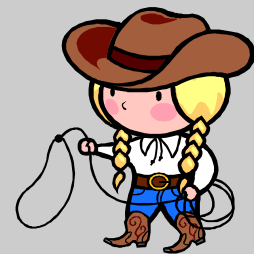
The Science STAAR Test is not until Thursday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. We appreciate your help and support as we continue to prepare. You can help by ascertaining that your child is at school every day on time and is ready and prepared to listen and work hard!

In Math, we focused on fractions and geometry this nine weeks. In Reading and Social Studies, we have been studying the development of the Thirteen Colonies and the Revolutionary War. Science has been interesting as we wrapped up our energy unit and began our earth science unit with weather. Language Arts has been all about recognizing and being able to use the parts of speech effectively in our writing and learning word meanings.

As always, we appreciate you and all your help with the holiday party we had at the end of December. We ended the first semester with a wonderful sing-a-long and party. Thanks to all who contributed and helped with food, drinks, games, and organization during such a busy season!

Appreciatively,  
Fifth Grade Team

# Are You Smarter Than LC Cowboy?



Details Coming Soon!