

EXPLORER

January 2013

Principal's Message

Happy New Year and welcome back! We look forward to a great year for Shelley Elementary in 2013. The coming of a new year is a time when we pause to reflect on the past year and to establish goals or make resolutions to help us move forward with improvement and continued growth and success. It is our goal at Shelley Elementary to continue to ensure safety and to provide excellent educational opportunities for all of our students, and to work collaboratively among our faculty and staff as well as with the support of our amazing parents to do so!

I received a number of e-mails, phone calls, and even personal visits the last week of school in December in response to concerns raised in the tragic incident at Sandy Hook Elementary in Connecticut. At that time I sent an electronic message to each of our patrons, briefly reviewing our school safety plan. I was especially touched by a conversation with one of our Kindergarten students the following Monday. As the students were entering the gym for a school program, this young man came over to me and with very big eyes and much emotion asked me if I had heard about the "bad man in another town who went in to a school and shot some students and teachers." I told him I had heard about it and it was a very sad thing. He then asked, "But YOU'LL keep US safe here, right?" I told him how I had met with our teachers after school on the day of the tragedy

and we had reviewed our safety plan so we could make sure all our students would be protected in an emergency. He smiled and said, "My mom *told* me you would take care of us!" Thank you for the trust you place in us as you send your children to school each day. We take this responsibility very seriously.

I would also like you to know that we held a lock down drill with the students on Tuesday, Dec. 18, to help them practice our plan in the event our school would need to go into a lockdown mode. It was a positive experience as students listened carefully to teachers as they discussed the safest place to be, and the importance of staying calm and following directions.

Some of you may remember about five years ago when our school was placed in lockdown one afternoon. There was a serious car accident in our area and the Life Flight helicopter needed to land on our playground field to transport one of the victims. We simply needed to keep the students away from the accident and the helicopter. There was no imminent threat of harm to any of the students, yet it was a good reminder of the importance of having a plan in place so that we could respond appropriately should an emergency arise.

We will continue to hold regular emergency drills, including fire/evacuation, earthquake, and lockdown scenarios so that teachers and students will be able to respond confidently and appropriately in the event of a real emergency.

School Community Council Supports Student Learning

In the month of November, the School Community Council published our annual Stakeholders Report listing current council members, sharing information on the success and progress of Shelley Elementary students over the past school year, and giving an accounting of the expenditure of our school's Land Trust funds. It was sent electronically to each of our patrons, and is posted on our website for further reference. Hard copies are available by request at the front office as well.

We are especially happy to note that during our first year of transition to the school wide Modified Extended Day model, our students achieved a solid and strong ranking under the new Utah Comprehensive Accountability System (UCAS), scoring 532 out of 600 possible points, ranking in the 91 percentile of the state! We are pleased with the growth and progress of our students.

6th Grade N.O.V.A. Graduation

On Thursday, December 13, we had our N.O.V.A. graduation for 6th grade students. Congratulations to these young people on successfully completing the N.O.V.A. certification program! (N.O.V.A. stands for nurturing opportunities, values, and accountability.) Under the direction of the American Fork Police Department, Officer Bylund came to the school each Wednesday during the first semester to teach students the basic N.O.V.A. principles. Armed with these principles as tools, we are confident that our students will be able to better address personal situations that may arise and to make wise life-long decisions, especially as they are preparing to move on to the junior high. The program ended with a resounding demonstration of the N.O.V.A. cheer!

Thus far in our current school year, our teachers have been implementing the new K-5 Language Arts Core and the new Math Core in 6th grade. (This coming school year, we will then add the implementation of the new K-5 Math Core and the 6th grade Language Arts Core.) I would like to express my appreciation for everyone's support as we have begun this transition to the new Core Curriculum. Our teachers have stepped up to get to know and become familiar with the new curriculum and additional supportive strategies and resources and are doing an excellent job in their teaching. Through weekly collaboration they are working closely together reviewing data and planning and refining assessments and curriculum to best determine and meet the needs of their students. Parents have focused on the many positive benefits of the change as well—the increased rigor, and the integration of the curriculum areas, especially the increased emphasis of writing throughout all subjects. They are volunteering their help in the classroom, and are communicating closely with teachers to support student success. Students are thriving as they engage in their lessons and learning activities each day.

The month of January will be a busy time as we settle back in to our routine of school. We will be completing the winter DRA assessment for all students. This is a reading assessment that will help make teachers aware of students' growth in various areas of their reading and inform them of needed additional instruction and support. Our teachers look forward to visiting with you about your student's progress in our upcoming parent conferences the first week in February.

I do hope that everyone had an enjoyable Christmas holiday break and have enjoyed seeing everyone again as we have returned to school ready to continue our journey through this great school year!

Peggy Crandall, Principal

ASD Special Education Parent Night

The Alpine School District Special Education Department is pleased to announce "Parent Night" for parents who have students potentially or currently receiving special education services:

Where: Legacy Elementary School
28 East 1340 North, American Fork
When: Thursday, January 17th, 2013
Time: 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Topic: Behavior strategies for students
on the Autism spectrum

Jannica Dale, the presenter for this evening, is a special education teacher leader with experience as a small-group Autism teacher. She will be speaking about behavior strategies to help establish/maintain positive relationships and avoid conflict. Depending on the needs of parents, there may be a couple of follow-up meetings at two-week intervals to discuss the use of the behavior strategies in the home setting and insights to help parents move forward positively in the future.

Please come join us!

Shelley Sounds

What a wonderful time we experienced performing our three Christmas shows for family and friends! We will begin regular Tuesday and Wednesday rehearsals again starting Tuesday, January 15 at either 8:15-9:10 am or 2:15-3:10 pm for our new Disney medley. We have room for a few new students in the 2:15 pm class, but will put students on a waiting list for the 8:15 am class since there are already 54. As current students choose not to continue, we will fill spaces with our waiting list, in order of oldest students and boys first. Registration forms will be available from Mrs. Davis, so pick one up and come join the fun and learning! We'll have a "Zippadee-Doo-Dah" time!

From the Lunchroom a.k.a. Café Shelley

There have been several changes to our lunch menus that we would like you to be aware of, so we will be attaching a menu to the newsletter as long as there are more changes.

These changes have been made to comply with federal guidelines. We appreciate your patronage and your continued support! Thanks!

Parent Help and Follow Up Needed

We have a concern with the growing number of parents who call and ask for one of their children to come to the phone to speak with them, or for the office to get a message to their children. We understand that emergencies and unexpected situations do occur, but whenever possible, please confirm your after school plans with your children ***before they come to school in the morning.*** This would be greatly appreciated and help reduce class time disruptions.

One final note is a reminder that ***all treats brought to school to share are to be commercially prepared and packaged.*** This assures product consistency and safety. Labels may be read to determine contents to which some students might have an allergic reaction. We would appreciate your adherence to this important school and district guideline.

Working together, office and home can both contribute to a safe and smooth-running school environment that helps teachers and students alike get the most out of the learning experience. Thank you.

Attendance and Punctuality Are Essential for Success

Parents, it is extremely important for your child to be at school every day (except in case of illness). Please do not keep your child out of school to baby-sit, go shopping, etc. Make every attempt to schedule doctor appointments before or after school times. We ask that you call the school the day your child is absent, so that we might make record that the absence is excused.

Getting to class on time is also essential. When children arrive late, it is disruptive to classmates and can have an adverse effect on your child's educational learning. If students are less than ten minutes late, they should just go directly to class. If they are more than ten minutes late, they should stop by the office for a check-in slip. Students who are repeatedly late may be asked to complete missed work or to make up lost time. Please help us by making sure your child arrives at school on time each day. Thank you.

A.L.L. TESTING OPPORTUNITY

Alpine School District Gifted Services will be conducting eight sessions of testing for placements for the 2013-2014 school year. Any interested student currently in 2nd through 7th grade in Alpine District is invited to attend a testing session to qualify for a placement in an Advanced Learning Lab. (A.L.L.) program. Testing may be done on any Saturday in January, at a variety of locations.

Registration for the testing may be completed online, and there will be a \$20 fee for the testing. Go to www.alpineschools.org to Parent/Students, to Registration/ Enrollment, then to Gifted Education and register on the homepage there through Xpress Bill Pay. You may contact ASD Gifted Services at 801-610-8475 or e-mail blangford@alpinedistrict.org with questions.

Shelley 6th Grade Bridges the Generation Gap

Just after Thanksgiving break, Shelley 6th grade students loaded a couple of busses and headed over to the American Fork Senior Citizen Center. With video cameras in hand the students spent an engrossing 40 minutes listening to some of the people tell about their lives. Then the students said goodbye and headed back to school.

Over the course of the next few weeks the students watched the videos they had made and pulled off information and stories to write about. They researched historical topics, wrote draft after draft of the stories told to them, and even collected pictures. Finally the writing was done. On Wednesday, December 19, the students traveled back to the Senior Center for another visit. They presented the people with the stories they had written. Then the students sang a few Christmas songs and shared some cookies. It was a fantastic way to spend the last day of school before Christmas break.

Through this project, Shelley 6th grade students made connections with another generation through their study and writing. It was touching to see the students recognize similarities they have with these older people. One student said the following about the project, "At first I thought this project was going to be boring, but it was really cool. I'm glad I got to be a part of it." The older people were extremely impressed by the excellent behavior and work of the students. It was a great project that brought two parts of a community together and helped each group appreciate and understand one another a little better.

Winter Weather Brings Concerns for Student Safety

With the arrival of the winter cold and snow, we typically experience an increase in the number of vehicles coming to and from school each day. With over a thousand students, we have a very large number of students being dropped off and picked up at any given time. To assure student safety and the most efficient use of these critical time windows, we need to ask your help with the following:

- 1. Carpool whenever possible.** If just one car comes for even three children as opposed to one car coming for each of three children, it cuts the traffic down to only a third as many vehicles. We recognize that waiting in I-o-n-g lines of traffic can be trying, so anything you can do to reduce the lines is appreciated.
- 2. When dropping off and picking up students, please pull all the way forward.** There is often quite a line of cars waiting at any given time during drop off and pick up times. If you simply pull in and stop right in front of the school doors, it forces a large number of cars to remain waiting on the street. However, if you pull as far forward as possible, it allows several cars to get off the street and to be delivering students all at the same time. This is a much more efficient use of space and time.
- 3. Please take care of lunch money, homework check-off, and hugs at home before you jump into the car to come to school.** That way, you can pull in, the students jump out of the car with a quick "Good-bye, Mom/Dad! 'Love you," and you are on your way. When parents have to get out of the car, come around, look through the child's back pack for a permission note, lunch money, etc., it greatly slows down the traffic flow.

4. Please obey traffic markings. It is not appropriate to cross a double yellow line. On occasion we have noted drivers cutting into the oncoming traffic lane on the street in front of the school to zip around a line of cars once they have picked up their own children. This can be very dangerous, and we have seen some frightening near misses. Please plan your schedule such that there is not a need to compromise safety by breaking the law to gain five minutes.

5. Pick up your children in designated areas. By far, the greatest number of parents uses one of our four pull-through areas to drop off or pick up students. Thank you! A few others park in the nearby neighborhoods and have their students come to meet them at their car at an agreed upon spot. This is fine also, *IF* the student still crosses with the crossing guard and follows appropriate sidewalk routes to get to the parent. At times we will see a student dart across the road to meet a parent waiting in the car half-way down the block. Even if oncoming traffic is obeying the speed limit (which is not always the case), it is still very dangerous for a student to randomly dart across the road.

Each one of our students is very precious and important to us. Just as you do, we also want them to arrive at school and to return home each day--safe and protected. Because we are not a bussing school and have such a great number of students who are transported in cars each day, we need *everyone* to exercise extreme caution and good judgment in the process. Thank you for your help in this important matter of student safety.

Storytelling Festival Is Coming!

"Once upon a time," and "Long ago and far away," are magical phrases that conjure up exciting stories to delight and entertain. Our 5th Annual Storytelling Festival begins now, with all students encouraged to either write their own 3 - 6 minute long original story or find a story to re-tell for their class and grade-level competitions to be held the second week in February. All participants will be invited to share their story at our "Evening of Storytelling" on Friday, February 22nd at 7:00 p.m. where families come in their pajamas with pillows and blankets to listen. In addition, the two top winners from each grade will participate in our storytelling assemblies on Wednesday, February 20th. One lower and one upper grade representative will then be selected to participate in district competitions. Get excited because we want to know, "What's YOUR story?"

Online Registration for Parent Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are coming up on February 5 and 7. ***You may use the online scheduler starting any time on Monday, January 14.*** The parent sign-up window will close at midnight on Friday, January 25. Teachers will then fill in the remaining time slots with appointments for those who have not signed up by that point. If you do not have internet access at home, this scheduling may be done either at the public library on their computers or on Shelley's Media Center computers.

Step-By-Step Parent/Guardian Instructions--

1. Visit the school's homepage (<http://shelley.alpinedistrict.org>) and select the Online Scheduler icon/link at the very bottom right hand corner of the page.

2. From the Online Scheduler Home Page:
 1. Choose your student's school from the drop down list and click "GO".
 2. Enter the school password (explorers).
 3. Enter your student's "Student ID". If you do not know the Student ID, use the LOOKUP STUDENT ID button to access the system.
 4. Verify the student's birth date.
 5. A list of your student's teachers will be displayed. Check the box next to the name of each teacher(s) with whom you would like to meet.
 6. If you have more than one student in the school you can see all of your students' teachers' schedules at one time by answering YES to this question: "Do you want to schedule conferences for another student?" Then repeat the steps above for your other students. If you only have one student, answer NO to that question.
 7. You will then see the available time slots for each teacher you selected.
 8. Select the times that work best for your schedule.
 9. Enter your email address (recommended) if you would like an email reminder sent to you. (Your email address is kept private.)
 10. Once you have finished you can confirm your appointment details and print your conference schedule.
 11. Write down the confirmation number (you will need this number if you need to cancel or change an appointment.)

Need help? Contact the school's Online Scheduler™ specialist:

Name: Mr. Blevins, Assistant Principal

E-mail: tblevins@alpinedistrict.org

Phone: (801) 610-8718



Jazz Reader Begins!

Shelley Elementary will be participating in the Jazz Reader contest again this year. It will go from Friday, January 18 through Tuesday, February 19, 2013. Our theme for the contest is "Champions of Reading—Go for the Gold"!

Any reading the students do, or anything that is read to them as they follow along, outside their regular school day counts for the contest. To help provide opportunities for reading, our PTA has planned some delightful events. Please make note of the following on your calendars:

Friday, Jan. 18 - **Parent letter and tracking sheet** for the first weekend will come home

Tuesday, Jan. 22 - First full week **tracking sheet** will come home, and one will follow **each Monday** through the remainder of the contest

Thursday, Jan. 24 - **Moms and Muffins**

Track 1 students 7:30 - 8:00 a.m.;

Track 2 students 8:45 - 9:15 a.m.

Monday, Jan. 28 - **Family Reading Night**

5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Friday, Feb. 8 - **Dads and Donuts**

Track 1 students 7:30 - 8:00 a.m.;

Track 2 students 8:45 - 9:15 a.m.

Friday, Feb. 15 - **Student Read-a-Thon**

Track 2 students come early 8:00 - 9:15 a.m.;

Track 1 stay after 2:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Last year the students of Shelley Elementary read a combined total of 835,005 minutes. This was more than we've ever read before! As a result, Mrs. Crandall spent a day on the roof of the school. It seems that as we raise the standard, the students stretch to reach the new goal, so this year our goal is 1,000,000 minutes. We know that with everyone's combined efforts and emphasis on lots and lots of reading, we can make and even surpass our goal. If we do, Mrs. Crandall will celebrate by making a personal visit to each class, dressed as a character from one of her favorite books, and reading a book to the students.

We look forward to a great month of sharing the joy of reading in as many ways as we can think of, and encourage the students to turn off the television and their electronic games and immerse themselves in good books as they READ, READ, READ!

January 2013

	1 NO SCHOOL	2 NO SCHOOL	3	4
7	8	9 School Community Council 2:30 p.m.	10	11
14 Window Opens for Online Registration for Parent/Teacher Conferences	15 PTA Board Meeting 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	16	17	18
21 Martin Luther King Day NO SCHOOL	22	23	24 Moms & Muffins Track 1 7:30-8:00 a.m. Track 2 8:45-9:15 a.m.	25 Window Closes at Midnight for Online Registration for Parent/Teacher Conferences
28 Family Reading Night 5:30-7:30 p.m. Gym & Hallways	29	30 3 rd and 4 th Grades Utah Symphony Field Trip	31	February 1 <u>Saturday, Feb. 2</u> Alpine School District Saturday BRIGHT IDEAS 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (by registration through ASD Gifted Services)