



MARCH 2010  
ISSUE 7: 2009-2010

### What can you do to help at Little Elementary?

#### Ongoing - Crossing Guards

Do you have 15 minutes in the morning or in the afternoon to ensure that the Little students stay safe? Have you always wanted to wear an orange vest or hold a stop sign? Well, does the school have a job for you! Please call the school office and say you can help. Again, a special thanks to Kathy Ruscio, who has taken time out of her day to help! Thank you so very much!



#### **Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>**

Love to bake? Are your brownies the best? We need desserts and drinks for the teacher dinners during spring student conferences!



#### **Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup>**

We need main dishes, sides, desserts and drinks for the second night of teacher conferences. We are trying for an Italian theme but anything you can provide for our hardworking teachers would be appreciated.

If you can help out, please contact Jen Strong at [jstrong@homesincolorado.com](mailto:jstrong@homesincolorado.com) or leave a message at 303-467-1563.

Thank you for your help and your continued support.



## Mission Possible!

Dear Parents,

### What do teachers do on Professional Development Days?

What is professional development you ask? These are the few days throughout the year that teachers study and learn new and innovative instructional approaches. It's a time to share collaboratively with colleagues and deepen our expertise. On February 12<sup>th</sup>, the teachers at Little Elementary gathered together to deepen our learning around several key areas: educating the gifted child, writing instruction, integrating technology into the classroom; higher order questioning and Response to Intervention. Our goal on these professional development days is always to better ourselves as educators so that we can better meet the needs of the students here at Little.

We began our day together with Jenny Fredrickson from the central district office. Jenny is a resource for our building around educating students who are Gifted and Talented.

Then the staff split off and chose three sessions that best fit their needs. Some teachers wanted to deepen their understanding around conferring during writing. Other teachers chose to go to a session around integrating technology. Each staff member was able to attend three of the breakout sessions.

The breakout sessions were taught by teachers here at Little Elementary based on their immense expertise in certain areas. The day was a great success thanks to the collaboration and planning of many, many of the teachers here at Little!

### IMPORTANT REMINDER:

#### CSAP TESTING DATES

Date	Grade Level
February 17 & 18 March 2, 3 March 10, 11	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade
March 2, 3, 4, 5, March 8, 9, 10, 11	4 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> Graders
March 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 March 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade

Sincerely,

*Esther G. Valdez*  
Principal

# Letter from the PTSA President

Dear Little Families and Friends:

Wow can you believe February is over and March is upon us. The year is going by so fast.

Thank you to everyone who participated and gave of your time and donations for our fundraisers. The Read-A-Thon was a wonderful success. We brought in well over \$3,000.

A big warm thank you to all who gave to the "Change for Haiti's Children" coin drive. This idea was brought to life and propelled by our Kindergarteners. Thank you for your thoughtfulness and time Little Elementary Kindergarteners!

Thank you to all the families who made it out to Chuck E. Cheese and helped support our school. We realize it can be tough to commit to and support every fundraiser so we just want to say thank you for what you can do. Every little bit helps.

Please remember that our PTSA meetings are the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm. There you can learn more about how the funds are spent and how it directly helps our school and your student. And of course PTSA is preceded by the Parent Information Meeting at 5:30pm. Child care is provided.

This news letter will highlight upcoming events like the upcoming teacher conferences, and our need for food donations for our teachers, Little's next night out for March, and for the movie choices you will be able to vote on for movie night April 9th. Read on for further details.....

Thank you for supporting Little Elementary!

Anna Topkoff,  
Little PTSA Co-President



## COLLECT BOX TOPS

Two great ways to make \$money\$ for your school...THAT DON'T COST YOU A DIME! Clip the "Box Tops for Education" from participating General Mills products, put them in a baggy, with the name of your child's teacher, and return them to the school. General Mills will donate .10 for each current box top. You can also log onto [www.boxtopsforeducation.com](http://www.boxtopsforeducation.com) and select "Bonus Offers" for more chances to earn money for Little



We also participate in Campbell's Labels for Education. Go to <http://www.labelsforeducation.com> to view the program. Your child will soon bring home details and fun formats to help collect the UPC symbols that will help Little earn extra money for our children.



## It's almost time to Spring Ahead!

Remember to turn your clocks forward an hour on Sunday March 14th

## Due to the Snow Days

June 2, 2010 will be the last day of school instead of May 28, 2010

# IT'S TEST TIME AGAIN!



All Jeffco students participate in state and district tests to assess their progress toward the Colorado State Standards. This information is used to help teachers identify each student's instructional needs and for parents to know what and how their child is learning. The assessments are also used in combination with other measures to gauge how well schools in Jeffco are supporting the achievement of all of their students.

When you take a look at the March Calendar later in this newsletter, you will see that much of March is devoted to CSAP testing.

## *What is CSAP?*

CSAP is the Colorado Student Assessment Program designed to provide a picture of how students in the state of Colorado are progressing toward meeting academic standards and how schools are doing to ensure learning success of students.

- CSAP tests students reading, writing, and math skills in grades 3-10. Students in grades 5, 8, and 10 also are tested in science.
- CSAP is administered in the spring of each year. Each test includes multiple choice, short answers, and long essay questions. Each test takes from 60 to 65 minutes, depending on the grade level.
- Based on their performance, students receive a rating of unsatisfactory, partially proficient, proficient or advanced

Students are not compared to each other, but are rated on how well they are meeting standards and how much they improve from year to year.



## *To be successful on test days, a child needs...*

- ❖ A good night's rest (at least 8 to 10 hours)!
- ❖ Comfortable clothing!
- ❖ Three #2 pencils  
(send a few extra if you can)
- ❖ A hug and best wishes!
- ❖ A balanced breakfast!
- ❖ A calm unhurried morning!
- ❖ Two large erasers  
(send a few extra if possible)
- ❖ Assurances that you know they can do well and that you PROUD of them!



### *Help your child avoid negative test anxiety...*

Test anxiety can manifest itself in 2 ways:

- Positive test anxiety can supply energy and motivate students to concentrate and work harder.
- Negative anxiety can provoke frustration, fear or hopelessness.

It's good for children to take testing seriously, but it's detrimental when they feel negative test anxiety. The goal is to build successful testing experiences for students. Some strategies to help reduce anxiety:

- When stress hits, have a plan! Practice relaxation exercises at home with your child to help relax muscles and reduce anxiety. Remember that simply sitting quietly for a minute or two can be very helpful...even for us adults!
- Try to maintain a positive attitude while preparing for the test and during the test.
- Read the instructions carefully when the teacher hands out the test. Remind your child to ask the teacher to explain if they don't understand the test instructions.
- Look quickly at the entire test to see what types of questions are included. This will help your child pace themselves.
- Skip a question if they don't know an answer and move on. Don't waste time worrying about it. Mark the question, and return to it if you have time at the end of the test.
- Don't worry about how fast other people finish their test; just concentrate on your own test.

Looking for additional information regard the CSAP test? There is a lot of good information on the Colorado Department of Education Website.



If you would like to see the CSAP Summary Data for past results go here:

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csap/csap\\_summary.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csap/csap_summary.html)

Have you ever wondered what the CSAP might look like for your child's grade? I have.

The following link will take to a sample of released test items. While many of the test items that are now released are many years old, they may give you an idea of how the tests were graded at that time and the level of proficiency that might be required for a particular grade.

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/released\\_items.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/released_items.html)

There is also information regarding scoring:

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csap/csap\\_scoring.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csap/csap_scoring.html)

**SPRING  
CONFERENCES  
ARE ON  
WEDNESDAY,  
MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup> AND  
THURSDAY,  
MARCH 25<sup>TH</sup>**



**CHECK WITH  
YOUR CHILD'S  
TEACHER TO FIND  
OUT WHEN YOUR  
CONFERENCE IS  
SCHEDULED.**



**The Best Reader in  
Little Elementary is  
Caleb  
Christensen!**

**He read over 2,000  
minutes for the  
read-a-thon  
pledges.  
Amazing!**

**For all of his hard  
work he received a  
\$25 gift card to  
USBourne Books**

## **Dinner and a Movie – It's a Date!**

**Come to the Annual Little Elementary Family Movie Night on April 9<sup>th</sup>.**

Dinner will be provided by Little Caesar's Pizza and you get to decide the movie!

Go to [www.LittlePTSA.com](http://www.LittlePTSA.com) and vote for your choice of movie on movie night.

Choices are:

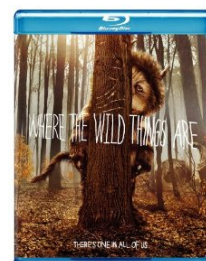
**G-Force (Rated PG)** - Just as the G-Force — an elite team of highly trained guinea pigs — is about to save the world, the F.B.I. shuts the secret unit down. But these next-generation action heroes won't be stopped. Armed with the latest in high-tech spy equipment, and with the F.B.I. on their tails, the fur flies as they race against the clock to save the world. *G-Force* is fantastic fun for the whole family.



**Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs (Rated PG)** - Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs tells the story of an eccentric wannabe scientist, Flint Lockwood. His latest contraption is a miraculous device designed to solve the world hunger crisis. But when Flint bites off more than he can chew, he sets in motion a global disaster of epic proportions. Based on the #1 best-selling book by Judi and Ron Barrett.



**Where the Wild Things Are (Rated PG)** - A 2009 American fantasy comedy-drama film directed by Spike Jonze and adapted from Maurice Sendak's 1963 children's book of the same name. It combines live action, performers in costumes, animatronics, and computer-generated imagery (CGI). The film stars Max Records, Catherine Keener, and Mark Ruffalo, and features the voices of James Gandolfini, Paul Dano, Lauren Ambrose, and Forest Whitaker. The film centers around a lonely 9-year-old boy named Max (Records) who sails away to an island inhabited by creatures known as the "wild things," who declare Max their king.



**Vote for your movie now at [www.LittlePTSA.com](http://www.LittlePTSA.com) !**

**Flyers will be coming home in March to sign up for this annual event!**



**The Pomona Area  
Science Fair is  
scheduled for  
Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at  
Moore Middle School.**

Those students that had projects that were advanced on to the next level during our Annual Little Elementary Science fair last November should dust off their projects and start getting them ready for the Pomona Area Science Fair.

If your child was voted on to the next fair, in early April, you will receive notification regarding the specific times and locations of the Pomona Area fair on Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup>.

Many classrooms are looking for donations of mint gum for the student's to chew during the CSAP tests.

Some studies have shown that chewing mint gum has boosted students mental alertness during standardized tests.

If you could donate a few packs of mint gum to the CSAP cause, the students would very much appreciate it.

## **The Hard Work is Over (Except for all of the March Testing) and Only the Fun Remains!**



### **Whatcha talkin' about, Willis? Well the Read-a-thon pledging, of course!**

Little Elementary collected \$3,758.97 in pledge funds. Of those funds, \$1,879.48 will be used to buy the books that the pledgers listed on their wish lists. \$939.74 will be used to purchase books for the library and the classrooms and \$939.74 will come back to the PTSA to be used to support the technology needs of the school.

Caleb Christensen (4<sup>th</sup> grade) was the student who read the most minutes during our pledge weeks and received a \$25 gift certificate for more books (he will need them)!

All students who read over 500 minutes during the pledge period will get to enjoy donuts with our principal, Esther Valdez, or our library diva, Lisa Polacsek, on Read-a-thon day.

Mrs. Harrison (4<sup>th</sup> Grade) and Mrs. Wiemers (5<sup>th</sup> grade) both won gift certificates to Whole Foods for their efforts.

All students will receive and ice cream treats on Read-a-thon Day, April 16<sup>th</sup> during lunch to celebrate both their reading and test taking efforts!

The classroom that will be determined to be the top performing classroom based on a combination of pledges brought in and reading minutes will get a pizza party. The winning room as yet to be determined, so stay tuned!

The actual Read-a-thon in on Friday, April 16<sup>th</sup> and hopefully we will not be snowed out like last year. If you would like to spend some time at the school reading to the kids, please contact your student's teacher or email [kimjudson @msn.com](mailto:kimjudson@msn.com). The kids would love to hear you read!





March's "Little Night Out" is at CiCi's Pizza

Date to be determined – flyers to come home in a few weeks.

A portion of the purchase price of your meal will go to benefit Little Elementary.

5740 W 88<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Westminster, CO 80031

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## CHANGE FOR HAITI



The Kindergarteners did an amazing job raising money to help the children in Haiti. They launched project **CHANGE FOR HAITI'S CHILDREN** late in January and continued to raise money through February 8<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you to all who donated to the children of Haiti. Stories of children emptying out their piggy banks in order to donate was very common and we are all so very proud of our Little Caregivers! Thank you also to the parents who donated their time and money to help this noble cause. It is wise to invest in our future by teaching our children to care about the needs of others and to donate their time and money to make another's life better.

All money collected will be donated to **SAVE THE CHILDREN**. Save the Children has been working in Haiti for the past 45 years. For more information about their work, please visit [www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org).

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### Planning on Moving On or Just Moving Next Year?

Please let the school office know if your student is not going to return to Little Elementary next.

A little planning is always welcome and very much appreciated!

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Congratulations to **Rebecca Napowsa, Sophia Thompson and Daniel Stone** for being selected into the Jefferson County Elementary All-County Bank or Orchestra!

They performed a concert on February 18<sup>th</sup> after over 6 hours of rehearsal! We are very proud of you all!



# Little Elementary – March

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 CSAP – 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	2 CSAP – 3 <sup>rd</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	3 CSAP – 3 <sup>rd</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	4 CSAP-4 <sup>th</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	5 CSAP-4 <sup>th</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	6 
7	8 CSAP-4 <sup>th</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	9 CSAP-4 <sup>th</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	10 CSAP – 3 <sup>rd</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	11 CSAP – 3 <sup>rd</sup> through 6 <sup>th</sup> grades	12 CSAP – 5 <sup>th</sup> grade	13
14 <b>Daylight savings!</b>	15	16	17 Kiss me I'm Irish Day! PTSA Meeting 6:30	16	19	20
21	22	23 GT Seminar- Visual Spatial	24 Teacher Conferences	25 Teacher Conferences	26 Pride Celebration Day!	27
28 	29 No School – Spring Break	30 No School- Spring Break	31 No School- Spring Break			



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