

EXPLORER

January 2015

Principal's Message

Happy New Year and welcome back! We look forward to a great year for Shelley Elementary in 2015. 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!

School safety continues to be in the news around the country and I have received phone calls, emails and visits from concerned patrons about what Shelley has in place in case of an emergency. We have a school safety plan in place and we review it frequently for updates and information that we feel needs to be added or taken away. The American Fork Police department is very active in our schools, doing walk through's, training in our building and patrolling around our school during the day. We have adult supervision during the most busy times of our days at our playgrounds, drop offs and pickups and other high traffic times of the day. They are easily identifiable by the orange safety vests that are worn. Thank you for the trust you place in us as you send your children to

school each day. We take this responsibility very seriously.

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, 4th and 5th.

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!

Mike Ericksen, Principal

Online Registration for Parent Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are coming up on February 4 and 5. The online sign-up window will be in January. We will be sending a separate email with dates and instructions on how to sign-up thru Skyward when that times gets closer. 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 Main Office computer.

Why is that green or red flag out in front of the school?

Shelley has partnered with the Division of Air Quality this year to be involved in a program to help parents know when it will be either an inside or outside day this winter. The posting of the green flag indicates all is good with outside air quality and students will be having an outside lunch recess day. If the red flag is posted or replaces the green flag during the day, parents will know that air quality is past the recommended levels for all students, and it will be an inside lunch recess day.

The current air quality guidelines can be accessed on the website at www.airquality.utah.gov and then click on Current Conditions. In order for an inside to be called by the principal the PM 2.5 level needs to be around 90 or above.

What did Shelley Elementary score on the new school grades report card?

We received an A grade on the new grading report card issued by the Utah Office of Education! If you follow this [link](#) to the states data gateway, you will be able to use the pull down menus to access Shelley Elementary for our report card. There were only 11 other elementary schools in Alpine School District that received an A grade. Kudos go out to our fantastic staff of educators that we have at Shelley, who consistently provide our students with the best possible educational opportunities. Thank you parents for helping your students to be successful at school by devoting time to their homework, reading to them, and spending numerous hours making sure that your child comes to school ready to learn. Thank you!

Storytelling

It's "Once Upon a Time" for our annual Storytelling Festival! Every student is invited and encouraged to write or find a short story (3 - 6 minutes) to practice, practice, practice telling during all of January to their families, stuffed

animals, and even to themselves in the mirror. During the second week of February they will then share their story in their classes to compete to be the top winners in their grade. All storytellers are invited to tell their story at an "Evening of Storytelling" on Friday, February 20 at 7 pm to their family and friends one final time. Every Shelley family is welcome to wear pajamas or sweats and bring blankets and stuffed animals to come hear the bedtime tales, whether their child is participating or not. Six or seven talented storytellers of all ages will present their stories to the families and friends gathered in the same classroom assigned to them. The top two or three winners in each grade will spin their tales at an assembly on Thursday, February 19. They'll compete to represent the lower or upper grades at Shelley in district competition during March. Many of our Shelley winners have been storytellers at the Timpanogos Storytelling Festival in August or gone on to national competition. May the creativity run wild and juicy words flow fleetly off the tongue, and may we all "live happily ever after!"

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.

KINDERGARTEN NEWS

The kindergarten year is nearly halfway over. How could that be? Time is flying so quickly! We as teachers have loved watching your little ones grow and progress. So much progress has been made in the past four months! Soon it will be time to administer the DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment). Alpine School District expects each kindergarten student to be reading on a level 2 at this time. Students will be expected to read on a level 4 by the end of kindergarten. We will administer the DRA once again in the Spring. We have been working hard on reading at school and hopefully you have been working hard at home as well. How can you help your child? Read to them and read with them each night for 20 minutes. Practice take-home-readers as part of that 20 minutes each night, and return the book each day in order to receive a new book. Practice sight words. Your child needs to know these words on sight, not by sounding them out. There are very good tools that our district has made available to us. Raz Kids is a reading program that each child has access to at school and at home. If you are not sure how to access this tool from home, please contact your child's teacher. Tumble Books is another great tool that is accessible through the Shelley website. We appreciate all that you do at home to support our efforts at school. We are blessed with wonderful, supportive parents that care very deeply about the success of their children.

1ST GRADE NEWS

Welcome back to school, schedules, friends, and learning! We hope that your holiday was a great one filled with family, and fun. Most of us love to return to a routine. December was a busy month full of crafts and activities, holiday stories and excitement. Some of our students were able to participate in a special program where they painted Christmas cards for members of our military. As a school we participated in a special assembly honoring members of the military as the cards were presented to members currently serving. It was a great thing for our students to think about others who might not get to be home with their families for the holidays. Hopefully you were able to hear them sing a little bit of the song we learned, "There's No Place Like Home for the Holidays" as they busied themselves around your homes this holiday season. We learned a small part of the song and sang it for the visiting military personnel.

We spent the month of December working on subtraction strategies. These include counting back, making a ten to subtract, using addition to subtract, and several others. We will start off January reviewing these strategies and jumping into learning time to the hour and half hour as well as simple comparison measurement. Please look for ways to help your student become familiar with the clocks in your home and challenge them to recognize the times that important things happen in their day. This will help make telling time more meaningful for them.

This month we will be working on our DRA reading testing. Please read, read, read with your students. We want to help them to receive the best score that they are capable of doing.

2ND GRADE NEWS

December was full of a lot of learning and fun! We continued to learn various Math strategies for adding double digit numbers, including two, three, and even four addends. We also reviewed skip counting and learned how to count money. In Social Studies we explored different Christmas traditions in countries around the world and compared those traditions with what we typically do here in America. A highlight of December was our field trip to see BYU's Christmas around the World followed by a short visit to the newly renovated BYU Bean Museum. Since the students didn't have nearly enough time at the museum, we ask parents to take their families there. It's free. And it's AMAZING!

Reading will continue to be our focus when we come back to school in January. As parents, the **most important** thing you can do to help your child is make sure they read, **READ, READ!!!** Listen to your child read; read *with* your child; read *to* your child and model good fluency, expression, and excitement about reading; and let your children see *you* enjoying reading your own books. The mid-year reading test (DRA) will be given in January, so it is important that students read aloud every day.

We feel it is a privilege to teach your children and look forward to helping them learn, explore, and progress through the rest of the year.

3RD GRADE NEWS

We had a fun time with our activities for Polar Express week. As we started division in December, we have investigated it with inverse operations, word problems, arrays, related facts, and rules for dividing with 1 and 0.

The first week in January, students will do a homework assignment making a snowman. During the rest of the month, come and check out our lost snowman projects and help the students match the lost snowmen. Starting in January, all students need to type the writing homework assignment. If you don't have a printer, email it to your child's teacher. As we are preparing for our writing test, we will be training our students to use Utah Compose. A big part of the 3rd Grade testing is writing. We want to encourage you to have your child write any chance you get.

4TH GRADE NEWS

The 4th Grade hallway is a buzz with a Happy New Year full of exciting learning? Here is why:

Spelling: Four students will be chosen from testing in each 4th grade classroom, for a grade level spelling bee in January.

Rendezvous: In February, in conjunction with the Utah Studies of our great state, we will become mountain men and Utah Indians for a day. Ask your student about the beaver pelts they are earning for the trading blanket.

Writing: Our writing skills will shine in the February school writing test. Utah Compose is a great online sight to practice our writing skills. Enjoy your student's practice work there or on their Google account.

Fourth Grade teachers and students are looking forward to a Happy New Year!

5TH GRADE NEWS

Our Fifth Grade students are preparing for the writing portion of the SAGE testing in February. Each student has been given a log in and password. Their log-in user name has been assigned by the State and can be found in their individual blue 5th Grade Planners.

Most students have already completed their first essay. It is easy for the students to log in at home and share with you their writing activities. The web site is called *utahcompose.com*. Utah Compose is an online formative assessment tool created to improve students' writing skills by enabling them to submit essays, receive feedback and revise their work. Students compose essays in response to one of our Utah Compose pre-packaged prompts, or they can respond to a teacher-generated prompt. Upon completion of the essay, the student submits it for feedback. Within seconds, Utah Compose generates a holistic score as well as a standards-based score for each of the six areas of writing. This feedback includes suggestions on improvements in each standards area and recommends specific lessons or interactive tutorials. Please help your student continue to work on their writing at home.

6TH GRADE NEWS

Sixth grade has finished 2014 full force. Everyone enjoyed our Renaissance day, on December 18th. We learned about archery and other medieval games, illuminated lettering, siege weaponry, the feudal system, and Punch and Judy style entertainment complete with tarts to eat. We also enjoyed a Shakespeare presentation by the Pleasant Grove High School Shakespeare Club. These students placed quite high in the Utah Shakespearian Festival competitions this past fall. We are so grateful they were able to come and share with us. In all, our Renaissance day was a successful day of fun and learning.

Our 6th grade classes have also been working hard in our other studies. We have been busy writing informational, argumentative, and narrative pieces. Our focus in reading this past month has been on making inferences and understanding figurative language. Most of our classes read the original *A Christmas Carol*, by Charles Dickens. We really enjoyed studying the figurative language in that literary work.

With coming of the new year, our classes will be beginning or continuing our study of algebra in math and continuing learning about space in Science.

We hope this holiday break is enjoyed by everyone and look forward to getting back to our studies in January.

January 2015

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
			1 NO SCHOOL	2 NO SCHOOL
5	6	7 SCC Meeting 2:30 p.m.	8	9
12 "Michael Vey Books Rock" Assembly	13 PTA Board Meeting 12:45 p.m.	14	15 Spirit Night 5 – 8 p.m. @ Chick-Fil-A	16
19 Martin Luther King Day NO SCHOOL	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30