

RIVER OAKS ELEMENTARY

“Where Discovery is Elementary”

January 19, 2010

LET US HEAR FROM YOU

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CALENDAR ITEMS

Stanford Testing	January 20-28
Coat Drive	January 19-29

FROM THE DESK OF MRS. SHENKER

Please support the Share the Warmth Campaign by donating winter coats. Donated items will be given to students of Boone Elementary. Students may bring donated coats and jackets to the stage in the cafeteria. Thank you for your continued support of our larger school community.

I am very excited about several technology initiatives on our campus. SMART Boards (interactive whiteboards) have been ordered for each 3rd-5th grade classroom. In addition, our PTO has generously agreed to fund a 20-user mobile laptop cart. As we continue to dream a school together, technology must be part of our shared vision. We want ROE students to be prepared to succeed in a technological, global society. I look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas.

3RD GRADERS DOING THEIR PART TO PROVIDE AID IN HAITI

3rd grade chose Heifer international as our grade level action project several years ago. Each May, we have collected all of our pledged/earned donations, then figured out how many/which animals to purchase for families around the world. Heifer has worked with Haitian families for ten years, with 16 projects and 16,000 families involved. It is clear that many of those projects and families have been impacted by the earthquake. We have decided to request that this spring's donations go toward rebuilding the Heifer project in Haiti. Rebuilding will follow the work of the first responders; and we, through Heifer, will be part of the rebuilding.

I know many of our families feel compelled to help those affected by this horrific disaster. If you would like to donate to our third graders' rebuilding efforts, please forward your donations to the school and earmark them for Heifer. We will see that they get included in our offering. Thanks for your compassion for others less fortunate.

FIRST IN MATH

First in Math: A Dynamic, Easy-To-Use Online Program That Will Strengthen Your Child's Math Skills!

Check out www.firstinmath.com! River Oaks is piloting this exciting web-based educational website for all our students for the remainder of the year. Based on the 24 game, which has been making math fun for almost 20 years, this website has a variety of games to help kids develop and reinforce the basics. Each child has his/her own, personal user ID and password to access the program from school, home, or anywhere they have internet access. Since it is web-based, there is no software to install. Children proceed through the levels at their own pace, mastering facts and increasing problem-solving, computation, critical-thinking and pattern-recognition skills.

Studies show that children who play the 24 Game on a regular basis experience significant improvement in both their skill level and their attitude about math. The First in Math computerized program takes this to the next level, getting kids excited about math, and engaging them like no workbook ever could. Our teachers have been looking for innovative ways to get their students to practice their facts, and this gives them that opportunity while increasing the intellectual demand as they work through the levels.

The teachers got the log-in information for each of their students on Thursday. By Friday, 199 of our students had started solving problems. In two days, they had solved more than 70,000 math problems online! Encourage your child to log on to www.firstinmath.com at home to benefit from this fabulous opportunity!

2010 SPELLING BEE CHAMPION - COURTNEY JACOBS!

The River Oaks Elementary School-wide Spelling Bee for 2010 was held on January 15th. Thirty fantastic spellers represented their homerooms in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade. Courtney Jacobs from Mrs. Beery's class was named the school champion by correctly spelling *decongestant*. Joe Lipper, representing Mrs. Corzine's class, was runner-up. The students listed below spelled 155 words, including *aggrandizement*, *paramecium*, *omniscient*, and *latitudinarian*, to determine our champion! It was a very exciting event. Our Bee is an official step toward the Scripps National Spelling Bee to be held in the spring in Washington D.C. Congratulations to all our spellers who tried their best and used all the spelling techniques they've been taught in their classrooms. Courtney will represent ROE at the Central Region Spelling Bee on February 10th.

3-Bennett	Christina Wang	Saahithi Joopelli
3-Nelson/McHale	Lola Dinh	Zainab Niaz
3-Price	Eliza Pillsbury	Manar Ansari
3-Sun	Eli Maierson	Sam Elmer

3-Thomas	Lucy Zhang	Hyun Jae Jung
4-Bustamante	Jackson Hanna	Thomas Ku
4-Corzine	Joe Lipper	Elena Margolin
4-Gisi	Aarohi Sheth	Sabrina Koseki
4-Mansur	Samuel Chen	Alexandra Kakadiarus
4-Ritter	Ilana Inselbuch	Aditya Pethe
4-Waugh	Camille Calabrese	Samantha Su
5-Beery	Ned Swart	Courtney Jacobs
5-McLaughlin	Olivia Williams	Nikolas Prazak
5-Vialard	Zainab Jimoh	Thomas McNeill
5-Wilkerson	Zada Boyce- Quentin	Diana Paulson

resources, note-taking, planning for and implementing action projects, etc. We invite and encourage all parents to mentor, even if your child is not a current 5th grader. However, parents of current 5th graders are not allowed to mentor in their own child's homeroom. Also, if you know of any community members who would like to volunteer in this capacity, please pass this information on to them as well.

Mentors will meet with a small group of students for at least one hour a week beginning the last week of March through the first part of May. If you are interested in being a mentor for the exhibition, please email me as soon as possible! You need no expert abilities to be a mentor, just a willingness to support students in their work!

We would like to get the mentors confirmed as soon as possible. We will have a mentor meeting in March before spring break to prepare you for the work you will do with our students. Thank you in advance for all of the support you will give to our 5th graders!

-Becca Pfeifer, IB Coordinator, rpfeifer@houstonisd.org

COAT DRIVE

Calling all ROE media outlets! Beginning this week and continuing through next week we will be conducting a Coat Drive at ROE with the slogan "Share the Warmth". Let's remind parents that this would be a wonderful time to clean-out closets of old winter coats and bring them to the ROE stage. All winter items will be donated to Boone Elementary for their needy children.

During the recent "cold snap" many children at Boone Elementary could not come to school because the children did not have proper winter clothing to protect them from the elements. The principal and teachers are struggling to meet the needs of the student body, but they could use our help.

Once Boone Elementary's needs are met, the remaining coats will be distributed to other needy children by the Communities in Schools group. Please help us get the word out, to "Share the Warmth".

VOLUNTEER OF THE DAY

Interested in being ROE's Volunteer of the Day? Assisting the front office with their administrative duties is a great way of being involved in your child's school. There are still many days (few Wednesdays though) available to sign up. If interested, email me the date or dates you can volunteer (only one volunteer a day). Thanks! Isabella Alcañiz jalcaniz@uh.edu Sarah Bloome, PTO Volunteer Coordinators

STANFORD TESTING STARTS TOMORROW!

All students in grades 1-5 took the Stanford practice test today as their final preparation for the district-wide testing which begins tomorrow. The students will take portions of the test battery each day through January 28th. The schedule of subtests was sent home last week. Please make sure your child gets plenty of rest each night and arrives on time for school each day. Research shows that eating a healthy breakfast that includes protein will improve performance. Finally, there will be no homework given during Stanford testing. Thanks for your continuing support of our academic program at River Oaks!

5TH GRADE STANFORD TESTING

Since 5th grade has the early Specialist classes each day, we will continue to have those classes each day except Wednesday during Stanford testing. The students will begin their testing at 8:45 a.m. on 1/21, 1/22, 1/25, 1/26, and 1/28. They will not have Elective classes on Wednesday, 1/20 or 1/27, so testing will begin as originally scheduled at 8:15. This is a change from the testing schedule that went home last week. Thank you for making sure the children are at school on time each day.

CALLING ALL MENTORS!!! EXHIBITION 2010

As part of the Standards and Practices of the International Baccalaureate Program, in the final year of the program, all students complete a program-specific project that allows them to demonstrate a consolidation of their learning. In the Primary Years Program, that project is called Exhibition.

At this time we will begin recruiting parents and community members to mentor a small group of students during the inquiry process. Mentors help students with gathering