



Volume 10
Issue 2

Shooting Star Scoop

October 2014

The monthly newsletter for Nikiski North Star Elementary
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
nikiskinorthstar.blogs.kpbsd.k12.ak.us



Important Dates

October 1

PTA Meeting
3:45pm - Lounge

October 6 - 9

Fire Safety Training

October 8 - 10

PTA Costume Sale
3:30 - 6pm

October 16

Earthquake Drill
10:16am

End of Quarter Assembly

October 17

Teacher Inservice
NO SCHOOL

October 25

Fall Carnival
1 - 4pm

October 27 - October 31

Book Fair in Library

October 29

Early Release Day
School out at 2:00pm

October 30 & 31

Parent/Teacher Conferences
NO SCHOOL



Principal Points

September 30, 2014

The chill is in the air as an Alaskan fall makes its brief appearance. The temperatures are dropping and snow could appear anytime. We encourage everyone to begin pulling out those winter coats, hats, mittens, boots, and snow pants so they are ready to go as the temperatures continue to drop. While snow pants and boots may not be needed quite yet, the winter coats, hats and mittens are good for students to begin bringing to school. Kids enjoy going outside and playing in the fresh air. It's always more enjoyable when they are warm while doing so.



Last year's Perfect Attendance students enjoyed a ride with the Nikiski Fire Dept.

The school year is off to a great start and routines are in place. Thank you again for your diligence in following safety rules in our parking lot. Just as a reminder, if you are dropping off or picking up your students please use the parent pick-up/drop off lane closest to the school. For pre-K parents who are bringing students for the afternoon session I would ask that you park in the parking lot and escort your student into the building. The lane next to the building should not be used for unattended vehicles.

Our school has a continued focus again this year on math and school attendance. We are in the second year of implementing the new Alaska math standards and we are seeing improvements from the focus made last year. Our staff is committed to designating the time during "split specials" for small group math instruction. Additionally, grades 3-5 are using levelled math groupings to further provide for differentiated instruction. Please let me, or your student's classroom teacher know if you have questions, comments, or concerns about this new practice. Research is clear that consistent school attendance is critical to a student's academic success. Thank you for helping your student understand that attending school is important.

October is fire safety month and once again Nikiski North Star is fortunate to have firefighters from Nikiski Fire Department come work with our students. They will be in our school October 6-9 teaching kids about fire safety techniques. This year they are also going to be talking with our 5th grade students about firefighting as a career and giving the students an idea of what training and qualifications a firefighter may need. We appreciate their willingness to talk with our students about the importance of education as it relates to their careers.

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Points continued

October 6 is National Anti-Bullying Day sponsored by the PTA. Bullying prevention and awareness ties in perfectly with our PBIS guidelines which are Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe and Be Caring. Nikiski North Star has partnered with Nikiski Middle Senior High for this event. The middle school drama class from NMHS will present skits to Nikiski North Star students about bullying prevention and awareness. The skits were written by the senior English class at NMHS. We are so fortunate to have a K-12 effort in our Nikiski community that focuses on this important topic.

Before I close, I'd like to share a great kid quote. Last week our school had one of our monthly fire drills. At the end of the drill the students were all lined up on the playground. I was visiting with the kindergarten class when a little girl tugged on my jacket and said very emphatically, "Mrs. Gilman, you just took our learning time!" This really is a fabulous comment when you realize that even at a very tender age kids see the value and importance of learning. ☺

Margaret



PTA News

NNS PTA would like to welcome aboard Emily Brigham as our new Vice President! We would also like to remind everyone that our fall carnival is coming up soon on October 25th. It will be from 1pm - 4pm. PTA is now accepting donations for costumes and candy. We could also use volunteers to help with decorating the school on October 24th and running booths on October 25th. If you are willing to volunteer please contact any PTA board members or Rhonda White.

World Day of Bully Prevention is on Monday, October 6th. Wear any BLUE SHIRT and join us in solidarity to stop bullying and cyberbullying. If your children already have Nikiski North Star gear they can wear that would work too.

We are at it again collecting box tops for our school this year. The money collected from August thru December will go to more sleds and winter toys for the playground. So please send in your box tops, they help the school in a big way! Thank you.



BOOK FAIR

Shop the annual NNS
Scholastic Book Fair during
Parent/Teacher Conferences!

October 27 - 31

NNS Clothing Order Form

Name _____ Teachers name _____

Phone # _____ DUE BY OCTOBER 10th

Hoodie— \$20.00 Total # of shirts _____ X 20.00 = _____

YS _____ YM _____ YL _____ YXL _____

AS _____ AM _____ AL _____ AXL _____ other _____*

T-Shirt— \$13.00 Total # of shirts _____ X 13.00 = _____

YS _____ YM _____ YL _____ YXL _____

AS _____ AM _____ AL _____ AXL _____ other _____*

Long Sleeved Shirt—\$15.00 Total # of shirts _____ X 15.00 = _____

YS _____ YM _____ YL _____ YXL _____

AS _____ AM _____ AL _____ AXL _____ other _____*

Sweatpants—\$24.00 Total # of sweatpants _____ X 24.00 = _____

YS _____ YM _____ YL _____ YXL _____

AS _____ AM _____ AL _____ AXL _____ other _____*

- 2XL and up —Add \$6.00

(Please indicate size in other *)

Grand Total= \$ _____

- Size Code Examples : YS=Youth small

AXL=Adult Extra Large

- Picture examples are on the back of this form
- Cash or Check: Please make checks out to NNS PTA



The front of all shirts/
sweatshirts are the same.



Back of the T-shirt says:
"I'm a shooting star!"

"I'm a shooting star!" will
be written across the
hood on the hoodie
sweatshirts.



"I'm a shooting star!" will be
printed down the sleeve of
the long sleeved shirt.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Brianna Redfern
at 776-2600 or bredfern@kpbsd.org



Reading and the Primary Grades

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, Department of Elementary Education

A Successful Start in School



A growing body of research indicates that students who struggle to become successful readers by third grade will have a more difficult time in school than their peers who *read fluently*.

“Fluent” reading happens when a child can read quickly and accurately at a level appropriate for their age or grade. Fluent reading is a bridge to comprehension. When a child isn’t stuck in the process of figuring out every single word, he or she can think about the meaning

and ideas behind the words being read. This allows students to *comprehend and learn* from what they are reading while also putting together new ideas!

Teachers in the KPBSD use a variety of measures to keep track of how students are progressing in their reading skills. A pre-reading or reading fluency test, commonly called a TEL or R-CBM is given at least three times a year. Children who struggle to achieve average scores on these tests may be re-

ferred to the school’s intervention team for extra reading help.

Ask your child’s teacher when your child will be assessed with the TEL or R-CBM, or what his or her scores were. Below average scores may indicate a need for extra help, while above average scores may indicate a need for enrichment or acceleration. Asking how your child scored will start a conversation about whether your child is on track to learn to read to succeed!

Resources for Reluctant Readers

KPBSD schools have a variety of resources available to help students who are struggling to become fluent readers. In addition to the support of Title I teachers at eligible schools, the District also provides Interventionists who are highly instrumental in ensuring students receive whatever type of support is needed. If you are concerned about your child’s progress:

- Contact your child’s classroom teacher and

ask if meeting with the school’s Intervention Team could be helpful.

- Ask for ideas of specific things you can do at home to reinforce what is being taught in school.
- Find out if your child is demonstrating delays in other areas.
- Ask what interventions are available to help your child.
- If your child is being

considered for retention, monthly meetings need to be held with you involved to monitor his or her progress. During these meetings, your child’s progress will be reviewed and the next steps to help your child succeed will be discussed.

- YOU are an important part of your child’s success. Please partner with your school!

Websites for Adults to Explore

- *Early Literacy Games and Tips for Parents* at <http://getreadytoread.org/>
- *Resources for Parents to Use* <http://www.readwritethink.org/parent-afterschool-resources/>
- *Activities and Links to Cool Literacy Stuff* <http://www.scholastic.com/parents/>
- *Apps for Reading Comprehension* http://www.readingrockets.org/teaching/reading101/comprehension/literacyapps_comprehension/
- *What to do if Your Child Struggles* <http://www.readingrockets.org/helping/>
- *Information About Learning Disabilities* <http://www.ldonline.org/parents>



Links for Kids

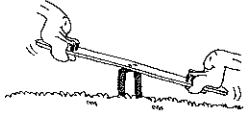
- *Ages 3-7* <http://pbskids.org/>
- *Ages 4-9* <http://pbskids.org/gol/index.html>
- *Ages 5-8* <http://www.starfall.com/>
- *Ages 8-11* <http://www.funbrain.com/brain/ReadingBrain/ReadingBrain.html>
- *Reading Games* <http://pbskids.org/games/reading.html>
- *All Levels* <http://www.earobics.com/gamegool/gooy.html>

Home & School

Working Together for School Success

CONNECTION®

Nikiski North Star Elementary School
Ms. Margaret Gilman, Principal



SHORT NOTES

Celebrate progress

Suggest that your youngster create a fun reminder of all the things she has accomplished. Let her cover a container with construction paper and label it "I did it!" Then, she can write each success ("I memorized my times tables") on a slip of paper and put it in the container. If she's feeling discouraged, have her read the slips.

Excellent attendance

Being in school every day means your child won't miss out on learning. Try to schedule appointments and family trips outside of school hours. If he asks to stay home "just because," remind him of what he'll miss, such as his reading group or art class. Explain that he can be absent only if he's sick or if there's a family emergency.

Eat meals together

You may have heard that it's important for families to eat dinner together. But other meals count, too. If you work in the evenings, maybe you could make time for a family breakfast. On a weekend, try a picnic lunch! Research shows that children who regularly eat meals with their families tend to do better in school and avoid risky behavior.

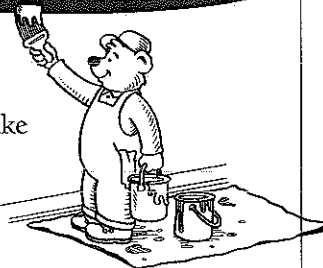
Worth quoting

"The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up!"
Mark Twain

JUST FOR FUN

Q: What's yellow and smells just like green paint?

A: Yellow paint.



Homework solutions that work

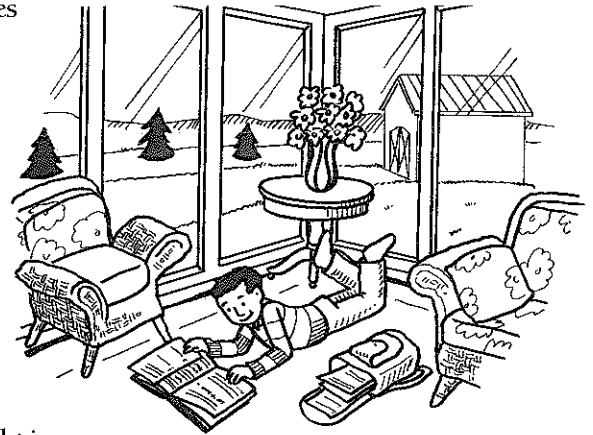
Like an actor rehearsing his lines or a batter working on his swing, your child does homework to practice what he learns in school. And if he's like most youngsters, homework brings occasional challenges. Here are solutions to common problems he might face.

Getting started

When your child gets home from school or after-school care, he might want to relax for a little while, or he may want to jump right in and work. Have him try each method for one week and keep track of how it goes. He could write notes in each day's calendar square. ("Went great!" or "Hard time getting started.") After two weeks, he can review the notes to see which routine worked best.

Staying motivated

Does your youngster ever feel restless when he's doing homework? Suggest that he get up and move to a new spot. For example, he might finish his vocabulary assignment at the kitchen table and then read his science chapter on the



porch. A planned break (say, to have a snack or take a walk) can also give him a second wind.

Solving problems

Help your child make a list of strategies he can use when he gets stuck. For a math assignment, he might try tools like a number line or find sample problems in his book. When he's reading, he could look up words in a dictionary or reread a paragraph. *Tip:* If he's still stumped, he might call a friend or write down his question to ask his teacher the next day.♥

Family teamwork

Whether your youngsters are doing a group project or playing Hacky Sack, a team effort is needed. Everyone's a winner with these games that will show them teamwork in action.

Lower the yardstick. Together, hold a yardstick horizontally so that everyone has one finger underneath. Then, lower the yardstick to the ground—but if anyone's finger drops away, you have to start over. See how many tries it takes to get the yardstick to the floor.

Pass the ball. Sit in a circle with your feet out toward the center. Pass a ball around the circle—using only your feet. How many times can the ball go around before it drops on the ground?♥

