Happy February!

I would like to remind all of you that parent conferences are on February 10 and 11. You will hear from your teachers (if you haven’t already) to sign up for a time. We all look forward to this time when we can sit and talk uninterrupted about your child’s progress at TISA.

March 11th is the beginning of the testing window for 3rd through 8th grade state testing. At TISA we encourage our students to do their best and show us what they know. We also let them know that there will be things on the test that they don’t know yet and that is OK. We are very clear that the state test is a snapshot of student knowledge and that is why we look at many points of data to indicate student growth over time. Also the state uses the data from the test in the calculation of the school grade. That is why it is important for all students to be here on time every day and do their best so the state has all the data about all our students. Thanks for your support with this.

Susan Germann

**Kinder News:**

Gung hey fat Choy!

The kindergartners heralded the year of the horse with unmatched appetite for learning. I am excited about our new visual literacy curriculum. We call it "Gallery Talks," which revolve around viewing artwork and developing visual thinking strategies. It’s amazing to experience each child pointing out something notable about artwork by Breugel and Picasso. The children have been also working with flat and solid shapes and studying dimensions in space. We are creating sculptures and collages, plan on going on a gallery walk and visiting with artists about their use of space and space.

**PTA update & Sweetheart Pancake Breakfast!**

TISA PTA would like to thank everyone that came out for January’s meeting! We are still active and ready for the events planned for the rest of the school year! Mark your calendars for TISA Sweetheart Pancake Breakfast coming up! Saturday February 15th, 8am-10am.

Tickets will be going home with your child. Please make sure to send back you ticket money by Tues. February 11th.

We will not be having a meeting in February. So be sure to come to our next meeting in March! We are thinking of having it right after school at 4pm so stay tuned for more details!

March’s meeting will be big planning for Bingo Night at The Taos Mesa Brewery in April!

As a reminder, Pizza Day is the last Friday of every Month. Lastly, Tisa Swag is coming! Be on the lookout for an email and order form for T-shirts, totes and more!

Thank you to all our teachers and parents for all their efforts this year! Our kiddos appreciate it!

**True, but funny, facts for kids**

Link: [http://archive.ely.anglican.org/education/funnyfacts.htm](http://archive.ely.anglican.org/education/funnyfacts.htm)

* Shakespeare invented the word "assassination" and "bump."
* Marilyn Monroe had six toes on one foot.
* Women blink nearly twice as much as men.
* Right handed people live, on average, nine years longer than left handed people do.
* The average chocolate bar has 8 insects' legs in it.
* The average human eats 8 spiders in their lifetime at night.
* A rhinoceros horn is made of compacted hair.
* It is impossible to sneeze with your eyes open.
* The giant squid has the largest eyes in the world.
* The longest one-syllable word in the English language is "screeched."
First Grade:
In the last two months first grade has spent time learning about the lives of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nelson Mandela. We have worked on making connections between these great men and ourselves. First graders are now moving way outside themselves into studies of the moon and solar system! Why does the moon change shape every night? Why does the sun move across the sky? Did you know that if the Earth were a basketball, the moon would be a ping pong ball- 40 feet away?? In math we have been doing work with word problems. Tricky stuff with a lot of storytelling possibilities!

Second grade hit the streets of Taos to raise awareness about the dolphin slaughter in Taiji, Japan. We have created a petition and will be visiting Enos Garcia next week to gather more signatures. We will be sending our petition as well as cards made by TISA kiddos to an international event to be held on Valentine’s Day. We are studying the life of Harriet Tubman in honor of Black History Month. I believe the way to teach the importance of standing for something (which Tubman did) is to involve the students in such activities. We gained great insight into the emotions one experiences when standing selflessly for another- even if it is a wet mammal aka dolphin!

We had a great time visiting Lenny Foster and taking his picture! On February 21st we will be having an art opening at The Living Light Gallery where our portraits of Lenny will be on display and for sale. On February 6th EXPLORA will be visiting our classroom for an all-day science event. Taos Fall Arts Judges Choice winner, Stuart Wittwer will be coming into our classroom to help us make sculpture from found art such as broken toys and the like... and if that’s not enough action we are deep into rehearsals for our up-coming musical production entitled, "Life Cycles". Whew what a month!
**Third graders** are working with measurement. One of our projects is making calendars. The children have been painting and drawing beautiful images and verses to show how we mark time. The concept of time is so abstract and obscure. Did you know that the earth used to be 80 days longer? Scientists learned this by studying ancient coral. The distance between the earth and moon grows by about the length of a worm each year. This means that our calendar year actually gets shorter each year. Amazing how deep counting days can be. And how beautiful!

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**Fourth Grade** has had a very productive start to the New Year! We have started a unit on Norse Mythology as well as a Literature unit on *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. The hero character appears in both types of literature. This gave us an opportunity to discuss the characteristics of fictional heroes, as well as ask the question, “Do real life heroes exist?”. Collectively, the 4th Grade created a definition of what they think it means to be heroic in real life. Each student also wrote a paragraph about a person they consider a hero.

According to the 4th Grade class, heroes are, “people you look up to”.

“Heroes: do countless things to save others, stand up for people who are not as strong, end things that are unjust, set and accomplish goals, are proud of themselves, help others, save people and things, fix problems in life instead of letting them pass by, do outstanding things, risk their life for other people, and are not afraid to speak the truth”.

“Heroes are: brave, loyal, humble, courageous, great, nice, thoughtful, and helpful”.

~TISA 4th Grade

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**Important Calendar Dates!!**

**Friday, February 7, 2013**
- End of Grading Period #2

**Mondays, February 10th**
- Last Ski day

**Monday, February 10th-11th**
- Parent/Teacher Conference
  - Will need to fill out paperwork for returning students for 2014-2015 school year.
  - No Monday Enrichment 2/10/2013
  - No School/ Aftercare 2/11/2013

**Saturday, February 15, 2013**
- PTA sponsored Sweetheart Pancake Breakfast
  - 8:00-10:00 at Masonic Lodge
  - Tickets $7 a piece
  - Turn in un-sold tickets to teachers ASAP for other parents who need more.

**Monday, February 17, 2013**
- President’s Day- No School or Monday Enrichment

**Thursday, March 10, 2013**
- Lottery applications available for 2014-2015

**March 31st –April 4th**
- Spring Break!

**Tuesday, March 11, 2013**
- SBA Testing for grades 3rd-6th
Fifth Grade

Hello everybody! We have been going into a new math subject…..

Dividing fractions!

The whole class seems to like this new topic. Dividing fractions is actually quite simple. You just write the question in a different form. First, you take the first fraction, and copy it down. Then, you take the division sign and turn it into a multiplication sign, and then you take the last fraction and flip it over to its reciprocal. Easy right? We have been working in our workbooks and textbooks, along with playing some math games Ms. Linda has taught us. In social studies, we have been studying Ancient Persia. In our project books, we have written down poems and drawn some pictures of Persia’s gods and even the Persia Mountains and landscapes! Ms. Linda taught us a song in Persian too called Day by Day or Ruz bey Ruz!

In science, we are learning about the circulatory system. I find it interesting that the heart has four chambers (the right ventricle, the left ventricle, the

Right atrium and the left atrium). Next we will be studying the digestive system and learning how our bodies get what we need from what we eat and drink. Stay tuned!

Makaiah Glauser and Brooke Walker, 5th graders

Sixth Grade

We are finishing up our Greek Unit and will be presenting our Exhibition on Feb 21st. The students have created portfolios, authentic Greek pottery pieces, Scrolls, Big Head Poster (projects about a famous Greek Person), and Constellation posters. We are also performing 2 plays about the Greek gods and two traditional Greek dances (one a Spartan Sword Dance!). We are looking forward to showing off all we have done. We have enjoyed our Ice Cream Sundae Incentive for learning multiplication facts and were surprised how much better we did than last year. (Was it maturity or reflex?) We have also completed our Geometry unit. After Thanksgiving we shared our Shapes PowerPoints and now we are creating park designs and computing the perimeter and area of our items.

Next we are turning our minds to fractions and decimals in math. We will be focusing on the American Revolution and participating in literature circles with books set during that time period. In science, we will be working with simple machines and building our bridges for the bridge competition in May (this year there will be three schools competing!). We made it successfully through the second wave of MAPS testing (everyone making their projected goals for improvement!) and are glad for the 2 month break to rest up and get ready to knock the SBAs out of the park!

We have been working hard and are amazed at how much we are learning. We look forward to welcoming another guest speaker to come talk with us about Ancient Greece and look forward to the first of our Harwood trips at the end of the month!
Seventh and Eighth grades are settling back into schoolwork after our much needed winter break.

In Social Studies we are working in partners to research one of the pueblos located in New Mexico. We will be creating a poster and power point about each pueblo. We have written to each pueblo asking for information and received several replies. We will be face-timing with the Governor of the Laguna Pueblo. Meeko Concha, grandfather of one our students and a pottery artist from Taos Pueblo, came to speak to the students about the art of pottery. He brought a video, pictures, examples of his work, and samples of the fine clay he makes for the students to handle.

In literacy we are finishing up our novel studies. The students have been working hard in their literature circles. It’s great to see them working together on the different skills involved in gaining a deeper understanding of the novel they are reading. Next we will begin our end of unit projects and will watch the movie version of *Bless Me Ultima*.

On an interesting note, two of our students were able to Face Time with the governor of Laguna Pueblo.

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**2013-2014 Lottery Applications!!**

Lottery applications will be available March 10, 2013 for new students so spread the word. We will close the lottery Thursday, April 17, 2013 and draw on Friday, April 25, 2013. During our parent/teacher conferences on Monday and Tuesday, February 10-11, parents need to fill out the returning student form and mark siblings if any. We need to have this done before the lottery starts for potential students. Thank you in advance for helping through the process.

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**Monday Enrichment & Aftercare:**

“Monday Enrichment Program would love to see some new faces! This program runs on Mondays from 8am-5pm. Weekly activities include yoga, reading in the book nook, group-building activities, cooking and baking in our awesome kitchen, fiber arts, age-appropriate writing exercises, outdoor play, and specific projects that change weekly. We try our best to accommodate student interests and tailor our programming to reflect their passions. The students who attend M.E.P. really enjoy it but would like to have some more company! We have tentative field trip plans - ice skating with Ms. Linda and the upper campus at the Youth and Family Center as well as a possible collaboration with Field Institute of Taos. Please sign your child up in advance so we have an idea of how many students to expect. Donations of arts/crafts/baking materials will be greatly appreciated and enjoyed.

After Care is available Tuesday-Friday. Activities include homework help, playground time, 30 minutes of computer use, arts & crafts, board games and hanging out with friends. Latest pick-up is 5:30pm.”

**Monday Enrichment- $20 per Monday, 8:00-5:30**

**Aftercare- $5 per day, 3:30-5:30**

Audrey