Director's Message:

Happy February!

“Sometimes the heart sees what is invisible to the eye.” H. Jackson Brown, Jr., author of Life’s Little Instruction Book.

You parents know that this is especially true in children. I am currently fostering an 8-year-old dog and my grandson loves to use his hands to make a heart around the dog’s face and then I take a photo. I’m hoping he’ll get so attached to Spark that his parents will want to keep him. I encourage you to watch your child(ren) as they exhibit their unique, creative personalities and then every day share with them one joy they have given you. So during this month of celebrating love, be sure to focus on your greatest gift—your child(ren)!

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 14th, 8am-10am.

Tickets will not be going home with your child. Please make sure to get your tickets during parent/teacher conferences this coming Monday and Tuesday. Some of our local business like Real Eyez, Taos Cow, and Wabi Sabi will be selling them at their business.

Mark your calendars, Bingo Night at The Taos Mesa Brewery on May 1st!

As a reminder, Pizza Day is the last Friday of every Month. Pizza will be this Friday as an exception due to the school closing last week.

Kinder News:

The kindergartners heralded the New Year with a voracious appetite for learning. We are celebrating the wonders of human body in our first UbD of the year by honing our observation skills, using Visual Thinking Strategies, and exploring the world of many senses. The global aspect of TISA’s integrated arts curriculum allows for approaching this life science theme from many angles, honoring multiple intelligences of the whole child. It’s amazing to watch children create portraits of each other, measure their bodies in an artistic way, experience the limitations of human nature in dance, yoga and exercise. Visual Thinking Strategies supports young students engaging in a dialogue with artists from near and far such as Edgar Degas and Michael Hensley. The rich world of the senses offers further visceral experiences, flavors, textures, sounds and colors to incorporate into artwork. Studying the human body as the sacred dominion of the self in such a way honors one of the great polymaths of all times: Leonardo da Vinci. He said, “the human… is a masterpiece of engineering and a work of art.”
**First Grade:**

1st graders made Thing 1, Thing 2 & Cat in the Hat Popsicle book marks. They also explored color and texture using homemade puffy paint to create a Seuss town.

1st grade girls reading Junie B. Jones, & 1st grade boys sharing an interesting book!

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**Second grade**

The second grade is immersed in our Plants and Animals Unit. The students have planted “lawns” of rye grass and alfalfa and continuously document change through journal notes and illustrations. Soon, we will be “mowing” our lawns to observe any changes that occur. An extension of this unit is our study of symmetry in nature and art. As we progress through the unit, we will begin to use our campus greenhouse to grow garlic and onions. Weird Science continues to be a popular learning experience. We have recently investigated centripetal force, static electricity, and a chemical reaction to create lava lamp.
**Third graders**

The 3rd Grade has started a Science unit called Sun, Moon, and Stars. We began with the study of the sun. We used compasses to determine the cardinal directions both indoors and outdoors. Students then conducted scientific observations to track the movement of the sun during one day. We integrated the arts by studying the Aztec calendar and creating suns using both curved and straight lines. Our class reading included non-fiction articles about earth's movement around the sun as well as global folktales which explain natural phenomena through fictional tales. We are also very happy to welcome Ms. Audrey (TISA’s aftercare provider) to our classroom. Audrey assists in 3rd and 4th Grade every afternoon. She has already started knitting groups with the 3rd Grade.

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**Fourth Grade**

The 4th grade has been busy learning about the Norse people of Scandinavia and their myths. The students have painted the creation myth of fire and ice and drawn the picture of the nine worlds. We are learning the poem, "For courage". These stories are always exciting for the students and inspire their imaginations! In math, we are finishing our study of multiplication and division and moving on to decimal work this week. We have enjoyed learning to read maps and converting map scales to miles as well. Did you know that Cairo, Egypt has a population of 10,834,000?

We were very inspired by our visit to the Harwood Museum and have created beautiful printed cards to donate to the men’ shelter benefit. The materials used are simple and the results are spectacular. The students gave their parents a 2015 calendar to preserve their beautiful artwork! Thank you to Rebecca and Jayne at the museum and all the wonderful volunteers who help make this program possible.
Fifth Grade

Yay for February! We have been studying the American Revolution and many of our American heroes. We have looked at how music motivates people and how songs like Yankee Doodle were meant to inspire those during the war. We will be working with Mr. John, Ms. Amber, and Ms. Ashleigh to integrate the creative arts into this study. Next week we will become Patriots or Loyalists and create our own newspapers. In science, we have been studying the relationship between Mass, Weight, and Gravity and have been exploring the Scientific Method in detail!

Sixth Grade

In our Science UBD: Health, Nutrition & the Human Body we are learning how the health of our organs depend on a healthy diet and lifestyle. We researched these topics and presented our findings on posters to the class with facts about caring for the major organs and body parts. We learned what Superfoods are and got to try chia seeds and make two healthy snacks. We made coconut chia seed smoothies and baked honey lemon chia seed muffins--yum! We're also learning about our country's food industry, food safety and some major issues we are facing today. We had a guest speaker come to our class and discuss Food Choices and how drastically that has changed over the past decades. We also checked our a major fast food menu online and "ordered" a couple typical meals and learned how many fat, sugar and sodium grams that looks like. It was eye-opening! And since health also means safety we were fortunate to have Taos Paramedic, Fernando Medina and EMT, Leslie Smith give an awesome presentation on Home Safety and Emergencies. We are going to have them back again in March with an ambulance and simulate a few home emergencies--let's see how good we do!
Eighth Grade  Eighth grade is digging into our classics UBD beginning with A Separate Peace and ending with The Catcher in the Rye. We hope the TISA community is enjoying our monthly TISA TALKS double page spread in the Taos News; we have gotten a lot of great feedback from the community. We are about to embark upon a Grande effort to save Chaco Canyon from oil exploitation and fracking. Thanks to TISA parent Michelle Locher, who is on her own mission to save this most sacred of spaces, we were able to learn all about the history of this amazing place. We are hoping to have Senator Tom Udall come and explain how we can best stop this from happening in our beloved New Mexico.

Michelle Locher presents her slide show on Chaco Canyon.