



Elementary School
Home-School Connection

The Messenger of God said: "All people belong to God's family, and God favors best those who are most useful to God's family."

(Jamch Saghir, Konuz al-Haqayeq)



"I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood."

— [Martin Luther King Jr., *I Have a Dream: Writings and Speeches That Changed the World*](#)

January 2014

Message from Sister Bibi Baksh, Elementary School Instructional Leader

Parents will notice curricula are currently very challenging. This might be very evident in lower ES grades (K-2). This is because we are complying with Common Core State Standards. With the appropriate exposure and consistency, children of this age group are really capable of learning and grasping information with more ease than as they age. This has to do with the “neuroplasticity” of the brain at a young age. One of my goals as Instructional Leader is to take every opportunity to maximize the effectiveness of classroom instructions at this crucial time of child development. I, therefore, encourage parents to once again visit www.corstandards.org and www.engageny.org to learn more about State Standards so classroom expectations will be clear to them. Furthermore, based on my educational background in neuroscience and physiology and childhood education and my experience as a teacher, I can say Common Core equals Common Sense; it is a clear cut guideline of instructional strategies and learning outcomes. Unfortunately, the greatness of the standards has been overshadowed by state test controversies and other agendas. So, please visit the above mentioned website. The former is very explicit in laying out academic expectations. Again, based on my knowledge of brain development and child psychology and my experience, these expectations are quite attainable.



Important Dates:

Science Fair: February 5th, 2014

Elementary Winter Show: February 14th, 2014

Spelling Bee: March 5th (Elementary School), March 6th (Middle School).

After School Help:

Sister Sonia from PTA will be volunteering every Monday to assist 5th Grade students with homework. Slips were sent home. Please sign up. She will start in February Insha Allah. Sisters Ala, 5th grade teacher, and Celina, 3rd Grade teacher will be staying after school on Thursdays to assist students with state test prep.

Trips:

We are currently looking into trip ideas. If anyone knows of any exhibits or has any suggestions, please email out trip coordinators, Srs. Sana and Ala, at smunassar@andalusiaschool.org and/or aabdallah@andalusiaschool.org

Special Thanks to PTA

Br. Vahid did an excellent job at building cubbies for Grade 2 students. Thank you to all who contributed. Special thanks to Sr. Sakina for materials.

Sr. Neema will be volunteering to tutor upper ES students.

Sr. Kinza has been volunteering as a grade 2 Foundations tutor.

I am asking any parent who has a few hours a week and can volunteer to help our struggling readers to please email me at bbaksh@andalusiaschool.org. We do have Title 1 services for city students, but we did not get funding for Yonkers Kids. Either way, students at this level really benefit from one-on-one assistance. Teachers are using strategies to assist them in the classroom, but again, they need more one-on-one attention.

Student of the Month Achievers:

Grade	December	Most Improved 1st Marking Period.
Pre-K	Fatima Salim	Deen Giljic
K	Maryam Aamir	Sary Igbara
1st Grade	Abduraheem Azeez	Adam Alomari
2nd Grade	Hadia Jamshaid	Akram Abuawad
3rd Grade	Mohamad Suwan	Nasser Shibah
4th Grade	Kamelah Khan	Zainah Alomari
5th Grade	Kareema Ghaswala	Azizah Rashid
Computer		Sara Ahmed Gr. 1
Arabic	Meral Alhariri K	Abraham Nasher Gr. 1
	Hashem Alomari Gr. 3	Yasmeen Masoud Gr. 2
Islamic Studies	Ibrahim Malik Gr. 2	Adam Masoud Gr. 4
Quran	Reema Alomari Gr. 1	Adam Masoud Gr. 4

Book of the Month is:



This story is set in the South in 1962. It is based on the author's childhood experience. He could not figure out why there were water fountains labeled "White" and "Colored" when the water came from the same source. In the end, his experience made him more determined to never let anyone prevent him from fulfilling his dreams. We chose this book to build on awareness of segregation in US history without being too dramatic for younger children. They are already making great connections to Ruby Bridges, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr.

Writer's Corner

Writing Response to the book, *White Water*.

Dear Michael,

I just read your book, *White Water*, and the story taught me a lot about the past. So, I wanted to tell you a little about what's happening right now. Blacks and Whites have the same water fountains, the same schools, the same of everything, and it is all because of this guy, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his speech called, "I have a Dream." This is pretty close to what he said: I have a dream that one day my four little children will be judged by how they act and not their race. Because of that speech, there are no more "White" and "Colored" fountains. So, today things are much better.

Sincerely,

Yasmeen Masoud

You can always send me a message at bbaksh@andalusiaschool.org



