

The Innovator

**Third grade students beautify
Scales campus as they learn about plants**



Mrs. Gregory's third grade students water the garden. Four classes share the responsibility. L to R- Tamira Jones, Alondra Rivera, Rosisela Flores, and Pasion Valdez.

December 1, 2007

**A MESSAGE FROM
PRINCIPAL**

DAVID DIOKNO

Welcome to the third edition of the Scales Innovator! I hope that you find this color newsletter as informative as we do. This is just one of many examples of how we share with the Scales community. I know that through communication and partnership, we will continue to help every child achieve.

Continued on pg. 2...

Our Study of Plants by Mrs. Suzanne Gregory, third grade teacher

All third graders at Scales have just finished a science unit on seeds and plants. Each classroom planted a garden plot just outside of their classrooms and work to keep it watered and weed-free. Students learned about the parts of a seed and the parts of a plant. Their study culminated recently with a trip to the MAC farm in Maricopa to learn the story of corn. The students are eagerly awaiting the growth of their seedlings in the garden.



SCALES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mr. Diokno continued...

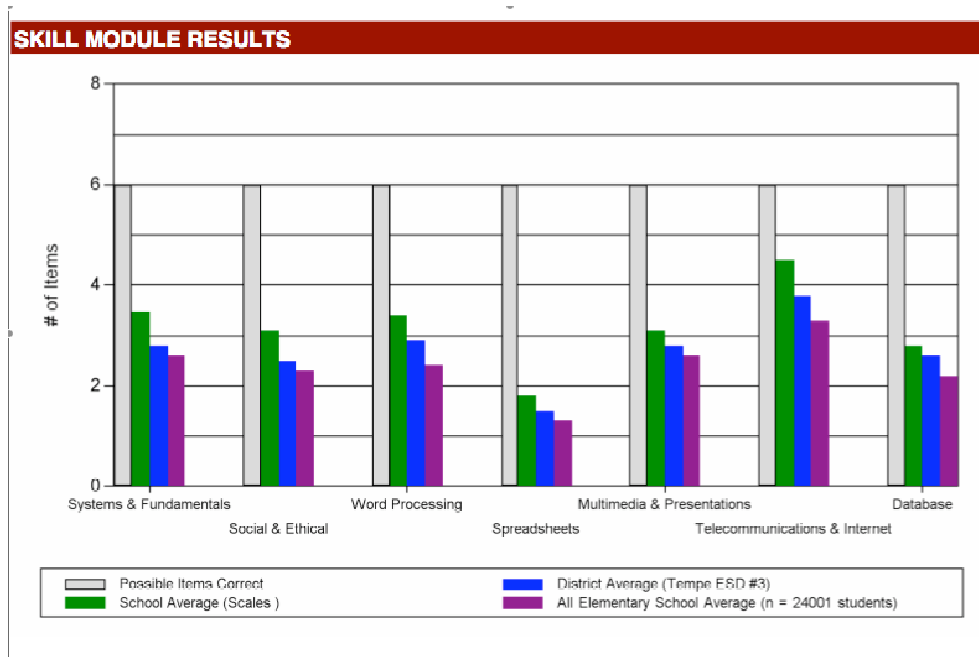
I'd like to continue to stress the importance of our commitment to excellence. Parental involvement in partnership with our dedicated teachers will ensure that we meet all students' needs. As teachers and staff, we set high expectations for students and we model what we preach to ensure that our students continue to rise to curricular challenges. Our focus as we transition into Scales Technology Academy is to directly support student achievement through the use of technology. Our teachers are doing that and take every opportunity to learn more about technology so that they can integrate it into the curriculum.

Each child should be able to tell you about different experiences and ways they use technology everyday. Technology is a wonderful tool that reinforces student learning. Recently, six teachers attended a conference that focused on websites that support classroom teaching. These teachers had nothing but great things to say about their learning. They will be sharing ways to directly incorporate websites into daily lessons with the rest of our teachers. Another group of staff members drove up to Flagstaff to attend a Saturday conference on Technology in Education. Our staff is committed to lifelong learning. They set a great example for each child at Scales!

Our students are truly learning about technology, which is evidenced by a technology literacy assessment taken by our fifth graders. (See graph below). In this assessment, we not only scored above other schools in the district, but also the state! This is just the beginning of our enhanced learning! In order for us to continue to succeed, we will all need to put in a lot of hard work and effort.

For parents, we ask that you are vigilant in following up with your children on their work at home.

- 1) Maintain an open line of communication with teachers and the school and feel free to ask questions or seek help when needed.
- 2) Make sure your children eat balanced meals, get plenty of rest, and come to school everyday, on time. A healthy mind and rested body lead to successful learning.
- 3) Limit the amount of television (non-educational programs) and video games and encourage reading and other academically focused activities.



4) Show an interest in your child's learning and ask him or her about the school day. Studies have shown that parents who show an active interest in what their children are learning help set the stage for a great educational experience. Please know that together we will help show our children that there is no limit to the power of the mind.

SCALES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A FIRESIDE CHAT WITH MR. WHITNEY, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

CUB SCOUTS

Cub Scouts has successfully landed here at Scales! I really encourage all boys who are in grades 1-5 to get involved! There are so many neat and fun activities for all to share! Meeting nights are on Mondays from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the school library. Mrs. Shepherd is our new Cub Master and brings her enthusiasm and experience to our school and pack! This next meeting we will be looking at uniforms and working towards our Bobcat badge! If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Whitney at 480-741-0749.

PARENTS ON CAMPUS MUST SIGN IN

Parents, if you come to our campus to pick up your children, please be sure to stop by the office first and sign yourself in. This is a safety issue and we need to be sure that all adults on campus have been accounted for. If you need a parent teacher conference, please be sure to contact that teacher or a school administrator before coming to campus. This makes it easier for everyone.

*LANGUAGE ARTS CORNER- How to Write "Right"
by Dawn Moan-Minott, Language Arts Coach*

Handwriting seems to be a thing of the past in our day of advancing technologies. However, it is still an important part of our school curriculum. The following are some tips for parents to use at home to help develop and motivate writers:

***Check your child's grip.** Make sure that your child is gripping the pencil equally by the thumb, the side of the middle finger, and the tip of the index finger.

***Trace an adult's writing first.** Write a sentence or caption under a picture and have your child trace it. Next have them write the same thing underneath your writing.

***Practice makes perfect.** Provide lots of experiences for your child to write. Use journals, notes, friendly letters, etc., to give many opportunities for writing.

There are some important factors to consider if your child is having difficulty with handwriting. Not every child develops fine motor skills at the same rate. Try not to compare your child to other children. Also, handwriting practice needs to be **FUN!** When an activity is enjoyable, it increases your child's motivation to write "right".

Turn the page for a third grade writing sample.

Tempe Elementary School District No. 3

Mission Statement- To assure that all students reach their achievement goals.

Goals-

- Increase **student achievement** in every classroom, for every student, in every subject, everyday.
- Provide **exceptional service** and **support** to all.
- Provide a culture of **innovation** and **risk-taking**.
- Provide **outstanding facilities** and **technology**.

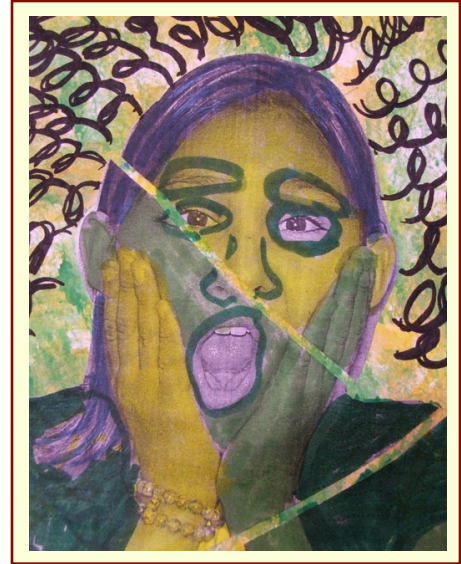


The Turkey Trot Cross Country Race was held at Scales on Nov. 21st. Parents and teachers cheered students on. Kindergarten students (above) ran with great enthusiasm!

SCALES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

An excerpt from My Moody Vacation Last Year by Samantha Sorensen, Mrs. Higgin's 3rd grade class

Last year I had a moody fall vacation. I had so many feelings. When you looked at my expressions, you could tell how I felt. Sad, excited, delighted, and mad. On Tuesday evening, I went to a party. I drank tasty soda pop. I was delighted because everybody looked pretty. Later that week, I walked to the park by myself. I just sat there alone in the muddy sand and made a small sand castle. I felt sad. The next morning I was at a playground. There was no basketball court. That made me mad. Then on a Saturday evening I went to a fair. It had a Ferris Wheel that was colorful. There was a "shocking" slide. I also went on a frog-hopper that goes up and down. I was delighted. Now you know why I had so many expressions on my face. Have you ever been that way?



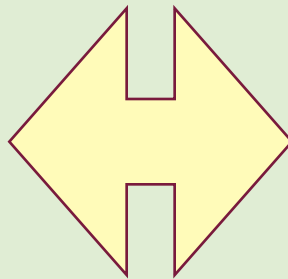
A NOTE FROM THE SCHOOL NURSE

The following information is taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/disease.htm>. Please educate yourself on Influenza and the Influenza Vaccine by visiting this website. Thank you! Halyna Chirovsky, RN, BSN (480) 929- 9909 ext. 6903

What is influenza (flu)? Influenza, commonly called "the flu," is caused by the influenza virus, which infects the respiratory tract (nose, throat, lungs). The flu can cause severe illness and life-threatening complications in many people. In the United States, the peak of flu season can occur anywhere from late December through March. **What are the symptoms of the flu?** Symptoms of flu include fever, headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and muscle aches. Children can have additional gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, but these symptoms are uncommon in adults. **How long is a person with flu virus contagious?** The time from when a person is exposed to flu virus to when symptoms begin is about one to four days. Studies show that most adults may be able to infect others from 1 day prior to becoming sick and for 5 days after they first develop symptoms.

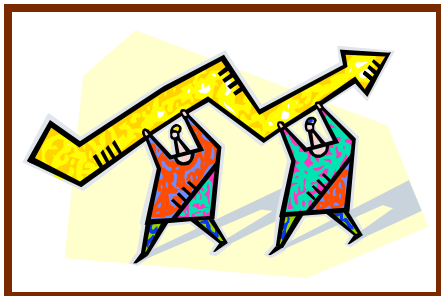
Testing Notice-DIBELS reading assessments will be ongoing November 29th - December 13th in grades K-5. MAP testing (reading and math) for grades 2-5 will also be occurring in December. Make sure your child comes to school rested and prepared everyday. Specific dates for your child's upcoming tests will be available through classroom teachers or the office.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



"Families Learning Together" begins November 29th on Thursdays from 6-8 p.m. Second – fifth grade students are invited to attend, **with a parent**. They will learn how to create iMovies, podcasts, and digital iBooks. No younger children may attend. A signed permission slip is required. For information, please call Mrs. Laneback (602- 478-2463).

SCALES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



A \$50,000.00 Challenge! by Principal Diokno

Did you know that you can make a contribution to our school through the Tax Credit Program and receive 100% of your dollars back when you file your taxes and claim a state tax credit? You can reduce your tax liability by up to \$400 (\$200 for single or \$400 for a married couple filing jointly) or claim an additional refund up to \$400. Check with your tax consultant to see if you are also eligible for a deduction on your federal taxes to the Internal Revenue Service.

*What will Scales do with these extra dollars? **We enhance the learning for all of our students through extra-curricular activities.***

This year, our tax credit contributions helped fund: 1) Mallet Madness, 2) 2nd Grade Reading Club, 3) Kindergarten Reading Club, 4) Saturday Technology Camp, 5) 5th Grade Math Club, 6) 3,4,5 Literature Club, 7) Fitness Club, and several different trips and activities. These dollars are essential to help us provide extra learning opportunities for each child.

I have challenged our school to raise \$50,000 through the Tax Credit program. *With your help, we can do it! You may pick up Tax Credit applications at the school. Be sure that your application names Scales School as the beneficiary of your contribution. Take as many forms as you like and share them with friends, family, and co-workers, as many people aren't even aware of how they can help. And it won't cost them a dime. The Tempe Schools Credit Union (Mill Ave. and Alameda Dr.) will lend you the money at no interest to take advantage of this opportunity.*

Call today to find out how you can contribute to Scales School. Take advantage of Tempe Schools Credit Union's interest free loan (480) 967-9475. HELP US EXCEL!

Keeping Kids Safe by Officer Greg Bacon

December 1st we are hosting a district-wide Child Safety Day here at Scales School in the Gililland Gym. Like you, we want your children to be safe. Please make time to bring your children to Child Safety Day so that they can be fingerprinted and photographed. This updated information is extremely helpful to authorities and saves

time when a child is missing.

Also, as parents, you can help your child to stay safe by teaching him or her: 1) full names, 2) home address (including city and state) and 3) phone numbers. Teach your child how to use a public phone and make sure he or she know how to dial 9-1-1, stressing its use *only* in an emergency.

Do you know your children's friends and where they live? Where do they play after school and on the weekends? Knowing where your child is will keep him or her safe.

As the holidays approach and the busy shopping season begins, please remember to keep your children by your side. One way to make it easier to spot your children in crowded places is to color coordinate their clothing or place a colored band around their arms.

The number of missing children increases when children are distracted by holiday attractions and walk away from their parents. For safety tips, visit <http://www.tempe.gov/cpu/safetyawarenessforkids.htm>.

Have a happy holiday season and keep your children safe.

SCALES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



A Tradition of Literacy: A Gift to Your Children

by Rachel Trim,
Library Media Specialist

Traditions are common in many cultures, communities, and families. They mark the birth of children, holidays, birthdays, and other special events. Children look forward to the familiar nature of these events and identify with the patterns we establish.

Yet, as parents, how often do we think about the traditions of literacy we are creating in our home? Each time we encourage our children to do well in school, develop personal reading habits, or to search for answers to questions, we are establishing a very important pattern of learning.

We can effectively model healthy literacy skills in our homes even if we are still working towards our own literacy goals. Children notice when grown-ups make time to read or study. They learn from us to search for information with not only books, magazines and newspapers, but also when we use the Internet and computers to complete tasks and communicate with others.

Visiting the local library together familiarizes all family members with reading materials that stimulate personal interests and promote reading for

information and enjoyment. The gift of literacy doesn't have to be expensive. The local library is a place where books and other materials can be borrowed. Visitors can use library computers to look up information, play educational games, choose reading material and search databases.

The gift of literacy is a lifelong tradition that enriches our children's lives. As they grow up, they will continue their education, become employed, and most likely have children of their own. The time spent establishing a tradition of literacy will bless each family member today and can create a tradition worth passing down for generations to come.

What is MAC-Ro Math?



Have you heard about MAC-Ro math? Although the MAC-Ro math kickoff was 2 months ago, second and third grade students are still going strong practicing their math skills with this motivational program sponsored by Rodel. Mrs. Laneback's 4/5 class is also piloting the program. Students who finish math packets earn prizes and increase their math skills. Ask your child about MAC-Ro math and about the two crazy principals who dress up and sing about arithmetic. Ask your child to sing the MAC-Ro math song!

December Calendar

1- 9:00 a.m. Scales
Safety Day @ Gililand
4- 5:30 p.m. Site Council
6- 6:30 p.m. PTA mtg.
11- 7:00 p.m. Band
13- 7:00 p.m. Orchestra
17- 7:00 p.m. Choir
24- Jan. 4 Winter Break
Jan. 7- Back to School

Job Opportunity-

The Nutritional Services Department is in need of substitute cafeteria helpers. For more information, please call 480-774-2124.

Special thanks to all who contributed to this issue of the Innovator:

Writers- David Diokno, Matt Whitney, Dawn Moan-Minott, Halyna Chirovsky, Greg Bacon, and Suzanne Gregory

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We appreciate you!

Rachel Trim, Editor
Library Media Specialist