

THE COUGAR COURIER

May 1, 2017

Cottonwood Creek
11200 E Orchard Rd
Englewood, CO 80111



Dear Cougars,

It is hard to believe that it is May, and we are wrapping up our school year. Thank you for supporting our school community in finishing the year strong. May is a wonderful blend of celebration, learning, and closure. Parents often ask what they can do with their student(s) over the summer to prepare for next year. I have a number of thoughts, and the first is ALWAYS to end the current school year with conviction, focus and continued dedication to learning. Once summer hits, consider some of the following:

- Read **EVERY** day – have your student read independently or read books with them; this is the single most beneficial activity you can do to promote continued growth in literacy and ultimately learning;
- Check out the library - many summer activities are available through the public library, and usually they are FREE;
- Listen to audio books while in the car – this models fluency and continues the practice of critical thinking with “text”;
- Continue to use the online games and resources that your student(s) used during the school year. Most subscriptions and student accounts are active through the summer;
- Encourage your student(s) to explain their thinking...about EVERYTHING! This will help with continued practice of higher order thinking and encourage the generalization of those skills by students;
- Work with your student on elements of growth mindset and self-regulation as they encounter challenges during the summer;
- Write about things! Encourage your student to write--as a form of reflection, in the form of non-fiction, as prose, through letters...practice the craft of writing!

Again, thank you for your assistance during the 2016-2017 school year! On behalf of all of the Cougars, we appreciate your endless hours of support, your numerous conversations about learning with your student(s), and your incredibly generous donations. Your commitment to our Cougar family is second to NONE!

Cottonwood Creek’s ROAR Team would like to celebrate the excellence of the following parents for their fantastic contributions to our school community:

- Jennie Preece and Susan Mui – These two wonderful parents are the Cultural Connections (PASS) Co-coordinators, and they are the energy and organization behind the cultural elements of Multi-cultural Night at Cottonwood Creek. *Jennie and Susan, we celebrate you as ROAR parents of the month...thank you!*
- Heather Dolan, Jenny Emerson, Amy Shineman, and Sara Smaling – These fabulous Cougar parents work collaboratively with other members of our fabulous PTO and our Cottonwood Creek Elementary School community to coordinate our spring auction, raise funds for our school, and provide students with the elements necessary to have a truly special learning environment; *Thank you for making the spring auction event successful and fun! Heather, Jenny, Amy and Sara, we celebrate you as ROAR parents of the month...thank you!*

Enjoy your week!

Take care, *Julie*

IMPORTANT DATES:

May:

1-3 High Trails

1-5 Child Nutrition Appreciation Week

1-5 Teacher Appreciation Week

5 Non-Contact Day - No School

9 3rd Grade Fieldtrip

10 Bike to School Day

National Nurse Appreciation Day

11 Kindie Fieldtrip

Spring Choir Concert

12 PTO Meeting

Important Phone Numbers:

Main Office: 720-554-3200 Fax: 720-554-3288

Attendance: 720-554-3295

Kids Club: 720-554-3266 Before and After School

Cottonwood Kitchen: 720-554-3271

Cottonwood Nurse: 720-554-3208

SCHOOL HOURS: 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.



Snow Delay and Closure Line

720-554-4701

<http://www.ccsd.k12.co.us/SchoolStatus/>



Community Information Corner

Many of our community partners share information with us. To access information from the following organizations, please visit the Cottonwood Community Information Corner at the entrance of the school:

- Science Matters
- Bike Path Learning: Foreign Languages
- Young Rembrandts
- Destination Imagination
- Boys Scouts of America
- Girl Scouts
- Band
- Chess Club
- Tae Kwon Do

End of School Year in the Library!



Hear Ye! Hear Ye! The time approaches for all library books to return to their home. The following dates have been set up for our Cottonwood library books to be back to the library:

- Last day to **check out books is May 5th**
- All **student books** are due **May 12, 2017**
- All **Parent/Community books** are due **May 12, 2017**
- All **teacher books** are due **May 19, 2017**
- Arapahoe Library** visiting to present their **Summer Reading Program-May 15th**

Please make every effort to return books/magazines checked out or pay for them by May 26th. Thank you for your help and support in making reading and responsibility important parts of your child's education.

KINDERGARTEN



In Kindergarten, we have been busy learning about maps and globes! As we focused a bit on Africa, we had a presentation by drummer Bob Hall who brought some instruments with him and taught the students about how music and dance in Africa. A special thank you to the PTO for sponsoring this SEM activity.

Our latest focus in our writing workshop has been on opinion writing and writing “how to” books. We hope you enjoyed your child’s “All About Me” books. The goal was for each student give an opinion and to write at least 2 reasons to support their opinion. We also continue to talk about those conventions of writing-have a capital letter at the start of the sentence, punctuation, and spaces between words. We think the “how to” books turned out great too!

In math, we have been learning to describe objects in terms of several measurable attributes including length, weight, capacity and temperature. One of the major goals of this unit is to help students understand that numbers are composed of groups of 10s and 1s. The State Standards require that all kindergartners be able to count by 10s and recognize that the numbers from 11 to 19 are composed of a 10 and some

more 1s. Students will actively decompose and compose numbers. When students decompose a number, they begin with the numeral form of a number and represent it as a collection of 10’s and 1’s using double ten-frames, Unifix cubes, stick bundles, or equations.

Please continue to read, read, read with your Kindie! Whether you are reading to them or they are reading to you, this time working on books together is invaluable. Take time to talk about the stories with them-discussing favorite characters, the setting, any problems in the story, and solutions. Also, it would be great if you could model “retelling” the story with the book closed after reading it, and sometimes have your child do the retell.

Thank you for all your hard work with your children at home!! Mark your calendars now for our Kindergarten Graduation Program/Ceremony taking place May 24th at 1:30 p.m. in the gym. Kindergarten students will be dismissed for the year following the ceremony.

1st Grade

News from First Grade

First grade is buzzing with excitement! We have a variety of insects that we are studying. Lots of creepy crawly things are changing as they grow from egg to larvae to pupa to adult. We also are sprouting seeds as we have moved through the month of April.

Eric Carle, Cynthia Rylant, Leo Lionni, and Tomie dePaola are now known authors in first grade. During our author study we are reading books written by these authors and becoming very familiar with their characters, special illustrations, or their writing styles.

Below are some important dates to mark on your calendar.

May 5th - No school

May 12th - All Library Books are due

May 23rd - Field Day

May 26th - Last day of school - half day



2nd Grade

Hello 2nd Grade Families,

It is so hard to believe, we are quickly winding down the school year! On Thursday, May 4th, second grade will be going on a field trip to Hudson Gardens. We thank all of the parents who volunteered to join us and wish we were able to take everyone. We are so fortunate to have such supportive and willing families. Please mark your calendars to join us for our 2nd Grade Author's Celebration/Tea on Friday, May 12th. The kids are working hard to put together their writing portfolios to share with you.

We are culminating the school year with a poetry unit in reading and writing. In science, we are in the middle of our plants and animals unit. Students have been learning about how to cultivate the growth of certain plants and veggies and learning about how habitats sustain plant and animal life. We have finished unit 6 in math and have started Bridges unit 7, measuring in metric units. We continue our work in problem solving multidigit computation.

Author Ryan Sloth will be coming to Cottonwood on May 10th to speak to our students. An order form was sent home if you would like to purchase any of his books. We look forward to seeing all of you for the Author's Celebration/Tea on Friday, May 12th.

Take care, The 2nd Grade Team: Rebecca Buell, Kathy Feeley, Kate Howard, Natalie Morris, and Erin Wehrle.

3rd Grade

Wow! It is hard to believe we are near the end of another third grade school year. A great deal of learning is still taking place as we once again conclude this year.

In addition to the wonderful job the students did with their recent biographies, we were also very proud of their efforts during the PARCC testing. The third graders were positive and hardworking.

The science kits have arrived for our last unit of the school year, "Matter and Energy". Our objective with this FOSS Unit is to explore the three properties of matter - solid, liquid, and gas. Students use metric tools to measure the properties of matter - mass, volume, and temperature - and observe that starting substances can change into new substances as a result of a chemical reaction. In addition, students investigate the properties of light, and observe the conversion of energy from one form to another. As we wrap up this school year, students will learn economic and government concepts during social studies, too.

Having just completed the geometry unit in Bridges, students will extend their study of multiplication and fractions during the remaining part of the school year. Using larger numbers, as well as reviewing the commutative and distributive properties, will be a focus. We will tap into the power of the associative property of multiplication as well. Keep practicing those basic multiplication facts!

With only a month of school remaining, please reinforce the discussions we are having with your children about the importance of staying focused at this time of the year. There is still so much learning ahead of us. These remaining days of school are important and filled with significant learning opportunities. Thank you for your continued support as we continue running the race to the end!

4th Grade

Hello, fourth grade families! First of all, we'd like to congratulate the fourth grade students on a job well-done in their program "Vacation on Mars." It was so much fun to see the students' hard work come together in a wonderful performance. Thank you, Mrs. Lavrisha, for fostering confidence and a love of music in all of our students!

We have been busy here in fourth grade! In reading, we've been studying poetry. We've learned how to read poems according to their punctuation and intended rhyme and rhythm. We've also studied how poets use figurative language and sensory images to help us visualize when reading poetry. Students have even dabbled in writing their own poems. We look forward to celebrating our learning on Wednesday, May 10 at our classroom Poetry Slams!

In writing, students are creating their own narratives. Some students are writing realistic fiction, while others are exploring the fantasy genre. No matter the genre, all students are learning how to develop characters and setting, SHOW, not TELL, and incorporate a blend of dialogue, actions, thoughts, and feelings to make their stories come alive. We can't wait to read them!

In science, we're exploring environments. Some big questions we're asking in this unit include...What happens when we change an environmental factor in an environment? How do living and non-living things interact in their ecosystems? To study these questions, we're observing how air temperature affects mealworms, and we set up aquatic ecosystems with fish, snails, and plants. Soon, we'll be planting seeds and studying their salt and water tolerance.

In math, we're getting ready to begin our final unit of the year. We'll be studying basic algebra, including patterns and functions, and we'll continue to explore more multiplication strategies.

Thanks for your continued support! We look forward to a fantastic rest of the year with these fourth graders!

5th Grade

Thank you families for another wonderful 5th grade class.

As we get close to saying goodbye, we wish you and your families a wonderful summer filled with rest, fun, and family time. The school year has flown by and already the planning for the next has begun.

Looking back we have had a packed year of reading, writing, and math. The FOSS science units brought hands on learning, while social studies enriched our minds making history alive. We enjoyed a wonderful trip to Young Ameritowne and are looking forward to High Trails. Students worked hard and yet had fun along the way. As students enter into the joy of summer, we know some may feel nervous about the coming changes in middle school. Let them know they are well prepared for the tasks to come and that they will be making new friends along the way.

We hope that on Continuation day you enjoy the final moments of your child's elementary career. Sit back, listen to the music, and watch the memories (you might bring a tissue or two).

Happy summer,

The Fifth Grade Team

A look *back*...

and a look *forward*

