



# NEWSLETTER

**April 2013 Issue**  
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9155 Tutt Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO 80924  
Phone: 719-234-5500 FAX 719-234-5599  
Website: <http://www.asd20.org/rce>

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# Growth



## RCES MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission at Ranch Creek Elementary School, a collaborative, internationally-minded learning community, is to cultivate, educate, and equip the whole child, by fostering innovative, reflective thinking through inquiry-based experiences, and empowering active, principled participants in our world.

The purpose of the RCES newsletter is to provide insight into the culture of our school. It is designed and formatted to be read on a computer screen. The RCES website is designed to provide comprehensive information about all aspects of our school. Please call the school at 234-5500 if you have any questions or suggestions regarding our website.



# Letter from the Principal

Dear Parents and Students,

As we publish this newsletter, we've completed TCAP testing and 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, and we've returned from Spring Break energized for the exciting activities of the end of the school year. It feels as if the months are flying by; as a staff, we're starting to get ready for the **next** school year!

During April, a great deal of planning goes into creating classes for the coming school year. Current grade level teachers meet together with administrators, specialists, and support teachers to consider all these factors: balanced numbers of boys and girls; balanced numbers of advanced learners, on-grade-level learners, and students who require extra support; balanced numbers of students with special needs; balanced numbers of students requiring significant behavioral support; keeping constructive peer groups together; and separating peer combinations that have not been constructive.

If, in addition to the factors listed above, you as parents want to communicate with us about the type of classroom desired and the type of teacher with whom your child will thrive, we welcome a written statement from you. We request that this statement be submitted by the end of April. As in all District 20 elementary schools, we can't accept requests for specific teachers by name. In part, this is because a teacher's assignment may change at any point up until the first day of school. It is possible that some of our current teachers would be teaching in a different grade level next year.

We honor and welcome conversations with you about your child's education and classroom environment. With input from parents, we can do so much more for your child! If we work together as a team, there is no limit to the success your child can achieve.

Please stop by, call, email, or make an appointment to talk with us about any concerns or questions you have regarding your child's education and experience at Ranch Creek!

Sincerely,

**Susan Paulson, Principal**



# Library Media Center Highlights



## Internet Safety

All students at Ranch Creek receive internet safety instruction. All lessons are age-appropriate. Kindergarten's lessons include, Passwords, Real World Safety and the Internet Safety Pledge. First Grade lessons include, the World Wide Web, the Internet, Cyber Security, Digital Ethics, and the Internet Safety Pledge. Second Grade covers Being Safe Online, Copyright and Digital Ethics, Cyber Security, and the Internet Safety Pledge. Third, Fourth and Fifth Grade lessons include the Cyber Community, Cyber Security, Intellectual Property and the use of the following ebooks: *Avoiding Predators Online*, *Playing Games Online*, *Protecting your Privacy Online*, and *Stopping Cyberbullying*. Please contact the librarian if you would like passwords to these ebooks. We use primarily two internet safety curricula programs-I Safe [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org) and NetSmartz [www.netsmartz.org](http://www.netsmartz.org). Please feel free to visit these web sites for more information for parents about internet safety.

### Here are some internet tips for the home:

1. Discuss and help your child sign the Internet Safety pledge that your child will be bringing home.
2. Clear, simple, easy-to-read house rules should be posted on or near the monitor. Create your own computer rules or use the Internet Safety Pledge.
3. Look into safeguarding programs or options your online service provider might offer. These may include monitoring or filtering capabilities. Filtering products that use whitelisting, which only allows a child access to a preapproved list of sites, are recommended for children in this age group.



# Library Media Center Highlights



## Internet Safety

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4. Web sites for children are not permitted to request personal information without a parent's permission. Talk to children about what personal information is and why you should never give it to people online.
5. Talk to children about not responding to offensive or dangerous e-mail, chat, or other communications. Report any such communication to local law enforcement. Do not delete the offensive or dangerous e-mail; turn off the monitor, and contact local law enforcement.
6. If children use chat or e-mail, talk to them about never meeting in person with anyone they first "met" online.
7. Keep the computer in the family room or another open area of your home.
8. Have children use child-friendly search engines when completing homework  
*(these are located on our school web site under Learning Resources/Internet Resources).*

**Jessica Babbs**  
**Teacher Librarian**  
[jessica.babbs@asd20.org](mailto:jessica.babbs@asd20.org)



# *Coordinator's Corral*

## *Exhibition*



Ranch Creek will host our first annual 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Exhibition on April 18<sup>th</sup> during the school day so that all students may participate. Exhibition is a culminating event in a Primary Years Programme school in which all 5 Essential Elements are represented. (Knowledge, Concepts, Skills, Attitudes and Action) Students will also reflect upon their use of the Learner Profile attributes as they work with their group members.

Students have great freedom and flexibility in designing their own inquiry project. This year will focus on How the World Works. Kids work in groups that are organized to follow their own curiosity and interests. Together they will research their group questions and compile their learning which will then be presented to the school community. The way students present their learning will be a reflection of their particular groups' creativity and strengths. Grade levels will have the opportunity to visit 5<sup>th</sup> graders to view their projects' presentations. Families are also welcome to share this learning celebration as well. Watch Friday folders and the marquee for more details.

**Mary Anne Threet, IB PYP Coordinator**

# *Counselor's Corner*



Spring is here and with it the learning of our students is increasingly evident. The first three quarters saw the growth of knowledge, skills and understanding in all curricular areas as well as social learning. During the last quarter of the year we maintain our high level of expectations and as a result we see increased application of that learning.

Socially, children can sometimes experience bumps in the road with friends at this time of year. In some ways they see each other as siblings due to the extensive time spent together. We work together to use problem solving skills and communication skills to resolve conflict and tensions.

Another common bump in the road occurs when kids use their humor inappropriately for the school environment. Sometimes children try out bad language, rude gestures and put-downs. While this may be a normal expression of development, we take these behaviors seriously and respond with appropriate consequences so that our school environment remains safe and harmonious for all children.

**Mary Anne Threet, Counselor**

# A Note from Your School Nurse



## Exercise

### Exercise boosts your energy level.

Physical activity delivers oxygen and nutrients to your tissues. In fact, regular physical activity helps your entire cardiovascular system — the circulation of blood through your heart and blood vessels — work more efficiently. Big deal? You bet! When your heart and lungs work more efficiently, you'll have more energy to do the things you enjoy.

### Exercise promotes better sleep.

A good night's sleep can improve your concentration, productivity and mood. And you guessed it — physical activity is sometimes the key to better sleep. Regular physical activity can help you fall asleep faster and deepen your sleep. There's a caveat, however. If you exercise too close to bedtime, you may be too energized to fall asleep. If you're having trouble sleeping, you might want to exercise earlier in the day.

### Exercise improves your mood.

Physical activity stimulates various brain chemicals that may leave you feeling happier and more relaxed than you were before you worked out. You'll also look better and feel better when you exercise regularly, which can boost your confidence and improve your self-esteem. Regular physical activity can even help prevent depression.

# A Note from Your School Nurse



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## Exercise combats chronic diseases.

Regular physical activity can help you prevent — or manage — high blood pressure. Your cholesterol will benefit, too. Regular physical activity boosts high-density lipoprotein (HDL), or "good," cholesterol while decreasing triglycerides. This one-two punch keeps your blood flowing smoothly by lowering the buildup of plaques in your arteries. And there's more. Regular physical activity can help you prevent type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and certain types of cancer.

## Exercise helps you manage your weight.

This one's a no-brainer. When you engage in physical activity, you burn calories. The more intense the activity, the more calories you burn — and the easier it is to keep your weight under control. You don't even need to set aside major chunks of time for working out. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Walk during your lunch break. Do jumping jacks during commercials. Better yet, turn off the TV and take a brisk walk. Dedicated workouts are great, but physical activity you accumulate throughout the day helps you burn calories, too.

Resource: Mayo Clinic July 25, 2009

**Penny Bost**  
**School Nurse**

# PTA Newsletter



We are happy to report our new board positions for the 2013-2014 school year.

**Nichole Lively - President**  
**Richard Figueroa - Vice President**  
**Sarah Stejskal - Secretary**  
**Nancy Do - Treasurer**

Great parents make a great PTA! Please consider volunteering your time with special events and committees. We'll let you know when and where you are needed!

Popcorn Fridays have started up again. Our 2nd through 5th graders have enjoyed this tradition and our 1st graders and kindergarteners will experience the yummy fun in May. We are mindful of allergies. Rest assured the ingredients we use are safe and peanut free.

We will need to reschedule the Yogurt in Love Spiritraiser due to the last snow day. We are looking for a date in May and will keep you updated.

Our next meeting will be May 9th at 8:15am—see you there!