



# NEWSLETTER

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## **In this Issue:**

Principal's Letter . . . . .	page 2
Library/MC Highlights . .	page 3
Coordinator's Corral . . .	page 4
Counselor's Corner . . . .	page 5
School Nurse . . . . .	page 6
PTA Newsletter . . . . .	page 7

# Action



## **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, Students, and Members of the Community,

Next week, all Ranch Creek teachers are looking forward to sharing with parents and guardians at Parent/Teacher Conferences! We've had a wonderful fall and first quarter, and we have so much student growth and learning to celebrate! We'll be glad to welcome everyone into our school on October 17 and 18. If you have any questions about Conferences, please call our Front Office at 234-5500.

One of the ways we strive for continuous improvement at Ranch Creek is through the ever-increasing and supportive involvement of our parents, grandparents, and other members of our community. I am thrilled to report to you that **we have processed well over two hundred volunteer applications this fall**, and we're excited about all of our volunteers being involved in a meaningful way during the year. We appreciate the time, planning, and dedication put forth by our volunteers—we could not do all that we want for your children without this sacrifice from those of you who are currently able to help in this way.

We are grateful to all parents for ensuring your child's arrival on time each day. We encourage all students to arrive at 8:05. This provides time to settle in, greet teachers and friends, organize for the day, and begin learning even before the bell rings at 8:15. We work to maximize the learning day, while providing ample time daily for free play and physical activity, and we appreciate your cooperation in delivering your children on time and ensuring their attendance so that learning plans can be fully implemented. Meanwhile we continue to work with Academy School District 20's Security Department, to improve the safety and efficiency of our arrival and dismissal procedures.

Sincerely, in service to the children and families of Ranch Creek,

**Susan Paulson, Principal**



# Library Media Center Highlights



I noticed that today was the first day that it really started to feel like autumn. It was chilly, the leaves were a bright yellow, and a storm was in the forecast for the evening. As the season changes, we begin to think of putting the warm blankets on the bed, cooking soup, getting out the sweaters, and raking the leaves in the yard. This is the season for cuddling up with a good book, and I hope that the Ranch Creek library can help our students and families find just the book.

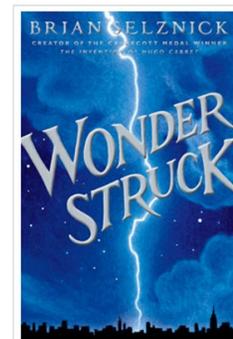
This month we will host the Scholastic Book fair from Monday, October 15th through Thursday, October 18th. The book fair will be open during evening conferences, so please stop by. A percentage of the profits from this book fair help us to purchase requested library books.

Our All School Reads book for the 2012-13 school year is titled ***Wonderstruck* by Brian Selznick**. This is the author of *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, our previous All School Reads title. Our classes will be reading this book, and we are encouraging our families to read and share it as well. Beautifully written and illustrated, it is a book that can be enjoyed by all ages at many different levels. This book is a keepsake, so if you are looking for holiday presents, I encourage you to consider this one. *Wonderstruck* is about “Ben and Rose who secretly wish their lives were different. Ben longs for the father he has never known. Rose dreams of a mysterious actress whose life she chronicles in a scrapbook. When Ben discovers a puzzling clue in his mother’s room and Rose reads an enticing headline in the newspaper, both children set out alone on desperate quests to find what they are missing. Set fifty years apart, these two independent stories—Ben’s told in words, Rose’s in pictures—weave back and forth with mesmerizing symmetry. How they unfold and ultimately intertwine will surprise you, challenge you, and leave you breathless with wonder. Rich, complex, affecting, and beautiful—with over 460 pages of original artwork—*Wonderstruck* is a stunning achievement from a uniquely gifted artist and visionary.”

Visit the website about *Wonderstruck* <http://www.wonderstruckthebook.com/>

Enjoy autumn!

**Jessica Babbs**





# Coordinator's Corral



## Action

**ACTION** is a significant component of Primary Years Programme schools. When we have fully learned something we are able to apply that learning. A child may become particularly interested in a science concept and ask for supplies or resources to use at home. Students may want to check out books on the concepts learned in a unit of inquiry long after the unit ended. When learning extends beyond the classroom expectations, and is generated by the child, we call that “action”.

Here are some examples from the first weeks of school. After a few mistakes, kindergarten students realized that they must wait for their teacher before leaving the lunchroom, so one child suggested they create a poster stating the lunchroom rules and hang it for all to see. While learning about “regions” 3<sup>rd</sup> graders continually wanted to explore maps and globes when an unfamiliar location was mentioned in any context throughout their day. Rights and responsibilities were the focus for 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Students began correcting their classmates’ behavior by stating “your noise is interfering with my right to learn” rather than telling the teacher.

You have likely noticed your child taking action at home related to classroom learning. Please share those stories with his/her teacher. We want to recognize students for “action”.

**Mary Anne Threet, IB PYP Coordinator**

# Counselor's Corner



With school underway and fall activities keeping children busy, it may sometimes seem that more and more time is spent outside the watchful eye of parents. Sports, hobbies and friendship activities are all important parts of our kid's lives. So how do we balance the need our children have for engagement in purposeful activities and the need we have to know they are safe. Adults and children will both gain confidence when children know how to be safe in our world.

There seems to be dangers lurking around every corner and it's not as simple as a stranger in a trench coat. It could also be a hidden food allergen, or a questionable website, or the friend's home where PG 13 and Mature ratings are allowed. When away from our care our children may be exposed to inappropriate language, unsupervised internet use, even non-nourishing "junk" food. Unfortunately, that's just the tip of the iceberg. So, how do we keep them safe when they are out in the world living their young lives? Maybe the simplest answer to that is "boundaries".

At school, children learn about the personal space they occupy that is separate from others. We experiment with our "space bubble" for learning--the amount of room we need to focus on our own learning without interference. Little guys are taught that they are the "boss of their bodies" and they practice speaking up if someone is bothering them or sitting too close in their workspace. They learn about "privacy" and how to be safe in restrooms. We also address keeping clothes on and keeping private areas private. Older students explore peer pressure; learn ways to speak up to bullying behaviors; and learn to report when something is not ok. They also practice saying no to the "bad ideas" that others think will be fun.

Children need to be able to voice their preferences with adults also. I give students the opportunity to say "no" to me during our lessons. When asking a child to help me model an example for the class that will involve me touching them, I tell them what is involved and ask their permission to move forward. I've loved seeing that students will sometimes say no and refuse to participate. That gives me the opportunity to value their voice and it sets the tone for that ownership of their bodies. It also helps model to the entire class that we can speak up for ourselves. As a parent, you can give your children those opportunities as well. Asking if they feel like giving a hug or if they would like to sit close or in your lap allows them to think about what they really do want. You can also "pretend" the scenario so they actually practice saying "no". We want our children to be equipped to set boundaries with adults they meet in sports, clubs and other activities away from home. Sometimes it helps to know they have our permission to do so.

To a safe and invigorating autumn,

**Mary Anne Threet, Counselor**

# A Note from Your School Nurse



## THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

How many hours of sleep do children need each night? The ideal amount of sleep for preschool-aged children is **10-12 hours per night**. When children don't get enough sleep, they can't concentrate on their schoolwork, they have trouble remembering things, they become irritable and fidgety, and they become vulnerable to colds and flu.

Here are some important things you can do to ensure that your child gets enough sleep every night of the week, including weekends:

- **Make time.** Don't allow their lives to get so full of sports, hobbies, and other activities that they can't get everything done without shorting themselves on sleep.
- **Set a regular time for bed each night and stick to it.** Saying "good night" at the same time each night will ensure a good night's sleep. The human body functions best on a regular timetable.
- **Be firm about your chosen bedtime.** Make sure that they understand that complaining about bedtime isn't going to get them anywhere. Alert your child a half hour before bedtime and then remind them again 10 minutes beforehand.
- **Empower your child.** Let him pick out his own pajamas to wear, stuffed animal to take to bed, etc.
- **Establish a relaxing bedtime routine,** such as a warm bath, playing soothing music, or reading a book. Reading is a great way to help children drift into sleep.
- **Beware of caffeine.** Avoid giving children anything with caffeine. Caffeine is a stimulant that can affect sleep.
- **Create a cozy sleep environment.** Keep your child's room cool, quiet, and dark (*a nightlight is OK*).

It's hard enough for children to get by with too little sleep for one or two nights, but it's even harder when sleep deprivation becomes a nightly habit - that's because the effect accumulates. Look at it this way, the more sleep your child gets, the more sleep you get!

# PTA Newsletter



A huge thank you to all of you who made **Field Day and the Fund Run** a success. It was windy and chilly that day, but the warmth of our volunteers' hearts made it a day to remember for all of our students. The numbers are still being tallied, so we don't have an official total of the money raised, but we hope to soon. We'll be collecting money through **Wednesday, October 10th**. Please return your folders with cash/checks or send your donation on line via Pay Pal to help us wrap up this great event. This Pay Pal option can be accessed on our PTA website. We plan to present the school with a check in November. The school will use it to buy technology to benefit our children.

Mark your calendars for some neat events coming up soon. The **Reflections Art Contest** will kick off soon. The theme this year is "The Magic of The Moment". Students will learn more in their classrooms in the next few weeks. **Chick-fil-A Week** begins October 15th and runs through the 19th. Proceeds from meals bought that week come back to our school. Look for the flyer coming home with your students or print one from the PTA website. Two other businesses also help with what we call Spiritraisers. It's great to dine with classmates and other Ranch Creek families. It's a win-win! You can head to **Little Caesar's** on Woodmen the first Tuesday of each month and **Five Guys Burgers and Fries** the second Wednesday of each month. The **Fall Dance** will be November 2nd. Our next **PTA general meeting** will be November 8th at 8:15am. Thanks for all of your support. Please bookmark our website <https://sites.google.com/site/ranchcreekelementarypta/home> or choose the PTA link from our school website. If you are not already on our email reminder list, send an email to: [ranchcreekpta@gmail.com](mailto:ranchcreekpta@gmail.com)