

# Hawk Headlines

## Estrella Vista STEM Academy



**Message from the principal:** March and April are very important as we head into our new state testing AzM2, formerly AzMerit. Students in grade 3-8 will take this important test on-line this year to assess their level of proficiency on the Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards. Please visit the AzM2 webpage by the Arizona Department of Education at [azm2portal.org/sample-tests.shtml](http://azm2portal.org/sample-tests.shtml). There you will find a link to resources for parents, students and sample tests. We are preparing our students to be successful on this new form of on-line testing. Below you will find some helpful tips to best prepare your child for success:

1. Get a good night's sleep- it is important to establish a set bedtime routine
2. Set a routine to complete homework- limit T.V. and video games
3. Get involved- ask your child's teacher what you can do at home to help your child at school
4. Regular and prompt attendance- make sure your child is prepared to learn each and every day
5. Talk to your child about a growth mindset and how to persevere when things may be challenging

Working together, I am confident that we will achieve greatness! It is important to praise your child, testing can cause some students stress. Talk to your child to make sure they feel prepared and confident to do their best!

Spring Break will be the week of March 9<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> and school resumes March 16<sup>th</sup>. Use this time to take your child to the library, visit a museum, and play board games. Enjoy quality time together!

Congratulations to our Employee of the Month, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade teacher, Ms. Vlieg. Ms. Vlieg supports our school in so many ways, from leading our MESA team afterschool, coaching our cheer girls, and supporting fellow teachers, Ms. Vlieg seems to do it all! What we love most about her is her positive spirit that is contagious for all around her. Congratulations Ms. Vlieg, we love you!

Please see our calendar for upcoming events- we would love to see more parents at our PTSA meetings, district events and family nights.

**Kids at Hope:** Here at Estrella Vista, our students are Kids at Hope Engineers! Career Day will be March 20<sup>th</sup>. We are currently looking for volunteers to come in and talk to our students about their career. We would love for our parents to be a part of that! Please contact your child's teacher or call the front office for more information.

**Safety:** Safety is our number one priority. Students are not to be on campus prior to 8:20 to ensure adult supervision is present. Thank you for following our parking lot procedures to help keep all of our students safe. Please drop off on the curb and be mindful of other drivers. Remember the parking lot is for parking only- it is not for student drop off. Our students are aware of this rule, please be a good role model for your child by following it at all times.

**STEM Update:** GREAT NEWS!! We were accepted into the NAU/Phoenix Suns Charities (PSC) STEM schools for the Future program. This grant supports a partnership with the NAU Center for Science Teaching and Learning to provide professional development, resources and support as we improve our engineering focus. The STEM leadership team and I are very excited for this new venture and will share information with you along the way.

**Tax Credit:** Remember to donate to our tax credit program. Married couples may donate up to \$400 and singles up to \$200. Any donation made serves as a dollar-for-dollar tax credit on filed state income taxes. Estrella Vista has a premier after school program. By making a donation, you help us maintain a competitive sports program along with clubs and organizations. Please donate in our office or go to our website for more information: [www.littletonaz.org](http://www.littletonaz.org). Thank you for your support!



## Kindergarten News

Watch out! A little leprechaun may come after your lucky charms! Kindergarten is proud of their gems and wish them all the best on their well-deserved upcoming Spring break!

Spring is starting to bloom and kindergarten is continuing to prepare for first grade. Kindergarten has many affirmations and great things going for them. We have discussed strategies and approaches that best fit the multiple needs of our learning and we are practicing how to use these skills independently.

English Language Arts: letter names and sounds, key details in a text, text features labels and diagrams, characters, setting, and events, blending nonsense words as well as reading sight words. We are progress monitoring for how many first sounds and sounds in a word students can recognize. At this point in the year, students should be able to name above 30 first sounds and segment sounds.

Mathematics: counting and labeling objects, number sentences, practice writing numbers correctly, finding missing numbers, what makes 7, 8, 9, and 10, number sentences with related facts for addition, knowing how to subtract, teen numbers

Science: Living and Nonliving things

Social Studies: US symbols and traditions

Writing: formation of letters, practice print from left to right, finger spacing and proper punctuation, brainstorming, draft models, narratives, drafting before writing, complete sentence with appropriate punctuation

Classroom teachers are often sending home reminders and what to expect next within our classrooms. Be sure to check those folders daily. We would like to thank parents for their continuous help with classroom supplies. Sharpened pencils, wipes and white board markers are always appreciated.

The kindergarten team would also like to thank you for your support with completing homework and helping your students practice reading fluency every day.

As always, thank you for all that you do and we appreciate your continual support,



## First Grade News

First, we want to thank parents for sending back homework every week and working with your child on those so important sight words.

English Language Arts: In this month, students are working diagraphs, ar, er, ir, ur and or. They are continuing to work on comprehension, answering questions using evidence from the story. Point of view is also a concept that they started to work on as well.

Mathematics: Students are working on place value. Counting by tens and ones with and without help. Knowing how many tens and ones are in any number up to 120.

Science/Social Studies: Students are working on animal classification. With Presidents' Day, students learned about the different presidents and some important things they did that affected the world today.

Writing: Students are continuing to write stories using the 5 W's (who, what, when, where and why). They are also working on writing reports on animals and countries they learn about.

Thank you parents again for everything you do at home to help your child succeed.

As always, thank you for all that you do and we appreciate your continual support,

The First Grade Team



## Second Grade News

We are gearing up and getting ready for our last quarter in second grade! Time seriously flies by, and we are so excited to continue learning as we close out our year.

In Math, we have wrapped up our units on addition and subtraction, and have been using what we have learned to count money, tell time, and measure different objects. Looking forward, we are going to be learning about data through charts and graphs, and introducing geometry and fractions.

In reading, we are going to be introducing different texts and reviewing all of the strategies we have learned throughout the year, including compare and contrast, point of view, and asking and answering who, what, when, where, and why comprehension questions.

We will also be tackling economics and space in science and social students. We are excited to learn about the world and the way things work!

As always, make sure to read every single night with your student, and tell them how proud you are of them! I know we are all so proud of them, and you should be too!



## Third Grade News

We are wrapping up the third quarter of the school year, what a busy time it has been! As we approach the AzM2 testing we are learning new standards while spiral reviewing previous standards.

In Math for third quarter, students were introduced to fractions. They learned how to write fractions including a numerator and a denominator. They learned how to represent fractions using equal parts of a whole and parts of a set. They learned how to represent fractions on a number line. Students are working on identifying equivalent fractions using a variety of strategies. Please continue to practice basic math skills at home every night as they are crucial.

Students are strengthening their writing skills! They are using writing templates to help with typing a complete paragraph including a main idea and supporting details. Students are using text evidence to help them expand on their writing. Students are also expanding their vocabulary with prefixes and suffixes.

In reading students are digging deep into stories to be able to answer several types of questions. Students are using Wonders and Achieve3000 to improve their reading skills. Students are identifying the main idea and supporting details through their short reads. Students are making connections and making inferences using text clues and their prior knowledge. Reading nightly with your child is critical. Please continue to support your child in reading by reading with them every night and by asking them the Five W comprehension questions (who, what, where, when, why and how).

Thank you for your continued support.



## Fourth Grade News

**Math:** This has been an exciting quarter of teaching and learning. Students have been working hard at showing models of fractions and understanding the various types of fractions. Students have begun to show mastery with adding fractions, subtracting fractions, and simplifying fractions. We are beginning to dive into more complex versions of fractions such as regrouping mixed number fractions and multiplying fractions.

**Science:** Our focus is on the Solar System and the multiple aspects that fall into that category. One class is working on showing a representation of the Earth's atmosphere and the impact each layer has on protecting our Earth. Students are taking a hands on approach by showcasing their learning through models, posters, and projects.

**Social Studies:** Students are researching and learning more about the state we live in, Arizona. They are acquiring more knowledge on the animals and habitats that are a part of Arizona and the numerous tribes across the state.

**Language Arts:** This quarter is all about comprehension. Students work hard at asking clarifying questions and breaking apart a text or passage. We are focusing on restating the prompt and providing relevant evidence to support a response as well. Our focus is to break down test questions and dive into what the question is asking.

We are excited to showcase student learning through powerful student-led conference next week



## **Fifth Grade News**

5<sup>th</sup> grade is ready for benchmark testing this week! We have been working hard to add, subtract, and multiply fractions, understand and identify the theme of fictional text and to know how to use the author's point of view to influence a story's outcome and its theme. We are also very excited about our next field trip scheduled for April to Valley Youth Theater. Never a dull moment in 5<sup>th</sup> grade!



## **Sixth Grade News**

As 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter is coming to an end and AzM2 testing is quickly approaching, students are doing their best to be prepared for these tests. Currently students are learning different test taking and studying strategies to help them feel more prepared. Also, in Social Studies the students are learning about Sparta and Athens, which they are enjoying tremendously! The students will be holding a debate in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and will be pretending that they lived during the Spartan and Athens and which side they would have wanted to be on. We are so excited to see their responses to one another!



## **Seventh Grade News**

In math class we have been working hard to identify unit rates and to use proportions to help us identify missing values. We are working towards finding constants of proportionality in order to help us read and understand graphed lines. After students show a mastery on this concept we will be moving on towards our statistics unit where we will be identifying what ways we can get samples that will help us work more efficiently.

During the last few weeks, we have been looking at historical figures like Cesar Chavez and Harriet Tubman. We have been reading informational text, diving deeper into historical context, and comparing and contrasting the impacts these historical figures have had. This week, we are looking at how poetry plays a role in these historical moments. We are going to read a poem about the Statue of Liberty and relate that back to our previous learning.

In Science we have started our Space Science Unit (Astronomy). Students began by researching and writing about the "Moon Hoax." Next as an introduction to modern space travel we viewed a movie about the Women mathematicians who made space exploration possible. Beginning this week we will explore the early history of Astronomy and how the early Astronomers used the stars to discover the universe.

Social Studies has been focusing on the end of World War 1 and how that may lead to future world problems. Before entering our World War 1 unit we will explore how the Great Depression was caused and the effects it had on daily life. Through our exploration we will compare policies during the depression era to more recent examples.



## **Eighth Grade News**

In science students have begun their Chemistry unit. We are learning about the structure of matter and how matter can undergo changes through chemical reactions. In this hands-on unit students will understand the structure of elements, compounds, and molecules. Students will also understand the difference between physical and chemical changes, how to balance chemical equations, and the law of conservation of mass.

In English language arts... students are currently solidifying their understanding on plot, story structure, and the effectiveness of character-driven stories versus plot-driven stories. Additionally, they are learning how all of these story elements work together in order to weave new narratives of varying purposes.

In the upcoming 4th quarter, social studies students will be learning how to be financially literate individuals who understand how to manage income, spending, and investment. Students will learn about interest rates, debt, credit, and budgeting.

In math... Students are solving systems of equations using substitution.



## **Music News**

In Music, we are learning about two exciting musicians. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is incredibly popular and wrote more music than almost any other composer. Charles Strouse is a Broadway legend who created the musicals “Annie” and “Bye Bye Birdie.” Students have had the opportunity to learn about these famous musician’s lives and explore their music. Additionally, students have been learning about rhyming words and rhythm patterns using rhythm sticks.

In Middle School, students are exploring computer coding to learn about the connections between music and STEM.



## **Technology News**

Students of all grade levels complete lessons involving the use of computers. These lessons include the proper etiquette of internet and safety use. The lower elementary grades learn how to use the basics, such as the “mouse”, dragging, keyboard use, etc. Upper elementary grades do the same to include the creating of Google sheets, slides and docs. Students in grades k-6 are on a 4 week rotation all year. Students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade are on a quarter rotation. The majority of the lessons are 10-15 minutes. Some quizzes or projects for the upper grades can take up to 45 minutes to complete. Students should be able to complete 2-3 lessons or one quiz/project per day, depending on their program. Students work at their own pace, however, if they fall behind, their grade does decrease. I would like to stress the need for them to have their own earbuds or headphones. They are needed for many of these programs and for health reasons, they really should bring and use only their own.



## Physical Education News

K – 2nd are working on their underhand throwing skills through a variety of games and practices.

4th & 5th are having a class tournament to see who is the best at a spatial awareness game named “Waiver Wars.” Students have made their own teams, named them, and have worked out strategies together to help them win.

6th has been practicing their pickleball skills for a skills assessment coming at the end of the week. Once they have finished, they will be learning the basic form for a golf swing.

7th and 8th just finished up their own pickleball unit where they took a practical exam in the end. They are now learning the history and basic rules for soccer. Soon, they will be forming teams and competing against each other in a small season.



## Art News

Kinder began the new year by drawing and then coloring with texture, the now endangered Koala from Australia. We learned about their habitat, what they eat and how they care for their young. These are coming out really nice! They then move onto creating a torn paper owl after reading OWL MOON by Jane Yolen. They also learned all about their diet and how if you are really quiet, you may see one at night! They will round off their visit to art with a tissue paper masterpiece yet to be determined!

1st and 2nd graders looked at the art of Edvard Munch, then did their own self-portrait, and then, used straws to blow their hair back for that surprised look! They then went on to create a snowy scene of Cardinals among Birch trees. They will then move onto the story of Elmer to create our own using cut tissue paper for the Elephant.

3rd and 4th graders worked on a half self-portrait with their name in Block letters on the other half. We used a mixture of oils, markers, and crayons. Next, they will be creating a Truffula Tree forest from the Lorax with oils and watercolor. If we have time, we will work on some op art magic.

5th and 6th graders began the new year with a self-portrait elongated, like the art of Amadeo Modigliani. They really got a kick out of elongating their necks and faces and most felt quite proud of their art! Next, they began looking at TUNICS of the Native Americans. We read the story ANCIENT THUNDER by Leo Yerxa. They are now using brown butcher paper to design their own version of an authentic leather tunic. If there is time, we will be doing some cool OP art to round out the quarter.

7th and 8th graders began the new year with giant self-portrait like drawings of themselves, that have been abstracted, like the work of Sandra Silbersweig who took her inspiration from Picasso. The 7th graders are using oils, chalk pastel, metallic markers and metallic colored pencils for these masterpieces. The 8th graders are using watercolors for theirs. I cannot wait to find out which I adore more! Next, they will be creating cut paper molas, like those of the matriarchal society of the KUNA INDIANS of Panama and Colombia and the hundreds of tiny islands in the Central American region. With parent permission, some will do a style using Exacto knives, and the others will use scissors creating a different style of mola. Paper Quilling is also on the

agenda for this paper heavy quarter. This is the art of winding paper around a tool, and pinching and bending the spiral to create shapes to fill in a chosen themed picture. I am excited to see these come to life!



## STEM News

K - 4th Grades: Students will be learning Design thinking process & solve problems. Students are also learning and exploring different advance careers in technology sector including job responsibilities and education required for those careers. Finding out which colleges and Universities provide course for those careers.

5 – 8<sup>th</sup> Grades: Students are learning Career of a Rocket engineer & designers. Students will be building “Solar Panel Cars” and learn about renewable energy.



## Band News

In 5<sup>th</sup> grade band, we are working on ensemble skills, such as blend and balance. We are also learning new notes, slurs, and ties.

In 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade band, we are working on 8<sup>th</sup> notes and dotted rhythms.



## Upcoming Events

03/06: First Friday Assembly, West Field, 8:45 AM

03/09-03/13: Spring Break, No School

03/19: Honor Roll Assemblies, Cafeteria, various times

Grades 3 and 4- 8:50-9:20 am

Grades 5 and 6- 9:20-9:50 am

Grades 7 and 8- 9:50-10:20 am

Grades 1 and 2- 2:15-2:45 pm

Kinder- 2:45-3:15 pm

03/20: KAH Career Day, School Wide, 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM

03/24: PTSA Meeting, Library, 5:30 PM

AIMS Science Testing – 8<sup>th</sup> grade

03/25: PTSA Dollar Dress Down Day, All classes

Grilling with the Principal Day, West exit of Cafeteria, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

03/26: Spring Picture Day, All grade levels, Free Dress for students

AIMS Science Testing – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

03/27: Littleton ESD Math Challenge, ULC North & South Auditoriums, 9:25 AM to 11:30 AM

STUCO Sponsored Spring Fling Dance, 6<sup>th</sup> thru 8<sup>th</sup> grades, 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

03/31: AzM2 Writing test, grades 3 thru 8