



Patriot Post



Notes from the Principal's desk

Volume 5, Issue 4
December 2012—January 2013

Students need daily math and reading practice

It is hard to believe December is already here! I certainly enjoy our wonderful school community and am thankful for the many blessings each day in this career. This is a combined newsletter for December and January since December is a short month. If additional items need to be sent home, I will get them to you through One Call.

I understand that December is a busy month, especially if you are traveling. Unfortunately, student achievement may drop during this month if students are taken out of school early and miss instructional time. You are highly encouraged to keep your children in school until the break begins on Dec. 19 and return on Jan. 2. I also want to encourage you to have your children read and work on math facts during break. Although they will be out of their normal routine, spending time reading and learning math facts will pay dividends for them. My wife and I used to do flashcards with our children while traveling to see family. We also asked family to read a bedtime story to the children. Both the family members and our kids loved it!

Please review the district calendar regarding holidays and the next Fort Bragg Continuous School Improvement (CSI) day on Jan 18. On CSI days, our staff reviews student achievement data and receives staff development related to our goals. CSI days allow staff to improve their instructional strategies and

focus on areas of improvement for the school.

I want to thank our Parent Teacher Association (PTA) for all of its efforts this year. The PTA recently helped with school pictures and Turkey Bingo. The PTA sells spirit wear, plans fun Fridays, book fairs, and provides funds for several other events. The Gordon PTA Board puts in many hours to make Gordon a better place and is in need of more volunteers. Many of the same people help with every activity and could use additional assistance. If you are interested in volunteering with the PTA, please contact the school at 907-1300.



Joel Grim

In our last newsletter, I requested that families not check students out after 2 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Also, students should not be checked out after 1 p.m. on Wednesday. This is so teachers are able to properly review concepts at the end of the day. Also, this reduces transition issues as classes are moving to the dismissal areas. I want to report that your assistance in this area has greatly improved our dismissal routines. A big thank you to our parents for your help!

Enjoy the holidays!

Gordon Elementary School/DoDEA MISSION: Educate, Engage, and Empower Each Student to Succeed in a Dynamic World.

Goal 1: By June 2013, all students will improve their reading comprehension skills by utilizing vocabulary, formulating questions, drawing conclusions, summarizing/retelling, and making predictions. Progress will be measured through the use of system-wide and local assessments.

Goal 2: By June 2013, all students will improve math skills, with an emphasis on Math Communication and Number/Number Relations. Progress will be measured through the use of system-wide and local assessments.

Counselors' Corner

Be Here: Attendance policy promotes student success

The policy is based on the principles that regular school attendance promotes higher levels of student achievement, school-connectedness, and readiness for college and careers.

Did you know? Excessive absences in kindergarten are associated with lower academic performance in first grade and predict low levels of educational achievement at the end of fifth grade.

Help your child get into the habit and learn the value of regular routines.

Teach your children that attending school is required unless they are truly sick.

Build relationships with other families so you can help each other



in times of transportation challenges.

Identify school activities like art, drama, music, etc. that can help motivate your children's interest in school and learning so that they want to attend.

Don't forget hats, gloves, and warm coats – layer clothing for

changes in temperature experienced throughout the school day.

Mark your calendars: March 11-15 for Terra Nova Standardized Testing for Grades 3 and 4.

Please do not schedule morning appointments or family vacations during this time.

By Mona Hegarty, School Counselor

Quarter-day attendance procedures track student absences

It is DoDEA policy that regular school attendance correlates directly with success in academic work, improves social interaction with adults and peers, provides opportunities for important communication between teachers and students, and provides a cumulative effect of establishing life-long positive habits that are critical for developing career readiness skills and success in college. Read more at <http://www.dodea.edu/attendance/upload/AttendancePolicy.pdf>

Attendance Calculation

Daily student attendance is identified based upon a quarter-of-the-school-day formula. Students will be identified present or absent, based upon the following criteria:

- Absent up to 25 percent of the school day = absent one fourth of the school day
- Absent between 26 to 50 percent of the school day = absent one half of the school day
- Absent between 51 to 75 percent of the school day = absent three fourths of the school day
- Absent between 76 to 100 percent of the school day = absent full-day



Home reading for the holidays and all year long



Every school day in America, 3,000 students drop out—the majority of them are poor readers. Students with below grade level reading skills are twice as likely to drop out of school as those who can read on or above grade level.

Source: Adolescent Literacy: A National Reading Crisis

Wide and frequent reading of trade books increases a student’s reading achievement.

Source: Scholastic: Classroom Libraries Work!

Research has found a relationship between the amount of time that children read for fun and their own reading achievement.

Source: Handbook of Research on Teaching the English Language Arts

Students need to read or be read to every day at home

Help your children meet their monthly Home Reading goals and receive monthly Home Reading incentives. Students who met their goal in October received a small toy and a coupon for a free personal pan pizza at Pizza Hut! For more information, speak with your child’s teacher or call Ms. Festa, Home Reading Program coordinator, at (910) 907-1300.

By Laura Festa, Home Reading Program Coordinator



Congratulations to the following classes for having 100 percent participation in October:

PreK

Harrison AM
Harrison PM
Jillard AM

Kindergarten

Grant
Baker
Maull
Merritt
Upton

Congratulations to the following classes for having 80% or higher participation in October:

1st Grade

Clark

2nd Grade

Colley

3rd Grade

Caruso
DeBruhl
Munsell
Schmotzer

4th Grade

Greene



There’s no limit to what you can do when you read.



Seasons Readings



Gordon Elementary School Library and Information Center



It's winter, time for frosty breath, knitted hats with pom-poms, warm mittens, and heavy insulated coats to wear in the blustery snow. Despite its bone chilling temperatures and days of doldrums, the winter months can conjure up fun. Whether it's sipping marshmallow laden hot chocolate after sledding or celebrating one of the many cultural holidays, there are a host of books that are just right for the season. The Gordon School Library and Information Center



(SLIC) has over 200 titles in its collection dealing with winter and the role it plays in such literary genres from

fictional holiday narratives to biographies, sports to fantasy, and from poems to cookbooks.

Here are a list of titles that are sure to warm young minds:

PreK-2

The First Day of Winter by Denise Fleming is a rhythmic, cumulative picture book about a snowman who comes alive as a child builds him with the help of friends. Another winter favorite is the classic *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats. This simple picture book is the winner of the 1963 Caldecott Medal. It tells the story of a young boy as he explores his snow covered city. A list of other recommended books for children 0-9 can be found at [Reading Rockets](#).

Grades 2-4

Horrible Harry and the Holiday by Suzy Kline tells the story of a third grader learning about the different ways people celebrate which makes everyone feel quite festive, well everyone except Harry. Something is definitely bothering him. What could it be? Another classic that's sure to please is *Snowflake Bentley* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin. This book is filled with outstanding illustrations. Wilson Bentley absolutely loves the snow so much that he wanted to be a snowflake as a child. He is determined to follow his dream of capturing the beauty of a snowflake, despite the ridicule he receives from his neighbors. For more titles follow the link to [Cold-Weather Chapter Books](#).

The information center has certainly been a buzz of activity. During the first quarter Gordon Patriots have checked-out 7,572 books. Here are our top 5 picks of the quarter.

Everybody Fiction (Picture)

1. *I Will Surprise my Friend* by Mo Willems
2. *Fly Guy vs. the Flyswatter!* by Ted Arnold
3. *I Spy Fly Guy* by Ted Arnold
4. *I Broke my Trunk!* by Mo Willems
5. *Buzz Boy and Fly Guy* by Ted Arnold

Fiction

1. *Captain Underpants and the Big, Bad Battle of the Bionic Booger Boy* by Dav Pilkey
2. *Happy Birthday Bad Kitty* by Nick Bruel
3. *Bad Kitty meets the Baby* by Nick Bruel
4. *Captain Underpants and the Wrath of the Wicked Wedgie Woman* by Dav Pilkey
5. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules* by Jeff Kinney



Check it Out

Did you know that your student has access to an online encyclopedia and databases at home via link on the cyber library? What are databases? Databases are programs that hold large amounts of information, usually in the form of short articles from magazines,

journals, and newspapers. This is an excellent resource tool when students are unable to locate information in books. Gordon subscribes to Encyclopedia Britannica Online, KidsInfobits, and CultureGrams. Username and passwords can be obtained through the school librarian.

Special Note

Recently, there have been a number of books returned to the information center sticky, wet and moldy, crayon or pencil scribbling, and pet marks. Please encourage your child to use proper book care when it comes to library books. Damaged books not only prevent others from reading them, it also decreases our school's resources. Here are a few simple rules to help keep books damage free.



Handle books with clean hands

- *Don't leave books outside
- *Keep away from food and drink
- *Don't give books to baby brother/sister or pets
- *Use a bookmark
- *Handle pages with care
- *Check book bag for spills
- *Keep in safe place

December

CALENDAR CONNECTIONS

Dear Families,

Celebrate music in your homes by posting the December calendar in a prominent place and using the suggestions below to add a bit of music fun to your month. Kids, if you know the answer to the Trivia Tuesday questions, be sure to let your music teacher know!

- 1 Learn about Hanukkah traditions and music by visiting www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/354748/jewish/Chanukah.htm.
- 3 Music Monday | *The Nutcracker Ballet* is based on an adapted story by Alexander Dumas. The original story was not suitable for kids.
- 4 Trivia Tuesday | This country pop singer/songwriter was born December 13, 1989.
- 5 Website Wednesday | Read about and listen to the story of *The Nutcracker* at <http://holidays.kaboose.com/christmas/nutcracker-story-music.html>.
- 7 Family Friday | Play your favorite Christmas songs and make up your own dances. Keep changing the songs to see how your movements change from one style to another. Share a few good laughs.
- 10 Music Monday | In 1892, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky composed a ballet based on Dumas's work.
- 11 Trivia Tuesday | This musician sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" at a Philadelphia 76ers basketball game at the age of eleven.
- 12 Website Wednesday | Plan a *Nutcracker* party for this Friday; visit www.llemonade.com/nutcracker for ideas.
- 13 Violin Day | Go to www.violinstudent.com/gamechooser to play some violin games.
- 14 Family Friday | Take your ideas from Website Wednesday and throw a *Nutcracker* party; include watching *The Nutcracker Ballet*.
- 15 The Bill of Rights was passed in 1791 | Go to www.congressforkids.net/games/billofrights/2_billofrights.htm to learn more.
- 16 Ludwig van Beethoven's birthday | Go to www.dassicsforkids.com/shows/showview.asp?id=20 to learn more.
- 17 Music Monday | The first performance of *The Nutcracker* took place in Russia in 1892.
- 18 Trivia Tuesday | This musician began writing her own songs and learning to play guitar when she was twelve years old.
- 19 Website Wednesday | Visit www.wartgames.com/themes/music/nutcracker.html for more info and fun with *The Nutcracker*.
- 21 Family Friday | Go caroling around your neighborhood.
- 22 Giacomo Puccini's birthday (1858) | Go to www.dassicsforkids.com/composers/bio.asp?id=40 to learn more.
- 24 Music Monday | *The Nutcracker Ballet* tells the story of a girl named Clara who receives a nutcracker doll from her godfather on Christmas. She dreams of her adventures in the Kingdom of Sweets.
- 25 Trivia Tuesday | Her hit songs include "Teardrops on my Guitar," "Love Story," and "You Belong to Me."
- 25 Christmas Day | Go to www.allthingschristmas.com/northpole.html to learn more about this celebration, its traditions and its music.
- 26 Website Wednesday | Learn about Kwanzaa, and explore the music and heritage of the African American culture at www.activityvillage.co.uk/kwanzaa_for_kids.htm.
- 27 National Fruitcake Day | See how many songs you can find with the word "fruitcake" in them.
- 28 Family Friday | Spread the joy of music during the holiday season. Lead sing-alongs as you visit different people over the holidays.
- 31 Music Monday | *The Nutcracker Ballet* is performed worldwide during the holiday season.



PTA news & events

The PTA would like to thank all the families that participated in Fun Fridays and of course Turkey Bingo! Thanks to the generous donation of turkeys from House of Raeford. Twelve families won a turkey for their Thanksgiving dinner and everyone had a blast!

The PTA accepts memberships and background checks all year long. If you have been thinking about it or just moved here, come on in to the office and ask for a form. Volunteers must have background check to participate in any function at the school.

A special thank you from us to all of our parent volunteers that help us organize these events, we could not do it without you! We would also like to thank Kelly Walker for her work on the school's Boxtop events.

Your PTA is still in need of a Spirit Wear/Fun Friday coordinator, so please see the Gordon office or PTA members for details.

We would like to give a warm welcome to our newest board member. The board elected Mary Brown as the PTA secretary.

The PTA board would like to thank the Maughn family for the beautiful lockbox located outside the school office.

Gordon Patriot T-shirts, long-sleeve shirts, and sweatshirts are always available to order. If you need a special size just ask!

DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Dec. 4, 2012**
PTA monthly meeting @ 1:45 p.m.
- **Jan. 4, 2013**
Fun Friday. Wear your Gordon shirt and buy a snack to support your school!
- **Jan. 8, 2013**
PTA monthly meeting @ 1:45 p.m.
- **Jan. 17, 2013**
Back to school dance. Put on those dancing shoes kids!

School Snapshots



Fire Safety Lessons

Students visit the Fort Bragg Fire and Emergency Services Safety House and learn how to exit a smoke filled room.



Families Making the Connection

Cutting Back on Sweet Treats

Cutting back on added sugars is important for everyone. Added sugars usually mean added calories and fewer nutrients. Even small steps toward lowering your family's sugar intake counts! Try some of these ideas:

Serve small portions. Show kids that a small amount of treats can go a long way. Use smaller bowls and plates for these foods. Have them share a candy bar or split a cupcake.

Sip smarter. Offer water, fat free milk or 100% juice instead of soda and other sweet drinks.

Shop smart. Play detective in the cereal aisle. Teach kids how to find and compare the amount of sugar in cereals they like. Have them select the one with the lower amount of sugar. When checking out, use a candy free checkout lane, if available. This helps avoid temptation.

Make fruit the everyday dessert. Serve fruit salad, baked apples or frozen 100% juice bars.

Make food fun. Sugary foods are marketed as "fun foods". Make eating nutritious foods fun, too. For example, get creative by preparing your own snack mixes. Try whole grain cereal, dried fruit and unsalted nuts or seeds.

Make treats "treats". Make them a sometimes food rather than an everyday food. Focus more on non-food treats as rewards. Kind words, hugs and small items, like stickers, can go a long way!

December

- Pear Month
- Hand Washing Week (2nd-8th)
- Cocoa Day (12th)

Fit Foundations

Sandi Coast Chili Mole

Makes 6 servings

Serving size: 2/3 cup chili and 1 ounce chips

Ingredients

- 2 cups canned diced tomatoes
- 1 cup canned pureed pumpkin
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup sliced onion
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 2 teaspoons ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 3 cups canned red beans, drained
- 6 ounces reduced fat or baked tortilla chips

Directions

1. In a large stock pot, combine all ingredients except for the beans and chips. Mix well.
2. Bring mixture to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium low. Allow mixture to simmer for about 12 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add beans to mixture and mix well. Cook chili for about 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Place 1 ounce of tortilla chips (about 10 chips) in each of 6 bowls.
5. Ladle chili over chips and serve.



Supported by the National Childhood Lead Poisoning Program, Division of Public Health, 1625 Department of Health and Human Services Building, 915 North First Street, San Diego, CA 92101. For more information, visit www.healthandhumanresources.org.
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 www.healthandhumanresources.org

Source: www.choosemyplate.gov, www.choosemyplatechallenge.com



Menus for December 2012

FORT BRAGG Schools



Monday, December 3	Tuesday, December 4	Wednesday, December 5	Thursday, December 6	Friday, December 7
Breakfast Pizza Or Cheerios Cereal Apple Wedges or Orange Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Chicken Sandwich Or Baked Potato w/ Meat and Cheese w/ Roll CHOOSE TWO Steamed Broccoli Garden Peas Orange Wedges Lettuce w/ Pickle Chips CHOICE OF COLD MILK	Scramble Eggs w/ Grib Or Toasty O's Cereal Orange Wedges or Apple Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Spaghetti w/ French Bread Or Cheeseburger CHOOSE TWO Green Beans Glazed Carrots Apple Slices Garden Salad CHOICE OF COLD MILK	Yogurt w/ Granola Or Cinnamon Toasted Cereal Apple Wedges or Apple Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Cheese Pizza Or Sloppy Joe CHOOSE TWO Steamed Corn Pinto Beans Romaine Lettuce w/ Cherry Tomatoes Fresh Grapes CHOICE OF COLD MILK	Pancake 'N' Sausage Or Cheerios Cereal Orange Wedges or Apple Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Bar-B-Que Chicken w/ Roll Or Hotdog CHOOSE TWO Baked Potato Fluff Baked Beans Red Jell-O w/ Mixed Fruit Apple & Orange Wedges CHOICE OF COLD MILK	Grilled Cheese Sandwich Or Toasty O's Cereal Orange Wedges or Apple Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Fish Sticks w/ Cornbread Or Ham & Cheese Sandwich CHOOSE TWO Oven Baked Fries Green Beans Sliced Peaches Plums CHOICE OF COLD MILK
Monday, December 10	Tuesday, December 11	Wednesday, December 12	Thursday, December 13	Friday, December 14
Whole Grain Croissant Or Cinnamon Toasted Cereal Orange Wedges or Apple Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Chicken Tenders w/ Roll Or Turkey Deli w/ Cheese Sandwich CHOOSE TWO Steamed Corn Black Eyed Peas Romaine Lettuce w/ Pickle Chips Orange Wedges CHOICE OF COLD MILK	Ham Biscuit w/ Oatmeal Or Cheerios Cereal Orange Juice or Applesauce Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Turkey Pasty w/ Roll Or Cheeseburger CHOOSE TWO Green Beans Glazed Sweet Potato Apple Slices Sliced Peaches CHOICE OF COLD MILK	Scramble Eggs w/ Grib Or Toasty O's Cereal Sliced Peaches or Grape Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Pepperoni Pizza Or Chicken Sandwich CHOOSE TWO Black Eyed Peas Glazed Carrots Navel Oranges Garden Salad CHOICE OF COLD MILK	Pancake 'N' Sausage Or Cheerios Cereal Orange Juice or Apple Slices Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Turkey Dressing Supreme w/ Roll Or Corn Dog CHOOSE TWO Sweet Potato Fluff Diced Collard Greens Red Jell-O w/ Peas Apple Wedges CHOICE OF COLD MILK	Breakfast Pizza Or Cinnamon Toasted Cereal Orange Wedges or Apple Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Fish Sticks w/ Cornbread Or Hotdog CHOOSE TWO Oven Baked Fries Baked Beans Orange Wedges Cole Slaw CHOICE OF COLD MILK
Monday, December 17	Tuesday, December 18	Wednesday, December 19	Thursday, December 20	Friday, December 21
Whole Grain Croissant Or Cheerios Cereal Apple Wedges or Orange Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Chicken Sandwich Or Sloppy Joe on School Made Roll CHOOSE TWO Green Beans Oven Baked Fries Orange Wedges Romaine Lettuce w/ Sliced Tomatoes CHOICE OF COLD MILK	Pancake 'N' Sausage Or Cinnamon Toasted Cereal Orange Wedges or Apple Juice Toast w/ (Jelly) CHOICE OF COLD MILK LUNCH Cheese Pizza Or Manager's Choice CHOOSE TWO Pinto Beans Steamed Corn Garden Salad Apple Wedges CHOICE OF COLD MILK	 WINTER	 BREAK	 BEGINS



FROM THE **LUNCH BUNCH CREW**

TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY WE

WISH YOU **HAPPY HOLIDAYS**



Featured recipe adapted from Myron B. Green Elementary School (San Diego, California)

Families Eating Smart and Moving More

Research points to seven key behaviors that can help children, youth and adults eat healthier and be more active:

- Prepare and eat more meals at home.
- Tame the tube.
- Choose to move more every day.
- Right-size your portions.
- Re-think your drink.
- Enjoy more fruits and vegetables.
- Breastfeed your baby.

By promoting good nutrition in the places where our children eat - at home and at school - we can have a greater impact on their health. Encourage your child's healthy eating habits by supporting school meals!

