

Spectrum Academy Elementary

January 2020

Principal's Message

Welcome to 2020! We are very excited to be entering the new year and are looking forward to all it brings. December was full of learning, fun and vacation time. Santa came to visit, and we had an amazing choir bell assembly that mesmerized our students.

We completed our DIBELS middle of the year reading assessments and are preparing for our mClass math assessments beginning Monday, January 13th. Please remember to send your students to school with plenty of sleep and full bellies to be ready to show their learning progress!

As January moves forward, please remember to send your child in layers. We go outside as often as the weather and air permits, even if it is snowing.

Finally remember to look at the calendar for upcoming teacher workdays and holidays; we do have a few student days off coming up.

May the new year be filled with blessings and happiness!

Jana Gold, MS
Elementary Principal



Upcoming Events

January

- 1-3 – Winter Break (no school)
- 10 – Lockdown drill
- 14 – End of Term 2
- 17 – No school (Teacher work day)
- 20 – MLK day NO SCHOOL

February

- 4 – 100th day of school celebration
- 7 – No school (Teacher work day)
- 14 – Valentine's Day
- 17 – President's Day (regular bell schedule)
- 19-20 – Parent Teacher Conferences (early release)

December Happenings



Winter Program Our students spent weeks preparing for our winter program, and it was delightful. Thank you for coming and supporting the students!



Santa Visit That jolly old elf came to visit, bringing smiles and candy canes. He visited each class and spent a few moments with each child.



Polar Express day The last day before break was full of fun with class parties, treats, and many classes watched the Polar Express. Students and staff alike reveled in wearing pajamas to school.

Related Services

Occupational Therapy

Singing the Blues Away Christmas is over, the last decorations are put away, and the sugar highs have left you in the dumps. What can we do to make it through the January doldrums? Here are a few ideas to help you and your children keep a smile on your face during the month of January.

Let There Be Light Research has shown that natural light improves sleep and wards off seasonal depression. In fact, lack of light can negatively affect the body's biological rhythms. To add light to your home, open your blinds and drapes, add mirrors which reflect light around a room, increase the wattage of the light bulbs in your home, rearrange rooms so you can spend more time near a window can provide that extra bit of sunshine to brighten up your mood-literally.

Get Exercise That Feels More Like FUN There are numerous studies touting the benefits of physical exercise. Bundle up and go for a walk with your child or the whole family. This could provide valuable time to talk as you move without making it feel like work. While walking, you could play "I Spy", or look for things you are thankful for, or walk to the store. When it snows, go out and make that snow angel or build a snowman with your children in the backyard. Now that's great exercise! Getting outside isn't easy when it's cold, but it has great benefits. It can reduce stress and symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), and improve focus.

Turn on the Tunes Studies have shown that uplifting, cheery **music** can elevate your **mood** by lowering your levels of stress-related hormones. It can also improve blood flow and even ease pain. My family loves to turn on the music and dance around the house. You could play musical chairs together, Ask your child to teach you a hip-hop move and dance together to their favorite song. Music could be used at bedtime or while completing chores. Do be discerning about your choice of music. I suggest choosing songs with uplifting lyrics. Memorize the words to a happy song and sing it when you are feeling sad.

Plan a Vacation or a Staycation Maybe you will go on that vacation, but maybe not. The truth is, it doesn't necessarily matter. Research shows that just planning a vacation can increase overall happiness. Get out the maps, let your children plan their dream trip when they say "I'm bored" or "There's nothing to do". They will be learning and honing their executive functioning skills without even realizing it. It wouldn't hurt to start putting money into a jar toward making that fun staycation or dream vacation come true.

Serve Others It's no secret that handing out compliments, picking a card off the angel tree, or dishing out food at a local soup kitchen can increase life satisfaction and improve mental health. This year I was in New Zealand when two mosques were attacked by a gunman. A simple act of kindness shown there was memorable for me. Several women were on the sidewalk near the blocks long memorial holding signs that said, "Free Hugs". I got one of those heartwarming hugs. Service doesn't need to be grandiose. A smile, a hug, a word of encouragement to someone else can lift your own spirits. Be an example and your kids will pick up on your enthusiasm for giving service to others, a true blues buster!

Welcome New Staff

Cristina Carreon joins us as a Speech-Language Technician, Stephanie Brown as a Kindergarten teacher, and Michelle Rice as a 3rd grade Para educator. Scott Hunter and Kathie Phillips will share duties as 2nd grade teachers and instructional coaches. If you interact with them please welcome them to Spectrum!

Related Services

Mental Health

Anxiety Awareness

Did you know that anxiety is the most common mental illness in the United States? Anxiety not only affects adults, but adolescents and children as well. Data from the National Comorbidity Survey Adolescent Supplement found an estimated 31.9% of adolescents and 1 in 8 children had an anxiety disorder. Also, according to adaa.org, 40% of young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder had clinically elevated levels of anxiety or at least one anxiety disorder.

Anxiety is a normal part of life and can be helpful. Anxiety about an upcoming project can motivate a student to begin the assignment and do their best work in order to complete the project on time and earn a high grade. If you are walking down the sidewalk and you see a large dog angrily barking in someone's yard, feeling anxious about the dog would prompt you avoid the dog, which may save you from getting bit. Anxiety becomes a problem when it interferes with our ability to function in our normal, everyday activities.

Anxiety often looks different in children than adults. Symptoms of anxiety in children may include: restlessness, fatigue, trouble concentrating, irritability, muscle tension, and trouble sleeping. Children may also experience more somatic or physical symptoms such as stomach aches, headaches, and muscle aches.

The Cycle of Anxiety. Feeling anxious can lead an individual to avoid certain situations that have caused anxiety in the past. This leads to temporary relief from the anxiety and reinforces avoidance, which leads to long term anxiety growth. For example, if a student feels anxious and overwhelmed about a school project they may avoid starting the project, providing temporary relief. When they think about the project again, they will remember feeling relieved when they avoided the project and want to avoid again. As the project due date approaches, long term anxiety will increase because they haven't started the project yet and they may feel more stressed and worried about completing the project on time.

What to do? The good news is that anxiety is treatable! Counseling and medication have been found to be effective treatments. A pediatrician or child psychologist can help determine if a child has an anxiety disorder and can provide treatment resources.

Focusing on the present moment can help a person not get caught up in worrying about the future. Mindfulness, progressive muscle tension and relaxation, and grounding exercises can help. Many guided mindfulness meditations are available on YouTube and on apps. Insight Timer is a free app and contains 24,000 different meditations.

Brittany Titensor MSW, CSW
Mental Health Specialist
Spectrum Academy North Salt Lake Elementary and Intermediate Schools

Subs Needed

Interested in working for the school? We are always in need of substitute teachers, and who better than those who love and are invested in our students? If you'd like to sub, please contact the office and submit a resume.

PTO NEWS

Hello Spectrum Cub families!

Thank you for all of the assistance you have put into all of the classes! It is greatly appreciated.

We are beginning to plan for our big activities of the year, and need your help to make it happen!

At our upcoming meetings we will be discussing Autism Awareness month (April), Staff Appreciation Week (May), decorating the school and End of the year celebration.

If you are interested in helping with any of these, please contact the PTO via email, Facebook, or Instagram.

We will be hosting social media contests throughout the next few months. Please subscribe/follow us to get the details!

Thank you all for your support!

Sincerely,

Spectrum Academy Elementary PTO

Email: spectrumacademyespto@gmail.com



www.facebook.com/SpectrumNSLPTO



@spectrumacademyespto

Social Media

Follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/spectrumacademy/>)
Instagram (@Spectrum_charter), or Twitter (@spectrumcharter)
for updates and information.