



# ALACHUA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



## Alligator Times – December 2021

Principal: Heather Harbour ♦ Assistant Principal: Kelitha Rainer

### Important Dates

- W. Dec 1 November Green Party
- Th. Dec 2 Picture Retakes
- T. Dec 7 Winter Concert
- T. Dec 7 PTA Domino's Fundraiser
- Th. Dec 9 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Spelling Bee
- M. Dec 20 Winter Break (Dec 20 - Jan 3)
- T. Jan 4 Classes Resume

### Winter Concert

We are excited to announce that our winter concert will be Tuesday, December 7 at 6:00 pm on the covered PE court. Alligator Chorus and Alligator Mallet Ensemble will both perform at this concert. Your child has already put in a lot of work for this concert and we are really excited for you to hear them perform!

### Front Office News

The Governor has signed the bills passed during the Special Session, and they took effect immediately upon signing. The new law (HB1 – COVID-19 Mandates) now requires:

- Mask mandates that require parental opt-out forms are no longer allowed. Parents may still allow children to wear masks at their discretion.
- Asymptomatic quarantine provisions now apply. Students can continue to attend school/work after COVID exposure, as long as they do not show symptoms or test positive. They may also choose to quarantine for up to seven days after exposure.

### PTA News

Our next meeting is Thursday, December 2 at 3:15 pm under the oak tree. Come early to mingle with other parents!

- Tuesday, December 7: Domino's dough raiser
- Coming Soon: Opportunity to volunteer as a reading buddy.

### Citizen of the Month

Congratulations to our November Citizen of the Month, **Marialita Jimenez-Andres** in Mrs. Cole's class. We are so very proud of you!

### Media News

Greetings from the media center! December is read a new book month. We encourage everyone to read something new. Our main focus will be learning about the different winter holidays that occur during this month: Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa. Reading is Fundamental (RIF) books are here! Our RIF celebration will take place this month. Every student will be able to choose two books of their choice to keep. Students will be getting these books right before the Christmas break, so there will be no checking out books that week. As a reminder, if your student has library books that are overdue, please return them as soon as possible. Lost books may be paid for to clear student accounts and allow them the opportunity to enjoy new books. If you have any questions or concerns about checking out books or lost books, please contact Ms. Zednek or Mrs. Sirdevan at the school. We can't wait to hear about the new books students have read when we come back from break! Happy reading!

### STEAM News

In STEAM for December we will be reinforcing steps of the water cycle. Students will work in groups to plan and build mazes that take the participant through the different steps of the water cycle. We are getting into more structure with the design process that is integral in engineering, especially revising plans so they best suit the outlines of the project. The steps of the water cycle is one of our science areas of improvement, so it would greatly benefit your student to reinforce those steps (evaporation, condensation and precipitation) at home. I can't wait to see what the students do for their maze builds!

*Happy Holidays!*



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### Third Grade News

Hello parents, fall is here and winter is approaching. Here is what's going on in third grade. We are now in our fourth unit in ELA "comparing points of view." We are working on social-emotional learning and culturally responsive perspectives through some different plays. We are talking more about character traits and how each character shapes the story. We continue practicing how to be "power readers," ask questions as we read, annotate our texts, and other "power reading" strategies. In math we are getting more into multiplication and division. In science we are learning about properties of matter, and the different states we can find matter in such as a solid, liquid and gas, as well as how to measure these. We are still working on government and citizenship, and our rights and responsibilities in social studies. As you know reading is an important part of being successful in third grade, so we should be reading daily at home. Please be sure to check your child(s) agendas nightly and initial each day.

### Fourth Grade News

In math, we are diving into understanding equivalent fractions, comparing fractions, and adding and subtracting fractions. With your child, look for ways you can identify and use fractions in the real world! In ELA, we are studying different points of view through first person and third person narrators. To practice this at home, have your child compare their perspective to others' perspectives. Continue to read at home for thirty minutes each night. We are improving our informational and opinion essay writing through working on integrating evidence and organizing our ideas. In science, fourth grade is learning about energy: forms, sources, and uses. Ask your child to identify the forms of energy around them. We hope to put what we learn to practice with some fun energy inquiries! Our garden is going strong and we will be able to harvest our crops this month. Once they are harvested, the school will get to enjoy the produce in their school lunches.

### Fifth Grade News

December will be a very busy and a very short month in fifth grade. The Green Party is happening December 1 to celebrate all the students who worked hard to improve their Acaletics scrimmage by at least ten percent. In language arts the students will focus on point of view, theme, figurative language, and literary elements in reading, while learning how to write a formal informative essay in writing. The fifth grade spelling bee is scheduled for December 9. The week of December 13, the students will have the write score writing test and the Acaletics scrimmage. Our field trip to Camp Crystal is coming up in January. Permission slips will be coming home soon. We are grateful for your continued support with behavior and academic goals in the classroom. Thank you for reminding your child to be a good listener, active learner, and a respectful student. We can accomplish great things together when our students come ready and willing to learn. Have a wonderful and safe winter break!

### Art, Music, and PE News

#### Art News:

During the month of December third graders will be learning about warm colors and cool colors, and will do a snowflake project. In fourth grade, students will finish their op art projects and then create a symmetry snowflake. Fifth graders will be finishing their op art projects. They will then either work on an op art cube or winter painting. Artist of the month students show exceptional creativity, hard work, and a positive attitude. Our artists of the month for December are Chloe Penny and Dominick Bustamante in third grade, Zuri Wims and Alberto Gregorio Francisco in fourth grade, and Lauryn Ford and Ben Scott in fifth grade. Congratulations to our artists of the month. Art club will be working on entries for the Saving My Alachua Calendar Contest. Happy Holidays to all!

#### Music News:

November has been filled with performing for our veterans, learning about American composer John Phillip Sousa and singing some folk songs. Third grade students learned what a rhythm is and how to write different rhythms. Fourth grade students used their knowledge of the music staff to play the xylophones along with the song Black Socks. Fifth grade students finalized their performance of "Straight Line Wonder" by performing their part on xylophones along with the book. With the holiday season approaching, we will be studying one of my favorite holiday traditions "The Nutcracker." We will watch performances of different dances from the ballet and discuss what we saw.

#### PE News:

**Proper Shoes:** Please make sure your child is wearing proper shoes to school each day and especially on PE day. The ACPS dress code calls for closed toe and closed heel/athletic shoes. Sandals, flip flops, crocs and slides are not safe for school activities. Physical education class is designed to be safe and fun and improper shoes are a safety hazard for students. Students will not participate during PE class with improper footwear. Thank you for your support!

The Alligator All-Stars program recognizes AES students who have excelled in the area of physical education and have displayed the traits of great effort, listening, teamwork and sportsmanship during PE class for the month of October. The winners are:

- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade: **Dominique Jackson** (Norris)  
**Michael Dudley** (Bellucci)
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade: **Prezley Evans** (Falk)  
**Dontae Baker** (Lake)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade: **Kolbie Dodds** (McDonald)  
**Reed Dillard** (Ward)

Great job! Keep up the positive attitudes, teamwork and excellent effort.