



Pinto Press

a Mass Media class publication

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Moniteau County R-1 Schools



"Equipping today's children for tomorrow's challenges."

www.californiak12.org

GRADING SYSTEM FOR CALIFORNIA ELEMENTARY

P = Proficient - Meeting grade-level or course standards independently, thoroughly and accurately
W = Working toward proficiency with Steady Progress
L = Working toward proficiency with Little Progress
NA = Not Assessed (if Column is Blank)
S = Satisfactory
N = Needs Improvement
U = Unsatisfactory

Standards-based grading is new standard

by Hailey Tarrants

Most parents and students are used to seeing the basic A, B, C, D, and F form of grading. However, at California Elementary School, standards-based grading has been the primary form of grading for the past six years.

Standards-based grading lays down specific expectations of students, and they get graded on their abilities to do

such expectations instead of taking the average of scores.

"The decision was made by the staff as a whole with the hope that with better understanding of what educational goals a student must meet, they could reach those goals more efficiently," said Gary Baker, elementary school principal.

The elementary is currently the only school out of the three at Moniteau R-1 that uses standards-based grading.

Third grade teacher Kayla Barnard

said that standards-based grading provides a lot of helpful information to both the parents and teachers. It gives each individual a look at what the student is mastering and with what they may not be doing so good.

It also helps the teachers to understand what they need to focus on with each student and helps the student work harder in one area.

"I prefer the standards-based grad-

continued on page 2

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
DECEMBER	9 California Bands Winter Concert 2:00 p.m. in CPAC	10 7/8 Boys BB vs Russellville	11 9/JV/V Boys BB @ Centralia 9/JV/V Girls BB @ SoBoCo 7 Boys/Girls BB @ Warsaw	12	13 1st Grade Concert 7:00 p.m. in CPAC 7/8 Boys BB vs Osage 9 Boys/Girls BB vs Osage	14 ES Movie Night 7:00 p.m. in the Gym JV/V Boys BB vs Missouri Military Academy	15 Var Boys/Girls BB National Guard Shootout @ JC Parents Night Out 5:00-9:00 p.m. @ CHS
		8th Grade Girls Basketball Tournament @ Jefferson City		JV Boys Basketball Tournament @ Blair Oaks			
	16 Christmas Choral Concert, in CPAC HS 2:00 p.m. MS 4:00 p.m. Mini Dance Camp 2:00 p.m. @ CHS	17 7/8 Boys/Girls BB @ Hallsville	18 CES PTO meeting 6:30 p.m. in cafeteria 7/8 Girls BB @ Osage 9/JV/V Boys BB vs Knob Noster (Dance Clinic performance)	19 9 Boys/Girls BB vs JC School Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. in CHS Library	20 7/8 Boys BB @ Versailles 7/8 Girls BB vs Versailles 9 Boys/Girls BB @ Linn	21 Early Dismissal 1:00 p.m.	22 JV/V Girls BB vs Kirksville @ MACC Var Boys BB vs Liberty, IL @ John Wood Community College in Quincy
	23	24	25 WINTER BREAK	26	27	28 Var Girls BB vs Caton @ MACC	29 Var Boys BB vs South Shelby @ MACC
30	31	1	2 No School (Teachers Professional Development)	3 Return to School JV/V Girls BB @ Eldon	4	5	
JANUARY	6	7 District FFA Greenhand Conference @ Lincoln	8 7/8 Boys BB @ Eldon 7/8 Girls BB vs Eldon	9	10	11	12
	Boys and Girls Varsity Basketball Tournament @ CHS						
	13	14 JV/V Girls BB vs Hallsville	15 9/JV/V Boys BB vs Osage	16 School Board Meeting 6:00 p.m. in CHS Library	17 9th Boys & Girls BB vs Fulton JV/V Girls BB @ Skyline	18 Kindergarten Nursery Rhyme Day 1:30 p.m. in CPAC 9/JV/V Boys BB @ Versailles	19 Var Boys BB vs Scott City @ Tolton
	8th Grade Girls and Boys Tournament @ Eldon			Junior Varsity Girls Basketball Tournament @ Blair Oaks			
	7th Grade Girls Basketball Tournament @ Camdenton						
20	21 No School 9/JV/V Girls BB @ Fatima 9 Boys BB vs Smith-Cotton	22 JV/V Boys BB @ Richland	23	24 9/JV/V Girls BB vs Smith-Cotton	25 9/JV/V Boys BB vs Hallsville	26	
27	28	29 CES PTO Meeting 6:30 p.m. in cafeteria	30	31	1	2 PTO Me & My Special Guy Dance in ES Gym	
JV Boys Basketball Tournament @ Helias			Varsity Boys & Girls Basketball Tournament @ Southern Boone				
FEB.	3	4 9 Boys & Girls BB @ Marshall JV/V Girls BB @ Versailles	5 9/JV/V Boys BB vs Boonville	6	7 9/JV/V Girls BB vs Boonville 3rd Grade Concert 7:00 p.m. in the CPAC	8 9/JV/V Boys BB vs Eldon	9 ACT 7:30 a.m. @ CHS

For athletic event times, go to the athletic calendar on www.californiak12.org

In my room . . . STEM is the Future

by Kody Bisges

Throughout the year students in Daniel Bestgen's first grade class work on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and technology) activities.

A STEM activity is something teachers in the elementary school have recently started doing because they allow the students to engage with each other and use critical thinking skills. This activity gives the students hands-on work to keep them engaged in the lesson.



Students at the first grade level often struggle with focusing, working with others, and sitting still for periods of time. These activities get them involved with each other and will teach them to help one another.

The goal of STEM is to increase literacy or knowledge and understand-

ing of scientific and mathematical concepts.

"The students enjoy doing these hands-on, critical thinking activities, as opposed to teacher-led instruction from a textbook," said Bestgen.

Recently in one of their STEM activities, Bestgen's first graders learned about the pilgrims and their voyage. This STEM activity ties in with the social studies unit they have been learning about in class.

For the pilgrim project, students received a sheet of aluminum foil and get to physically build a boat to see whose could hold the most pilgrims. Once they build their boat, the students tested it in a tub of water using pennies as pilgrims. The students were required to do three trials and got an opportunity

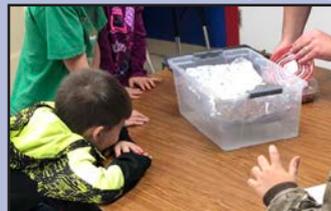


Using pennies, students in Daniel Bestgen's 1st grade class test their aluminum foil boats in a tub of water to see whose can hold the most "pilgrims" without sinking.

to redesign their boats to hold more pilgrims.

"Some of the biggest lessons the students learn from these STEM activities are learning to fail and bounce back, understanding the concepts of working within a group, and using strategies to problem solve," said Bestgen.

Overall, the students loved the STEM activity and learned to work with others. They also learned that failure is okay. Students were encouraged to recover, think outside of the box and design something better.



Elementary math: Foundation for students' futures

by Hayden Green, Kody Bisges, and Yaneli Banda

Elementary math is a foundation for students to succeed further on in life. According to fifth grade teacher Amy Higgins, each year in elementary school is a building block for the next one.

"Students begin with number recognition and counting in Kindergarten to solving various types of math equations with multiplication and division in fifth grade," said Higgins.

The math program has changed in the recent years to better the students. They now use a textbook program called Saxon Math.

"I like Saxon Math because it continuously reviews concepts from previous lessons," Higgins said.

Even though the concepts are revisited every few lessons, students still struggle with some assignments. However, a child can still succeed in a variety of ways. Title I math teachers are in the school with the sole purpose to teach math; also, online programs such as Xtramath and IXL allow parents to

help students with their math facts.

The teachers also integrate their own teaching techniques.

Fifth grade teacher Rachel Hees has her students in "math rotations" with hands-on work. This gets the students up and moving and makes math fun for the class.

Amy Howard, second grade teacher, also has her own way of preparing students for the future.

Howard said that she is "always trying to connect things with real life situations, like money and time."

Having these programs and quality teaching gives the students a foundation for next level math.



Mrs. Amy Higgins teaches her fifth grade class how to add up money by putting an example on the board during their group lesson.

Santa and the Star Search



1st Grade Concert
7:00 p.m.
Thursday, Dec 13
CPAC

Standard-based grading

cont. from pg 1

ing. I think it is helpful for students and parents to know exactly what we are learning about," said Susan Ferrell, fifth grade teacher.

Standards-based grading has become the "norm" for elementary school grading, and California Elementary School was at the forefront when they adopted it six years ago.

Adopt a student this holiday season

The Food Bank provides Buddy Packs to approximately 130 California students every week throughout the school year. At a cost of \$180 per student per year, the Food Bank is providing nearly \$25,000 worth of meals to families in our California community alone. If you would like to support a student in the Buddy Pack program, you can send a check to any of our school offices. Make checks payable to "The Food Bank."

Parents Night Out

Saturday, Dec. 15

5:00-9:00 p.m.

California High School

\$10 per child
potty trained - 5th grade

pizza & snacks provided

sponsored by
CHS Student Council

KINDERGARTEN NURSERY RHYME DAY

1:30 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 18

California Performing Arts Center



In my room . . . Research in science

by Gaven McKee

In one of the five sections of Mrs. Krista Davis's seventh grade science, students research engineered materials. The students start off this project by gathering as much information as they possibly can about their topic.

She makes sure to monitor her students and ask them questions on what they are supposed to be learning in this section and connects it to the project.

Davis said, "Students get so focused on finding the answer to the guiding research questions that they forget to actually process what they are reading."

When the students are doing their research, they get both online and paper handouts for their research questions. Most of the time, students complete this work in the class time allowed.

This year the students at the middle school have the additional study power time at the end of the day, which is a great time for students to



finish up any homework and ask teachers for assistance.

Discovery Education is a main source of information for Davis' science project. Students also use EBSCOhost, which is available online through the middle school library.

"One great thing about science is there are a variety of ways to learn and apply science concepts," said Davis.

She likes to keep her students excited to come to class every day by varying the ways students get to learn as well as the variety of ways that they present their knowledge of their learning.

Project posters, google slides, lab reports, and notebook entries are also used with seventh grade science. Some weeks the students are doing science lab investigations; other times they are researching a concept through reading and video resources.

Guest author provides tips for writing right

by Jesse Wingate

"Really get to know your characters, down to what they keep in their pocket and which secrets they hide" is advice to young writers from author Beth Vrabel.

Jill Meisenheimer, middle school librarian and chromebook manager, invited



author Beth Vrabel to come to the California Performing Arts Center to speak to the elementary and middle school students of California, Tipton, High Point, and Jamestown.

A juvenile fiction author from Dallas, Texas, Vrabel has written many books including *Bringing Me Back*, *The Reckless Club*, *Super Dorks*, and *Caleb and Kit*.

Vrabel gave two mass student appearances and two workshops for 20

students each. Her appearances were for fifth through eighth grade students of multiple schools, once in the morning and again in the afternoon.

Meisenheimer invited the smaller schools to participate in this event "because there was room in the PAC, and I wanted to open it up for other students to enjoy her presentation. I think we should always invite local smaller schools that do not have our beautiful facility and do not have the capability of paying a large chunk of money for presenters like Beth Vrabel."

Students were bused over for the presentations and workshops.

"During the workshops, I encouraged writers to dig deep and mine their own experiences for moments that could authentically move their stories forward," said Vrabel. "My biggest tip for any writer, though, is to take the time to tell yourself the story first. Give yourself the opportunity to fall in love with the storytelling."

Students were able to ask many questions that helped them stay involved. Students were very interested and respectful, enough so for Vrabel to say, "They were amazing. I think it's a really great crew here."

Technology tools help with learning

by Kayla Wehmeyer

Darrell Bolin, an eighth grade teacher, has been working as a science teacher for ten years with the past six at California Middle School. Bolin loves every part of science.

"Science brings meaning to mathematics, is involved in history and has a large amount of writing about it," said Bolin. The most challenging part of science is "trying to get everyone to the same level of understanding."

In class the students have learned about chemical compounds. They use a website called DE Techbook. This source has reading material with questions after the reading that they discuss in class. Bolin has created

a Quizlet for all his eighth grade science students to help them better their understanding of any of the topics.

Quizlet is an electronic studying tool for students to use like flashcards and quizzes. He also uses Quizlet Live. Quizlet live is a group game to help the students better understand their material in a more fun way.

Interacting in groups, his sixth hour class appeared to have a good understanding of the material. All of the students were quick to answer, and for the most part they got the answer correct.

Darrell Bolin's eighth grade science class uses Quizlet Live to practice their material and see what they know. Team results are posted for the class to monitor.



This newsletter is a product of the CHS Mass Media class, taught by Mrs. Christy Heimericks.

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Winter Choral Concerts

Sunday, December 16 in the CPAC



2:00 p.m. - High School Choirs
4:00 p.m. - Middle School Choirs

Science courses see increased enrollment

by Abigail Barnett

Over the past three years, upper level science classes have had a significant enrollment increase at California High School.

Dr. Sean Kirksey, CHS principal, has calculated four-year enrollment numbers of science courses. Over the course of four years, 2014 to present, in the classes of chemistry 1 and 2, physics, dual credit biology, and anatomy and physiology, there has been an increase of 76 students enrolled.

Whitney Toosley, high school counselor said “some of it has to do with weighted grades. However, another big part is that the science teachers talk with kids about classes offered and provide them with the best choice for each individual student.”

Amy Kuebler who teaches physics said the science department created a document a few years ago for students to look at for what courses they will have to take in college for science.

“I think that going over this document with all of our underclassmen has really helped to guide them as to what classes they should take [in high school],” Kuebler said.

“My goal in physical science is to prepare the students to take chemistry or physics. As far as physics goes, my goal is to have them prepared to succeed in college physics and to better understand how everything around them works.”

Kuebler points out that her students truly engage when she makes the lessons relevant to what they experience on a day-to-day basis.

Physics classes prepare students for medical, engineering, and architecture careers. Anatomy students are generally interested in the medical field.

Michael Baepler teaches anatomy and dual credit biology.

Baepler said, “it is a hard class, but it does enable someone to get their required college biology course completed during high school.”

Baepler agreed with Kuebler, “Bringing a real life situation gives students something to relate to, not only creating interest but also comfort.”

All in all, Dr. Kirksey credits the uptick in enrollment to a variety of understandings. These include meeting one on one with students to explain the importance of science in potential careers and adding weighted classes to provide extra benefits.



Jamie Johnston teaches her chemistry 2 students to draw “chairs,” an important way to present a 2-dimensional image that can convey 3-dimensional information.

He also noted that the counselors promote the importance of taking challenging and advanced classes. Most importantly the students must be willing to take and put work into advanced courses.

“[This] made it possible for these classes to go above and beyond.” Kirksey said, “It was a true combination of everyone’s hard work, and it took a team to accomplish.”

In my room . . . Learning to understand emotions

by Abigail Barnett

For most people facial expressions are used constantly and expressions come naturally; however, it is difficult for students with special needs to communicate and interpret emotions with others.

Kristy Gatlin teaches special education at California High School. In a class of eight it is crucial that the class stays calm and can recognize others’ emotions. Recently, she led the class through making an emotions board. Lined with columns of emotions, each day students put their name tag under the emotion they are feeling that day.

The class practiced using facial expressions and understanding how to communicate inside and outside of the classroom. The center of this learning unit was the movie *Inside Out*; a Disney Pixar film about a child who shows all of her emotions and how they guide her through a hard transition.

Gatlin said the students also role played using tone of voice to commu-

High school admires veterans with breakfast, assembly

by Morgan Kempfer

Since 2001, the high school has a Veterans Day Assembly to honor those who have served in the armed forces.

Jamie Johnston, high school science teacher and student council co-advisor, has been a part of this assembly for eight years.

“This assembly is very different than the other assemblies we do. The Veterans Day assembly is more formal and serious,” said Johnston. “Our community is so supportive of our school, so it is nice to be able to recognize those in our community who have sacrificed for us.”

This year the assembly was led by Grace Henley and Quinn Albertson, student body president and vice president, respectively. Gracie George also played

Veterans join students on a very special day to honor those who served.



a big role as the student body chairperson.

“The chairperson contacts the speaker and groups that are performing, comes up with the agenda and oversees preparations,” said Johnston.

The number of veterans that come vary from 12-20 every year, and FFA hosts a breakfast for those who come before the assembly.

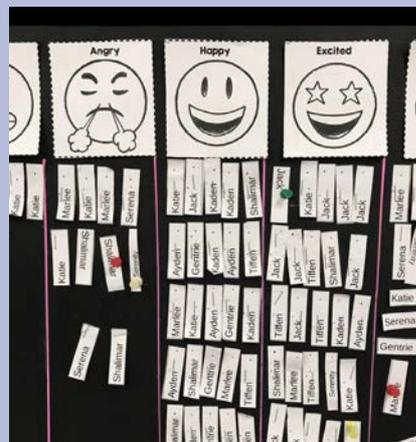
“Each year we have some components that are similar, such as a performance by the band or choir. We are also presenting “The White Table,” a ceremony to honor prisoners of war and those missing in action,” Johnston said.

This assembly has special speakers. This year’s guest speaker was George Shelley, who served in the United States Army for 20 years. The student speaker was Trey Porter who read his speech written in speech class themed “Why

My Vote Matters.”

A video was also played about Project Vigil, a memorial project started by an 11-year-old boy who in 2013 went to Omaha Beach and stood in a frozen salute for 90 minutes along the shoreline to pay tribute to fallen soldiers.

The assembly was brought to an end with a member of the band playing “Taps,” followed by a moment of silence to honor our fallen soldiers.



nicate how they are feeling.

The students enjoy this activity because they can express how they feel every day. This is beneficial to not only the student but also the class so they can practice using their facial expressions and emotions throughout the day.

It is important for everyone to understand what emotions people display and be able to express themselves in a healthy way while keeping calm.

California Basketball Tournament



January 7-12

Join the Pintos as we host for the 85th year.