

# R-STEM THE EXPONENTIAL TIMES



**December 2011-January 2012**

**Principal, Joey Page**

Office Phone: (612)798-6600 Office Hours: 7:00a.m.-3:30p.m. School Hours: 7:45a.m.-2:10p.m.

Sandie Forest, School Social Worker: (612)798-6663

Karen Slaght, School Social Worker: (612)798-6655

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**\*\*Current R-STEM student enrollment-826\*\***

**BE RESPONSIBLE.  
BE RESPECTFUL.  
BE SAFE.**



## Notes from the Principal

In R-STEM's second year as principal, it is very apparent there are many reasons to celebrate. Many of our students are excelling in academics, friendships and enjoying this school year. There are many people to thank for our success, especially you - the family. Every day you entrust us to care for and educate your child and for that we are honored. Thank you for making R-STEM your school.

As we look forward to the second half of the school year, we anticipate the same enthusiasm as the first half. With the arrival of winter and cold weather, I would like to give a few reminders. Students need to dress appropriately for the weather conditions. Should weather force school cancellations, it will be broadcasted on local radio and television stations.

Report cards were mailed out a couple of weeks ago to inform you of your son's or daughter's academic progress. We encourage you to continue to take an active role in your child's education. For students struggling in a class, our staff makes every attempt to notify the parent/guardian in a timely manner, so there is time for the parent /guardian

to get involved to assist the students in taking the necessary corrective actions. If you have questions please talk with your child's teacher.

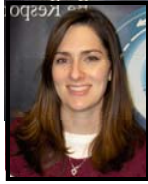
There are many conversations at the Capitol on the topic of bullying. Bullying in any form and by any name damages everyone involved - the aggressors, the victims, and the observers. Parents can play an important role in identifying and preventing bullying. It is the job of adults to help kids develop empathy, self esteem and peacemaking skills early in their lives.

In its simplest terms, bullying is when one or more person(s) persistently picks on another. People - children in particular - often feel isolated by bullying and may not even tell anyone else about their experience. Bullying often happens when onlookers are present. According to a recent CNN news series on bullying, more than 70% of the time the witnesses do not attempt to intervene. You should know that R-STEM rigorously engages our students in anti-bullying education. Please communicate *with us* about any *troublesome observations or information*. If you have questions around bullying or need to talk with a staff member, please contact the school.

Finally, soon it will be time for winter break. During the time off, it is important that students take time to continue reading, writing, and practicing math every day. You can make learning fun by tying it into your daily routine so students understand the importance of education.

## MEET MS. KASEY MATHERS OUR NEW KINDERGARTEN TEACHER!!

I am Kasey Mathers and teach Kindergarten at R-STEM School. I grew up in Burnsville, Minnesota. I have been teaching for six years and have taught kindergarten, first and second grades. I started teaching in Richfield and most recently taught in Burnsville. I am happy to be back in Richfield!



I love to spend time with my family and my new puppy, Mira. I love to spend time at my cabin in northern Minnesota and love to travel. I have been to Australia and visited London and Italy this past summer. But my favorite activity is reading books!

Another bit of exciting news is that I will be marrying my fiancé, Paul, next summer.



### Why I love teaching?

“The best part of being a teacher is helping kids learn and grow and to share with them all the great books and stories.”

## MEET MRS. MEAGAN PHILLIPS - OUR NEW MUSIC TEACHER!!

Hi! I am Meagan Phillips and this is my first year at the STEM School. I have 7 years of prior teaching experience, mostly in Massachusetts where I moved right after college in order to volunteer with AmeriCorps. As a volunteer, I established a music program in a bilingual charter school which mostly served Hispanic students.



I have run the Twin Cities Marathon twice and I love to garden. I have three children under the age of five, so I am very busy at home!



I also conduct a women's cappella group named "Soul Sisters" and we perform all over the West Metro area.

I am thrilled to be here at R-STEM and look forward to meeting you throughout the year!

## YOUR HELP IS NEEDED!

Now that the cold weather has officially arrived, the STEM school is looking for warm clothing for some of our students to wear to keep them warm during the cold winter months ahead.

### List of Donated Items Needed:

- **New or gently used winter jackets and snow pants (boys and girls - sizes needed are children's 5 to 14-16 and adult small and adult medium)**



- **New or gently used snow boots (boys and girls - sizes needed - children's 12 & 13 and 1 to 8)**



- **New winter hats, mittens or gloves (boys and girls - all sizes from children's small to adult small)**



**Please think of R-STEM students when cleaning out your closets or shopping during the holidays!**

## BLUER-STEM SHIRTS

Don't forget to have your child wear his/her blue R-STEM shirt every Friday and on our Sparkfest days (Dec. 20, Jan. 26, Feb. 14, Mar. 20, Apr. 27 & June 4 - *subject to change*)

A big thank you to the R-STEM P.T.O. for purchasing these shirts for all of our R-S.T.E.M. students and staff!



# Computer Lab Update

Kindergarten students are making noticeable progress with their mouse and navigation skills. They have been investigating websites such as Starfall.com and ABCya.com to practice letter identification, letter sounds, and first words. Students have also been engaged in SMART board lessons that reinforce classroom curriculum.

1<sup>st</sup> graders have been busy doing activities to reinforce their study of rock types, properties, and sizes. We have tested rocks with a simulation website to see if the rock samples split, float, wear well and are permeable. Students have also begun word processing documents that include adding graphics to their rock data table.

2<sup>nd</sup> graders are experimenting with the best way to build a marble run structure. They have been testing a number of simulation websites to gather information and observe changes to their designs. As they work they are modifying the speed, direction, slope, distance and height of the track. After testing and making adjustments students have found what type of construction elements are needed for a successful "run."

3<sup>rd</sup> graders recently completed mini research facts on either monarchs or light. Students used websites to gather facts and find definitions and then combine the information with an illustration in Kid Pix software. Students learned many of the drawing tools such as paint, fill, outline, gradient, resizing, font, and undo.

4<sup>th</sup> graders have wrapped up their study of solids, liquids and gases and how matter changes from one state to another. Website investigation and simulations helped to reinforce their classroom experiments.

(Continued on next column)

Students are now beginning their next project, which involves creating graphics and backgrounds for a collaboration doing mini movies with the FLIP cameras in students homerooms.

5<sup>th</sup> graders have been learning the "how tos" of digital photography. Students have been working to take quality digital portraits. We have been discussing: What is our purpose? What are the criteria? How do artists use digital tools? How do photographs help us communicate? We are working on an art project in collaboration with Mr. Bowman in which students are connecting their knowledge of technology skills, photography and art concepts. The students have been using digital cameras acquired from an RPS Grant awarded last spring.



## Kindergarten Round-up

### R-STEM

## Kindergarten Round Up!!!

*(for 2012-13 Kindergarteners only)*

***Mark Your Calendars!***

**When: Thursday, January 19th**

**Last Names (A-M) at 5:30p.m.**

**Last Names (N-Z) 7:00 p.m.**

**Where: STEM Cafeteria**

**Call 612-798-6602 (Nancy Berres)  
for further information**



# Phys Ed Dept.

It has been a fun and exciting year so far in Physical Education class. We are busy getting to know all of the students in the building, and are working hard to form relationships with your children.

Since the start of the school year and into this snowy winter, we will continue to focus on eye-hand coordination activities, sportsmanship and cooperation. The students have or will be engaged in the following activities during the months of November, December and January: bowling, volleyball, stations (balance, climbing wall, rope jumping, hula hoops, catch-a-cups, scoops, hopscotch, throwing, catching), parachutes, rhythms, tumbling, basketball and manipulatives.

Because the PE schedule is on a five day rotation, it becomes **essential** that every student puts their tennis shoes in their backpack each and every day. Proper footwear is essential when participating in Physical Education class. Students are constantly on the move, and they need to be able to move freely without losing a shoe, or having it hinder them in any way (from being too small or too large). Please send your student to school with appropriate tennis shoes; shoes that have no backs, and extended heels are not acceptable shoes.

If you have any questions regarding our curriculum, or would just like to touch base with any of the PE staff, please do not hesitate to call us at 612-798-6660 or email or visit our webpage. Joan Hoerauf:

[joan.hoerauf@richfield.k12.mn.us](mailto:joan.hoerauf@richfield.k12.mn.us) and

Anna Hettler:

[anna.hettler@richfield.k12.mn.us](mailto:anna.hettler@richfield.k12.mn.us)



# Kindergarten News

During the month of December, the kindergarten students will be working on a unit of study about the properties of matter. The students will be using their five senses to make observations about different objects and sorting them into two categories: natural or human made. During this unit, students have the opportunity to explore many different building materials. This is an introduction to engineering!



## PARENT SCHOOLVIEW LUNCH ACCOUNT ACCESS

Would you like to view your child's lunch account and make a payment on line???? Please stop in the office to get your access code from Nancy Berres or call her at 612-798-6602 and she will send the code home with your child.

## 2nd Grade Update

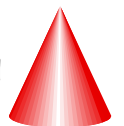
In December and January, Second Graders will be working on:

**Literacy** - We will be working on reading comprehension. We will be reading fiction and non-fiction books. In writing, we are working on Main Ideas and Details and talking about nouns in grammar. Our theme will talk a lot about Places and Mapping.

**Math** - We will be working on addition and subtraction stories, 2-D and 3-D shapes.

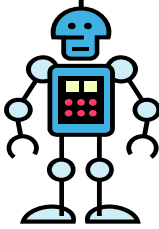
**Social Studies** - We will be working on Mapping.

**Science** - We will be experimenting with Solids and Liquids.



# Art Update

The Art Studio has been a **BUSY** place this year, and I am excited for some of the **AWE-SOME** projects we have coming up! The Kindergarten Artists have been doing a lot of exploration with the 7 Art Elements, and will continue this learning with projects using texture and form. Get ready for some sculpture! The First Grade Artists will also be using texture to create robots! The Second Grade Artists have been working with wind to create kinetic sculptures, and will focus on learning the 7 Art Elements next. We will be looking at art from around the globe to learn the Art Elements. The Third Grade Artists will be making multi-media artwork using light, in conjunction with their Light and Sound work in Science. We will be studying the Video artist Paul Chan, and his 7 lights installations. The Fourth Grade Artists will be making sculptural masks and learning about the many types of masks from many different parts of Africa. The Fifth Grade Artists will be making connections to the Technology Classes by creating self portraits inspired by the artist Chuck Close. Be on the lookout for our first portfolio's of Art... coming soon to a home near you!



# 1st Grade News

Take some time to play a board game and enjoy a hot cup of cocoa with your first grader during this winter season! Although games like *Connect Four*, *Uno*, *Jenga*, *Guess Who* and *Battle-ship* can seem like just a fun activity, they also help children develop spatial reasoning, mathematical thinking, and reinforce literacy. They also teach important social skills, such as communicating verbally, being patient, sharing, and taking turns. So gather your family and friends and enjoy some time playing games with one another. Your first grader will gain so much and you will create wonderful memories at the same time!



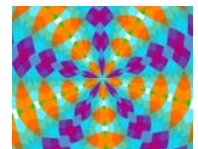
# 3rd Grade News

In literature, our Literacy By Design theme is "Now and Then". We are learning about how communities have changed over time. Our next unit will focus on natural disasters. We will be going to the Science Museum of Minnesota on January 4, 2012 to see the exhibit on natural disasters.

In math we are starting to work with multiplication and division! We will learn several ways to multiply so that hopefully, everyone is able to master the concept. We are also learning about graphs and how to read graphs. Finding the maximum, minimum, range, mode and median are some of the concepts we are learning about.

In science, we will be culminating our light and sound unit at the end of December. We have learned a lot about how light can be absorbed, reflected and refracted. We are learning how to make different sounds and have done some fun experiments with sound.

The Works will be coming in December to make a kaleidoscope with the third graders. Your child's homeroom teacher will give specifics about the date and time. We would love to have you join us!



# R-STEM Media Center Update

In Media, we are learning the difference between fiction and nonfiction and hearing books from these areas. We are also finding out where these books are located in the library.

Kindergarten and first grade students are listening to stories and acting them out with story theater using puppets and/or stuffed animals.



*Catherine Leslie*  
R-STEM Media Director

# 4th Grade Info

4th graders have hopped on their magic airplane this past week as we kicked off our unit on the Geography of the United States. We are learning about the different regions in the United States and what makes them each unique. In each region we visit, we are learning about the landforms, geography, culture, history, and the economy specific to that region.

While we have finished our multiplication unit in math, we still need to practice multiplication facts. Our goal is to have each 4<sup>th</sup> grader have their facts memorized! We hope you are encouraging your child to study them at home! Our current math unit is about place value and decimals, but then we will be diving back into a math unit on multiplication with larger numbers.



## R-STEM on Twitter

You can now follow R-STEM on Twitter. What Twitter does, in a simple and brilliant way, is to merge a number of interesting trends in social software usage. Keep up to date for R-STEM events by going to:

<http://twitter.com/risprincipal>

There is also a Principal's blog found on the R-STEM website.

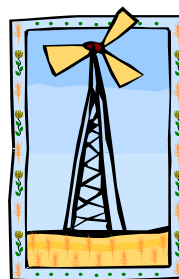
## STUDENT DROP OFF AND PICK UP ON 12TH AVENUE!!

When dropping off or picking up students on 12th Avenue, please use both sets of doors along 12th Avenue. The doors will be open at 7:25 a.m. and after school at 2:10 p.m. Pulling forward and using both doors results in less traffic and safety problems. Thanks!!

# Fifth Grade News

Our current unit in reading is Proud to be an American. The themes are Let Freedom Ring and Balancing Act. The students are learning how our constitution came about and how our government works. We will be learning about the three branches of government and the role of each branch. In spelling we are continuing to learn words with Greek and Latin roots. As the year goes on, we are finding words in our studies that are now familiar to us because we have a better understanding of the origin of words.

In science, we have finished our study of terrestrial environments. We have learned about environmental factors, changing a variable, and creating a fair experiment. We are finishing up the unit with an investigation called water tolerance. We will see how the amount of water, or lack of, will influence the optimum growing conditions for several types of plants.



In December, we will begin a new engineering unit. The students will study wind turbines and work in groups to create efficient wind turbine blades. We will use the engineering process and redesign our blades to create the most electrical output. Please look over the request list we sent home for things we can use for our engineering projects.

The emphasis for our next two math units is fractions and decimals. We will be comparing and ordering fractions and using data to add and subtract fractions and decimals. We will also be working with bar and circle graphs and stem-and-leaf plots.

A special thank you to parents for helping get math homework done and spelling studied with everyone's busy schedules.

# Enrichment Resource News

Here in ERC a new group of first grade students will be learning science concepts in the "Bubble-ology Unit". All of the students in first grade took the NNAT 2 test back in early December. This test which only takes 30 minutes is a nonverbal measure of a student's general ability. The results of this test will be available at the winter conference coming up in mid-February.

Our second graders are busy learning about our weather in their unit "and the Weatherman Says..." Weather is a fascinating topic for kids, and determining the condition of something you cannot see such as air is intriguing. This unit may culminate in a trip to the National Weather Center in Chanhassen. The Cognitive Abilities Test will be conducted with them in early March. A permission slip will be going home with them prior to the testing to explain the purpose of that ability testing.

The third graders are now learning about Paleontology. What came before is always a mystery, but when there was a fossil record left behind the mystery can be unraveled. Our third graders are learning about how paleontologists have pieced the fossil record together to make sense of the past.

The fourth grade students have finished up their unit on "Electricity and Magnetism" by building and lighting a model home. They are now beginning a study on matter in the "Chem 4 Kids Unit." Nothing should go boom, but lots of little pops and fizzes!

The fifth grade students busily built models of new modes of transportation from solar cars to hover crafts. They even tried their hand at constructing MagLev vehicles. They are preparing to work on a new unit "Hoax or Real?" In March they will be taking the Cognitive Abilities Test. This information from this test is utilized by the middle school as they determine appropriate levels of service for students, either G/T Smart or High Potential Smart in sixth, seventh and eighth grade.

Our four Lego League teams performed well at the tournament in St. Louis Park on Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our hope is that this program which has now expanded to all of the elementary schools in Richfield can expand to the middle school in the very near future. The Future Problem Solving teams are gearing up for the regional bowl being held at Richfield Middle School on Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>. The topic of the bowl will be Human Rights. Last year two of our teams advanced to the state bowl. We are hoping for similar results this year.



# Music Update

The music classes here at STEM have been busy Learning rhythms!

Kindergarten has been working on steady beat and finding their singing voices! We are also learning seasonal songs to sing at our SPARKFEST.

2nd and 3rd graders are busy learning half notes. 3rd graders are also reviewing sixteenth notes on the Orff and percussion instruments, and singing in canon.

4th and 5th grade music student have been learning sixteenth and eighth rhythms as well as dotted and syncopated rhythms. They have worked on 2-part harmony in canons and partner songs. 4th grade students are beginning to listen to music for their January field trip to Orchestra Hall!



**Please phone R-STEM when your child will be absent or late, even if you have already informed their teacher. This avoids a phone call to your home or work or your child having an unexcused absence on their record.**

**Please call 612-798-6600 and press #1 to leave a message (available 24 hours a day - 7 days a week)**



## R-STEM Calendar On Line

**See what is going on every day at R-STEM!!!**

**Check out our website at:  
[www.richfield.k12.mn.us/ris](http://www.richfield.k12.mn.us/ris)  
Click on the "CALENDAR" button on the right side of our home page.  
You will be able to check out events of the day and also upcoming events for the rest of the year, days off, etc.**

# R-STEM 2011-12 CALENDAR

## December

13-Student Council Meeting 2:15pm-Rm. 305  
13-R-STEM PTO Meeting 7:00pm  
19-The Works-Stone-9:00am  
19-The Works-McMillan-10:00am  
21-The Works-Thies-9:00am  
21-The Works-Munson-10:00am  
22-Jan. 2-Winter Break-NO SCHOOL

## January

3-School resumes after Winter Break  
4-Science Museum-3rd Grade-9:10am-12:30pm  
10-Student Council Meeting 2:15pm-Rm. 305  
10-R-STEM PTO Meeting 7:00pm  
11-Wood Lake-Hansen & Stalberger-12:05-1:45pm  
13-Wood Lake-Provost 9:45-11:45am  
16-Martin Luther King Jr. Day-NO SCHOOL  
17 & 18-Kindness Retreat 5th graders  
17-Wood Lake-McKeand & Peplow 9:45-11:45am  
18-Wood Lake-Awbrey & R. Pregler 11:50am-12:40pm  
19-Wood Lake-Erdmann & Steen 11:50am-12:40pm  
19-Kindergarten Round Up-STEM Cafeteria  
Last Names (A-M) 5:30pm (N-Z) 7:00pm  
24-Student Council Meeting 2:15pm-Rm. 305  
25-Orchestra Hall-4th Grade 9:15-11:30am  
26-Wood Lake-Anderson 11:45am-1:45pm  
27-Staff Development Day-NO SCHOOL  
30-Wood Lake-Allen & Cowdery 9:15-11:15am

## February

1-RBCU Field Trip-Stone 9:30-10:00am  
1-RBCU Field Trip-McMillan 10:05-10:35am  
1-Wood Lake-Dyer 11:45am-1:45pm  
2-RBCU Field Trip-Thies 9:30-10:05am  
2-RBCU Field Trip-Munson 10:05-10:35am  
3-Wood Lake-Baruch 11:45am-1:45pm  
7-Wood Lake-Larson 11:45am-1:45pm  
7-Student Council Meeting 2:15pm-Rm. 305  
7-R-STEM PTO Meeting 7:00pm  
8-Wood Lake-Sandvig 11:45am-1:45pm  
13-15-Scholastic Book Fair  
14-Wood Lake-Jacobson 11:45am-1:15pm  
15-Wood Lake-Ericson & Glick 9:15-11:15am  
15-Conferences 3:30-7:30pm  
16-Conferences 8:00am-8:00pm-NO SCHOOL  
17-NO SCHOOL

20-President's Day-NO SCHOOL

23-Woodlake-C. Pregler-11:45am-1:45pm  
28-Student Council Meeting-2:15pm Rm. 305

## March

2-Staff Development Day-NO SCHOOL  
7-Wood Lake-McMillan & Stone 9:00-10:40am  
8-Wood Lake-Munson & Thies 9:00-10:30am  
9-Report cards go home

12-Wood Lake-Mathers & Nelson 9:15-11:15am  
13-Wood Lake-Gerten 9:15-11:15am  
13-Student Council Meeting-2:15pm Rm. 305  
13-R-STEM PTO Meeting 7:00pm  
14-Vocal Music Demo-Gr. 3 & 4 9:00am  
14-Wood Lake-Lahren & Olson 9:15-11:15am  
15-Casual Picture Day  
16-Wood Lake-Gulland & Sellmeyer 9:15-11:15am  
19-School Board Meeting at STEM-7:00pm  
26-Wood Lake-Allen & Cowdery 9:15-11:15am  
27-Student Council Meeting-2:15pm Rm. 305  
29-Wood Lake-Hansen & Stalberger 12:05-1:45pm

## April

2-6-Spring Break-NO SCHOOL  
10-Student Council Meeting-2:15pm Rm. 305  
10-R-STEM PTO Meeting 7:00pm  
12-Wood Lake-Ericson & Glick 9:15-11:15am  
18-Vocal Music Demo-Gr. 1 & 2 9:00am  
19-Wood Lake-Anderson & Sharpe 11:45am-1:45pm  
23-Wood Lake-Larson & Sandvig 11:45am-1:40pm  
24-Student Council Meeting-2:15pm Rm. 305  
24 & 25-MCA Reading Tests-Gr. 3-5  
25-Wood Lake-McKeand 9:45-11:45am  
30-Wood Lake-McKeand & Provost 11:45am-1:45pm  
30-Wood Lake-Jacobson & C. Pregler-11:45am-1:45pm

## May

1-Wood Lake-R.Pregler & Steen-11:50am-1:40pm  
2-Wood Lake-Awbrey & Erdmann-10:50am-1:40pm  
3-Wood Lake-Gerten & Olson 9:15-11:15am  
3-Wood Lake-Baruch & Dyer 11:45am-1:45pm  
4-Staff Development Day-NO SCHOOL  
7-25-NWEA Map Testing (Gr. 3-5)  
7-Wood Lake-McMillan & Stone 9:00-10:40am  
8-Student Council Meeting-2:15pm Rm. 305  
8-R-STEM PTO Meeting 7:00pm  
9-Vocal Music Demos-Kindergarten 8:00 & 9:00am  
18-Wood Lake-Sellmeyer 9:15-11:15am  
22-Gr. K-2 Field Days (rain day-May 29)  
23-Gr. 3 & 4 Field Days (rain day-May 30)  
24-Gr. 5 Select Choir Concert 9:00am & 6:00pm  
25-Minnesota Zoo-Kindergarten-8:50am-1:30pm  
28-Memorial Day-NO SCHOOL  
31-5th Gr. Track & Field Day-RHS (rain day June 5)

## June

1-Wood Lake-Mathers & Nelson 9:15-11:15am  
4-Wood Lake-Gulland & Lahren 9:45-11:45am  
5-Veteran's Park-Kindergarten 9:45am-1:15pm  
6-5th Gr. Graduation-RHS Auditorium-10:00am  
6-LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

