



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

September 2011–Team Updates and Events

Kindergarten:

The Kindergarten is in full swing now that we have completed three weeks of school! We have been very busy learning the classroom routines and procedures as well as making new friends! The Kindergarten children enjoy the classroom jobs – especially walking the attendance folder to the office! We have met all of our special area teachers, school counselor, and principal. The children are having a blast learning the weekly vocabulary words, listening to stories, exploring the math times and thinking like a scientist! However, the most popular activities so far...snack, recess and the bus rides! We are definitely looking forward to cooler October weather, pumpkins and so much more!

First Grade:

Welcome back! The first grade teachers and students were very busy during the month of September. All of our boys and girls have adjusted to the daily life of a true first grader. Our theme for the month of September was apples and all first graders celebrated Johnny Appleseed's birthday with various apple activities throughout the day. Our reading groups have started and everyone is enjoying our new reading series, Literacy by Design. In Math, the children just finished a unit on comparing and measuring. The children learned how to compare, estimate, and measure using inches and centimeters. Our school's math specialist, Mrs. Krause, presented a lesson on liquid measurement. In this lesson, children learned about cups, pints, quarts and gallons. Our Science unit on the solar system took our first graders on a trip to outer space. They learned about the sun, the stars and the inner and outer planets. Next, the children will pretend to be astronauts and take a trip to the moon. In social studies, we are learning about maps. The children are learning how to create and read maps. In the area of writing, the first grade teachers are reviewing letter formation and proper pencil grip as we work our way through the alphabet. We are all very excited for our upcoming field trip on October 6th to Milky Way Farms. This field trip will connect to our theme for October...pumpkins! Happy Fall!

Second Grade:

It is difficult to believe that we have been back at school for a month already! September has been full of learning, activities, and FUN in second grade! We began the year writing Who Am I? riddles. Students followed the writing process: brainstorming, composing first drafts, and then final drafts. Stop by the second grade hallway and see if you can guess which apple has the clues for your second grader! There is a self-portrait under the clues, if you can't tell! Describing words and phrases were the focus of an acrostic poem lesson. Children wrote words for each letter of their first name to describe themselves. Another writing lesson taught this month was writing SUPER SENTENCES. Our young writers reviewed the two parts of a sentence and how to add adjectives and adverbs to create sentences telling about dinosaurs they had traced. Our classrooms have been filled with excitement and enthusiasm for our Social Studies dinosaur unit. Ask your student to tell you the names of the three dinosaur periods! In Science class, we have been using a beam balance and an equal arm balance to discover what it means to weigh. You should have seen the fabulous balanced mobiles they created! The second grade teachers are looking forward to a wonderful year with many more exciting lessons and events.

Third Grade:

Third grade is off to a great start this school year. We have been working hard at getting back into the swing of our classroom routines and adjusting to the third grade schedule which has specials in the morning and a later lunch from last year. The kids are doing a terrific job! In Language Arts we have begun our new reading program Literacy By Design. The program focuses on whole group, small group, then independent instruction. The students are enjoying the different variety of books the program provides and the connections they are able to make to their lives. In math all students are starting off with geometry and working on improving speed and accuracy with their basic facts.

Fourth Grade:

The Fourth Grade Students are off to a wonderful start this new school year! We have been working very hard during our first month of school. We spent the first couple weeks learning about each other, the school rules, and our daily classroom routines. We are excited to be "Bucket Fillers", and had a great time at our "Bucket Filler" assembly. The students are currently learning about the Five Themes of Geography in Social Studies, and we will soon move onto studying about early European explorations and settlements in North America. We will be using computer classroom for our Global Studies lessons, and the students are looking forward to "visiting" England, Spain, France, India, and Brazil during this school year. In Science, we are excited about our Ecosystems unit. We have already created our own terrariums and aquariums and have just finished adding our living organisms to their new environments. We are most curious to see what happens when we begin to upset the natural balance of our ecosystems due to certain types of pollutants! (Please do not worry we will be taking the living creatures out of the ecosystems prior to polluting them). To complement our studies in Science, we have planned a trip to the Camden Aquarium on October 21st. As you peek inside the classrooms during Language Arts, you will likely see the students engaged in small teacher led reading groups, or an assortment of different types of spelling, grammar, and/or writing activities. It has been a great first month of school, and we are very excited for all the fun and exciting learning events we will encounter throughout the rest of the school year!

Special & Support Area Updates

Physical Education

We have had a wonderful start to our Physical Education year! Kindergarteners are working on spatial awareness, locomotor skills and being introduced to ball skills. First and second graders have been working on more advanced ball skills, fitness, teamwork and some basic game strategies. Students in third and fourth grade have worked on throwing, catching, fitness exercises, kicking, teamwork, cooperation, social skills/responsibilities and more advanced game concepts. All parents are encourage to play games with their children that involve throwing, catching, and kicking a variety of balls. Just a reminder - please don't forget to send your child to school with sneakers on PE days so that they can fully participate.



October Events

- 3rd–5th–ERB Testing
- 6th–1st Grade Field Trip to Milky Way Farm
- 10th–No School
- 13th–Mother Goose Assembly for Kindergarten
- Week of 17th–Book Fair
- Week of 17th–Dictionary Week
- 19th–Mark Kistler Cultural Arts Program
- 24th - Scary Gym
- 31st–Halloween Parade and Parties

