

# Buzzing Around

January 2009  
Pine Bluffs  
Elementary School

Volume 1 Issue 5



## Principal's Corner



Suddenly, it seems, we are in the second half of the school year! Yikes! We are on the downhill side of the year and there is still so much to do!

This year, we have decided to have another optional parent/teacher conference day on February 15. This conference is not so much about report cards but more focused on student progress toward meeting the grade level goals by the end of the year. Teachers will notify parents that they feel they need to visit with to set up a time to meet on February 15. Parents may also request a conference with the teacher that day if the teacher does not request one. Within the next week or so, conference requests will be sent out. If you receive one, please respond as soon as possible so that teachers can get schedules firmed up.

February is just around the corner and that means spring will soon be here. With spring comes our state assessment, PAWS, which is given each year to students in grades 3-12. At our Parent Advisory Council meeting, parents suggested that we do some kind of parent meeting about PAWS so parents will understand more about the assessment. The testing window for PAWS begins March 8, so we will plan on holding a PAWS for Parents meeting sometime toward the end of February/beginning of March. More information about the PAWS for Parents night will be available later in the month.

Our students continue to do well at Pine Bluffs Elementary, as evidenced by our awards assembly last week. We are all so very proud of them and know they will continue to work hard during this second semester

## Important Events

January 15 - End of Second Quarter

February 10 - Laramie County Spelling Bee

February 15 - No School - Inservice Day/

Parent-Teacher Conferences

February 17 - Class Pictures

February 26 - Early Release -  
Regional Basketball




## Classroom Happenings

Mrs. Fornstrom's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class wrapped up a unit of study on the moon by completing a fun and yummy activity about the phases of the moon! Students learned about the eight phases of the moon which include the New Moon, Waxing Crescent, First Quarter, Waxing Gibbous, Full Moon, Waning Gibbous, Last Quarter, and Waning Crescent.

Students demonstrated their knowledge by recreating the phases of the moon with Oreo cookies.





# Buzzing Around

January 2009  
Pine Bluffs  
Elementary School

Volume 1 Issue 5

## Parent Advisory Council



This week, our Parent Advisory Council met to give input to our school on several issues. Superintendent Cozort has proposed a calendar idea on which he would like feedback. This alternate calendar would provide seven additional days off of school which, in the past, have been high absentee days. These are days when many staff and students, including elementary, are gone because of travel to sporting events far away. Many of our staff are coaches or parents of high school students and have substitute teachers in for them on these days. Many students are pulled out of school to either participate in the sport or go with parents to watch siblings participate.

The Parent Advisory Council felt that these “sports conflict days” were a good idea. They felt that with so many students and teachers gone on those days, the quality of instruction goes down. They felt the number of these days are minimal and, as long as we were still able to get out before Memorial Day, it was a good solution.

Council members also reviewed the plans for the new playground. The entire playground will be redone this summer. All of the asphalt will be dug up and replaced with smoother asphalt. Landscaping will be done along the south side of the gym and down the hill to the playground. This will help keep water from running down on the playground and eroding the surface. The pea gravel under the playground equipment will be replaced with engineered wood shavings and, best of all, the playground equipment will be replaced with new, safer equipment! This will include a large play structure with various towers, slides, and climbing apparatuses.

Other building projects were also discussed. The building’s electrical systems will be upgraded to meet the increasing demands of technology. The district has also received a large energy grant that will be used to replace as many of the single-pane windows on the north and west sides of the building as possible. All of these projects will begin as soon as school is out. Hopefully, they will be completed before school starts in August.

The Council discussed parent trainings that they would like our school to provide. One idea was a parent night right before PAWS begins to explain the state assessment, what students will be tested on, and how parents can help their children do their best. A Literacy Night is also being planned to share ideas with parents on how to help students in the five areas of reading.

If you have any questions or comments you would like to make about any of these issues, please contact school or any of the Council members. The Council members are: Laura Fornstrom, Angela Robson, Gabriella Garcia, Jamie Thurston, Alanna Eleshuk, Sharon Duffey, and Sue Stevens.