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November, 2011

ELEMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS: "SPECIALS"

ELEMENTARY SPECIALS:

- **Art**
- **Music**
- **Library**
- **Gym**
- **Spanish**
- **Technology**

As the first quarter of our school year wraps up, we wanted to highlight the work our elementary students have been doing in their "specials"--the subjects they study in addition to the core areas of math, language arts, science, social studies and religion.

This update is going out to **all families**, including families of toddlers and pre-primary students--many of our families with younger students have inquired about our elementary program and want to learn about the exciting opportunities their child(ren) will have in the near future. As always, please don't hesitate to contact us with your questions!

Art

Mrs. Mary Quick has always used creative tools to teach children about religion, but this year, Mrs. Quick is also teaching **art class**.

- Students have learned about primary and secondary



Mary Quick
Religion, Art



Sarah Brown
Music, Library

colors as well as contrasting colors.

- For the World Day of Peace, students created peace banners.
- 3rd and 4th grade also made 3-D pumpkins for Halloween.
- Next, students will be working with textures and patterns and will create weaving projects such as placemats.

Music

Mrs. Sarah Brown joined SJA last year as our music teacher and continues to bring a special 'harmony' to our school.

- 1st and 2nd Graders have been learning the note names, note values and rhythm while learning fun new songs.
- 3rd and 4th graders recently began playing recorders and are reviewing note names and values.
- Currently, students are working on a play about the 'Jesse Tree' to be performed with our Christmas Mass in December.

Library

When she isn't busy in the music room, **Mrs. Sarah Brown** can be found in the SJA library.

- Currently, the 1st and 2nd graders are learning the different areas of the library and the process for checking out books.
- 3rd and 4th graders have been enjoying the Spiderwick Chronicles and learning how to use the library for research.
- For Halloween, students made their own bookmark; for Christmas, students will be reading age-appropriate Christmas stories.

Physical Education

Patricia Ascorbe is a elementary lunch and recess supervisor at SJA and became our new **P.E. teacher** in early October. Miss Ascorbe is currently in Graduate school at Siena Heights University studying Counseling Education. She has been an athlete her whole life, playing basketball and soccer. She has also coached high school JV basketball in Miami, FL. Students



Patricia Ascorbe
Phys. Ed.

have gym class twice a week for 45 minutes.

- The 1st and 2nd grade are working on motor skills, including jumping, skipping, etc.
- The 3rd and 4th grade have been playing classic games, including dodge ball and 4-square.
- Next quarter, students will learn the importance of good nutrition and living a healthy life.
- Future plans include working on techniques in basketball and soccer, concentrating on dribbling, passing and shooting.

Spanish

Elementary students have Spanish class twice a week with **Miss Jessica Oquendo**. Miss Oquendo is a native of Puerto Rico and an alum of SHU with degrees in theatre and speech communication. She is currently enrolled in the Montessori pre-primary teacher training program and spends her mornings working as a Montessori assistant.



Jessica Oquendo
*Spanish, Montessori
Pre-primary Assistant*

- 1st and 2nd graders have learned numbers, days of the week, body parts, conversational skills and children's songs.
- 3rd and 4th graders have been reviewing numbers, days of the week and months of the year. They are also practicing conversation.
- Recently, students drew pictures of their favorite things and then learned the Spanish words to describe them to share with the class.
- Students are learning the geography of many Spanish-speaking countries to correct the common misconception among our students that all Spanish-speaking people are from Mexico. 😊
- Visitors from the Dominican Republic and from Venezuela will come to discuss culture and even teach a little salsa dancing!
- Future plans include learning about Christmas traditions in Spanish-speaking countries.

Technology

Technology and computer skills help children explore the core

subjects areas in a new and exciting way.



Sheila Wathen
*Webmaster &
Technology Assistant*

- 1st and 2nd graders are using [Skype](#) (a video-call program) to talk with 2nd grader Jonah Heckman, who is living in Norway this year. The Heckman's children attended SJA last year and will return next fall.
- 3rd and 4th graders are using a [document camera](#) (received as part of an LISD teacher grant) as a way to share work and create a deeper understanding of curriculum.
- This year students will be also be using [Google Earth](#) as the 1st and 2nd graders study Scandinavia and the 3rd and 4th grade study England.



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