

Edison



3350 Quitman St. • 720-424-7780 • <http://edison.dpsk12.org>

March 8, 2012

From the Principal

Dear Edison Community,

So...what is next? Are the Community Forums over?

As the principal of Edison, I am so greatly thankful for such an invested and committed community. A community that can come together to talk, through tears and screams, sadness and happiness, and in the end, agree upon a vision, a value system and an educational program that serves a diverse group of children. Many parents and teachers have invested hours and hours this year to share concerns and problem solve. With this type of commitment and investment, there is no option but to create the best school possible! I want to formally thank every parent and teacher who has taken a risk and shared their worries, frustration, successes, ideas and appreciations with me.

So, what is next? We have two more "Community Forums" scheduled, and we hope you all can come.

- HGT program information evening – March 20 from 6:00-8:00 PM in the auditorium at Edison. The Advanced Kindergarten, GT program and HGT program will be explained and defined.
- Parent volunteer appreciation breakfast – May 3 at 7:45 AM in the auditorium at Edison. We would like to express our appreciation of Bill Fulton's support and all the support, volunteerism, and feedback we have received from our parent community and PTA. This will be our last "Community Forum."

How will we continue our work? Well, we have some great plans! We will continue the communication plan that was established this year, including our very informative website (thank you Matt & Lisa Meeks of Moo Interactive!) and our monthly newsletters (thank you Matt & Lisa Meeks and Sara Watterson). We will have a Lawn Party Back to School Night (date TBD) which will provide parents and children an opportunity to meet their teachers and see classrooms. Then, in the Fall, we will have an Edison information evening which will provide parents an opportunity to learn about all the wonderful experiences for their children at Edison. We will also continue our community gatherings once a month. As always, I welcome your suggestions and feedback – please share additional ideas!

Again, thank you for the commitment you have made to our community.

Sincerely,

Sally Whitelock, Principal

Leadership:

Sally Whitelock, Principal

Sally_Whitelock@dpsk12.org

Nadine Ritchotte, Assistant Principal

Nadine_Ritchotte@dpsk12.org

Secretaries:

Esther Martinez & Michelle Miller

School day:

8:45 AM - 3:30 PM

Upcoming Events:

March 15

PTA meeting - Auditorium, 6:00-7:30 PM

Learn about summer camps! Additional EdFest items to be raffled off. Pizza and childcare provided.

March 6-8 & 13-15

TCAP grades 3-5

March 20

HGT program information evening - Auditorium
6:00-8:00 PM

March 22

Used Book Fair during the school day

Art and Music Performance

March 23

TCAP party for 3rd-5th graders

March 26-30

Spring Break – No School

April 5

Community Gathering - Library, 4:00-4:30 PM
CSC meeting - Library, 4:30-5:30 PM

April 12

PTA meeting - Auditorium, 6:00-7:30 PM

April 13

RIF book distribution

April 19

Author's Tea - Auditorium , 4:00-5:00 PM

Edison's School Vision

On September 24, 2011 a handful of parents and teachers joined Bill Fulton, facilitator, and Edison's leadership, Sally Whitelock and Nadine Ritchotte, to review school achievement and enrollment data, identify hopes and dreams for the Edison school community and establish a school vision which could be embraced by the entire school community. At this summit, the community group challenged themselves to create a vision that honored the work of Edison's committed teaching staff, while also providing a statement that would describe our true vision. The vision statement that was agreed upon and later approved by Edison's CSC is the following:

Edison Elementary is committed to being a collaborative learning community where rigorous academics and character education ensure the development of the whole child. We design learning experiences to meet the unique learning needs of each student so that all of our children develop 21st Century skills: critical thinking and reasoning, information literacy, self-direction, collaboration and invention/innovation. We celebrate curiosity and creativity in the development of life-long learners.

Since the approval of our new vision, Edison's teaching staff and leadership, CSC, PTA, and community has worked hard to keep this vision in mind as decisions are made and achievements are met.

"Quality Education For All Under One Roof"

A Proposal from Edison Teachers to Address Community Forum Concerns

Edison is committed to providing a quality educational program to all students, regardless of educational needs. At Edison, we serve children from diverse cultural backgrounds with typical educational needs, special educational needs, English language development needs and students with GT and HGT needs. We are committed to intervening for and challenging all students to develop to their full potential.

Though we believe that there should be equity in education and that all students must be prepared for middle school, high school and college or career, teachers must differentiate to meet the educational needs and learning styles of **all students**.

- **All students** will have opportunities to go on field trips, participate in hands on learning and projects and be provided with engaging learning experiences.
- **All teachers** will instruct toward the state standards and use the DPS curriculum, while supplementing with additional resources to intervene and/or challenge students at their appropriate levels.
- Teachers will use the Response to Intervention model with **all students**, ensuring students progress academically, receive grade level instruction and instruction based on current instructional needs and that data is driving all instructional decisions.

***All students will receive small group reading instruction daily at their reading level. Those below grade level will receive support by the special education or intervention teachers.**

We believe in teaching the whole child. All students need to be actively engaged in learning and instructed and supported in developing positive social, friendship and collaborative skills.

- All teachers will facilitate Morning Meetings in which students learn and practice community building, social/friendship skills, problem solving and working in collaborative groups.
- All teachers will use cooperative learning strategies to support students in collaboration skills: communication, social skills, team work and deepening students' understanding of concepts through discussion and discourse.
- All students will have opportunities to participate in hands on learning activities and do projects as part of their learning.
- Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS), including but not limited to CARES, will be used across the school to support positive choices and active engagement in learning.

Edison houses multiple educational programs for students. One of these is the HGT program. We understand that students who are identified as HGT have unique needs and we are committed to ensuring that our program meets the needs and learning styles of this population of students. In order to meet the needs of **all students** as described above, we propose the following approach to the HGT magnet program:

Intermediate classrooms (grades 3-5):

- Flooding (flexible grouping based on current instructional needs) in reading and math will occur to meet the individual academic needs of **all students**. There will be one group of students at each grade level and subject (reading and math) that uses curriculum and learns skills one year above grade level. While this flooding group was primarily designed to serve GT and HGT students, students showing the ability to be in these flooding groups will be served whether or not they are HGT identified. Additionally, GT and HGT identified students who are struggling with a subject may be ability grouped to best suit their needs.
- Projects and hands on learning with differentiation and choice for all students will be provided in the study of science and social studies.
- One classroom per grade level will serve all HGT identified students.
- Due to limited resources, if Edison's HGT designated classroom has additional space for students after all HGT identified students are placed, it will be filled with students based on data, both GT and achievement. Teachers will collaborate on all decisions regarding placement.

Primary classrooms (grades 1-2):

- Flooding (flexible grouping based on current instructional needs) in reading and/or math will occur to meet the individual academic needs of all students.
- Projects and hands on learning, with differentiation and choice for all students, will be provided in the study of science and social studies.
- Edison will cluster group HGT students and GT students. Typically, relatively few children are identified as HGT and GT in the lower grades. Cluster grouping is an approach to classroom assignments where children identified as HGT and GT are assigned to classrooms that house their HGT and GT peers. If, as in recent years, a small number of children are identified, they will all be in one classroom together. If the group of children identified as GT or HGT is large, children will still be assigned to classrooms with their peers, but groups of these children may be placed in more than one classroom per grade level.

Advanced Kindergarten:

- Students will be tested and placed in the Advanced Kindergarten classroom by the Denver Public Schools Gifted and Talented Department. This is not a site-based decision and as these children move into first grade and beyond, they are not necessarily identified as GT or HGT until tested and identified GT or HGT at the district level.

Beyond these solutions, we understand that GT and HGT identified children often learn at a fast pace, read at advanced levels, have advanced vocabularies and have unique social-emotional needs. To that end, all teachers at Edison are committed to being trained in and using the following best practices:

Acceleration and curriculum compacting:

- First and second grade HGT identified students will be taught at a faster pace. By third grade, students performing one year or more above grade level will be instructed with a curriculum one grade level above in Everyday Mathematics.
- In whole group reading instruction, students performing one year or more above grade level will be instructed with a curriculum one year above that of the typical student in that grade level. In small group reading instruction, students will be placed at their ability level.
- In science and social studies, teachers may teach the curriculum at a faster pace (accelerated and compacted) and will teach concepts at a deeper level and with a higher level of literature and a focus on research.

Enrichment:

- Teachers will provide in-depth instruction and learning of science and social studies units, going deeper than grade level standards require.
- In science and social studies, teachers will use higher levels of literature to teach and support critical thinking, analytical reasoning and research.
- Teachers will provide students who have met grade level proficiencies with opportunities for independent enrichment learning projects, scaffolding so that students learn the research process and are encouraged to use critical thinking and reasoning.
- Teachers will teach grade level content with an emphasis on a high level of transfer of knowledge into application. This may be apparent in the use of real world problems and problem solving.

Extra resources: Because we get a small amount of funding for housing the HGT program at Edison, we are able to provide our teachers with some extra resources. These include, but are not limited to:

GT Itinerant Teacher:

- The GT itinerant teacher will co-teach with or offer resources to **all teachers** at Edison to ensure that all students are challenged.
- The GT itinerant teacher will provide challenge (pull-out) groups to students to support student need.
- The GT itinerant teacher will mentor and collaborate with teachers to ensure that all teachers are prepared and have the resources to challenge students.

Professional Development:

- Since students who are identified GT/HGT have unique needs, **all teachers** at Edison will receive training in best practices around serving this population.

How Edison Ensures Quality Instruction

There is strong educational research which states that the most highly effective and highest achieving schools have three characteristics in common: 1) academic press – a specific, never ending focus on rigorous academic instruction for all students; 2) collective efficacy – the belief that all educators are equally responsible and work together to provide a quality education for all students; and 3) a community of trust between teachers and parents in which parents trust that their child's teachers are highly qualified and will do everything possible to meet their child's needs and in which teachers trust that parents will work with them as a team to provide a positive educational experience for their students. With this in mind, the leadership and teachers are committed to every teacher having strong instructional skills to challenge every student at Edison. In order to establish this, the School Leadership Team regularly discusses the district expectations, the goals of the school and the professional development needs of the staff at Edison. There are several things that DPS and Edison are putting into place to train, support, and evaluate teachers.

LEAP – DPS is currently in its first year of a new teacher support and evaluation system called Leading Effective Academic Progress (LEAP). This new feedback and evaluation system provides teachers with high expectations in the areas of learning environment, instruction, professionalism, collaboration, and student achievement. This year, DPS and Edison have piloted the administrator and peer observer components of this system, with a focus on teacher growth. Teachers have received feedback from school leadership and outside peer observers regarding their classroom management, classroom culture, use of high impact instructional moves (such as questioning, technology, descriptive feedback), ability to differentiate, instruction of academic language, instruction of 21st century skills, and content knowledge. Based on teacher and leadership feedback, DPS is making improvements to this system which will remain in a pilot phase next year. Teachers and leadership at Edison are excited about this growth model which we believe is helping to improve instructional practices in our classrooms.

Professional Development – This year, the teachers at Edison committed to three main professional development opportunities which include:

1. Continue to improve our ability to provide high quality writing instruction through coaching, training and collaborative planning. We participated in Writing Alive trainings, lesson studies with peers of writing lessons, and collaboratively planned integration of writing into science and social studies.
2. Improve math achievement through increased use of data to differentiate instruction and curricular conversations. We participated in math data team meetings, discussed ways to improve math instruction, and participated in cooperative learning trainings.
3. Improve student engagement through daily morning meetings, use of cooperative learning, and instruction of 21st century skills. Kagan Cooperative learning training was one training that many teachers participated in.

Next year, we are committed to continuing to improve instruction in all of our classrooms in all content areas through strong differentiation skills and strategies. All teachers at Edison will receive quality professional development in best instructional strategies to serve students with gifted and talent needs, as well as other learning styles. We will attend GT conferences, attend DPS offered training for teachers of gifted students, and provide professional development related to differentiation in-house at Edison.

Through the support of the DPS evaluation system, professional development offered by DPS, coaching, attending conferences, and in-house professional development at Edison, we will take the next step to ensure that all teachers provide a quality education for all students at Edison.

HGT Program at Edison

Though Edison is a neighborhood school and we strive to provide a quality education for all students, we also have a magnet Highly Gifted and Talented program. Therefore, it is important that we are able to communicate how our HGT program is similar to and different from the traditional educational program at Edison. We will be holding a parent information evening on Tuesday, March 20 to provide this information and answer questions.

We have had several questions about our HGT program and would like to answer some of them for parents. Here is a short question and answer:

Q: What is HGT?

A: The Denver Public Schools Highly Gifted Program provides an educational option for identified students in grades 1-8. Students identified as HGT demonstrate exceptional *intellectual ability and academic potential* (in the top 1-3 %), with related social/emotional needs, that exceed those addressed in a regular classroom. Identified students are offered a full-day school experience in one of nine magnet sites. The program is designed for students who have *academic* needs beyond their grade level and who need the support and challenge provided by a peer group with similar interests and abilities. It is a program for students who have *the most extreme gifted needs*. This program is not specifically designed for students with abilities in the arts, leadership or creativity, although highly gifted students may also have these strengths.

Q: At Edison, what is the same for traditional students and students identified as HGT?

A: All students at Edison are:

- Instructed toward grade level standards
- Provided with differentiated support, based on their needs
- Challenged daily in reading and math through the flooding model
- Instructed with: DPS curriculum, Everyday Math, Writing Alive, Houghton-Mifflin reading and skills, Reading workshop, TCI, Tracks
- Provided opportunities for projects – one for each science or social studies unit
- Provided opportunities to develop 21st century skills through the use of technology, projects, presentations, etc.
- Provided field trips to enhance learning
- Instructed with cooperative learning strategies
- Supported socially through Class Meetings, Bully Proofing, and PBIS

Q: What is different for students with HGT needs at Edison?

A: Students who are identified as HGT have diverse needs, therefore, we provide the following:

- Faster pace through curriculum (less practice, curriculum compacting)
- Enrichment activities and projects once students have demonstrated knowledge of grade level expectations – Going deeper through research, projects, technology, literature
- Advanced grade level (higher grade level) of reading and/or math curriculum if appropriate
- Co-teaching with the GT itinerant teacher to support critical thinking and reasoning
- Small group instruction with classroom teacher or GT teacher to challenge and support students (literature circle, etc)
- Daily social skills support and encouragement
- Envisions – Grades 4/5 – Independent choice based projects that integrate reading, writing, math and individual interests.

Please join us on March 20 to learn more!

Check Your Student's AR Progress On-line

All 1st-5th grade students at Edison are working hard to achieve their AR (Accelerated Reader) goals. Parents can check their progress online at:

<https://hosted252.renlearn.com/245193/homeconnect/>

The user name is your child's Student ID number preceded by "DPS;" for example: DPS123456

The password is your child's date of birth formatted as: mmddyyyy. For example, if your child's birthday is January 9, 2004, the password is 01092004

Contact your child's teacher if you need assistance with the user name and password.

Student Safety “Bucket” From The Community Forum

Student Safety was one of the original “buckets” brought up at the first Community Forum meeting. After some discussion in subsequent Community Forums, it was decided that this “bucket” should be absorbed by the Student Engagement Committee, a group that already existed to work on the climate and culture at Edison. The Student Engagement Committee is made up of one teacher from each grade level, two special education teachers, one specials teacher and one administrator. We would love parents to serve on the committee as well and have sent out invites multiple times, but, as of yet, have not had any parent volunteers.

In our first year (2010-2011), the SEC accomplished many things. The committee created a list of behavioral expectations for every area of our school and gave them to teachers to share with their students. We pared down “CARRES” to “CARES” to provide a good example for our students. We put some playground rules into place and decided that the whole staff should do Morning Meetings to teach social skills and bullying-proofing to Edison students. We held a super-successful Enrichment Day in a different manner than it had been done in the past, changed how “gotchas” worked and planned a TCAP Success party for our students. We adopted a new logo for our school which was drawn by a third grade student and selected through a school-wide vote. It was a good start, but the work was just beginning.

The SEC got to work even earlier this year (2011-2012) with many great ideas to implement. The committee refined our school-wide behavioral expectations and we set up a schedule in the first week of school for all students to visit the areas that we felt needed the most work (cafeteria, playground, bathrooms, hallways, and indoor days) and to hear and experience those expectations with adults from all over the school. The committee also created a video with student actors from all grades modeling the expected behaviors in these selected areas so that teachers could use the video in classrooms as a reminder of expectations at times when students needed to be reminded, such as after long vacations. A plan for our playground was created at this time. We used cones to create separate “game” areas on the field and all adults on duty are required to wear orange vests, so that they are easily recognizable to students.

Students who misbehave get a warning first. If there is a second example of the misbehavior, the student sits out for five minutes and fills out a refocus form. At the third incident, the student loses the rest of recess. We’ve tried very hard to make these expectations clear and consistent for all of our adult staff and all of our students. We’ve noticed a great change in behavior on the playground, just from enforcing these expectations.

Morning Meetings were refined in that the SEC found/created a lesson bank for teachers to use in the first six weeks of school. The lesson bank contained lessons to teach each of the CARES character traits. It also contained a full Olweus Bully Proofing Curriculum. Teachers were asked to hold Morning Meetings daily and to address these two issues completely. This creates a common language for our students and the adults in our building to continue to discuss these issues as they come up. Once again, consistency is the key to success.

The SEC decided to continue Enrichment Day and actually to expand to two Enrichment Days this year, one in the spring and one in the fall. We expanded each Enrichment Day to a full day, so that teachers could take students on field trips or work on all day projects. The Enrichment Days were funded by both the PTA and by parent donations of \$10. This funding paid for all transportation, admittance fees and materials needed.

The committee, as a whole, felt the “Gotcha” system needed revamping, so we started the Edison School Store. Students can now earn Edison bucks for showing CARES traits and save them to spend at the school store. We are currently trying to find ways to fund the school store so that it is sustainable, as we’ve noticed a huge change in behavioral data (ten out of school suspensions/2 in school suspensions as of the end of February 2012 as compared to 17 out of school suspensions/eight in school suspensions as of the end of February 2011). We believe that this change is caused, in part, by these examples of positive behavior support that the committee has put into place.

Edison’s new online store is open! The store features tons of new Edison swag, including t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, bags, mugs and much, much more!

PTA receives 15% of every sale and 100% of that goes directly to enrich our kids’ Edison experience including funding the Edison Earnings store for students at school.

<http://www.zazzle.com/edisonelementary>

Here’s What You Might Have Missed In The Eagles Roost Blog!

[Get Your Edfest Tickets Online Before The Deadline!](#)

February 24, 2012

[Edison Green Team In The News!](#)

February 21, 2012

[Boxtops Are Due Tomorrow, February 17Th!](#)

February 16, 2012

[Check Out The New Edfest Flyer In Your Thursday Folder](#)

February 16, 2012

[We Are Community Minded At Edison!](#)

February 10, 2012

[Community Forum Update](#)

February 8, 2012

[You Are Invited To The 3-Dimensional Art Exhibition 2012](#)

February 7, 2012

[Family Valentine’s Dance Sponsored By Nostalgic Homes](#)

February 6, 2012

[Edison Online Store Launch](#)

February 3, 2012

TCAP Celebration!!!!



3rd, 4th and 5th grade parents, we need your help!!!!

Your students have worked super hard on preparing for the TCAP. We would like to award them with an awesome party for doing their best! There will be Minute to Win It games, ice cream sundaes and many more fun activities... but we need your help! We are looking for a few good volunteers (10-20 or even more, actually) to help us with the party which will be held on March 23rd at 2pm.

We are also asking parents to donate ice cream toppings for our sundae party: hot fudge, whip cream, strawberries, butterscotch, anything you like on YOUR ice cream.

Please sign up below to donate toppings and bring them to the office by March 22nd. Thank you for your help!!!!

Yes, I can help. I would like to:

_____ donate my time on March 23rd from 2-3:30.

_____ donate ice cream toppings. I will bring

signature

PTA Corner

Did you know that EdFest 2011 enabled PTA to grant \$13,000 to Edison for the 2011-2012 instructional supplies and another \$10,000 for RIF, field trip transportation, enrichment scholarships, school enrichment days, school directory, t-shirts, Thursday folders, the Edison Earnings Store, teacher needs, etc.? A very special thank you goes out to the EdFest 2012 sponsors, volunteers and guests! The auction team is working hard on finalizing the numbers, so stay tuned to the Edison website and next month's newsletter for the grand total! EdFest 2012 turned out to be a very successful evening, but there are still items to be auctioned off. Please take a look at the list below. These items will be re-auctioned on March 15th, starting at 3:00 pm, all the way through the PTA meeting which goes from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, in the auditorium. The PTA meeting will also have guest speakers from various summer camps and other summer camp information. Childcare and pizza will be provided.

Comedy Works tickets

- Movie Night with Mr. Baltz and Principal Whitelock 6pm-9pm on Friday, April 13th at Edison.
- Baseball Clinic with Edison 4th graders, Owen Smith and Sam Vogl
- Attend a movie with Ms. Standlee and Ms. Turner. Date TBD
- Prints by Kris Fry "Best Friend Worst Enemy"
- Hiking with Ms. Wales and Mr. Allen
- Pizza and Game night at Michelle Miller's house
- Yoga mat, eye pillow and one year elite membership to yogadownload.com
- General Pest Control \$125 value
- Canvas with calligraphy quote
- El Camino and Kismet Ladies Night Out
- Framed Print by Dolores Depalo

- Stargazer Lily as a Watercolor
- Yoga for Young Warriors Summer Camp Certificate
- 3 Framed New York Art Pieces
- 1 month Unlimited Core Power Yoga
- 3-Private Personal Training at Fitness Together
- 3-Semi private Personal Training at Fitness Together
- 6 hours math tutoring
- 3- hour private pilates lessons at Joie de Vivre Pilates
- Hair cuts and Highlights at The Firehaus
- Classroom socials

Upcoming events and teacher needs:

Used Book Sale

March 22nd

Auditorium

Volunteers and books are needed.

Please visit the following link to sign up for a shift: <http://www1.mysignup.com/cgi-bin/view.cgi?datafile=edisonusedbooksale>

The Mile High 5

April 22nd

Strap on those running shoes and run for Edison!

Sponsors are needed for this event.

-You can register at: <http://brown.dpsk12.org/>

Totally Taste of Tennyson

April 28th

Break out your best 80's wear and spend the evening on Tennyson Street.

Sponsors are needed for this event.

**Volunteer sign up coming soon

Edison Earnings Store

Drop off box is in front of the office

The Edison Earnings store is in need of donations as well as a volunteer to assist Ms. Ritchotte every other Friday morning from 8:00 am - 8:50 a.m.

Art Classroom

Drop off box is in front of the office

Donations of small cardboard containers or inserts, single ply cardboard sheets, cardboard towel tubes, wooden shapes for building, fabric not being used, cotton stuffing, buttons and small paint shirts for primary students.

Please contact ptaedisondenver@gmail.com for further information. Would you like to be added to the PTA volunteer list and find out the inside scoop on events at Edison? You can do so by contacting the Edison PTA at the above email address.



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 <http://edison.dpsk12.org/?feed=rss2>