

Principal Kennections

Abby Kennell, Principal

Welcome Back to School!

I am thrilled and honored to serve our students, families, and community for **CC Mason Elementary IB World School**. I want to thank each and every one of our community members for all your support as we manage so many changes here at CC Mason. We have experienced huge changes this year, beginning with a new Principal, new staff members, a new secure vestibule, new procedures, etc. With those changes comes uncertainty but with your support and trust, we have had an exceptionally smooth start!

It is important for me to share a little about myself so you better understand who I am and what I value as a Principal. I have lived in the Cedar Park community since I was 2 years old. I attended Cypress Elementary, Leander Junior High, and graduated from Leander High School. I earned my Bachelor's in Applied Learning and Development with a minor in Special Education from the University of Texas at Austin. After a couple years of teaching, I knew I wanted to make a greater impact in our schools and decided to go to graduate school. I earned my Master's through the University of Texas at Austin's highly ranked Principalship Program. I have taught 3rd grade and 5th grade at Rutledge Elementary, served as Science Curriculum Specialist for Leander ISD and most recently served as the Reagan Elementary Assistant Principal. I have a strong passion for people (our students, staff, and community), instruction, and lead with a servant's heart.

Personally, I am married to an amazing and supportive husband, Stephen. We are twice blessed with boy/girl twins that are a little over two years old. Logan is our boy and Keller is our girl. We look forward to our kids attending the best school in the nation!

Upon being named Principal of CC Mason, I have worked to better understand the needs of the campus. The journey started with a tour of the community to learn more about the students we serve and where they live. We worked to establish a solid Leadership Team with a purpose of building strong systems centered around student learning and safety. As a campus, we will spend the year creating a clear focus on improving student learning. This work will be shared with our campus Site-Base Team. In addition, the campus is up for reauthorization for our IB PYP status during the 2017-2018 school year. We will begin the required self study this school year to help us better prepare for the reauthorization.

Thank you for trusting us to serve you and your sweet children. We look forward to an amazing school year!

With kindest regards, *Abby Kennell*

	PTO President	Upcoming Events
<p>Welcome back Mason Mustangs! We hope each of you had a restful and fun summer. Your PTO has been hard at work to make sure this year is one of the best yet. I want to share three immediate opportunities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We are introducing a new PTO “perks” membership program. When you join the PTO for just \$10 for an individual, \$18 for a family, you will receive a membership card. We will be announcing events throughout the year where you can receive a FREEBIE just by showing your card. 2. This year we have a brand new red Mason Mustang school shirt. It is awesome to see so many of you wearing them and showing off your school spirit! Your first “perk” when you join the PTO is to receive a \$2 discount on your shirt - \$10 instead of \$12. Every Friday is SPIRIT DAY so make sure you pick up red Mason shirts for your kids and you. You can order shirts - and soon other C.C. Mason spirit wear - online at http://mason.my-pta.org. 3. Your PTO is fueled by volunteers, and we always need more. We all have different strengths and gifts to offer and we can put your talents to good use. Whether you want to help at events, assist with fundraising and sponsor outreach, or serve on the baking committee ... there is a place for you. <p>For more information on volunteering, please contact Victoria Jimenez at victoria.botello12@gmail.com.</p> <p>We are so excited about this year with you and your precious kiddos!</p> <p>All the best, <i>Shannon Darby</i></p>		<p>9/8 Watch DOGS Pizza Party</p> <p>9/12 Grandparent’s Lunch</p> <p>9/23 Donuts With Dad</p> <p>9/26 Catalog/Cookie Dough Fundraiser</p> <p>10/29 MasonFest Fall Carnival</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Spirit Nights</p> <p>9/1 PDQ Spirit Night 9/21 Dairy Queen Night 10/6 PDQ Spirit Night 10/19 Dairy Queen Night</p>
		<p>Contact Us</p> <p>WEB http://mason.my-pta.org</p> <p>FACEBOOK http://facebook.com/ccmasonpto</p> <p>EMAIL Masonptopresident@gmail.com</p>

PTO Board Updates

Family Nights by Roxanne Funes and Dinita Caldwell

Hello Families! The Family Nights Committee has been meeting over the summer to plan events and activities for you to enjoy throughout the year. Our focus this year is giving back to our families as a thank you for your support of the PTO. Some of our ideas include considering hosting family events on Saturdays during the day to free up your evening schedules. Once our plan has been finalized, you will be the first to know. As we continue planning for this year's activities, we welcome your suggestions and participation.

Several of the events planned for this coming year include: the Annual Cookies with Santa with a Winter Wonderland twist, a Kite Festival, Camp out with Mason (summer camp expo) combined with Science Night, an end of year Graduation Celebration and several additional family activities throughout the year. More details will come as each event is near.

We look forward to seeing you at events and working together this school year.

Fundraising by Erica Baker

9/26 - 10/7 We'll kick off the year with a Cookie Dough and Catalog Sales Fundraiser to make sure we have plenty of funding for the field trips that are already on the schedule! In addition to the fundraiser aspect, each child will be able to earn some great prizes AND there is the chance for the whole school to earn a Reptile show!

Volunteer Updates by Victoria Jimenez

Our first volunteer opportunity will take place on **Monday, September 12th** which is our *Grandparents lunch*. Please sign up with the link below to help us serve lunch to some very special people !!

Type this to your browser to signup : <http://signup.com/go/NAWKY2>

Please take a moment and look at our webpage. Click on the headers for **Volunteers** or **Committees** to see how you can help this year. <http://mason.my-pta.org>

MasonFest by Jill Calcote

Mark your calendars!! MasonFest is Saturday, October 29th this year and the preparations are well under way. We are still on the lookout for additional organizers, sponsors, donors, vendors and people or businesses to partner with us to make this event a great success!

Please contact our MasonFest Chair at jillcalcote@gmail.com

Treasurer's Report by Terri Gomez-Ferree

Our carryforward PTO balance from last year is **\$19,477.52**. A portion of that is reserved for the water filling station installations which leaves roughly **\$10,000** available for regular business. We are in a great position to start the year and have plans to provide even more enrichment funds than last year to help our students and teachers.

Watch D.O.G.S by Oliver Engle

The Watch DOGS are excited about the coming year. We are working closely with the PTO and the school administration to maximize participation and positive experience for BOTH the students and father figures. There will be KEY information coming up at the Watch DOGS Pizza Party on **Thursday, September 8th** at the school. Be sure to attend!

Remember there are only three steps to being a Watch Dog:

- 1. Become a verified volunteer through the Leander ISD website.**
- 2. Acquire a Watch DOG t-shirt (this is a necessary "uniform" to participate.)**
- 3. Find a time or event at which you wish to participate.**

Classroom Updates

<p>Kindergarten Team Our Kindergarten Team is so excited about all of our new Mustangs who joined us this year. We have been doing very exciting things in Kinder, beginning with our first planner “How We Organize Ourselves” which has helped us learn organizational systems on an individual, home and community level. We are going to kick off September with our color days and learning our language arts and math rotations. Our first science unit will focus on how things move and exploring the world around us. Social Studies will guide our learning on citizenship in home, school and community. Look out for the amazing Kinder class this year!</p>	<p>Upcoming Classroom Events</p> <p>Mon, Sep 5th NO SCHOOL</p> <p>Fri, Oct 14th 2nd Grade Field Trip to <i>The Thinkery</i></p>
<p>First Grade Team First grade is off to a great start! We have been working on setting up our classroom systems and routines. We have also been diving into our first planner “Who We Are” as we set up our classroom communities. First graders are working on developing independence during Daily 5 and other classroom activities. Needless to say, we are off to an AWESOME start this year! Please remember to check the Home School Connections to stay “in the know” about what’s happening in first grade:)</p>	
<p>Second Grade Team We are thrilled to have our field trip already on the calendar! Second graders will be going to The Thinkery Austin on Friday, October 14th and will then have a picnic lunch at Milburn Park. Teachers will be sending out more information soon. In classrooms we will soon begin to learn about the action cycle. Students will explore global change makers and their impact on society. In science we will investigate the wonder of balance and motion. Hopefully you will soon notice your child making connections to our central idea: Conscious choices may make us balanced.</p>	
<p>Third Grade Team Third grade will start the year with our “Space Unit.” This unit of study will revolve around the theme: Where We Are In Place and Time. Our little Mustangs will learn how perceptions of our solar system have changed over time, as well as specific details about objects in the solar system. It goes without saying that our first unit of study will be out of this world!</p>	
<p>Fourth Grade Team We are excited for this year to come! Our first planner this year is Who We Are. We are exploring how our experiences influence who we are. We’ve learned about successful people who have faced failures and come through, we’ve learned about our own learning styles, and mapped out the important things in our hearts. There will be lots of self-discovery coming! This year we will visit the Bob Bullock Museum and hopefully the LBJ Library. We will keep you posted when those are on the calendar.</p>	
<p>Fifth Grade Team Fifth grade is excited to get this year rocking and rolling! We are off to a great start investigating How the World Works. We have planted terrariums to observe interactions between living and nonliving things, investigated volume with a problematic scenario involving baseballs and begun discussing the impact of explorers on the New World. We can't wait to learn and grow together this year!</p>	

Classroom Updates Continued

Library by Tracey Rice

The library is open for business, and we have already circulated over 2000 books to students! Did you know parents can check out books, too? Stop by the library and see Mrs. Rice to set up an account.

Can't remember your child's library day? Sign up for Remind! Information can be found on the Library website at <http://elemlibguides.leanderisd.org/Mason/home>

You can also find info about special events and library policies under the Mason Library tab.

Speaking of special events...Arrrrrr you ready to read?! Join us October 24-28 for the Bookaneer Book Fair! Book Fair is a great way to build your home library while supporting the school. Proceeds help pay for new library books, supplies, and programming. Scholastic gives 25-50% of sales back to the school. So come see us at the book fair where books are the treasure! Find more info in October on the book fair website at

<http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/homepage/ccmasonelementary>

Calling all volunteers! The library loves parent volunteers and could not be successful without their help. Volunteers shelve books, repair books, and assist students with check outs. We also need volunteers to assist with book fair set up, sales, and take down. Make sure your volunteer status is up to date, and contact our volunteer coordinator for more info!

Spanish by Bree Howard

¡Hola Padres y Estudiantes de La Escuela CCMason!

I am so excited to be starting my third year at this awesome school! It is so much fun getting to know the Kinder Students. As you may have heard, I am now seeing classes once a week. This will be a consistent time/day every week. We have decided to pull Spanish out of the Art, Performing Arts and Gym rotation. This change is beneficial for Spanish, because now it feels a bit more academic- still fun, of course. I can already see students are really taking it more seriously. I am also starting to see improvement already in their learning and attitude towards the language. I am looking forward to a great year!

¡CIAO AMIGOS!

Art by Tracey Day

Welcome back! I am super excited to see everyone again, and excited that I get to spend more time with my mustangs! The new specials rotation is allowing for everyone to come to art and performing art 12 more times this year. I have planned to do some fun and new things this year. We have started with kinder getting to know the room itself and where everything is. First and second grade are learning and exploring how to make their "oops" beautiful. Third is making some "crazy" hairstyles with lines. Fourth is all about radial balance, and fifth is starting optical illusions. Information will be sent home soon for 4th and 5th grade art club. The focus this year will be the empty bowl project.

SPROG by Jennifer Cowles

We are the Special Programs team, and we provide intervention and extension services such as Dyslexia, ESL, QUEST, Reading and Math support for the upper grades, and Supplemental Reading (SRP) for the lower grades. We are always looking for parent volunteers to help maintain Mason's Literacy Library. Talk with Victoria Jimenez, PTO Volunteer Coordinator, to learn more.

School Administration Updates

Counselor's Corner by Laurie Randel

Welcome back!! It is so good to see all your happy faces again! We have hit the ground running and lots of deep learning is well underway. There are many ways that I am here to support your students. A school counselor is different from a therapeutic counselor. I am a teacher who has had special training in helping students to navigate the educational system and overcome obstacles to their education. I wear many hats in the school and work with students, faculty and staff, and families in a variety of ways.

- I teach lessons to all students about relationship skills, conflict resolution and bullying prevention, self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, and developing a growth mindset.
- I provide brief, solution-focused counseling to individuals and small groups as needs arise. I can also help with referrals for more therapeutic-type counseling or evaluation if the need arises.
- I help students, teachers, and parents, work together to help create a safe and supportive learning environment.
- I help monitor students' academic progress to ensure that they are meeting their learning targets.
- I can help with questions about Exam for Acceleration and Section 504.
- In the spring, I also coordinate the administration of STAAR testing.

Thank you for sharing your children with us! Don't hesitate to call! I'm here to help!!

Mrs. Randel
(512) 570-5516
laurie.randel@leanderisd.org

Health News by Nurse Wendy Reed

LISD is offering **FREE** flu shot clinics for our students this year. It is completely voluntary, you are under no obligation to participate. Ours is scheduled for Tuesday October 11th from 11:30am-2:30pm at CC Mason. Consent forms went home last week. You must return your student's consent form for them to receive the vaccine. Remember: The best way to prevent the the flu is by getting the vaccine. Stay healthy y'all!

If you need another one or have questions, please contact me at:

Wendy Reed
(512) 570-5527
wendy.reed@leanderisd.org

Registrar's Reminders by Trace Abadie

Please take the time to update or create a txConnect account for your student(s) this year. There is important beginning of the year information that must be updated for this school year. Remember that txConnect is a great way to access your child's grades and report cards (3rd grade and up), attendance, immunizations, and the best way to keep emergency contact information up to date!

Please call or email me if you need your child's portal ID.

Tracy Abadie
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