

**Casis Elementary
Website**
www.mycasis.org
www.casispta.org

Casis Elementary
2710 Exposition, Austin, Texas 78703
February 9, 2007

**Casis Elementary
Attendance Line
414-0003**

Mission Statement

Our **mission** is to provide a learning environment that will enable each student to work to potential in his/her quest to be a life-long learner and a productive member of society.

Calendar Items

Friday, February 9		Jack Gantos Visits Casis
Monday, February 12	8:00 – 10:00 a.m.	PTA Budget Meeting (P15)
Tuesday, February 13	2:45 – 3:45 p.m.	Chess Club (Library)
Wednesday, February 14		Read Aloud
Tuesday, February 20		4 th Grade TAKS Writing Test/3 rd and 5 th Grade TAKS Reading Test
Tuesday, February 20	2:45 – 3:45 p.m.	Chess Club (Library)
Wednesday, February 21		Read Aloud
Wednesday – Saturday, February 21 – 24		Austin Energy Regional Science Festival 2007
Tuesday, February 27		Spring Group and Individual Picture Day (Stage)
Tuesday, February 27	2:45 – 3:45 p.m.	Chess Club (Library)
Wednesday, February 28		Read Aloud

Casis Parent Survey – Please Respond

For your convenience, in this week's Friday folder we have included paper copies of the Casis Parent Survey. If you have not yet completed your parent surveys online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=290583133991> or through the Casis website at www.mycasis.org, please do so as soon as possible. Copies are also available at the sign-in table and in the office. Please return surveys to your child's teacher or to the main office as soon as possible.

Author Visit With Jack Gantos - This Friday, February 9th!

Please join us for a day filled with humor, stories and learning with award-winning author Jack Gantos. Jack will be giving three presentations throughout the day in the cafeteria: Kinder – 1st: 8:15 – 9:15 a.m.; 4th and 5th: 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.; 2nd and 3rd: 1:15 – 2:15 p.m. Jack will also be having lunch with our teachers in the library and signing books through out the day. Books will be available for purchase in the library on Friday. Please come and be a part of this special day. For more information contact Amy Roberts at 472-3735 or asraustin@aol.com. Special thanks to Jo Cornwell for her beautiful Rotten Ralph display on the Casis Library doors.

Leadership Casis Make-A-Wish Drive

Leadership Casis will be collecting money Monday, February 12th through Friday, February 23rd to make a local girl's wish come true. Megan, a 14-year-old who is recovering from a heart transplant would like to take a trip to Australia to surf and see the animals in the zoo. Please note that there has been a change in the recipient of the Wish Kids Drive since last week. We did the math and if each student donates approximately \$8, we'll reach our \$5000 goal. Please help us make Megan's wish come true by sending money with your child. Leadership Casis kids will collect donations each morning during the announcements. Thanks in advance for your child's contribution.

Aladdin, Jr. Musical This Weekend

Come and enjoy Kealing's upcoming production of the musical, Aladdin, Jr., at the Kealing Magnet School Theatre, which is located at 1607 Pennsylvania Ave. on the southeast side of the school. Come see your favorite characters, Aladdin, Jasmine, Genie, Jafar, Abu, Iago and Razoul in action! Show times are as follows: 7:00 p.m. on Friday, February 9th; 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, February 10th. Tickets are \$4 for children/students, \$6 for adults, and may be purchased at the door.

Box Tops

Casis could win \$1,000 and we need your help! Please sign up at <http://www.boxtops4education.com/love> to support our school. Each new person that signs up at this site has a chance to win 10,000 boxtops for Casis. A new winner is picked each day in February. Sign up today as the promotion ends on February 28th.

Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to Lauren Moses, one of our fine resource teachers, whom her colleagues have selected as Casis Teacher of the Year for 2006 – 2007. Way to go Lauren!!

Student Illness

Parents, please be aware that we have experienced greater than usual student absences due to illness. This week, 6.5% of our students were absent. Please encourage your students to wash hands regularly to prevent the spread of germs and remember that a student must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Thanks for your cooperation and attention in this matter.

Casis Chess Club

The TCA Region VI Championship will be held this Saturday, February 10th at Laurel Mountain Elementary School. This is a great tournament for beginners to play in the JV section. Please visit www.turbochess.com to register for this event. Flyers and registration forms may also be downloaded at this site. Contact Diana Graves with any questions at 480-0782 or diana-graves@sbcglobal.net.

4th Grade TAKS Writing – and 3rd/5th Grade TAKS Reading – Tuesday, February 20th

On the morning of Tuesday, February 20th fourth graders around the State will be taking the writing portion of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) exam. The same day, 3rd and 5th graders will take the reading portion of the TAKS. We are excited about all of our students' and teachers' efforts in reading and writing across the grade levels. According to the Texas Education Agency, all 3rd graders are expected to pass the reading portion of the TAKS to go on to the 4th grade, and all 5th graders are expected to pass both the reading and math portions of the TAKS to go on to the 6th grade. There will be opportunities to retake the test, if necessary.

Visit the Texas Education Agency website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/resources/ssi/index.html> for further information about the Student Success Initiative. Please make sure your child receives a good night's rest, eats a nutritious breakfast and comes to school prepared to do his/her best. On these days, visitors will not be allowed in the 3rd and 4th/5th grade hallways in order to maintain ideal testing conditions. Your support and cooperation is appreciated!

Thoughts On TAKS & Testing

At Casis, we have had many conversations about testing. Our Campus Advisory Council, PTA and faculty have all discussed the topic. We recognize that students, teachers and parents all have different views about the high stakes testing that the State of Texas requires. Each teacher and our campus strive to find an appropriate balance so that students are well prepared and highly motivated to perform their best, while not being overly stressed or anxious. This balance is difficult to achieve because students may respond differently to the pressure and expectations of the testing process and the test itself. Visit http://www.eapublishing.com/pdf/brams_article.pdf to access an informative article with helpful strategies to reduce anxiety and build confidence for your students during testing times. If you have individual concerns, please contact your child's teacher.

Casis International Festival Wrap Up

We have just celebrated "Birthdays Around the World," this year's theme for the Casis International Festival. All of us celebrate life and thus, honor birthdays. Yet different countries celebrate in different ways. This event would not have been successful without the help of the many parents, teachers and school staff. Thank you to the regional coordinators for going above and beyond what they signed up for: Cathy Vasquez-Garcia for the Americas region, Ruth Johnson and Lisa Stark Walsh for Asia and Oceania, Linda Komm for Europe and Robbi Cooper and Lynn Boswell for Middle East and Africa. Thanks to the office staff, Annie Melvin, Kaysie Sallans and Annie Johnson. Special thanks to Kathy Mauro, Margie Medrano and Leadership Casis, Anne Veerarahavan, SueAnn Kenmotsu, Jayne Willingham, Dawn Black, Sybile Naegle and Ma Thu Zar and the many dedicated volunteers who stayed late, came early, baked/cooked for 750 students and worked hard in good humor and in the spirit of fun. We would like to thank the event chairs, Tsina Napoliello and Azita Mokhtari for all of their hard work and dedication to this wonderful event.

5th Grade Volleyball

Practice sessions will be held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 2:45 - 3:30 p.m. in the gym. For details, contact Ms. Samok at 841-5546.

Valentine's Treats

Due to AISD's Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV) policy, many parents are wondering what kind of food is appropriate for classroom Valentine parties. The district has restricted the following: chewing gum, hard candy, jellied candies, marshmallow candy, licorice, and caramel popcorn. Healthy treat options include: fruit, string cheese, pretzels, beef jerky, juices and yogurts. There is a more in-depth list of good foods on the AISD website: <http://www.austinisd.org/schools/health/nutrition.phtml>. We ask that you follow the district policy and try to provide healthy snacks for holiday parties. **Also, please be sensitive to students who may have food allergies by avoiding foods that include nuts or nut ingredients.** Thank you.

Spanish Language Education Fair for Parents and Children

The *Feria para Aprender* will take place on Saturday, February 17th, from 7:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at the Burger Center located at 3200 Jones Rd. This free event will be organized by special areas to provide information on Early Childhood Development, Elementary, Middle, High School, and College. Every hour, a bilingual professional will speak about each interest area. For the children, we'll have two reading gardens and a toy-making area. United Way is also organizing the participation of various non-profit agencies that provide services to families. All their materials will be in Spanish as well. For more information please visit www.feriaeducativa.org.

Cafeteria/Playground Parent Volunteer Monitor Thanks & Reminder

Thank you to the parent-volunteers in Ms. Christian's classes for monitoring the cafeteria and playground this week. Thank you in advance to Ms. Cornwell's parent-volunteers who volunteer February 8th – 14th and to parent-volunteers in Ms. Hudgins who will volunteer February 15th – 21st. If you can help, please call your homeroom parent. Thanks for all your help and support!

Sincerely,