



# *The Phoenix 2*

Winter Newsletter 2011

## **Mrs. Hart—Math**

Phoenix 2 math classes have been successfully writing and solving one and two step equations. In order to do so, we spent a bit of time learning the "sign rules," or the rules for adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing positive and negative integers. We then moved on to simplifying algebraic expressions using those rules before taking the leap into equation solving. Marking period 3 will include ratios, rates, proportions, percents, and geometry as we prepare further for the NJASK. Math always builds on the previous concept, so we are sure to master each one before moving on!

## **Ms. Sorensen—English**

In Language Arts, during the second marking period, students focused on writing persuasive essays. They started by brainstorming for ideas and successfully learned how to use graphic organizers in order to categorize and structure their thoughts prior to writing. The process of writing a five paragraph essay was tedious but seems to have paid off. In addition to reading a classic independently, students enjoyed reading and discussing story elements found in Jack London's short story, *To Build a Fire*. The third marking period will bring lessons in explanatory and speculative writing, answering open-ended questions, and independent reading.

## **Mr. Balog--Social Studies**

The second quarter of Social Studies for seventh grade students was loaded with world history and focused on many different cultures. First, our students learned about ancient Mesopotamia, where many historians believe civilization started. The students participated in some fun projects in which they learned about Mesopotamian rulers such as Hammurabi and Mesopotamian legends such as the Legend of Gilgamesh. Next, we studied World Religions and their founders. These religions included Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Students gained an understanding of how all three religions, though different and unique, have some beliefs and traditions that are extremely similar. This unit culminated in a Religions Celebration Festival in which students brought in interesting foods and delicacies from each religion and got to experience a meal in each religious culture. For the third quarter, we will focus a lot of our attention on the Middle Ages in Europe, and then learn about the different types of government systems.

## **Mr. Moore—Science**

In Mr. Moore's science class, we have begun studying cells. We are very excited to start using the microscope to observe plants and organisms that we will be collecting from a nearby pond. We are also getting ready to start working on our vegetable garden project.