

DECEMBER 2024

# Eagle Tales

## Message from Mr. Erickson

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Dear Families,

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for our amazing students, dedicated staff, and supportive families. Wishing you all a wonderful Thanksgiving filled with joy, family, and plenty of great memories.

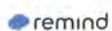
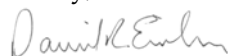
I'd also like to remind you of an important event coming up: our Governing Board meeting on December 3rd at 5:00 PM. During this meeting, the board will discuss and may vote about whether our school will continue with a 5-day school week or transition to a 4-day school week for the 2025-2026 school year. Your presence and input are valued, and we hope you can join us.

We are in the final stretch before winter break, with just three weeks remaining. Let's work together to encourage our students to stay focused and finish the semester strong. The second semester will begin on January 6, 2025, and we look forward to an exciting and productive new year.

As always, my door is open for any questions, concerns, or conversations. Please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Sincerely,



### Sign up for important updates from Elgin School.

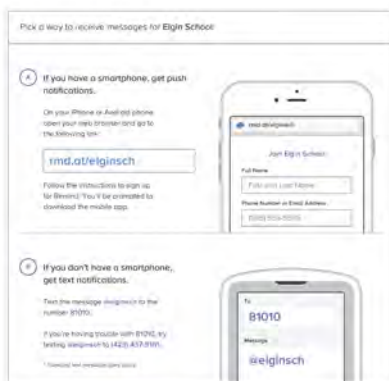
Get information for Elgin School right on your phone—noct on handouts.

Pick a way to receive messages for Elgin School:

1. If you have a smartphone, get push notifications.  
On your iPhone or Android phone, open your web browser and go to the following link:  
[rmd.a@elginsch](http://rmd.a@elginsch)  
Follow the instructions to sign up for Remind! You'll be prompted to download the mobile app.

2. If you don't have a smartphone, get text notifications.  
Text the message (designated to the number 81010).  
If you're having trouble with iPHONe, try texting "sign-up" to (423) 437-9100.

Don't have a mobile phone? Go to [rmd.a@elginsch](http://rmd.a@elginsch) on a desktop computer to sign up for email notifications.



# In the Spotlight

## Kindergarten - By Mrs. Kim Crawford

It's hard to believe the holidays are almost here, it's such an exciting time of year. Kindergarten has been working hard building and strengthening our foundational skills in reading, making sense of numbers in math, exploring different types of communities in social studies, and discovering how to be our happiest, healthiest selves in science. We've also been practicing our character building skills needed for making lifelong friends, becoming trustworthy and reliable, honest and caring.

Elementary students have visited Apple Annie's to explore the corn maze and pick pumpkins. We recently had our annual Veteran's Day Program where we performed songs and celebrated those who have fought to keep our country safe. Kindergarten is such an important time in a child's life and the memories we're making will always remain in our hearts.

It's been a great year so far and we can't wait to discover what we will learn next.



## Eagle Eye - Student of the Week

Recognizing elementary students who practice good character and citizenship



# In the Spotlight

## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade – Mrs. Aisel Gaviola

### A Year of Creativity and Achievement in 5th Grade

This school year has been an exciting adventure for our 5th-grade students, full of creativity, teamwork, and plenty of learning moments. From hands-on science experiments to creative art projects, each experience has brought both fun and educational growth.

At the start of the year, the students came together to create a Class Pledge, which they now recite every morning before their lessons. Focused on respect, responsibility, and perseverance, this pledge set a positive tone for the classroom and helped establish a strong, supportive community. They also created a Team Pledge for group activities, reinforcing the importance of working together and being accountable. To help build trust and team spirit, the students kicked off the year with a fun challenge: working in teams to build a tower using only straws. This activity was not only a great icebreaker but also helped students sharpen their communication and problem-solving skills.

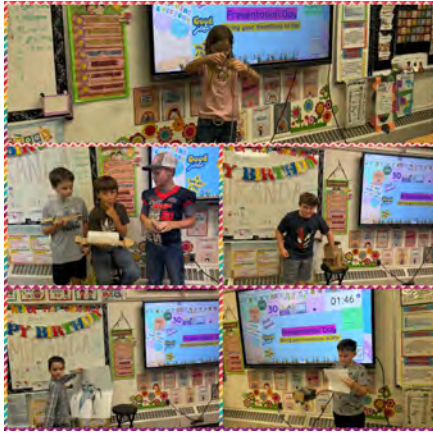


As the year moved on, our students tackled many exciting and creative projects. They kicked things off with a class play, where they wrote scripts, designed props, and practiced their performances. After lots of hard work, they proudly showcased their play, demonstrating great teamwork and creativity. Next, they dove into the world of graphic novels, choosing genres, designing characters, and crafting their own stories. This project gave them a chance to bring their imaginations to life while practicing what they've learned about storytelling. Once their novels were finished, the students got the chance to share them with the 4th-grade class. It was such a rewarding experience to see them grow as public speakers and storytellers, engaging the younger students with their creativity and enthusiasm. Public speaking continued to be a big focus, especially with an activity called 'Readers Theater'. The students took turns acting out different characters, and it was amazing to watch their confidence grow as they developed their acting and performance skills. They also explored the world of poetry, experimenting with different forms and writing their own poems. Sharing these poems sparked some deep and thoughtful discussions about how language can express emotions and ideas in such a creative way.





One of the most exciting projects this year involved writing an informative essay about an invention they think could change the future. After writing about their inventions and how they would improve people's lives, the students brought their ideas to life by creating models. For example, one student designed a "Food Duplicator," a machine that could replicate any meal, reducing waste, and saving time. This project sparked some lively conversations about what the future might hold in terms of technology! In science, the students really became junior scientists, diving into hands-on experiments that allowed them to explore chemical reactions and the scientific method. One of the highlights was building soda volcanoes, where they got to see chemical reactions in action. This messy and fun experiment helped them better understand how matter changes and how chemistry works, bringing the lessons to life. In history, the students took a deep dive into the lives of the Founding Fathers, creating infographics to share their research. This project combined history with digital skills, allowing the students to present their findings in creative and engaging ways. It gave them a greater appreciation for the contributions these leaders made to the birth of our country and how their legacies continue to influence our lives today.



Beyond academics, the students have been learning important life skills through the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program. These lessons have equipped them with the tools to make smart choices, resist peer pressure, and confidently navigate challenging situations. It's been wonderful to see how the program has helped them grow in responsibility and self-awareness.

Looking back at everything our 5th graders have accomplished this year, it's clear they've not only gained academic knowledge but have also grown as individuals. They've embraced challenges, worked together, and shown amazing creativity and dedication. We are so proud of everything they've achieved so far, and we can't wait to see what the rest of the year brings. Their enthusiasm and hard work make them exceptional students, and we're excited to continue this journey with them!

# Governing Board Update

The Sonoita Elementary School District Governing Board is made up of five Board members. These members are elected by voters of the district or appointed by the County School Superintendent. Each Board member serves their term voluntarily without pay. We have been fortunate to have many dedicated members over the years. At the end of December two of our current members, Ginny Cosby and Megan Thomas, will be leaving the Board. We want to extend our gratitude for their dedication to the students at Elgin School!



Thank You  
for your support



The Patagonia Regional Times recently shared biographies of the Board members who will be installed at our January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. You can check out the original article in the current print issue or on their website at <https://patagoniaregionaltimes.org/local-school-district-board-members/>. Make sure to check out their feature on new area teachers in the next issue!

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### Sonoita School District Board Members



**Harry Dotson**

Following a career in the US Army and a subsequent career in higher education, I returned here full time since 2016. Since my retirement I have made an effort to volunteer and in some small way give back to the community. To that end I served a four-year term on the board of the Santa Cruz County Fair and Rodeo Association. I am now in my sixth year of service on the Governing Board of the Sonoita Elementary School District and am currently serving as the President of the Board. I also volunteer for the Distance Education Accreditation Commission as an accreditation evaluator of online universities. I also attempt various wood-working projects using only hand tools with varying degrees of success. I am currently enjoying the Chiefs' march towards a Super Bowl three-peat.

I earned a BA (with Honors) from the University of Texas at Arlington utilizing the GI Bill degree and a MS degree from Kansas State University.

I serve on the Governing Board because I believe wholeheartedly in the value of public education. Public education is an integral part of the foundation upon which our nation has been built. It is a great equalizer and helps lift our citizens up. I have found it very gratifying to interact with staff and faculty of our district and most importantly to watch the students grow and succeed.



**Tony Fennell**

Born and raised on the South Side of Chicago, I grew up immersed in a community that instilled in me values of resilience and hard work.

In 1999, I left Chicago to pursue higher education at Eastern Illinois University and joined the Illinois National Guard as a Chemical Operations Specialist.

After graduating in 2003, I was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry before embarking on an 18-month deployment to Iraq. Following my first deployment I transitioned into being a Military Intelligence officer, where I continued to serve in four additional combat deployments over two decades.

I earned a Master's degree from Southern Methodist University, but most importantly was supported throughout this whole time by my childhood sweetheart, who became my wife and the mother of our three children. Together, we moved over a dozen times in 24 years, adapting to each new place until we finally settled in Sonoita, Arizona, marking the end of my service at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Shortly after retirement I joined Nemean Solutions as the corporate Senior Program Manager and continue to greatly enjoy supporting our servicemembers in this latest chapter of my life.

I have served on the Sonoita Elementary School District Governing Board since 2001.



**Dave Naugle**

I am looking forward to serving the Sonoita Community again after serving on the School Board during the time that the existing school facility was built and put into service. Then my employer relocated me back to Maricopa County. My wife and I are retired now and moved back to Sonoita last year.

My desire is to ensure the school properly meets the needs of the community and reflects the values of the community.

Yes, Naugle Avenue in Patagonia is named after my grandfather's cousin.



**Aaron Thomas**

I have three kids who attend Elgin School. I am currently the Vice President of the Santa Cruz County Fair Board and the president of our local little league as well as a coach. I have volunteered at the school as an assistant baseball coach.

I look forward to being a voice for our school as someone who is well versed in policy decisions, but more importantly as a parent and as a community member so that we can continue to make our school a great place to work and to grow the minds of our youth.

I have degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Agricultural Business and Economics. I am currently a real estate investor and an engineering consultant.



**Nancy Webster**

"Teaching is a way of life", or so said my collage advisor upon my graduation from George Washington University with a master's degree in curriculum development and early childhood education. How right she was!



From then until my retirement, I have had the privilege of teaching children from nursery school through third grade in private and public schools, was an aide in a special ed self-contained classroom, and volunteered in a school for autistic children and an inner-city school in Philadelphia.

I lobbied on the Hill for educational issues and was a national spokesperson for parental involvement in public school education.

As President of the Inner School Council in Lower Merion Township, Pennsylvania, I presided over a coalition of nine public schools PTA's.

I knew it was time to retire when I bent down to tie an usher's shoelace at church one Sunday. Teaching is a way of life.

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MISSOULA  
**CHILDREN'S  
THEATRE**

A PRODUCTION OF MCT, INC.

**Save the Date!**

Elgin School's Missoula Children's Theatre Residency

December 9th-14th

The performance will be held on Saturday, December 14th at 6:00 PM



**Permission Slips  
must be returned  
by Wednesday,  
December 4<sup>th</sup>!**

### THEATER! DRAMA! MUSIC! COSTUMES! FUN!!!!

The renowned Missoula Children's Theatre is coming to Elgin School December 9th—14th! This week-long residency is made possible for Elgin students through tax credit and parent donations. A little red truck will pull into our town with everything it takes to mount a full-scale musical production of "Hercules." The truck will have a team of directors, lights, costumes, props, and make-up, everything except the cast. That's where Elgin students come in. The school has declared that week "No Homework Week" for participants, so any student who would like to try out for this performance must be able to attend the week-long rehearsals if given a part. Up to 50 students are needed for this production! Check out a previous performance of *Hercules* at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3H3ozm\\_2uU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3H3ozm_2uU).

Please note that if a student is given a part in the play, he/she needs to be available Monday through Friday from 2:00 PM until 6:30 PM, and on Saturday, performance day, for morning dress rehearsals and the 6:00 PM evening performance. Students who commit to this endeavor will be expected to follow through on that commitment. More details will be sent home with the students.

Mark your calendars for this incredible opportunity for our Elgin community.



Conceived and Written by  
Michael McGill  
Joseph Martinez

MISSOULA  
**CHILDREN'S  
THEATRE**

Music & Lyrics by  
Michael McGill

**Presented By: Elgin School Students**

**Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>**

**6:00 PM**

**Elgin School Gym**

*Donations to the Elgin School & Santa's Helpers  
Food Drive are appreciated.*

### **Childfind Screenings**

*If you have concerns about your child's development from ages 3 to 21 years of age in these areas:*

**VISION/HEARING \* SPEECH/LANGUAGE \* THINKING SKILLS  
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT \* BEHAVIOR \*  
NORMAL DEVELOPMENT**

Your school's CHILDFIND can help – with a free screening, and if needed, referral for diagnostic evaluation and/or early intervention programs (birth to three). If you have any concerns about your child's development, certain benefits are available through your local school district.

Screenings are available **by appointment**. To schedule your appointment or for more information please contact:

Christine Clouse- Student Services  
455-5514 cclouse@elgink12.com



Elgin Elementary  
School

## **PREKINDER Story Time**

- *Join us to meet new friends, get to know our campus, and learn Kindergarten readiness skills!*
- *Story Time is open to students eligible to enroll in Kindergarten in Fall 2025. (Must be turning 5 by 9/1/2025)*



**Wednesdays at Elgin School  
8:00 AM - Flag Ceremony, Gym  
8:10-8:45 AM - Story Time & Activities, Library**





**Elgin School PTC**

**Meeting Dates:**  
Meetings are held in the Conference Room

**Dec. 4th - 6:00 PM**  
**Dec. 11th - 7:30 AM**

# Community Ugly Sweater PARTY

**December 20th**  
**5:00-8:00 PM**  
SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

**Free Entrance**

**Special Guest - The Grinch!**

FOOD, DRINKS, & ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE! CASH & VENMO ACCEPTED

**Snow Garden!**  
**Pie Auction!**  
**And more!**

**Border Hookups will be performing!**

**Ugly Sweater Contest!**

- Groups
- Ugliest
- Homemade
- Most Patriotic
- Vintage

**All are welcome!**

Proceeds to benefit Elgin School Student Programs

ELGIN SCHOOL PTC  
Is holding a  
**PIE Auction FUNDRAISER**  
AT THE UGLY SWEATER PARTY

And looking for  
**Pie donations**

**When:** December 20  
**Where:** Sonoita Fair Grounds  
**Time:** 6:30

**A COMMUNITY EVENT!**



# Cafeteria Connection

Connecting you to your child's school lunchroom



## PROTEIN POWER: Meat and Meat Alternatives in School Meals

Protein gets a lot of attention these days. In school meals, we categorize protein-rich foods as meat and meat alternatives. Let's explore what falls under this category, the requirements we follow, and the nutritional benefits they offer to our growing learners.

### WHAT ARE MEAT AND MEAT ALTERNATIVES?

Meat and meat alternatives encompass a diverse range of protein sources essential for supporting the growth and development of our students.

#### These include:

- Lean meats such as poultry, beef, and pork
- Beans, lentils, legumes
- Nuts and nut butters
- Tofu
- Cheese



### NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

Meat and meat alternatives are rich sources of protein, essential for building and repairing tissues, supporting immune function, and maintaining overall health. Additionally, they provide vital nutrients such as iron, zinc, and B vitamins, which are crucial for cognitive function, energy metabolism, and overall well-being.



### MEETING USDA REQUIREMENTS

Our school meal programs adhere to USDA guidelines that encourage a balance of all food groups, including meat and meat alternatives, to ensure that students receive adequate nutrition to thrive both academically and physically. These guidelines help us create menus that provide the necessary nutrients for optimal growth and development while also promoting lifelong healthy eating habits.

By offering a variety of options on our menus, we ensure that all dietary preferences and needs are accommodated.







Elgin Schools's  
*Holiday*  
Food Drive

**December 2nd-17th**

.....  
**Bring your non-perishable  
canned food items to Elgin School  
by December 17th to help local  
families this holiday season!**





# 2025 Testing Dates

## Elementary Calendar Grades 3, 4, & 5

April 1st - Science (5th Grade only)  
- Oral Proficiency (3rd Grade)  
April 3rd - Writing



April 8th - Reading & Math, parts 1  
April 10th - Reading & Math, parts 2

## Middle School Calendar Grades 6, 7, & 8



April 1st-3rd - Science (8th only)  
April 8th - Writing

April 9th & 10th - Reading  
April 15th & 16th - Math



**Winter Break**  
**December 23rd - January 3rd**

School resumes on  
**Monday, January 6th**

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS**

Elgin School  
 8th Grade CIMI Club  
 Room 15

**Holiday Shop**

Students in K-8 can shop for family and friends!

Gift wrapping included!  
 All gifts will be wrapped and tagged by the 8th Grade Students

Our personal shoppers (8th graders) will assist younger students. Just send them with a list of names and their budget!

**DEC 17th-19th**  
 12:30-2:30 PM

**MOST ITEMS UNDER \$10.00**  
 Many items are in the \$3.00-5.00 Range

**A FRIENDLY Reminder**

**NO TOYS AT SCHOOL PLEASE**

Please support your children by reminding them that toys are not allowed at school. This will help to eliminate distractions during learning times.

*Thank You For Your Help and Support.*

**SCHOOL TIMES REMINDERS**

7:30 AM  
 Gates Open  
 Supervision begins on campus  
 Breakfast available until 7:50 AM

7:55 AM  
 School Begins  
 Gates shut  
 Students arriving after this time are marked Tardy and will need to enter through the office

**Don't be late!**

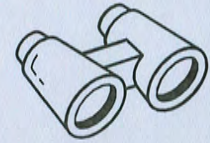


# Explore the Night Sky!

**When: Monday, 12/2/24  
6:30pm-8:30pm**

**Where: 150 Blue Haven Rd.  
Patagonia, AZ 85624**

Join us at Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve to stargaze with local astronomy enthusiast Harold Meckler and his telescope. Please dress warmly and bring binoculars and a flashlight.



**RSVP by emailing  
[aaron.mrotek@tnc.org](mailto:aaron.mrotek@tnc.org)**

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The Nature Conservancy  
Arizona

