

# News from Stormy the Sidewinder



Dear Families,

Thanks for a great start to the 2022-2023 school year. It's been wonderful to see all our returning Sidewinders and welcome all our new Sidewinders and their families. We had a great turnout for open house and thank everyone who was able to attend. We look forward to an incredible year!

## Upcoming Events:

1. Early Release (1:55) – September 7, 14, 21, 28
2. PTSO – September 1 (3:15)
3. Labor Day (no school) – September 5
4. School Council – September 12
5. Kona Ice Treat Sale at Lunch/STUCO Spirit Day – September 16
6. Parent Teachers Conferences/11:55 Release – September 22, 23
7. Powerhouse – September 30 (9:00)
8. 11:55 Release – September 30

## SSE's Focus

We will continue with our school motto "SSE, A Great Place to Be!" We will maintain our focus on SSE's Three to Be "Be Respectful, Be Responsible," and we will be adding "Be Kind" this year as our focus. Character Counts, CHAMPS, and SSE's Three 2 Be help all students create positive relationships with their peers and staff and also supports them as they work toward being the best they can be. In support of our school's goals of increased achievement in literacy, math, and writing, and in addition to our core block of instruction, we will be continuing with "Read, Rattle & Roll" and "Walk to Math" as we work with all students according to their ability and needs for a 30-minute intervention and/or enrichment block.

## Professional Learning Communities/Data Teams

We are beginning our 12<sup>th</sup> year as a Professional Learning Community/Data Team where teachers work collaboratively, focusing all their strengths on improving instruction, maintaining ongoing meaningful assessment, and using all available data to drive instruction to better meet the needs of our students. We will also be focusing on multi-grade PLCs where grade levels meet quarterly to discuss student progress, intervention strategies, and vertically align curriculum. Teachers will be meeting on all early release days.

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## Meet our New Dean of Students

My name is Wendy Norburg and I am honored to serve as dean of students this year at Superstition Springs Elementary and Mesquite Elementary. I have been a part of Gilbert Public Schools for over 20 years, serving as a classroom teacher and an instructional coach. I am excited to put all of these experiences together to support the administration, staff, and students on both campuses. I look forward to getting to know the families at Superstition Springs Elementary this year.



## Infinite Campus Emergency Contacts & 'Annual Update' Instructions for 2022/23 School Year

Click on the Annual Update graphic under District Announcements:

Message Center

Announcements Inbox

District Announcement  
07/10/2019

Please click here to complete your Annual Update / Awareness Contract / Chromebook Agreement


Please click here to make an online payment in InTouch

The 'Annual Update' allows you to tell us of any updates to your contact information, address changes, updates to emergency contacts, awareness contract, and Chromebook agreement for grades 7-12. Every parent or guardian must complete the 'Annual Update' process.

Click on Complete My Annual Update:

Infinite Campus

What would you like to do?





## Standards Based Grading



### A Family's Guide to Report Cards

#### Important Note

Report cards are available on the Infinite Campus Portal four times each year at the conclusion of each 9-week grading period.



#### Questions?

If you have further questions regarding the GPS Report Card, please contact your child's classroom teacher.



#### Providing the Best Information About Student Learning

This guide has been created to provide parents with the following information about Elementary Student Report Cards in Gilbert Public Schools:

- An overview of philosophy and purpose.
- An explanation of how to use and interpret the GPS elementary report cards, including the standards-based design and its connection to the Arizona Academic Standards.
- An explanation of the Academic Performance for Standards Proficiency
- Answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about report cards.

Reporting student progress is an essential part of the communication and partnership process between home and school. It is the district's professional responsibility to provide families and students with comprehensive and useful information that thoughtfully reflects the learning process. Families and students should have information that accurately reflects students' levels of performance and their progress in meeting academic standards for each quarter. Report cards provide a "snapshot" of student learning reflecting grade-level standards, quarter to quarter progress, and where support and/or enrichment may be needed. Learning is the central message we wish to communicate to both families and students. Students should be evaluated on their individual progress toward achieving the standards and skills of their grade level.

#### Arizona Academic Standards

Gilbert Public Schools fully implements the Arizona Academic Standards supported by the Arizona Department of Education. These high-quality standards provide a rigorous and relevant education to children across our community. Designed with the understanding that learning begins at birth and continues throughout every stage of life, these standards ensure that children and students are supported in their learning from their entrance into school until their high school graduation. Arizona's academic Standards require students to engage in various types of reading, writing, speaking and listening for English Language Arts. Students benefit from mathematics standards that define knowledge, understanding and skills that need to be taught and learned so all students are prepared to succeed in credit-bearing, college-entry courses, and/or in the workplace as their high school career comes to a close.

Gilbert Public Schools' teachers and administrators look forward to a continued partnership with you as we help prepare your child for college and career readiness. We encourage you to visit <http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/> for further information regarding the Arizona Academic Standards.

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## GPS Grading Philosophy and Mindset

In Gilbert Public Schools, we believe:

- The goal of instruction is to ensure learning.
- Grades should communicate proficiency, mastery, and understanding of standards and skills as outlined by the Arizona Academic Standards.
- The pace of learning doesn't matter; the proficiency and mastery of that learning matters.
- The goal of a pretest is to determine what a student knows at a basic level and remembers from past learning.
- If a student masters all of the concepts in any quarter, the grade should reflect successful mastery.
- Students should have multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery.
- Classroom quizzes are designed to measure learning.
- Homework is designed to practice a skill that has already been taught.

## A Brief Look at What Teachers Mark on Report Card

### Mathematics Sample

Priority Standards are listed for each Content Area Domain. These indicate the major areas of learning.

Standards-based language and indicators have become the basis for marking student performance and describes expectations.

MATHEMATICS 6				
	Term			
	QT1	QT2	QT3	QT4
<b>RATIOS AND PROPORTIONS</b>				
Constructs ratio and rate reasoning to solve real-world problems				
<b>THE NUMBER SYSTEM</b>				
Fluently adds, subtracts, multiplies, and divides multi-digit numbers with decimals using a standard algorithm				

A numeric mark (4, 3, 2, 1) is placed by the Priority Standard. A space left blank indicates an area not evaluated at this time.

### English Language Arts Sample

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 2				
	Term			
	QT1	QT2	QT3	QT4
<b>READING LITERATURE</b>				
Asks and answers such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text				
Recounts stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determines their central message, lesson, or moral				
Describes how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges				
By the end of the year, proficiently and independently reads and comprehends grade-level literary text				

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## Understanding the Academic Performance Level for Standards Proficiency

To be accurate and fair in reporting both student progress and achievement, teachers use the Proficiency Scale pictured below to report individual progress of standards in each academic area each quarter.

Four levels of progress are noted using a numeric marking system (numbers 1-4). On the Academic Performance Level, the numbers themselves are not the focus. Rather, the descriptor that describes each number. The descriptors represent the level of the individual student's skill, as well as the level of independence in which the student demonstrates the standard.

A mark of "4" indicates **Highly Proficient**. This means a student is demonstrating advanced mastery of the grade level content knowledge, concepts, and skills consistently on their own.

A mark of "3" indicates **Proficient**. This means a student is demonstrating mastery of grade level knowledge, concepts, and skills related to the content standards.

Academic Performance Level for STANDARDS PROFICIENCY	
Descriptors	Score
Highly Proficient	4
Proficient	3
Partially Proficient	2
Minimally Proficient	1
Blank Score Means Not Assessed	

A mark of "2" indicates **Partially Proficient**. This means that a student is sometimes able to demonstrate a basic understanding of the grade level knowledge, concepts, and skills with some support.

A mark of "1" indicates **Minimally Proficient**. This means a student shows no or very little basic understanding of the grade level knowledge, concepts, and skills even with assistance and/or significant support.

Standards Based Grading (SBG) focuses solely on progress toward master of the Arizona Academic Standards for the grade level. An SBG gradebook tracks learning through activities that focus on priority standards and does not include non-academic factors such as behavior, participation, effort, and attitude. These attributes are important and assessed and reported but through **Work Habits**, which is separated from academics and more appropriate.

Traditional and Summit Personalized Learning Platform classrooms will utilize Achievement Letter Grades (A-F).

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## Questions Frequently Asked by Parents About Report Cards

*How does the traditional letter-grade system compare to the standards-based grading system?*

Traditional Report Cards	Standards-Based Reporting System
Major subjects listed by name only.	Contents standards and grade-level indicators define major subjects.

*Won't most students receive the same grades, mostly 2's & 3's?*

Learning is a process and it should be expected that repeated experiences and exposures are necessary for students to acquire new skills and strategies. A score of "2" indicates the student is slightly below expectations, but is progressing towards the standard. Once the student demonstrates thorough understanding of the content and skills involved in the standard they will earn a "3". The process of moving from a "2" to a "3" is student specific and is characterized by the student independently performing the skills with accuracy and quality. The proficiency scale "continuum" guides teachers, informs parents and can motivate students to extend their learning and competencies further.

*How do I help my student "get a 4?"*

Remember, a mark of "3" indicates that a student is meeting grade-level expectations with independence and excellence. With high and challenging expectations, a "3" is exactly where a competent student should be. "Getting a 4" is not about what more a student does. It is what a student knows, and at what level s/he applies what s/he knows to new and higher-level situations that exceeds what is explicitly taught in class. The shift in thinking from the A, B, C, D, F letter grades is that "3" is the top for the grade level and should be celebrated as such.

*How is it possible for my child to "drop" from one mark to another?*

It is important to note that the student does not necessarily drop a grade. The proficiency score is an indication of performance with expectations of difficulty that increase throughout the school year. In other words, the concepts increase in difficulty as the year progresses. Therefore, a student who demonstrates a proficiency score of 3 in first quarter could earn a 2 in second quarter when the rigor of the standard has increased. This shift from a 3 to a 2 indicates the student understands the major elements of the concept, but may need more development of the finer details.

*Attendance Summary: On the report card the phrase, "Lack of attendance means there were no absences", why is this comment there?*

Infinite Campus automatically adds this comment to all of the report cards. It is telling you that if you see nothing in this area it means your child has no absences.

*Why aren't the grades just averaged?*

The purpose is to report what students know and are able to do. Averaging does not represent an accurate picture of where a student is in the learning process. For example, a student who struggles in a class at the beginning of a grading period may receive poor grades, but they keep working and learning. Eventually, they can clearly demonstrate competence in a standard and should receive a score that reflects their new ability instead of being penalized for not knowing the beginning.

Where can I find more about the Arizona Academic Standards?  
<http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/>

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## Message from your School Social Worker

SEL (Social and Emotional Lessons)

SEL will take place during Week B specials time in your student's class. One program that we use is Second Steps and Common Sense Media. There are three main units in the Second Step program and one extra unit for kindergarten to 3rd grade. The following is a summary of each unit.

- Skills for Learning (Kindergarten to 3rd Grade): Students gain skills to help themselves learn, including how to focus their attention, listen carefully, use self talk to stay on task, and be assertive when asking for help with schoolwork. During this unit we look at picture cards, listen to songs, and play games.
- Empathy: Students learn to identify and understand their own and others' feelings. Students also learn how to take another's perspective and how to show compassion. During this unit, Kindergarten to 3rd grade students look at picture cards, listen to songs, and play games. Grades 4th to 6th watch video clips from Second Steps.
- Emotional Management: Students learn specific skills for calming down when experiencing strong feelings, such as anxiety or anger at school. During this unit Kindergarten to 3rd grade students look at picture cards, listen to songs, and play games. Grades 4th to 6th watch video clips from Second Steps.
- Problem Solving Steps: Students learn a process for solving problems with others in a positive way. During this unit Kindergarten to 3rd grade students look at picture cards, listen to songs, and play games. Grades 4th to 6th watch video clips from Second Steps.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me. If you would like your child not to participate in SEL, please click on the link below for the opt out form. Please print, complete, and return to the school. Thanks for all your support!

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TiAbDYxksk9owYgMBQ9fN2I8yK4wpouq/edit?usp=sharing&oid=113054827465243824857&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Shawnda Harmsen MS, RYT, RCYT  
Email: shawnda.harmsen@gilbertschools.net  
Phone: 480.641.6413 x 1408  
GPS Wellness Resources for Families: <https://www.gilbertschools.net/wellness>

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## **PTSO News:**

Welcome back!! We are looking forward to an amazing school year! We couldn't do it without the support of our amazing school community!! Please follow us on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/sseptso> We update this page often with school news and upcoming events. You can also message us with any questions you may have. If you aren't on Facebook, we are also available by email at [sseptsoaz@gmail.com](mailto:sseptsoaz@gmail.com)

**PTSO Meeting Dates:** September 1, October 20, November 10, December 1, January 12, February 9, March 9, April 6, and May 18. Please join us this year!! Meetings are at 3:15pm after school in the library! Kids are welcome!

**Yearbook SALE:** Get your yearbooks NOW

[https://www.jostens.com/apps/store/productBrowse/1409092/Superstition-Springs-Elementary-School/2023-Yearbook/2022072209150729098/CATALOG\\_SHOP/?fbclid=IwAR07TgnSdCbADuqP0IY8\\_88YO6F\\_yw-JlpnduH0WJWwCflvXyEDmku5jQtY](https://www.jostens.com/apps/store/productBrowse/1409092/Superstition-Springs-Elementary-School/2023-Yearbook/2022072209150729098/CATALOG_SHOP/?fbclid=IwAR07TgnSdCbADuqP0IY8_88YO6F_yw-JlpnduH0WJWwCflvXyEDmku5jQtY)

**SSE Spirit Shirts:** On sale NOW - <https://ssespiritwear.itemorder.com/shop/sale/>

\*\*Are you interested in Volunteering? We are always looking for an extra set of hands with our events! Please message us on Facebook or send an email to [sseptsoaz@gmail.com](mailto:sseptsoaz@gmail.com).

## **Fundraising Information:**

**Fry's VIP Card:** Is your Fry's VIP Card linked to SSE? This is easy, free money that goes right back to our classrooms. Go to the Fry's App/Website and choose Community Rewards - then select Superstition Springs Elementary - PTSO. Invite friends, family, and neighbors to join in!

**AmazonSmile:** Want to help make a difference while you shop at Amazon? Simply follow the instructions to select "Superstition Springs Elementary School PTSO" as your charity and activate AmazonSmile now!! They'll donate a percentage of eligible purchases back to our school! Invite friends, family, and neighbors to join in!

**Kona Ice:** Kona Ice will be out at the playground once a month! **Cash only - \$4 each.**





## Character Counts Golden Ticket Winners



Monroe Santos  
Holly Folger  
Braxton Weathers  
Gracie Graham  
Jaxon Karges

Kristine Bahdi  
Parker Roberts  
Kenzie Salter  
Anthony Baumgarner  
Emma Stadler

## Character Counts Winners

King Jones  
Malakai Lent  
William Velazquez  
Dana Price  
Beckham Rogers  
Auni Bhune  
Irelynn McIlveen  
Samantha Martinez  
Michael Dorodo  
Audriana Maynez  
Kenzlie Staggs  
Joni Eisenbeis  
Carlos Yubeta  
Taylor Gregg  
Jacob Bury  
Rylee Vaughn  
Teagan Morrow  
Finn Folger  
Natalia Maynez  
Carson Cone  
Paige Zehring

Michael Bullard  
Marilyn Jaramillo  
Shiloh Campbell  
Darcy Banfield  
Arianna Martinez  
Penny Clark  
Lillian Howard  
Maggie Jones  
Natalia Maynez  
Jackson Hiley  
Natalie Rieck  
Remy Freeburg  
Lyla Roberts  
Cohen Ferrin  
Max Richardson  
Ayden Rivera  
Amaia Cruz  
Karsten Halsey  
Irie Bandin  
Lindyn Strong  
Leah Yanez

Aiden Mendoza  
Preston Prescott  
Taylor Gregg  
Morgan Hensen  
Olivia Durrant  
Carlos Yubeta  
Levi Roberts  
Sophia Hutchins  
Audrina Alcantara  
Brooklyn McClard  
Braylon Boyd  
Kaleb Schaffner  
Myles Stricklin  
Lucu Jones  
Rai Camacho  
Carter Gale  
Zoey Himphill  
DJ Graham  
Brevan Banfield  
Teddy Carlson  
Angel Martinez

# News from Stormy the Sidewinder

September 2022

Superstition Springs  
Elementary  
480-641-6413  
Fax 480-854-8871  
www.gilbertschools.net

September  
Character Trait:  
*Responsibility*



Darcy Banfield  
Hailey Duddy-Allen  
Maria Ortiz  
Danny Burnside  
Abigail Pedersen  
Elijah Andrade  
Matthew Craig  
Levi Anderson  
Alana Scott  
Henry Werner  
Audri Maynez  
Xavier Stewart  
Oliver Clark  
Jett Fardos  
Cash Dingman  
Dawsyn Davison  
Molly Randall  
Rylie Kennedy  
Kimberly Contreras  
Paige Zehring  
Isabella Mercada  
Emma Stalder  
Gunner Quist  
Hunter McClellan  
Jaxen Mansfield  
Bella Meyer  
Henry Werner  
Kaitlyn Vaughn  
Darcy Banfield

Sophia Post  
Enzo Gaccino  
Cruz Wilson  
Penny Clark  
Aria Pickering  
Mallory Johnson  
River Takagi  
Lilly Cox  
Jenna Versteeg  
Jaxson Butter  
Justin Cortes  
Maria Wantink  
Samy Ouali  
Max VanCleave  
Lillian Leichtman  
Sophia Flores  
Natalia Maynez  
Alyxandria Maya  
Kahil Reid  
Ava Onken  
Mateo Arcos  
Jon Campbell  
Abigail Rogers  
Aiden Mendoza  
Lyla Roberts  
Noah Barnes  
Lora Carlson  
Parker Roberts  
Jonathan Zamora

Anishka Hoti  
Braylynn Wood  
Lexi Tarkington  
Jori Comerford  
Parker Roberts  
Bentley Walter  
Gonzalo Lopez  
Silas Marshall  
Grayson Espinoza  
Elizabeth Connolly  
Malia Herron  
Rai Camacho  
Wyatt Dettman  
Jonah Webb  
Olivia Durrant  
Anyia Terry  
Kaitlyn Sanchez  
Kinsley Sotelo  
Owen Covert  
Jaxon Butter  
Doc Hollie Vann  
River Takagi  
Max VanCleave  
Levi Anderson  
Zackary Williams  
Alice Harmsen  
Paige Zehring  
Presley Robinson

## Nurses Notes



**DONATIONS NEEDED-** The Health Office is in need of gently used ELASTIC-WAIST SHORTS and PANTS. Socks, Shoes and NEW underwear would also be greatly appreciated. We need both boys and girls clothes in all sizes (4T-16). We do not need any shirts at this time. Thank You SSE Parents!!



## Library Link

# THE LIBRARY LINK

*good things are happening in the library*

NEW BOOKS ON SHELVES SINCE SCHOOL STARTED: 68



## DONORS CHOOSE PROJECT & ONGOING DONATIONS

*Graphic Novels for Eager Readers*

This month, our generous community helped raise over \$500 through a site called Donor's Choose. The money was used to buy 29 brand new, high demand graphic novels for our library. I wish I could have recorded the students reactions to the news! A HUGE thank you to anyone who donated or shared our project so we could reach our goal. One of our biggest goals in the library this year is to stock the shelves with new (or new to us) books!

Want to help us reach our goal?

Here are two ways you can help:

- 1) Drop off your new or gently used books to the front office and let them know they are for the library.
- 2) You can use all or part of your educational tax credit to help us buy new books. Just go online to **[www.gilbertschools.net/taxcredit](http://www.gilbertschools.net/taxcredit)** to make your donation.

Every penny raised will go directly to getting new books for our library and into the hands of students!

# News from Stormy the Sidewinder



## Battle of the Books



Battle of the Books is a nation-wide reading program. At SSE, teams are composed of groups of 2-3 students from fifth and sixth grade. Students read four books per quarter for three quarters, after which a District-wide battle is held at the end of the school year.

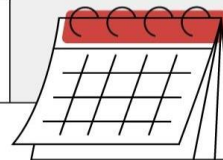
Battles will test the student's knowledge and memory of the books they have read including title, author, and key details of the text.

### 2022/2023 BOOK LIST

*Picture of Hollis Woods* by Patricia Giff  
*The Girl Who Could Fly* by Victoria Forester  
*Earthquake Terror* by Peg Kehret  
*Where the Red Fern Grows* by Wilson Rawls

*Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan  
*Poppi* by Avi  
*Bridge to Terebithia* by Katherine Paterson  
*Hatchet* by Gary Paulsen

*The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman  
*Riding Freedom* by Pam Munoz Ryan  
*The View from Saturday* by EL Konigsburg  
*Castle in the Attic* by Elizabeth Winthrop



### BATTLE DATES

All Battles will be held in the SSE Library at 1:30pm. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Battle #1  
October 25th

Battle #2  
January 10th

Battle #3  
March 28th

Our District Battle will be held in April.

FOR MORE VISIT: <https://sites.google.com/view/superstitionspringslibrary/home>