Traditionally, February has been a time of celebrating love, kindness, empathy, and compassion. How do you celebrate February with your students? Teachers across the nation (including 50 teachers in Inyo County) are using Inner Explorer as a way to boost these important skills in their classrooms. The Inner Explorer program is a series of daily 5-10 minute audio-guided mindfulness practices. The program focuses on key areas of development, bringing mindfulness to education and helping students prepare for learning. Daily mindfulness practice is a trauma-informed approach to teaching kids practical techniques to appropriately handle negative emotions such as stress, anxiety and anger. Inner Explorer offers programs for PreK-12 students that help students with following themes: discovering breathing and relaxation exercises, learning awareness of senses, using thought and emotional regulation, developing compassion and connection, and promoting social emotional learning. Inner Explorer also integrates classical music and journal writing. One primary Inner Explorer strategy is the calming "sharkfin" breath. The students place their hand along their nose (see photos) and with their exhale, they release their hand downward. Students find these focused breathing techniques to be calming and helpful for learning. National research on the program indicates 28% higher grades, 60% decrease in behavioral issues and 43% decrease in teacher stress.

Here’s what some of our teachers and students are saying:

“I use Inner Explorer to help my students deal with tough times. It calms and focuses them every day.” Abby Sada, Bishop Elementary Teacher

“Since using Inner Explorer, I have noticed my students are better able to refocus and recharge when needed.” Rory Winzenread, Round Valley Teacher

“I like to end our day with Inner Explorer, if we have time, so that we end on a nice, peaceful note.” Trish Wallace, Bishop Elementary Teacher

"Inner Explorer is good for people and calming down and experiencing new things.” 4th grade student

“I sent loving kindness thoughts to my cousin.” 1st grade student

“I like when we think about kindness.” 2nd grade student

"I like the quiet because if it’s too loud it hurts my ears.” 1st grade student

“It makes me happy.” 2nd grade student

“ar I like how Inner Explorer is relaxing and you can calm down after recess.” 4th grade student

For more information on Inner Explorer, please contact Tiffany Randall tran dall@inyocoe.org

## Spelling Bee Results

Twenty-six students from local elementary and middle schools participated in the 2018-19 countywide Spelling Bee at Jill Kinmont Boothe School. The winners were:

1st—Rose Bracken, HSMS
2nd—Ashley Fitt, HSMS
3rd—Sabino Palestino, Lo Inyo

After much competition with words like diaphanous, fuliginous, and mulligatawny, the winning word was: colloquialism.

Thank you coaches for working with students to prepare for the bee, and the local Altrusa Chapter for sponsoring the Spelling Bee competition.

Representing Inyo County at the Elementary State Bee in May will be Madison Benninger and Kevin Glenn. Rose Bracken and Ashely Fitt will represent Inyo county at the Junior High State Bee in May. Congratulations to all the student participants!
March 4th Professional Development Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>AM Session (8:00 - 11:30)</th>
<th>PM Session (12:00 - 3:00)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVID</td>
<td>BES certificated - Tallman</td>
<td>HSMS - Classroom at HSMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HSMS - Classroom at HSMS</td>
<td>BUHS - Carl Lind BR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Crisis Training</td>
<td>BUSD Classified - BES LRC</td>
<td>BES certificated - BES LRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI Training</td>
<td>BAC Classroom</td>
<td>BAC Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Spanish</td>
<td>BES Dual - Mammoth High, Trailer L</td>
<td>BES Dual - Mammoth High, Trailer L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BES Dual - Mammoth High, Trailer L</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement Science</td>
<td>Pali - ICOE Conf. Room</td>
<td>Pali - ICOE Conf. Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-sensory strategies /</td>
<td>RV School</td>
<td>RV School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGSS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Behavior Supports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in MTSS</td>
<td>BES classified - Tallman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASC &amp; Instruction</td>
<td>OV School</td>
<td>OV School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lunch will be served from 11:30am - 12:00pm in the BAC. For more information:
on CPI contact Heather Carr (hcarr@inyoce.org)
on Active Crisis Training contact Kristin Carr (kcarr@bishopschools.org)
For any other questions, contact Iliissa Twomey (itwomey@inyoce.org)

Family Science Nights

Students are invited to explore the extreme environments in the Eastern Sierra through interactive science activities. Kids and their families will figure out why jackrabbits have big ears, get to try mountain driving, explore how clouds are formed, uncover archaeological artifacts, and much more! There are activities for all ages from painting native fish to exploring the chemistry of Mono Lake. All of the Family Science Nights are free and are held from 5:30-7:30pm at the school gym or cafeteria. Siblings are welcome and all students must be accompanied by an adult. For more information or to volunteer, contact your school office!

Feb 5 – Owens Valley
Feb 7 – Lone Pine
Feb 12 – Bishop
Feb 13 – Big Pine
Feb 21 – Round Valley

STEM Book Raffle

Congratulations to the individuals that entered that STEM book raffle (included in the January newsletter). Keep an eye out for more raffles or giveaways in upcoming newsletters!