



February / March 2016 Newsletter

Principal's Message

Greetings. When I started thinking about what to share in our monthly newsletter, I was embarrassed to realize that I neglected to publish one for February. Chalk it up to three days of outdoor education with our fifth graders at Astro Camp. As I mentioned at the assembly just following that trip, this year was one of the more memorable simply because of how splendidly our fifth graders represented our community. One of the highlights of my work these past two years has been seeing a class like this one mature from kindergarten to their final year with us. It is always a bittersweet moment to see them off to middle school on culmination day, which this year will be June 10th at 10:15 AM.

February and March were action packed as always with restaurant fundraisers, class field trips, the Scripps Regional Spelling Bee at which Rafael L. represented us with pride, continued professional learning on the part of our teachers, a student celebration of Black History Month, and a totally rad 80's themed dance fundraiser thanks to the leadership of its chair, Christie Levine. We continue to be lifted by all of the special people who work so tirelessly for our students so that they have the very best in educational opportunities. April is an important month as we make budget decisions at our next SSC / ELAC meeting on April 7th at 02:50 PM in room 5 and our Booster Club meeting on April 6th at 06:00 PM in our library. These meetings are open to all families, and your input is encouraged and welcome. This year because of a \$45,000 technology grant that we received from the district, we have the potential of funding more teachers' assistants next year throughout all of our grades in kindergarten through fifth grade. Hearing from as many of our stakeholders about how we spend money that is allocated and raised is critical to our work.

Finally, I recently wrote my annual yearbook message and spoke to how challenged these times make it to stay optimistic and positive. As the adults in our children's lives, we must first assure them that our primary role is to ensure their safety and well-being. We must also be prepared to answer their questions in honest, plain language, as they are exposed to or hear about events here at home and internationally. Finally, we must model for them and expect of them positive, humane interactions with the people in our lives. We cannot underestimate the power of kindness. Let's do our best to model what we expect. *No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.* Aesop *Principal Jenkins*

Attendance

Our goal is for 76% or more of our students to be in attendance 96% of the time. **An attendance rate of 96% is no more than 7 absences.** We continue to do our best to reach out to families to ensure that our students are in school as much as possible. While we understand that illness is unavoidable, I do feel like there are many students who could be in school more. Please remember that we cannot teach who is not here! Currently our school-wide rate for students in attendance 96% of the time is 62.4%, which represents a decline of 2.1 percentage points since January. Let's ensure that we are only absent for excused reasons. First grade wins the extra PE class and Mr. Bax's class wins a free Mad Science™ class for an attendance rate of 97.93%! Congratulations! Thanks.

Cumulative Attendance Data as of March 11, 2016

The class with the best attendance wins a free Mad Science class! All classes get 10 minute of extra recess.		Numbers in parentheses represent percent change since January.	
Percentage in Attendance by Class		% of Students with 96% Attendance	
Masi	97.63%	Kindergarten	61.1% (-2.7)
Phelps	96.89%	First Grade	68.2% (0)
Rothschild	97.90%	Second Grade	67.9% (-2.4)
Bax	97.93%	Third Grade	61.9% (-3.5)
Flaxman	96.78%	Fourth Grade	58.9% (-0.7)
Buck	96.38%	Fifth Grade	61.5% (-3.8)

Anti-Bullying Support

In order to clarify how we define bullying in an investigation, below is the definition that helps us in making a determination if bullying is actually occurring:

Bullying is any deliberate and unwanted severe or pervasive physical, verbal, or electronic act, conduct or communication, committed by a pupil(s) that is repeated, or likely to be repeated, and has, or can be reasonably predicted to have, the effect of one or more of the following: (1) Reasonable fear of harm to person or property; (2) Substantially detrimental effect on physical or mental health; (3) Substantial interference with academic performance; and (4) Substantial interference with the ability to participate in or benefit from school services, activities, or privileges.

All reports of suspected bullying are investigated thoroughly. While the goal is to address the report immediately, we have 30 days to resolve the issue and 60 days to respond.

Conferring with Readers

After a mini-lesson in readers' workshop, students are released to read independently books of interest to them at their instructional reading level. This does not mean, though, that our teachers' work is done. This time is critical to the work as they research, observe, and directly teach students one-on-one, in pairs, or in a small group. Typically, when teachers work individually with students, we call this work conferring. A typical conference usually starts with some research, either done at another time, as the teacher observes the reader prior to the conference, or in the initial stages of a teacher sitting and reading with students. Once the teacher is able to identify an area of strength on which s/he can build, the teacher can either mirror what s/he sees students doing in their reading as a means for the practice to strengthen, model a strategy that they can use in their reading work, or mentor / coach them as they read to build on areas of strength. All of this work is done with an admiring lens in order to build confidence. We work toward understanding deeply our readers.

Click on this link to learn what your child should be learning!

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/index.asp>

Important Dates

03/30/16 Ms. Fielding's & Mr. Rothschild's Field Trip	04/08/16 Emergency Drills
04/01/16 Jogathon Fundraiser!	04/08/16 Ms. San Juan's Field Trip
04/01/16 2016-17 Enrollment Begins	04/11/16 Spring Portraits
04/01/16 SAS Application Window Opens	04/15/16 Teacher Time Auction Ends
04/04/16 Coffee & Tea with the Principal	04/15/16 Prospective Family Tour
04/04/16 Teacher Time Auction Begins	04/19/16 Mid-Term Notices
04/04/16 Ms. Aver's & Ms. Block's Field Trip	04/20/16 GATE Parent Meeting
04/06/16 Booster Club Meeting	04/21/16 5 th Grade Panorama Picture
04/07/16 SSC / ELAC Meeting	04/21/16 PSArts Family Art Night