



December 2016 Newsletter

Principal's Message

Greetings. Even though December was a short month for us in school, that did not stop us from making the most of the 12 days we had together. A HUGE thank you goes to our students, teachers, parents, and especially Ms. Babchenko for what was yet again an enchanting day of song and holiday spirit on Thursday, December 15th. It is always a special treat to see our students perform, and we are so thankful to our corps of room parents and our Booster Club for organizing holiday baskets for auction. Stay tuned for fundraising totals!

We are excited to announce that because of a donation made by one of our parents specifically earmarked for technology, our third through fifth graders will now be 1:1, student:device with Chromebook laptops. The gift also afforded us an additional iPad for each kindergarten class so that our teachers could have a desired 8 devices to run 2 groups of four during small group learning. Through their collaborative efforts, our teachers are expanding their repertoire of applications and uses so that our students can engage in 21st Century learning. It is truly gratifying to see all of the forces align to benefit our students. We are definitely stronger together.

In addition to our learning around technology, our teachers continue to study ways in which we can help our students become lifelong learners and teachers. We began our journey with UCLA and their team by thinking of how our questions help us understand and guide student thinking. Once we have an insight into students' approaches to a problem, we thought about how to "nudge" them to greater efficiency and deeper understanding. Our teachers also thought about how we assess reading and writing with an expert from Growing Educators, and in January we are going to engage in collective strategic planning around evidence of learning that doesn't show the kinds of growth we would expect for some of our students. By focusing on high impact teacher practices and by making the learning visible to our students, we will develop in our learners habits of mind that will enable them to tackle any task.

Finally, January marks the beginning of our annual Great American Spell Check pledge drive and spelling bee. Each of our students in grade 1-5 hone their word knowledge while we raise thousands of dollars for field trips and programs. Make sure to keep your eye out for pledge forms and spelling lists. We're excited! Thanks for your support as always!

Principal Jenkins

Attendance

Our goal is for 76% or more of our students to be in attendance 96% of the time. Our school-wide attendance rate is 69.6%, which reflects a drop of 3-percentage points since our last newsletter. **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. This month we will start recognizing students with perfect attendance, and continue that for each month through our end of year perfect attendance recognition. Attendance is such a critical factor in our students' success, and our teachers and I are committed to making every second count. Please support us in this effort. Third grade wins the extra PE class, and Ms. Tepas's class wins a free Mad Science™ class for an attendance rate of 97.86%! Congratulations!

Cumulative Attendance Data as of December 16, 2016

The class with the best attendance wins a free Mad Science class! All classes get 10 minutes of extra recess.		The number in parentheses represents the percent change since November's newsletter.	
Percentage in Attendance by Class		% of Students with 96% Attendance	
Pippin	95.87%	Kindergarten	55.78% (+4.68)
Tepas	97.86%	First Grade	72.2% (-6.6)
Block	97.85%	Second Grade	75.4% (-4.8)
Neri-Muñoz	97.25%	Third Grade	76.5% (-1.1)
Saxton	97.81%	Fourth Grade	75.6% (-0.1)
Payne	96.43%	Fifth Grade	66.3% (-7.5)

The Role of Metacognition and Reflection

Scores of studies have shown that when students reflect on their learning, the rate at which they retain content and deepen understanding increases. As a result, our teachers have begun to incorporate reflection into their work with our students, including questions that they send home as homework. Below are some questions that come from *Visible Learning for Mathematics*, which you can use at home. These can be an easy way for you to get insight into your child's day.

- 1) How was your understanding increased by today's lessons? How do you know?
- 2) What questions do you still have about what you learned today? How will you answer them?
- 3) What do you feel still needs work? How do you know?
- 4) How well did you work with others today? How did it help you learn?
- 5) Did you ask for help? Did you offer help to others? How did that impact the learning?

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

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

Great American Spell Check and Spelling Bee

During the week of January 9, 2017, students in grades 1-5 will come home with a letter explaining our annual pledge drive and spelling bee competition. All students will be expected to master 50 words for their grade level and can practice an additional 50 words and beyond if they wish to compete in our school wide bee on Tuesday, January 31st at 02:00 PM. Students are asked to collect pledges on the 50 words that they will spell the week of January 23rd and collect pledges on the number of words spelled correctly and turn them back in by Friday, February 3rd. This year we are setting a fundraising goal of \$25 per student, or approximately \$10,000. All monies raised go toward student field trips and programs. May the best speller win!

Important Dates

01/09/17 School Resumes	01/26/17 Prospective Family Tour
01/09/17 Spelling Bee Fundraiser Begins	01/27/17 Mad Science (K) Session 2 Ends
01/09/17 Coffee & Tea with the Principal	01/30/17 STAR Nova & Japanese Session 3 Begin
01/13/17 Mid-Term Notices Go Home	01/31/17 Annual Spelling Bee (2:00 PM)
01/16/17 No School: MLK Jr. Day	02/01/17 5 th Grade Fitness Exam Begins
01/18/17 Yui Japanese Session 2 Ends	02/01/17 Mad Science Session 2 Ends
01/19/17 Emergency Drills	02/01/17 Booster Club Meeting
01/19/17 SSC/ELAC Meeting	02/03/17 Mad Science (K) Session 3 Begins
01/20/17 STAR Nova Session 2 Ends	02/03/17 Spelling Bee Fundraiser Ends
01/25/17 Yui Japanese Session 3 Begins	02/06/17 Coffee & Tea with the Principal

