



The Pink Panther

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

25 South Hill Court, Oakland, California 94618 (510) 879-1710



SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 12, 2006

Dear Kaiser Families,

Our refreshing rains have finally arrived, and the hills are turning green again. Daffodils are sprouting and the Acacia trees spread their yellow glow along Highway 13. Our "winterspring" has arrived. When the rains are coming down and we can't go outside many of us like to read. The gift of reading that was given to us by our parents and teachers is precious, and complex. There are many facets of the skill of reading that we monitor here as your children grow.

Decoding/encoding: Young children learn the names and sounds of letters, and as they do so they can **decode** a word (make the sounds of the letters to sound out the word). Soon after they begin to **encode** words (write letters for the sounds of the word in order to write out the whole word). This is the foundation of our reading which we refer to as **the alphabet system**.

Fluency: After a child learns how to read individual words we monitor how fluently they read sentences. You can help improve your child's fluency rate by doing a daily two-minute exercise. Time your child as they read from a favorite book for exactly 1 minute, noting the words they mispronounce. Correct their pronunciation on these words, and then have them read the same text for exactly 1 minute. They should read more fluently the second time, and go beyond what they have read the first time. This simple exercise will give your child the experience of increasing their fluency, seeing a measure of that fluency by looking at the page, and increasing their confidence. All in three minutes!

Comprehension: The underlying goal of reading is to construct meaning. We monitor how well the children comprehend what they read by asking them questions after they read the text, and checking to see if they remember what they've read. We know that people who are thoughtful readers are better readers. There are a couple of things that you can do to increase your child's comprehension as you read together. Ask **prediction questions**, such as a question about what a character may do next and why. **Model** out loud how you think about the text. Raise questions about **significant details** and guide your child in looking back into the text if they have forgotten. This **active reading** of the text will greatly enhance your child's comprehension skills.

We also monitor **spelling, vocabulary, checking skills**, and **writing** samples. Research into how children learn to read has led to some surprising discoveries. We know, for example, that the first 1000 **high-frequency words** account for about 85% of all written language; helping your child to memorize the first 200 or so of those words greatly increases their beginning efforts at reading. We also know that once a child has reached the fifth grade level of reading something truly magical begins: if the child reads just 20 minutes a day they will read a million words a year, and at that **level their brain will automatically learn spelling, vocabulary, grammar and syntax!**

What a gift!

- Mel Stenger, Principal

Getting In The Know

PARENTS WANTED!!!!

We need PARENTS of gifted children to attend our Annual California Association for the Gifted Conference.

- volunteer for 3 to 6 hours on **Friday and/or Saturday, March 2 & 3, 2007.**
- come for Parents' Day at the Conference on **Sunday, March 4, 2007, 7:30 am -2:30 pm.**

See page 6 inside the Pink Panther for Details.

Support PTA's Take Your Family to School Week

This week, **February 12-16**, PTAs across the nation will take part in the second annual PTA Take Your Family to School Week. Last year, this new event helped thousands of family members share an important part of their children's lives and strengthen the parent-school partnership. PTA Take Your Family to School Week helps PTAs commemorate Founders Day (February 17) and rededicate themselves to child welfare through parent involvement. If you haven't yet "given a day", now is the perfect time! Visit your child's classroom during this Week. By participating in school activities, you'll gain a new perspective on your child's school day and send your child the message that you value education. Take *your* family to school this week!

Join the School Site Council!

We are currently looking for a new SCC member!

The SSC is the overall governing body of the school, reviewing progress monthly on the third Wednesday, from 4:00-5:30, about implementing and improving the current school plan, equity issues, academic performance, and budgets. There is very little work outside the meeting time besides occasionally reviewing a document.

Please call the office if you can help us in this way.

KAISER CALENDAR

DATE / DAY	EVENT
Feb 12-16	Take Your Family to School Week
Feb 19	Presidents' Day (Monday: School Closed)
Feb 21	SSC Meeting
Feb 22	PTA Board Meeting
Feb 23	African American Potluck
Mar 2	Gardening Day
Mar 7	General PTA Meeting
Mar 12 through 16	Parent Teacher Conferences: Minimum Days all Week

The Kaiser School Web Site

<http://www.kaiserelementary.org>

- Info about fundraising events
- After school programs
- **Teacher classrooms online**

How to be in the Pink Panther

To include your story or information
in your school newsletter:

forward your news, questions or article to the editors by 5:00 p.m. on Sundays to:

mryder@ix.netcom.com and
kbradley@ix.netcom.com

How to Reach Kaiser School

Our phone number is **(510) 879-1710**
(includes a 24 hour message service).

To participate in the school community group,
go to (and join) this website:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/
kaiserelementaryschool_group/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kaiserelementaryschool_group/)

Healthy Lifestyles... Healthy Children

Even if your child has an acceptable Body Mass Index (BMI) and is not overweight, now is a good time to encourage him/her to love an active lifestyle.

Children who learn to love playing sports or doing activities outside at an early age will continue that behavior later in life. If your child is overweight, it is even more important that you encourage him/her to put down the soda, turn off the TV (two things that research shows correlate to the growing obesity epidemic in children) and get active. Here are some suggestions on how to get started from Oprah Winfrey's famed trainer, Bob Greene:

- Do encourage your child to join a team. Most communities have recreation centers where there are organized team sports such as basketball, baseball, t-ball, and soccer. And they almost all need parent volunteers!
- Don't overlook your child's interests, and what he/she is good at. Maybe your child loves nature – a bug-collecting hike might be just the thing. Maybe he/she is a great climber – consider a jungle gym or climbing wall. Maybe his/her hand-eye coordination isn't well developed – then swimming or bike riding might be better choices than tennis or baseball.
- Don't try to teach your child a sport if you tend to be impatient. If you think you might become frustrated when your young athlete doesn't catch on quickly enough – and he/she may not, even if he's taken to some other activity earlier – get someone else to play coach. It's not worth the risk of turning your child off to a particular sport before he/she even gets started.
- Do make physical activities a family affair. Physical activities can be something everyone in the family can enjoy and look forward to sharing with each other. You can organize weekends and vacations around hiking, skiing, swimming/snorkeling – there are even family "camps" based on a particular sport.
- Don't buy toys that encourage sitting around. Books and puzzles have their place, but if you want your child to get up and go, consider a pair of skates, a basketball or soccer ball, or a new bike.
- Do steer job-seeking children towards something physical. A paper route, garden chores or a car wash are probably better choices than inputting data into a computer.
- *Always* make it fun. Remember how your toddler loved being active ALL the time? Older children can feel the same way, especially if they see you're having fun too. It can be as simple as "I'll race you to the door." Or you can have a special "private" soccer practice with your child. Or, ask him/her to come watch you play tennis – not only can he/she see how much fun you're having, you can ask him/her to be the ball-boy or girl, then play together when you're finished.

Source: eDiets.com, "Get Kids Fit: Dos and Don'ts," by Bob Greene, BFA, MFA



EXTRA EXTRA !!

BE THE PINK PANTHER'S NEXT CO-EDITOR

The Pink Panther Staff is changing into the new season. You and your partner editor can have your first new issue published as soon as March 5th !!

If you're ready to drive Kaiser's primary weekly newsletter from the front seat, we need you now! Contact Malcolm Ryder (outgoing editor), Kim Karl (VP Communications) or Lisa Downes (PTA President).

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IT'S TIME AGAIN FOR OUTSTANDING TEACHERS NOMINATIONS!

The Realtors, Managers and Staff of Prudential California Realty acknowledge the commitment made by the special people who dedicate their lives to teaching our children. With this in mind, the Education Foundation was created in 1992. The Foundation's mission is to honor outstanding teachers in the public schools for their priceless contribution to the lives of our children and America's future. **Each winter we encourage students, parents, peers, administrators and others to nominate exceptional public school teachers for an award and grant consideration. The following spring, each chosen recipient is honored at an Award Ceremony with public acknowledgement of their achievements and a cash grant to be used at their discretion.**

To date, our Foundation has awarded \$497,895 to 848 special teachers throughout Northern California. In the spring of 2005, 105 teachers were awarded \$62,895. We hope to continue to grow the Foundation's contributions so that we can give more awards each year. Please help us spread the word about our Foundation, so that more teachers can be recognized. All nominations and donations are gratefully appreciated. To nominate a teacher, either fill out the attached Teacher Nomination Form, visit the prudential website www.prurealty.com/educationfoundation to fill out an electronic form, or call your Prudential California Realtor for more information. We accept nominations each year until March 15.

Hi! I want to let the community know that the magnificent fence and flowering vines you all gave me are a delight to me and a daily reminder of the outpouring of love from Kaiser.

All of the neighbors who walk or drive by comment on the handsome fence! I'm one lucky lady!!!

Fondly,
Katie McLane

Last call: GET YOUR Auction Donation Receipts...

For those of you needing auction donation receipts for tax purposes. \$\$\$\$\$

I have printed out all the receipts! They are in the form of a letter. Email me or contact the office if you have questions or addresses to confirm. Thanks – Liz Hall
probossliz@pacbell.net



**THE GROUNDHOG
SAYS
EARLY SPRING
THIS YEAR!!**

GARDENING DAY

MARCH 12

2006-2007 Pink Panther Staff:

Copy Editors: Wendy Harcarik
Carrie Shepherd
Pink Panther Editor: Malcolm Ryder

Pink Panther's PTA Sponsors:

PTA President: Lisa Downes
VPs Communication: Kim Carl
Kiki Bradley

Kids Take the Page

Tom Rust's PTA Championship class went to Ironworks this past Wednesday. It was their reward for having the largest percentage of PTA membership. Here are the highlights from the post-game interviews...

Grace and Alvon:

Ironworks was the best fieldtrip ever! We had a great time. Our class was screaming their heads off. Our class was thrilled to go to Ironworks. Rock climbing was so fun. It was the best day ever. We loved it!



Aponi and Sage:

Ironworks was the best fieldtrip ever! We didn't just get to rock climb; we got to go on the slack line. Even Mr. Rust got to climb and everybody was chanting for him. It looked funny when the kids were coming down. They looked like puppets on a string. We want to go to Ironworks again!

Justin and Carl:

Ironworks was a wonderful field trip! At Ironworks we did 4 or 5 rock walls. When it was Mr. Rust's turn everyone was screaming. On some of our climbs we went high. We had a good time there.

Isabella and Madison:

Thank you PTA for sending us to Ironworks. We had so much fun climbing. Some kids were scared at first. Then they went to the top. We hope to win again! We love to climb at Ironworks.

Jared and Emmanuel:

Ironworks was the best field trip ever! It was fun when we got to the top. It was also fun when we got to jump off the rock wall! We went on different rock walls. We were thrilled for the PTA letting us go to Ironworks.



Andrew and Miles:

Thank you PTA for sending us to Ironworks. Thank you for the fieldtrip. We made it to the top. And our fellow classmates watched us climb. It was the best field trip ever!

Emmett and Henry:

The PTA paid for our class to go to Ironworks. Ironworks was the greatest place we've ever been to! We had never been there before. Now when we go rock climbing for real we will know how to get down by just letting go and leaning back. (We had a harness and rope.) We can't wait to go there again!

Max and Maya:

Ironworks was the best field trip ever! We had tons of fun! Our Ironworks teacher was great. We both didn't make it to the top the first time. The class was screaming off their heads because of the field trip! We wish that instead of going to school, we could go to Ironworks.

Itzeel and Dejane:

The PTA paid for our class to go to Ironworks. Thank you PTA for sending us to Ironworks. It was a very fun field trip. Some of us were scared. Most of us made it to the top many times. We loved it so much. It was crazy!



Parents & Teachers

Santa Clara 2007- PARENTS WANTED!!!!

Parents at the Conference 2007

from Deborah Hazelton, CAG Parent Representative Chair

We need PARENTS of gifted children to attend our annual California Association for the Gifted Conference in March 2007! We have recruited many speakers and resources for you here in Santa Clara to support you in your quest of raising a gifted child in the 21st century. Come to Santa Clara and enjoy the conference and the people around you who share your passion for educating the gifted.

We will offer a newcomer's workshop on Thursday, Friday, and Sunday to help guide you through the broad range of choices. Our Parent Strand was designed with you in mind, offering sessions covering subjects ranging from how to encourage your child with homework to the college bound gifted planning ahead.



Here are a few titles from workshops on Sunday:

- 1) Living Successfully with Your Gifted Child
- 2) Gifted Parenting:
- 3) Helping Your Gifted Child Thrive .
- 4) Why are Boys Dropping out of Gifted Programs?
- 5) A Parents Guide to Gifted Children
- 6) What works with Gifted Kids?
- 7) Parent Involvement is a Three Way Street



Come by our Resource Room, which is a favorite of many, as we display student artifacts, charts, and handouts.



At the end of the conference on Sunday, we offer these **Table Talks with** experts from up and down the state discussing **Hot Topics** such as:

- the Young Gifted Child
- Gifted at Risk
- Twice Exceptional Gifted
- Social Emotional Needs
- How to Advocate for your Child.

Come for the whole conference! If you can't come for the whole conference, come for **Parents' Day at the Conference on Sunday, March 4, 2007, 7:30 am -2:30 pm.**



Volunteers Needed for CAG Conference

CAG needs parents and teachers who are willing to volunteer for 3-6 hours on **Friday and/or Saturday, March 2 & 3, 2007.**

If you volunteer on either of these days, you may return on Sunday and enjoy the conference for no charge.
If you are interested in volunteering at this event, please e-mail

Beth Littrell

bethlittrell@gmail.com