



# The Pink Panther

## Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

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



SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 20, 2006

Dear Kaiser Families,

Last week I wrote a bit about the components of reading development that we monitor here at Kaiser Elementary. This week our subject is math. Being highly skilled in math is key to success in contemporary American society. Whether we are comparing prices at the grocery store, figuring out interest payments on a new car loan, or just budgeting our monthly bills Math is hugely important in our lives. Have you ever been part of a conversation where someone just freely admits that they can't balance the checkbook, and then we all chuckle and nod our heads? Or have you witnessed the person in the checkout line at the grocery store who is failed to estimate what her purchases are compared to her cash? I always wonder why these two situations are socially acceptable while we would never admit in public that we couldn't read the newspaper, and we would never ask someone in the checkout line to read the label for us.

The teachers here at Kaiser are doing their part to shift our culture from accepting math incompetence, sometimes called innumeracy, and are helping our children develop their math skills to launch them into a more successful and enjoyable life. Here are some facets of math development that we monitor at Kaiser, and that you can help monitor at home also:

**Number Sense:** this is a child's sense of numbers, or ease of using them. We look for children to be able to put numbers in order, beginning with the whole numbers one through 30 in kindergarten, and eventually developing the ability to sequence fractions and decimals. Number Sense also includes an understanding of **Place Value**.

**Using Multiple Strategies:** It's not enough for a child to know how to solve a problem one way, they must know many ways to solve a problem, many ways to get to the correct answer. Related to using multiple strategies is the idea of **metacognition:** Children must be able to describe how they are solving the problem and why they are choosing the method they are choosing.

**Mental Math and Estimation:** These two skills related very closely to number sense. In addition to understanding sequencing and place value, it is important for children to be able to do basic computation in their head: rounding off and multiplying two digit numbers, keeping a running total, or estimating change are just a few examples of mental math use every day.

**Measurement and Geometry:** Beginning in kindergarten with the names of different shapes we develop children's spatial reasoning through instruction and measurement in geometry. As they apply numbers to length, area, and volume, children learn to apply these concepts to everyday and scientific situations.

**Involvement In Everyday Math:** One of the things I noticed over the years about successful math students is that they are often involved in their parent's math lives. That is, they are going to the store with their parents in figuring out the best prices, they are being introduced to budgeting by their parents, and they talk about household economics on a regular basis.

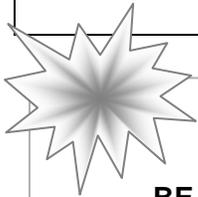
**Algebra Readiness:** one of our school districts goals for every child is to be algebra ready. The state standard for California is that every child should be ready to deal with algebra on the ninth grade level, and many during their eighth grade. It is important for all children to study algebra around that age level, not for its practical implications, but for its developmental importance: algebra shifts the child away from concrete specific answers in math to being able to handle abstract variables, changing rates, and numbers that change depending upon what other numbers do. Studying algebra gives students mental skills that are applicable in many situations, including human relationships.

I know that mathematical thinking is not the easiest thing for everybody. But the next time you run into a problem that needs math skills to solve it, for the sake of your children stop, talk about it, figure it out, and then discuss how you solved the problem. Don't wait until you get to the checkout line to give the cashier back the things that you can't afford, keep a running total with mental math. Sit down and balance your checkbook and show your son or daughter what you're doing. And by all means don't put duct tape over the blinking clock on your VCR, just read the directions!

Have fun with numbers!

*Mel Stenger, Principal*

## Getting In The Know



### 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 5<sup>th</sup> !!

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).

[mryder@ix.netcom.com](mailto:mryder@ix.netcom.com)

[kcarl@berkeley.edu](mailto:kcarl@berkeley.edu)

[lisadownes@yahoo.com](mailto:lisadownes@yahoo.com)

#### 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 21	SSC Meeting, 4 p.m.
Feb 22	PTA Board Meeting
Feb 23	African American Pot Luck
Mar 2	Gardening Day
Mar 7	General PTA Meeting
Mar 12 through 16	Parent Teacher Conferences: Minimum Days all Week
Mar 21	SCC Meeting
Mar 29	PTA Board Meeting

### 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](mailto:mryder@ix.netcom.com) and

[kbradley@ix.netcom.com](mailto: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

## Upcoming Healthy Living Assemblies and Meetings

Kaiser Permanente is about to present a series of assemblies for students in 3-5<sup>th</sup> grades. The first assembly will take place on Wed. March 7. They will present an interactive educational theater program focusing on healthy eating habits and exercise. On

Wed. March 14<sup>th</sup> they will conduct smaller "classroom workshops" reinforcing the performance content. On Tues. March 27<sup>th</sup> there will be a follow up "parent's night" for 3-5<sup>th</sup> grade parents and students which will include sharing a healthy meal provided by Kaiser Permanente and a "bringing home" program. Adults will participate in an interactive workshop/performance with students.

### Mark Your Calendars!

Wednesday, March 7 is our next *General PTA* meeting. Mr. Ross will be speaking about the upcoming science fair and giving important information to parents. Please plan on attending.

### **SSC Meeting**

Come join us at our next SSC meeting on Wednesday, February 21 at 4 p.m. in the Library.

#### **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

# Happy New Year!!

The Chinese New Year is very similar to the Western one, rich in traditions, folklores and rituals. It has been said that it is a combination of the Western Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year. This is hardly an exaggeration! It is popularly recognized as the Spring Festival and celebrations last 15 days. On the day itself, an ancient custom called Hong Bao, meaning Red Packet, takes place. This involves married couples giving children and unmarried adults money in red envelopes. Then the family begins to say greetings from door to door, first to their relatives and then to their neighbours. Like the Western saying "let bygones be bygones," at Chinese New Year, grudges are very easily cast aside.

The Chinese lunar year is divided into 12 months of 29 or 30 days. The calendar is adjusted to the length of the solar year by the addition of extra months at regular intervals. The years are arranged in major cycles of 60 years. Each successive year is named after one of 12 animals. These 12-year cycles are continuously repeated. The Chinese New Year is celebrated at the second new moon after the winter solstice and falls between January 21 and February 19 on the Gregorian calendar.

The year 2005 translates to the Chinese year 4702 - 4703.

Rat	Ox	Tiger	Cat (Rabbit)	Dragon	Snake	Horse	Sheep (Goat)	Monkey	Rooster	Dog	Pig
1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911
1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923
1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935
1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	<b>2007</b>



(See more of this at [www.theholidayspot.com/chinese\\_new\\_year/](http://www.theholidayspot.com/chinese_new_year/))

# Parents & Teachers

## TOP TEN WALKATHON THEMES WE WON'T BE USING THIS YEAR

10

**"Walk the Line"** (we give 'em black t-shirts and they all do their best Johnny Cash impersonation).

9

**"Walk Like An Egyptian"** (we insist they keep all knees, elbows and wrists at right angles throughout the walk)

8

**"Walking on Eggshells"** (we pretend we're really mad at them and make them feel on edge as they do laps around the school).

7

**"Walkabout"** (instead of giving 'em t-shirts and otter pops, we send 'em out into the desert with a knife and a compass).

6

**"Walk The Plank"** (we blindfold 'em and see if they can figure out when it's time to turn to avoid the fence)

5

**"Walk DMC"** (we give them all fedoras and gold chains and make them hip hop from Queens NY to Kaiser)

4

**"Put Your Foot Where Your Mouth Is"** (we have them celebrate the most embarrassing fund-raising speeches of all time)

3

**"Stairway to huff heave gasp huff Heaven"** (huff heave gasp huff no flat terrain gasp huff included in huff the course)

2

**"Kicks are for Kids"** (no shoes allowed until they each complete 16 laps)

and, the number one theme we won't be using this year...

1

**"Walk-A-Thong"**

## African American Potluck this Friday, February 23 - 6:30pm

Please join us on Friday for an evening of delicious food and entertainment.

### On the agenda:

- **Dinner** starting at 6:30
- **Mr. Neat's** class presents the play "**Freedom**" written by Mr. Neat.
- **Oratorical** presentations by:  
Sophia Lee, Nydesha Foster & Students from Ms. Gorham's 2nd Grade class
- **African Dance** with Pope Flynn

There will be a "*craft table*" in the same area as the food tables. This should help parents, with energetic little ones, who may need to come out of the auditorium during the play. We ask that you stay with your child, to supervise them, while doing the crafts.

Please refer to the table below, for food assignments;

**A - H:** Entrée/Main dish  
**I - R:** Dessert, Fruit or other Healthy Treat  
**S - Z:** Appetizer, Soups, Salad or Sides

***We look forward to seeing you all at the wonderful celebration of Black History month!!!***