



The Pink Panther

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

25 South Hill Court, Oakland, California 94618 (510) 549-4900

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 21, 2009

Dear Kaiser Families,

By the time you read this newsletter, we will have a new president: Barack Hussein Obama. We will have watched and cried as our nation welcomes its new leader and looks to him to bring forth among us "Change we can believe in." In the last three months as our country creaks and moans under the burdens of war, a deteriorating economy, and the relentless media messages of doom, we have looked forward to this day and this man to turn it all around. We have held out, waiting for someone to bring us out of our collective mess, to change our fate. We have believed.

Last night I Googled "Obama Promises" and got 10,800,000 hits in 0.13 seconds. There were promises to make government work, promises to dismantle our armed forces, promises of Change, promises of a new style of politics, the American Promise, an index of Obama promises, promises of a new era of scientific innovation, promises to stop America's jobs from going overseas, promises to "remake the world," promises of a tax plan to deliver broad-based tax relief to middle class, promises of a new tack on Iran, promises of a bid to overhaul retiree spending, Blogs devoted to posts about Obama promises, promises of a "new chapter" on climate change, a video about Jobs Promises, promises of a Net Neutrality law, promises to bankrupt coal industry, promises of drivers licenses to illegals, promises of more aid to Afghanistan—all on the first two pages! We have a mighty long list of expectations for this man. Why have we drawn up such a daunting set of hopes? Because we have believed.

It seems as if we are piling all the worries of the world, our country, the states and cities, even our own personal worries on the new president. Do we really expect him to change it all overnight? Do we really think that by electing a new president, even a terrific, talented man such as Obama, he can lead us down a different path? If we stop and consider our expectations, of course we won't demand that Obama do all this. But we do expect change, because we have believed.

Belief is a different kind of process. It's not the same as mere thinking, our expecting. Belief also implies trust in the other, and a willingness to let the self become involved in making things different, and to risk letting even our very selves be changed in the process. We believe in our spouses and because we freely give our love, our relationship grows and we become different, stronger people. We believe in our children and that faith leads us to sacrifice for them and love them, and we see our families grow, and we all become more than we thought possible. I've seen that same dynamic here at Kaiser where teachers and students believe in each other and let themselves get caught up in the educational process and in so doing they both grow and change; teachers become listening learners and students grow in confidence and competence.

The promises made by our new president are also a call for us to believe that things can be better, not by waiting and watching what he and others will do, but by getting involved and growing into something and someone different. "Be the change," President Obama says. Believe.

Mel Stenger, Principal

Getting In The Know

ASIAN HERITAGE POTLUCK January 30, 2009

Volunteers, ideas and enthusiasm are welcome for the planning of this year's Asian Heritage Potluck. It would be wonderful to display music, food, arts and crafts, decorations and/or performances that represent the cultural diversity of Asian students and families attending our school. Please contact Karen Orsulak, the ad-hoc coordinator, at 510-729-6141 or karen.orsulak@gmail.com if you would like to get involved or have any suggestions for the evening. If anyone has any contacts or has talent to provide some of the entertainment, please speak up ASAP. Although the event has tended to celebrate Lunar New Year, since it is around this time of year, it does not need to be solely focused on Chinese and Vietnamese New Year. Let's be creative and inclusive and have a fun time! If anyone would like to co-chair the evening, your help is welcome. I also need help with decorating the school lobby sometime in the next couple of weeks.

Thanks, Karen Orsulak

Teacher In-Service on Jan. 26

January 26 will be an in-service day when the faculty will review how the students are doing, how we are doing, and how we can improve. We welcome your input. If you want to leave a note for us in the office, I will convey your ideas to the staff. We're always looking for ways to improve.

How to be in the *Pink Panther*

To include your story or information in your school newsletter: forward your news, questions, or article to both of the editors by **5 p.m. on Sundays** via e-mail:

carriemail2001@yahoo.com – Carrie Shepherd
jolie@earthlink.net – Jolie McRae

Please put "Pink Panther" in the subject of your email to ensure that it is not deleted accidentally!

KAISER CALENDAR

DATE / DAY	EVENT
Jan. 21	Family Reading Night & PTA general meeting, 7 p.m.
Jan. 26	In-Service day – No School
Jan. 28	PTA board meeting
Jan. 30	Asian Heritage potluck
Feb. 16	Presidents Day – No School
Feb. 27	African American potluck

How to Reach Kaiser School

Our phone number is **(510) 549-4900**
(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/)**

**The Pink Panther is also available at
www.KaiserElementary.org.**

Pink Panther's PTA Sponsors

PTA President: Janice Murphy

Pink Panther Staff

Co-editors: Jolie McRae & Carrie Shepherd
Copy editor: Wendy Harcarik

Kaiser Kiosk

Join In Orff Spring Program Planning

Being in the Audience, Copying and Handing Out Programs, Donating Umbrellas and Wind Chimes, Getting the Children to the School, Getting the Children Lined Up and to the Stage, Lighting the Stage, Moving Instruments and Props, Running the Sound System, Setting Up Microphones and more! In addition to the hard work the K-3 children put into preparing for and presenting their Winter Orff Program, it took many others to help make the performance successful. My deepest appreciation to all the community members, parents, school staff and faculty members who helped make the K-3 Orff Winter Program a success. As the children's teacher and director of the program, I was very pleased with how the children pulled their performances together to create some truly memorable and moving experiences for me. I hope those of you who saw the program were pleased, and I hope the children felt pride in what they accomplished.

Looking toward the Spring Program, Ms. Yang and I will be directing Class 2C in telling an African story through drama and music. The other K-3 classes will prepare "A Children's Rite of Spring" using the children's ideas about springtime and musical themes from Igor Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring." I would like to form a team of adults that I can work with between now and the performance in May to cover the logistics of putting on the performance. If you have an interest in being a part of the technical or creative aspects of the program (lighting, sound, sets, props, etc.) please email me at ScottsMusicClub@mac.com. I would like to develop more school and community adult participation in our program so that we can make it an exciting school event.

If you loaned umbrellas and wind chimes for the Winter Program, I thank you again and you may pick up your items at the Kaiser school office.

Thank You,

Scott Walz
K-3 Orff Music & Movement Consultant

TAKE THE KIDS CHALLENGE

Kaiser Permanente is sponsoring the Kids Challenge program at East Bay Regional Parks. The 2009 Kids Challenge guidebook is filled with 15 self-paced activities for kids age 17 and under. All participants will receive a prize, and those complete the Kids Challenge of trying five activities will receive a colorful commemorative patch and Frisbee (one per child, while supplies last).

Some activities require parent participation and/or additional fees. Materials are free to Alameda and Contra Costa County residents and kids of Kaiser Permanente employees. Registration is required; to sign up, call 1-888-EBPARKS (327-2757), option 2, 3.