



The Pink Panther

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

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

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 11, 2010

Dear Kaiser Families,

In her book *The Power of Words* Paula Denton focuses on teacher language that helps children learn. There are chapters about how question strategies can stretch children's academic and social skills, helping them remember expectations, and redirecting behavior. Although her research has been mainly in classrooms focused on teacher-student interactions, we can gather a lot of wisdom for use in our own interactions with our children.

One particular section that caught me was Denton's encouragement to show faith in children's abilities and intentions. The language we use with kids is such a powerful shaper of identity and self-perceptions that it also becomes a shaper of kids' abilities and performance. *Our expressions and statements of belief in our children can help them to believe in themselves.* If we say, "When you're ready to listen I'll tell you what we're going to do" it conveys our belief that they can quiet down and listen and pay attention. Yes, they may be quiet if we just tell them to be quiet, but the previous method carries with it an assumption about our belief in their abilities.

When we praise our kids with specific details such as, "You completely cleaned off the kitchen table! It's spotless!" it builds their confidence in their abilities. This works better than, "Great job!" because it gives the kids the reason for the praise. Noticing and speaking the positive details of our approval lead children to believe in themselves. They also will be more likely to work hard to repeat the behavior for which they are praised. Also, we never know when our positive words will have a transformative effect in a child's life. We should be free in giving encouragement because we never know when our words can catapult a child into something wonderful.

A couple of years ago an Oakland Principal, Dietra Adkins, told a story about a teacher who changed her life. She described having a wonderful first grade teacher who listened to her, respected her, corrected her and challenged her. She remembered when the teacher said, "Dietra, you can be anything you want to be," over and over. When Ms. Adkins went to college on a scholarship for one subject, she enrolled and did a double major, adding education. She really wanted to be a teacher. She believed in herself because of what her teacher told her years before. She has had a successful career as a respected teacher and principal.

Since Martin Luther King Day is next week, I'm reminded of a story. *Gone with the Wind* won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1939. One of the parties had an antebellum theme, with the women in hoop skirts and the men in morning coats. They paraded into a grand hall decorated as a Southern plantation. Hattie McDaniels, who had won Best Supporting Actress, could not attend the ball because

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Getting In The Know

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she was black. The producers of the ball wanted things to be very authentic, so they hired a black gospel choir and dressed them as slaves to entertain the partygoers. The choir was from Ebenezer Baptist Church in Alabama, directed by Martin Luther King, Senior. Martin Luther King, Junior was a boy of 10, dressed in slave rags, singing in the choir. I often wonder what effect this experience had on him. Maybe the irony of it all sunk in. Maybe he was hit with the injustice of the exclusion of blacks. Maybe it was a moment of life-changing decision. We'll never know.

We do know though, that we can never be certain when what we say or do will affect someone or how it will. Take a moment on the upcoming Martin Luther King holiday to do something memorable with your child. Create a possibility!

--Mel Stenger, Principal

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

**The online Pink Panther includes
information from our Wellness
Committee**

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. 14	PTA General Meeting
Jan. 18	MLK Day, No School
Jan. 20	SSC Meeting, 4-5:30
Jan. 20	PTA Reading Night, 6:30-8:30
Jan. 27	PTA Board Meeting, 6:30
Jan. 29	Asian Potluck, 6:30
Feb. 1	NO SCHOOL – End of the Semester

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/)**

Pink Panther's PTA Sponsors

PTA President: Kimberlee White

Pink Panther Staff

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ASIA



Asia is the planet's largest continent, covering 30% of the Earth's land mass and including some of its most amazing geographical and cultural wonders. The world's tallest mountain, Mt. Everest, is in Nepal and the world's lowest point, the Dead Sea, is in Israel and Jordan. The world's deepest lake is Lake Baykal in between Siberia and Mongolia. Asia spans the world's longest coastline, bordering the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The most populated countries on the planet are China and India, with Asia's total population being nearly 4 billion people. Many of the world's oldest civilizations arose from Asia and Asia has always contributed to some of the most important scientific, spiritual and cultural developments in human history. Asia is comprised of Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Asia. There are nearly 50 countries and dependency/territories in Asia, not including Oceania.

Countries and Territories of Asia

Armenia, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Cyprus, Georgia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Korea-North, Korea-South, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syria, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yemen.

If your family or child's ethnic, cultural or spiritual heritage is associated with any of the above countries, please help us celebrate all that is Asian by participating in the Asian Heritage Night at Kaiser Elementary.

We would like to embrace and encompass all Asian cultures within our school community and encourage you to share food, folktales, music, art/artifacts, children's crafts projects, games, activities, cultural performances, history, or information about famous Asian-Americans. Please volunteer to participate in this unique event if you can. All Kaiser families and staff are welcome to join in the evening and bring an Asian dish to share.

ASIAN HERITAGE NIGHT POTLUCK
FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2010, 6:30 PM

To volunteer please contact: Karen Orsulak at 510-610-3682 or karen.orsulak@gmail.com

Volunteers, contributions and ideas are needed for entertainment, children's arts and crafts, other activities, set-up and decorating, music, clean-up and co-chair.

Getting In The Know

Will your child be returning to Kaiser? We are trying to determine how many children we can take in next year at various grade levels. To that end we are asking that you please fill out the attached form and let us know of your plans.

February 1 will be an in-service day when the faculty will review how we are doing, and how we can improve. We welcome your input. Last week I attached a list of different roles and programs we have going on. 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.

RETURNING TO KAISER?

We are trying to determine the number of children we will have attending Kaiser School next year, and the number of spaces we will be able to offer to families wanting to come here. To help us with this, we ask that you take a moment to complete this form and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible. Please complete one for each of your children.

Thanks!

Student Name: _____

Grade this year: _____

_____ Will return next year

_____ Will not return next year

Teacher's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____