



The Pink Panther

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

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

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 16, 2010

Dear Kaiser Families,

As always, we are constantly trying to improve our practice. This past week we had a faculty meeting on Monday and another on Wednesday. We talked about ways we can help some of our children improve their behavior, the bully/victim/bystander relationship, guidelines for yard supervision, and classroom sessions with Second Step to increase emotional literacy and rehearse conflict resolution. Our grant committee is also working on getting us funding for additional classroom instruction in this area. The early Wednesday schedule gives us valuable group time that we spend in taking care of business, communications, and procedures, as well as in depth discussions about education and learning.

This week we read an article on how to encourage depth in curriculum, that is, how teachers can structure lessons and conversations to push the kids to deeper, more complex thinking. Our teachers currently do occasional lessons on art appreciation following a method we learned called Visual Thinking Strategies, which asks very open-ended questions yet requires kids to back up their statements with evidence. The method also pushes kids to listen to each other and to stay focused on one thing for about 20 minutes—an accomplishment in itself! We realize this type of teaching is currently not the most popular among some educators, that many others may be teaching small bits and test-taking skills, but we want something more for our kids: we want them to think, to become thinkers, to learn and become learners—and to like it!

There is a significant amount of educational research which tells us that when we structure learning experiences and conversations around deep thinking and complex problems, not only do kids learn more and better (and perform just fine on tests) but that they find the experiences deeply satisfying. It follows then, that they will become thinkers and learners for life. If you'd like to read more yourself try the book [The Significance and Meaning of Deep Understanding](#). It's a book I've been studying in my principal inquiry group, and it has some important ideas to inform the way we teach.

The first area we are approaching with this concept is the enhancement of our Open Court Reading Program with additional literature. Although most of us would agree that Open Court is very good for providing the basic building blocks of reading and methods for monitoring student skill development, it leaves something to be desired in giving children deep literature experiences. I have challenged the faculty to draw up a cohesive plan of giving our children literary experiences which will expose them to different genres, give them group experiences of reading books, and lead them into deeper exploration and enjoyment of reading. We will be working on this literature enhancement plan over the next couple of months.

Of course we need your help. Please encourage your child to be a reader. There are many studies that show that once a child reaches 5th grade reading level and reads just 20 minutes a day, they will be reading about *a million words a year*. And at that rate a couple of wonderful things happen. They begin to think about what they read as they read it. They learn new vocabulary, sentence structure, syntax without extra work. They learn and think about literary elements such as setting, plot, and characterization without extra focus. This wonderful stage of reading and learning awaits those who master the building blocks of reading and who establish a habit of daily reading. At school we are working on mastering the building blocks, we need you to reinforce them at home and to establish the routine of daily reading. The results are worth it!

Mel Stenger, Principal

Getting In The Know

Want to join the School Site Council? The SSC monitors the school programs and progress in general. We meet monthly, third Wednesdays, to review how things are going and to ask questions and give input. We need two new members. If you are interested, please email Patricia Broadbent at pbroadbent@actransit.org or leave a message for the principal in the office. It's an easy way to help!

Medical Supplies Drive

Please help us gather supplies for the relief efforts in Hati. Supplies may be dropped off in each class.

- Kinder – non-latex gloves (one size fits all)
- 1st – antibiotic ointment and hydrocortisone ointment
- 2nd – rolling bandages and surgical masks
- 3rd – sterile gauze pads and adhesive bandaids
- 4th – triangle bandages
- 5th – iodine

**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
Feb. 17	SSC Meeting
Feb. 23	African American Assembly
Feb. 24	PTA Board Meeting, 6:30
Feb. 26	African American Potluck, 6:30
Mar. 3	General PTA Meeting, 6:30
Mar. 12	Report Card Period Ends Minimum Day
Mar. 17	SSC Meeting, 4:00
Mar. 18-19	Parent-Teacher Conferences Minimum Days

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

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

Kaiser Kiosk

Once again, Kaiser kids have shown their “stuff”! Fifth graders Emma, Lucie, Sage, Maya, and Madison have all won awards in the Martin Luther King Oratorical Fest District competition. They performed last week and were judged along with kids from many Oakland schools and came out winners. We share in the pride of their accomplishments.

Congratulations, girls! Go Kaiser kids!

African American Assembly
Tuesday, Feb. 23

Unique Derique
featuring hamboning and
the history of clowning.

9-9:45 K-2nd graders

10-10:45 3-5th graders

Moms/Daughters Needed for Paid Research at Stanford

Stanford University’s Psychology Department is currently seeking mothers with a history of depression and their 10 to 14-year-old daughters for a paid research study at Stanford. Following a 20-30 minute phone screening interview, eligible participants will be asked to come to Stanford University for up to 3 sessions, each lasting approximately 3.5 hours. Eligible pairs will be compensated \$40/hour and researchers will schedule sessions at your convenience: evenings and weekend sessions are available. For more information, please email or call Hannah Burley at mood@psych.stanford.edu or (650) 723-0804 and mention Study #724 your message.