



The Pink Panther

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

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

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 7, 2010

Dear Kaiser Families,

The economic realities of California's downturn are hitting us. There's no way around it. Over the past month or so bits and pieces of my decisions have come out and in this letter I want to describe for you the changes which will be coming. To give some perspective, our total school budget, excluding PTA support, is about \$1,300,000 and I've had to cut over \$92,000 for next year, or just over 7%. In mid-February when I was told I needed to cut that amount and it took until mid-May to finalize all the changes. Please forgive me if I've been short or grumpy or distant this spring, but this process has been riddled with setbacks and changes. Rather than put out each decision as it was made, I've put together the following paragraphs to describe these very difficult changes. You might want to sit down.

In dealing with budget constraints, I've eliminated the position for our library clerk, Poly Thy. I also eliminated the part-time position of Mira Santos, our family support provider. PTA has been supporting the librarian position and math intervention position, both held by Marcia Brooks; because the school will need additional funding for a full-time intervention and family support provider Marcia's position has been eliminated. (Most of you know that Marcia has not returned to Kaiser since Kim and I told her 2 weeks ago; the news was devastating to her. The teachers and children are preparing appreciations for her, hopefully to give her on June 11.) These three women have served our community well and we thank them and we will miss them. I will be moving Rebekah from Kindergarten support to the library; Rebekah is very close to earning her teaching credential and I'm happy she's decided to help us in that way. (And I have leads on 2 library volunteers!) We will be able to keep our library!

Several support personnel have taken big pay cuts but have decided to stay with us and continue their work in spite of it all. We appreciate their dedication and we thank them! I've also had to reduce the part-time PE teacher from 3 to 2 days each week. Because of seniority issues Valerie Ostrom may be transferred; we're waiting to hear. The district funded personnel (administrative assistant, principal, classroom teachers, custodian, and lunch service worker, part-time resource teacher and aide, speech therapist, and psychologist) will all continue at their current levels. These positions are governed by various unions, and school sites have no influence over their creation or elimination.

Other cuts include:

- There is no money for teachers to attend professional development or to bring in experts.
- Normally I've had funds to pay teachers for about 3 days of extended contract time for curriculum development or planning; next year they'll get only one day.
- No money for refreshments at all-day meetings for teachers.

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Getting In The Know

- We've contracted for a therapist intern for counseling services one day per week, for the past few years; there's no money for that service next year.
- At this time I'm still trying to assemble funds for Candy Sanderson, our part-time music teacher for grades 4 and 5.
- Our supplies budget has been decimated. When I assured us of PTA support. You'll be getting a letter about how you can help with that in August.

Our PTA will continue to fund our Orff music program, computer and part of the art instructor contract, Ms. Pearl's contract, and one lunch time supervisor. We will be asking the PTA to fund the full-time intervention/family support provider and part-time upper grade music teacher. This is in addition to all the other wonderful things you do and fund to make our school a wonderful learning community.

There's a story in the Christian tradition about loaves and fishes. In it Jesus tells his disciples to feed 5,000 people with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. They don't know how it will happen, but they do it anyway. The disciples end up collecting leftovers. We can learn 2 things from this story: the woeful inadequacy of our resources does not excuse us from our responsibility to educate every child, nor from our commitment to our mission. Secondly, only when we dare to courageously enter into such seemingly impossible situations can we become transformed into a new reality reach for new possibilities. We don't know how, but we're moving forward anyway believing that a new future awaits us.

This process has also been very painful. I've had to put aside personal feelings and try to decide always on what's best for the kids. I've had to walk with the knowledge some of you wondered about my decisions when I could not talk about them publicly. I want to thank all the wonderful people who have expressed sympathy and support when they heard about the decisions I've had to make. Time and again you show me the love and support that transforms a mere group of people into a learning community. You give me faith in people and hope for the future of our school.

Mel Stenger, principal

Don't Forget...

Please resolve any missing library book or textbook issues. District policy is to hold report cards until these issues are resolved.

KAISER CALENDAR

DATE / DAY	EVENT
June 10	Whole School Field Trip to SJ Tech Museum
June 11	New Families Ice Cream Social, 6:30 pm on the playground
June 14-17	Last week of school. Minimum days all week—dismissal at 1:25 pm.
June 16	5th Grade Promotion, 1 pm
August 30	School starts, 8:45 a.m.

Pink Panther's PTA Sponsors

PTA President: Kimberlee White

Pink Panther Staff

Co-editors: Jolie McRae & Carrie Shepherd

Copy editor: Wendy Harcarik

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/

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 Kiosk

Kaiser ALIVE 2010 – Closing Remarks

Kaiser ALIVE has come to a close yet again. And yet again it was a wonderfully successful event. The closing party last Friday night was fabulous. It was heartwarming to see how many families came to participate in this annual event. A BIG thank you to Kimberly White for the “slammin” BBQ! Also a “Shout Out” to all the students and to the parents who continue to support their children every day. Thank you too, to the Kaiser ALIVE volunteer squad (Mae Chan Frey, Sarah Moxon and Christine Kizziah) and to the fabulous class tally takers. I truly could not have done it without your help!

As fast as news spreads through our little community, no doubt everyone knows who won what, but I would still like to say congratulations to the top point achievers and the lucky raffle winners. If you did not get your trophy, your prize certificate or your medal, they will be available on Tues in the office for you to pick up.

Also, those with certificates, please contact me with your prize/color choice by Friday so I can have your prizes to you by the end of the school year. Please email me at luv2scrap42@yahoo.com .

With warm wishes for a fabulous summer,

Darlene (Kaiya’s Mom) Smith

Top Point Achievers:

Jake McRae & Marcos Fourquet	Top Overall Points
Sierra Kim-Tran	Kindergarten
Octavia Ontiveros	First Grade
Isaac Kim-Tran	Second Grade
Jake McRae & Marcos Fourquet	Third Grade
Lulia Admokom	Fourth Grade
Itzel Aguilar	Fifth Grade

Raffle Winners:

Skylea Griffin	100 – 149 pts	Webkinz
Zoe Stein	150 – 199 pts	1 yr to Kids Nat’l Geo or a \$20 Gift Card
Paul Carney	200 – 249 pts	6 months to Club Penguin or \$30 Gift Card
Caitlyn Freeman	250 – 299 pts	iPod Shuffle
Marcos Fourquet	300+ pts	4 Season Passes to Six Flags