



The Pink Panther

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

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

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 4, 2010

Dear Kaiser Families,

On September 15 we had our first School Site Council Meeting. We welcomed new member Charsina Imara, who won the election at Back-to-School Night. We discussed performance data, reviewed the school site plan summarizing our programs and personnel, and reviewed our budget. The SSC meetings are open to the public. Everyone is welcome to attend and participate in our discussions of the broader topics and issues affecting the whole school.

Last week I received some feedback that my presentation about tests scores and the achievement gap at Back-to-School Night may have been misinterpreted by some as a public criticism of the performance of our African American students or of the support of their parents. That was not my intended message, and just the opposite is true: the African American students here at Kaiser do better on average than those in West and North Oakland, and much better than those in the district as a whole, so we and you are doing many things right!

When we look at test scores we look at the whole group and at subgroups *to see how we are serving different groups*, not to blame any group for holding back the school. Sometimes that analysis gives us insight into the way we serve different groups or raises questions about the school's service to them. For instance, looking at data about girls' performance in math has led to improvements in the way schools address their needs. We regularly look at boys, girls, low income, and disabled. We look at different racial groups if they constitute 20% of the tested population and are composed of at least 50 children. The only racial group that qualifies here is the African American group. We have done well in our service to most kids here at Kaiser. The staff and parents should be congratulated!

On the other hand, there is still an achievement gap and it is my responsibility to investigate it and to correct it. This is a matter of equity in the school's service to children, not of blaming the kids or their parents. My intention in my presentation was to give details about the gap, to let parents know that our staff has been working on it for some years with some success, and that we need your help. Indeed the SSC has requested that I research and publish ways that parents can support their children's progress. **The strategies for helping are for all parents of all students.** Here are a few:

1. If your child slipped in performance between 2009 and 2010, make an appointment with your child's teacher to make sure the teacher is aware of the situation, have the teacher share his or her plans for boosting your child's performance and give you specific strategies to help.
2. Monitor homework, quizzes, and tests and stay in communication about intervention and support. Don't wait until report card time.
3. Set measurable goals for improvement during the Parent-Teacher conferences which are coming up the week of October 11. You should get a reservation form very soon if you have not already received one.

One criticism I deserved is that I said that 28 African American kids did not make a whole year's growth, but I did not report the number that had achieved accelerated learning, that is, made more than a year's growth. It is my pleasure to report that **24 African American kids made accelerated growth in either English/Language Arts or math or both!** We are proud of the kids, their parents and our teachers! As I said that night: **Every child deserves to make at least one year's growth, and working together we can make that happen. It is my goal that every child perform as proficient or advanced in both English/Language Arts and math.**

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Getting In The Know

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On a different topic, a very sad coincidence: Last week our staff was treated to an in-service on how to present the film "That's a Family" to their classes. The film explores different family structure, including those headed by gay and lesbian parents. Also last week two suicides made headlines; one was of a college student who feared social rejection when his roommate posted a video online revealing he was gay, and the other was a middle school boy who hung himself after his classmates taunted him about being gay. October 11 is National Coming Out Day. Let's take the opportunity to teach our kids about acceptance and affirmation of our gay and lesbian friends and their children. Every child deserves to go to school in an environment free from put-downs and encouraged to become who they truly are, with our encouragement and support!

Friday morning all kids were treated to a wonderful assembly called Wildlife Encounter. The presenter brought live animals from Australia and New Zealand. Some of the children were able to touch them, and all the kids were treated to a very close up view as the speaker walked among the kids with the animals. Your children may have told you about it. I'm mentioning it because I want to thank you. It is your support through the PTA that pays for our wonderful assemblies which combine fun and learning, and there's not much better in life than that!

Mr. Mel Stenger, Principal

KAISER CALENDAR

DATE / DAY	EVENT
Oct. 8	Staff Development Day No School
Oct. 11-15	Parent-Teacher Conferences minimum days all week
Oct. 11-15	Book Fair!
Oct. 15	World Heritage Potluck 6:30 p.m.
Oct. 28	Picture Day
Nov. 11	No school

Check out the complete 2010-2011 school year calendar at
www.kaiserelementary.org/calendar

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!

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

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/

Kaiser Kiosk

Please remember to bring child conflict issues to teachers and other school adults rather than trying to resolve them alone. Please do not talk to other kids about conflicts with your child; go through the teacher.

The Distaff Singers gave us a grant of \$500 to support our Orff Music Program. Thanks! Look for their flyer attached to our newsletter this week.

Our neighbor, Gordon Piper, is a finalist in the Cox Conservation Heroes Award competition. He has been beautifying neglected Oakland properties for twenty years. Deadline to vote is October 10. The online voting site with the nominees' videos: <http://goo.gl/XFRx>.

Kudos to our principal, Mel Stenger, who shows by his example that he is willing to do whatever is needed to make Kaiser the wonderful school it is, including arriving with mop and bucket to clean up after an upset stomach incident in the classroom. Way to go, Mr. Stenger!

—A Kaiser Grandma

Coffee with Kim

Come have coffee with PTA President, Kim White, on Thursday, 10/07. It's happening at the picnic tables in front of the school around 8:30 a.m. Find out what's happening with PTA or voice your questions and concerns.

October 8 is an in-service day for teachers and there will be no school for children.

Conference week is October 11-15. Please look for a reservation form from your child's teacher and remember that we have minimum days all week.

There's still time to join our PTA! Your membership and pledge helps support the fine programs here. And it costs way less than your phone bill! There's a little competition going on between classes. Check out the mountain climbers in the hallway!

Girl Scouts will meet this Monday, October 4, and October 18. We will also meet the 1st and 3rd Monday in November.

Daisys are in Portable D, 3-4 pm, dues \$3.00

Brownies are in Portable A, 3-4:15 pm, dues \$2.50

Jr. Girl Scouts are in Portable C, 3-4 pm, dues \$2.50

THE RACE TO THE TOP IS ON!

There's been a resounding response from the Kaiser community to joining the PTA. So far, 225 parents and staff have become members, representing 175 students and teachers. But, there's still a way to go (110 more students) to help each class climb to the top of the Kaiser PTA Mountain and reach 100% membership. Ms. Gorham's class is taking the lead, with 77% of her students having parents who joined the PTA. Ms. Banks' class is close behind with 76% of her classroom having PTA membership. All classrooms are still contenders, making a push to scale up that mountain, many are already over 50%. The classrooms with the most members and highest percentage will each receive \$100 for a class activity!

Teacher	# of Students Teacher PTA Members	Total # Students and Teacher	Percent PTA Members	# of Students/ Teacher Remaining
Gorham	20	26	77%	6
Banks	19	25	76%	6
Haruyama	18	25	72%	7
Hunter	17	25	68%	8
McGhee	16	25	64%	9
Feague	16	26	62%	10
Yang	15	25	60%	10
Apaydin	15	26	58%	11
Bailey	12	24	50%	12
Neat	16	33	48%	17
Araki	11	25	44%	14

DON'T DELAY, JOIN TODAY!

If you haven't joined the PTA already, it's only \$10 per adult and gives you the right to vote on important matters impacting your child's education. The PTA is critical in funding many of the great programs at Kaiser. Look for membership forms in the front hallway by the PTA member box or fill one out in your classroom when you go to your Parent Teacher Conference. No form? Just put submit an envelope with payment, stating parents and children's names and teacher. The deadline is November 1st.

And a heartfelt thanks to the following people who were instrumental in the re-creation of the new PTA Mountain: Luzmarina Tovar, for her beautiful artwork and craftsmanship, Tom and Molly Talamantes for obtaining supplies and transport, Carolyn Watson for donation of the wonderful dolls, and Chris Gaw for the original PTA mountain—it will be missed!

Questions? Contact: Karen Orsulak, VP Membership, karen.orsulak@gmail.com