



# The Pink Panther

## Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

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

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 14, 2011

### Our Intervention Support

Dear Kaiser Families,

Here at Kaiser Elementary we are doing our best to provide intervention for children who are performing below grade level, as well as challenging work for children who are performing above grade level. Each grade level is involved in Workshop Time, sometimes called Independent Work Time, during which the classroom teachers are to provide intervention for struggling students, and challenging work for those who have already achieved their grade level standards.

The teachers meet weekly in grade level collaboration teams to look at information from tests, quizzes, and student work, and to determine which students need extra help and which students should be challenged. I am proud to say that every child's performance is reviewed, and every child's needs are taken into consideration. We have also hired part-time extra help for our teachers: Oscar Campos, from Adventure Time, supports teachers during this intervention time. Susanne Plunkett, the manager of our Adventure Time Program here at Kaiser, closely monitors the students that work with our Fast Forward software intervention program. Mitch Sasada also works as a classroom support person. Last week we were able to welcome Matt Steigerwald as another Academic Mentor; his exact schedule of support will be arranged very soon. And Sonya Brooks supports the 4<sup>th</sup> grade when she is not in the library or front office. If you feel your child needs extra help in a particular area and is not getting it, please see their teacher for a conversation about how we can help.

The faculty and I share a common value in our belief that we are not teaching to reach good test scores, but that good test scores are a reflection of great teaching. We aim to teach the whole child, to promote critical thinking, build good citizens, and grow a love of the arts. There is a significant amount of educational research that 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 studied in my principal inquiry group, and it has some important ideas to inform the way we teach and parent.

One of the easiest and most effective ways to encourage deep and complex thinking is through reading. There are many studies that show that once a child reaches 5<sup>th</sup> 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

The School Site Council monitors the school programs and progress in general. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 23, at 4:00 in the library. We will be discussing the impact of the budget cuts on our program next year and some ideas on configuration of the fourth and fifth grade levels. All are welcome!

### GENTLE REMINDERS...

- We do not have supervision for children before 8:30 a.m. or after 3:10 p.m.
- Please support your child's learning by making sure they do their homework, letting them have a complete school day by arriving on time and not leaving early, and by staying in close contact with their teacher regarding their progress.

**Check out the complete 2010-2011 school year calendar at [www.kaiserelementary.org/calendar](http://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!

### KAISER CALENDAR

DATE / DAY	EVENT
Feb. 21	No School – Presidents' Day
Feb. 23	School Site Council meeting, 4 pm
Feb. 25	African American potluck
March 2	PTA General Meeting
March 9	Chinese acrobats performance, 10 a.m.
March 11	Second report card period ends

**The Pink Panther is also available at [www.KaiserElementary.org](http://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/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kaiserelementaryschool_group/)**