

PONY EXPRESS NEWSLETTER



Home of the S.M.A.R.T. Panther

November / December 2015 Issue

Dear Parents:

It's hard to believe that we are in our 12th week of school with parent conferences starting after the Thanksgiving break. Here at Pony, we provide a comprehensive program to meet all student's needs. We offer Dance Club, Band, Garden Club, Track, Running for Rhett, Girls on the Run, and Nature Bowl Competition to name a few. We offer programs to support self-esteem and community service through the "PAWS" Team which stands for Positive Action with Success. Pony has intramurals during lunch recess throughout the year. In our K-2 grades, students are receiving Conversational Spanish lessons each week. Our goal is to keep students connected to school to make school an exciting place to be.

SHORTENED DAY SCHEDULE

1-3 Grades 9:00-1:40

4-6 Grades 9:00-1:41

Kindergarten: schedule stays the same

CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

Minimum Day/Shortened Days start on – Friday, November 20

Thanksgiving Break (no school) – November 24-28

Parent Conferences (shortened days) – December 1 - December 5

Winter Show 2nd and 3rd Graders - December 16th

Last Day of School - December 18

School Starts – January 4th 2016

Parent Conferences are around the corner. Start expecting a schedule when to meet with your child's teacher. The schedules will be going home soon. If you have not signed up for a conference or you have not heard from the teacher by November 16, please call the school to schedule one. A parent conference is a time to meet with the teacher one-on-one to see how your child is progressing academically toward meeting the standards in reading, writing, math and science. This is the time to ask questions and learn your child's strengths and academic areas that may need more attention.

Benchmark Testing that covers the first trimester common core standards will begin administered the week before break and the week after for students in 2-6th grade.

Preparing for Colder Weather means it's time to get out the sweaters, jackets, hats, and gloves again. Please put your child's first and last name and teacher name on all outerwear so we can identify who it belongs to.

Daily Attendance is crucial to your child's education. Pony Express's attendance rate is 97%. In order to keep our attendance rate up and students on target for learning, we need to make sure students attend school daily. When your child attends schools, they are more likely to succeed academically. It's difficult for the teacher to provide academics when a student is frequently absent. In addition to falling behind in school, students who are not in school on a regular basis are more likely to get into trouble and worse case drop out of school as they get older. Lists of excused absences are listed below. All other absences are considered unexcused and could result in the student being a truant.

Excused Absences

1. Illnesses or injury
2. Having medical or dental services rendered.
3. Quarantine under the direction of a County or City Health Officer.
4. Funeral/memorial service and/or bereavement.
5. Court Appearance.
6. Religious holidays.

BIG THANKS! to PTA for organizing a wonderful Harvest Festival and a shout out to the teachers, students and parents for helping with individual class games. We had a wonderful turnout and all seemed to have a great time.

During this time of being thankful, I am grateful to be at Pony Express and to work with a wonderful community of students, staff, and parents.

Sincerely,
Debra Hetrick

PTA NEWS

PTA is going through some changes this month. Our PTA President, Andrea Delgado, has resigned her post. She made the announcement at the last PTA meeting on November 4, 2015. She shared how much she loved this position and our school. Due to personal commitments, she could not devote the time to this position that she wanted. She stated that she would continue to promote Spirit Fridays by sell tee-shirts. We thank her for her service in getting us through the harvest festival and wish her well.

So parents, now what? According to the by-laws: ARTICLE V, Section 12, "A vacancy occurring in any office shall be filled for the unexpired term by a person elected by the executive board." ARTICLE VI, Section 2b, states that one of the duties of a vice president is to "Perform the duties of the president in the absence or disability of that officer to act."

We are hoping that a parent would be gracious enough to step into this position and be voted in by the executive board. This position would involve running the PTA meetings, writing the monthly newsletter and being part of the team. If any parent is interested, please contact Rod Fong at ponypta@gmail.com to get more information. The executive board will be meeting in December to finalize the position.

The PTA winter fundraising will be coming to a close. We will be collecting the orders by this Friday. This is our big fundraiser of the year so please help us out to provide funds in the classroom and for field trips. Also, gift card orders will be available this week.

P.E. NEWS

Just like any other teacher, Physical Education teachers also have standards that must be met. Those Standards can be viewed from the following website: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/pestandards.pdf> Unfortunately for students in grades 1 – 6, they only receive Physical Education with a credentialed Physical Education teacher twice a week vs. five days a week in middle school. With the limited amount of time that I see the students, my curriculum is driven in three parts.

1. Physical fitness testing along with training for fitness testing which is covered at least once a week,
2. Skill building making sure to keep with appropriate grade level expectations,
3. Positive social interaction which includes peer to peer, small group, and large group activities all of which should be meaningful and should last close to or at least 70% of the time they are in my Physical Education class.



I have a degree in Kinesiology with an emphasis on teaching K – 12, a single subject teaching credential, and multiple years of coaching physical education. This is a passion of mine and I strive to show that passion in my teachings daily. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at your earliest.

Sincerely,

October Reyes

Physical Education Teacher