

Pony Express Newsletter

February 2016

Debra Hetrick, Principal

Rod Fong, Interim PTA President

Principal's Message

Dear Families,

It's hard to believe that we are already into February. This school year is moving along at a fast pace. Progress Notices will be coming out soon with parent conferences happening after spring break. If you have concerns academically, please contact your student's teacher.

Important February Dates:

Feb. 2	PTA Meeting 6:00PM
Feb. 16-Mar. 1	Open Enrollment
Feb. 19	Family Dance 6:00PM-8:00PM

Open Enrollment

Open Enrollment is an opportunity for families that live within SCUSD boundaries to apply for spots in schools beyond their neighborhood school or to apply for enrollment in specialty programs and schools. Pony Express has kindergarten and 2nd grade openings. The dates for open enrollment are from February 16th starting at 8 a.m. – March 1st ending at 5 p.m. Once your child has been accepted into the school, you must register your child at the Enrollment Center to attend the new school of choice **Monday, April 19th – Wednesday, April 28th, 2016.**

Parents must indicate on the Open Enrollment application any Special Education Program Services their child is currently receiving. Students requiring special programs as a part of their Individual Educational Program (IEP) can participate in Open Enrollment based on space availability in both the required program and the school of choice. Students receiving Speech/Language Services, Resource Specialist Program (RSP) services and students who are fully included may apply for their school of choice through Open Enrollment. Parents interested in their child attending a specific special day class (SDC) program should contact their Program Specialist in the Special Education Department (916-643-9174).

Literacy

Literacy continues to be an area of focus at Pony Express. The core of the Kindergarten through sixth grade curriculum is Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening. At Pony, these skills are taught daily in a balanced and comprehensive program.

Our goal is to ensure that every student receives the support that he or she needs so that they are reading on grade level by the end of the school year. Therefore, it is vital that students are engaged in reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities every day. In the classroom, teachers have established specific routines that are followed daily to support reading.

Students have lots of opportunities to interact with fiction and non-fiction texts in a variety of ways so that they can continue to develop as critical readers. At Pony some of these activities include Shared Reading, Read Aloud, Interactive Read Aloud and Strategy Lessons. In order to ensure that your child is reading on grade level, we are asking that you partner with the school by using the following tips at home on a daily basis:

- Sleep is critical to your child's academic success. Long-term memory is consolidated in the brain while we sleep. Studies show that people who get 8 hours of sleep out-perform those who do not get enough sleep by 3 to 1.

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- At the early grades, read to your child daily and allow them to read to you as well. If you speak a language other than English, then read to your child in that language. Take time to ask questions about their reading to determine their comprehension level.
 - It is important that your child reads “just-right” books every day at home. Reading should not be frustrating. Children should be able to read the words on the page easily. They should read smoothly and they should be able to understand and talk about the book.
 - Research shows that the more time a student reads the better his/her performance will be in school and on tests: 4-7 minutes = scores increase by 30%, 15 minutes = scores increase by 70%, 30 minutes = scores increase by 90%, 60 minutes = scores increase by 95%

Sincerely,

Debra Hetrick

Principal

PTA President's Message

Hello Pony Parents:

It's only been a short couple of weeks since our last newsletter, so for someone with not much to say and with little on their mind...it's not easy to put a few hundred meaningful words together for posting. However, I will try. It was announced at the last general association meeting that the president's position for Pony's PTA remains vacant. We also had a brief review of our budget and decided that a spring fundraiser would be held. There was a lively discussion regarding our upcoming Family Dance; this dialog may continue into our next meeting. January 22nd was Movie Night and from what I observed, it was pretty successful. PTA is working on putting together an E-waste event for later this month, so volunteers may be needed, but for sure, if you have e-waste to be recycled, please hold them until our school e-waste event. Tuesday, February 2nd, PTA is having a general association meeting, and if you're interested in the upcoming Family Dance, you should attend. The principal topics for discussion will possibly be Family Dance, E-waste, and a Spring Fundraiser.

Sincerely,

Rod Fong

Interim PTA President
