

Pony Express Newsletter

February 2015

Debra Hetrick, Principal

David Cooper, 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. There are five weeks of school left before the end of the second trimester and parent conferences. If you have concerns academically, contact your student's teacher.

Important February Dates:

Feb. 9 & 16	Holiday/No School
Feb. 10	PTA Meeting 6 pm
Feb. 17-March 3	Open Enrollment
Feb. 20	Family Dance 6-8 pm

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 15 openings for kindergarten students. The dates for open enrollment are from February 17th starting at 8 a.m. – March 3rd 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 by Monday, April 20 – Wednesday, April 29, 2015.

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 at (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 participate in guided reading in 1st and 2nd grade, which is small group instruction with text that is at the student's reading level. In addition to receiving guided reading from the classroom teacher, some students also read with a tutor.

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%

Oral Story Family Workshop: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 from 6:00-7:00pm.

This workshop designed for K-1 students and will help parents learn strategies on prompting and practice writing with your child. RSVP required so we can provide enough supplies for everyone.

Sincerely,

Debra Hetrick

Principal

PTA President’s Message

I like February. A simple four weeks with Valentine’s Day tucked right in the middle. **It’s short and sweet.** So in honor of this month, I will be brief.

Thanks to everyone who attended or volunteered their time for last month’s Family Movie Night and the E-Waste Fundraiser the following day. We had great turnout for both events. Not sure yet on how much money the PTA raised from all the old electronics folks dropped off, but the nostalgia was priceless! We even collected Walkmans that played cassettes and cameras that used film. What are those? Just Google it while I sit here and feel old.

While you’re on the computer, head over to our **new website** <http://ponyexpress.scusd.edu/> and add it to your bookmarks. Erin Fong and Paul Hemesath gave the old webpage a much-needed facelift. With a more user-friendly design, it’s now easier to find out what’s going on at Pony Express and discover the many ways to help the PTA raise funds for our school, from the Amazon Rewards program to Raley’s/Nugget Scrip Cards.

Roses Are Red, Violets Are Blue, **COME TO THE FAMILY DANCE ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20 FROM 6-8 PM!**

Poetry was never my strong suit, but now that I have your attention...get ready for family friendly fun turned up to “11” at our annual dance. A professional DJ will entertain, and there will be plenty of food, drinks and the always popular Silent Auction, which offers a chance to bid on Disneyland passes, Funderland VIP tickets, a spa package, and much more. The cost for the dance is only \$2 per person with a \$10 max for a family of five or more. Look for ticket order forms soon. We will also be selling tickets at the door. Most importantly, **I will not dance, so a good time is guaranteed for all!**

See you at the PTA Meeting on Tuesday, February 10 at 6 pm.

Sincerely,

David Cooper

PTA President

Join Us for the Pony Express Family Dance!

Put on your dancing shoes and shake off the winter blues at the Family Dance on **Friday, February 20, 6-8 pm.** It's a night of music, dancing and fun courtesy of a family-friendly DJ.

We will sell food and drinks, and there will be a Silent Auction to bid on goodies such as Disneyland and California Academy of Science passes, Funderland VIP tickets, a Spa Package, a bike, and more!

Tickets are \$2 each or \$10 maximum per family. Look for ticket presale info coming home soon.
(An adult must accompany the students.)



We really need volunteers to help us with this event. Please contact Patty Cooper at 393-4149 or patty.cooper@cabiotech.org, if you can decorate the cafeteria with us after school on Friday, February 20, or if you can help during/after the dance. Thanks!

PTA General Association Meeting Agenda Tuesday, February 10, 2015, 6:00 PM

2014-2015 Board:

President	David Cooper	Fundraisers	Erin Fong
Vice President	Rod Fong	Newsletter	Rebecca Ramirez
Treasurer	Teresa Kim	Newsletter Distribution	Erin & Rod Fong
Secretary	Rebecca Phillips	Website Administrator	Paul Hemesath
Raley/Nugget Scrip	Matina Bragas	Marquee	Dave Kim
Membership	Rod Fong	Box Tops for Education	Matina Bragas
Assemblies	Audrey Hemesath	Harvest Festival/Family Dance	Patricia Cooper

- ◆ Call Meeting to Order David
- ◆ Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes. Rebecca P.
- ◆ Financial Report Teresa
- ◆ President's Report David
- ◆ Principal's Report Mrs. Hetrick
- ◆ Teachers' Report
- ◆ Family Dance Patricia
- ◆ Reports by Committee Coordinators
 - ▲ Membership. Rod
 - ▲ SCRIPS/Box Tops for Education. Matina
 - ▲ Student Assemblies. Audrey
 - ▲ Fundraising Events. Erin
- ◆ New Business/Open Mic David
- ◆ Dates and Announcements
 - ▲ No School, February 9 & 16
 - ▲ Family Dance, February 20
 - ▲ Spring Break, March 30-April 3
 - ▲ Next PTA meeting, March 10
- ◆ Adjourn

Thank you for supporting the PTA
<http://ponyexpress.scusd.edu/>