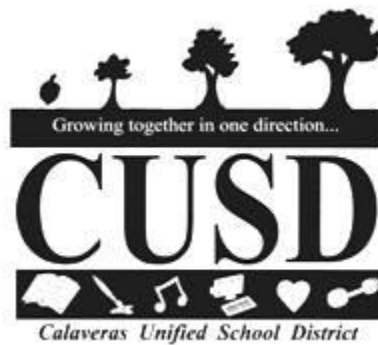


CUSD Newsletter

Celebrations and Connections



Winter....2011



San Andreas Elementary---Wildcats Celebrate and Give Back

Cold weather and a bad economy overlooking the holidays brought December in like a lion. It was clear that the San Andreas Wildcats and community were up to battle, however, when:

- Wildcats joined forces with the California Highway Patrol to help bring toys to those less fortunate than themselves. Students proudly marched to the office with games under their arms and smiles on their faces proving that it is truly greater to give than to receive.
- Parents made sure that students came to school to learn, giving 200 students perfect attendance for the month of December.
- Students decorated the office with handmade snowflakes, cards with classroom writing and holiday haikus.
- The San Andreas Community Covenant Church donated 50 handmade blankets for a student raffle.
- Classrooms competed to see who could bring in more items for the food drive.
- Teachers and students put on a wonderful holiday program for parents that warmed everyone's heart.

And what happened then? Well, in Whoville they say that the Grinch's small heart grew three sizes that day."

---Dr. Seuss

VSE: Title I Funds Directly Benefiting Students

Title I funds received by Valley Springs Elementary School this year are being used to directly impact student learning. Based on our student population, our school receives targeted Title I funds that are used to benefit students performing below grade level. This year, in addition to our regular Title I funds, our school received some additional one-time Title I funds, as a result of federal ARRA money. The combined funds are being used to fund the following programs and services:

Full-Time Learning Center Teacher

Our full-time Title I learning center teacher runs targeted academic intervention groups all day throughout the school week. Our learning center follows a blended model, coordinating with our special education teacher and paraeducator. The learning center program collectively serves students with IEPs and those who are at risk or below grade level in the core subject areas. Teachers help identify students performing below grade-level and assessment and achievement data is monitored throughout the school year by both the regular education teachers and the learning center teachers.

Technology

Title I funds will be used to add and update technology in our computer lab as well as update our teacher laptops. Completely updating our computer lab will allow our low achieving population to receive targeted computer/technology based interventions (using specific software programs focused on raising student achievement). The updated lab will also allow our school to implement a more sophisticated data tracking/assessment system so that low achieving students can be assessed via computers and data can be monitored for response to intervention. With an updated lab, our school will have the capability for during the day as well as after-school technology based interventions for low achieving students. Updating teacher laptops will enable teachers to integrate technology into their curriculum to support the learning needs of low achieving students. The laptops also will allow teachers to access critical assessment data and manage/analyze this data to meet the needs of low achieving students.

Targeted Academic Intervention

Title I funds are being used to provide targeted reading and math interventions at multiple grade-levels. For example our first grade team is implementing a during the day reading intervention for 1st grade struggling readers. Utilizing a reading intervention curriculum called "Early Reading Tutor," a part-time intervention teacher is targeting 14 first grade students identified by their teachers based on data. Each student is receiving 10-15 minutes of highly focused one-on-one reading instruction four days a week for the majority of the school year. Their data will be tracked all year long to evaluate the program.

We have devised similar interventions for students in other grade levels all with the goal of raising student achievement among our lower performing student population.

The entire Valley Springs Elementary community is thankful for receiving these funds, and excited about the many benefits (both short term and long term) that our students will gain from these programs and services.

Mokelumne Hill Elementary Awards



Mokelumne Hill Elementary has a tradition of honoring students each trimester at an awards assembly. The first trimester assembly honored students for Honor Roll, Perfect Attendance, and Alpha Awards. Alpha Awards are worn by students who have received all Ps (progressing at grade level) or Ss (strong progress) in the areas of behavior and effort. That means the child does not have any Ns (needs improvement) on their report card in these areas. The staff believes every child has the potential to receive an Alpha Award if they do their homework and class-work, listen in class, treat others with respect and try their hardest. Taylor and Ricky are two kindergartners showing off their Alpha Awards in the picture to the right.

Growing Together PreKindergarten and Kids Place After School Programs

What an exciting and fun first half of the year this has been for our CUSD Growing Together Pre-Kindergarten and Kids Place After School programs.

Pre-Kindergarten programs are quickly filling to capacity and learning is in bloom. We have added new curriculum, which has enhanced our language arts learning and are excited to embark on a “math” journey as we focus on tasks of strengthening our curriculum in this area.

School sites have been very welcoming and we strive to give our smallest students the best start that we possibly can.

At Kids Place we have worked together to strengthen our after school intervention programs.

We have added an art and music teacher to our programs and continue to strive for enrichment that will continue in to the later part of the school day.

The staff for all of these programs are amazing. They care for students and are always working harder to make each site a great place for our students. We are truly “Growing Together in One Direction.”

San Francisco Opera Visits Rail Road Flat School

The students at Rail Road Flat experienced the beauty of the opera when the San Francisco Opera graced the student-body with a wonderful performance. The students listened to beautiful singing as well as watched fellow students help with the story line through their acting. Each year the Calaveras Arts Council sponsors this day for the students. As the students sat and watched, all warm in the multipurpose room, snow covered the ground outside. The staff, students, and parents had the joy of a moving performance as well as the joy of the first snow. A special thank you is offered to retired teacher, Jane Sprouse, for working with the children to learn their lines for the performance. Everyone was impressed!



Toyon Middle School----Making A Difference

Landscaping/Outdoor Projects: Much progress has been made by the students of the Landscaping/Outdoor Projects classes under the direction of teachers Kevin Hesser and Doug Clark. Students, staff, and parents also came out to two school work days to get all the plants in before the heavy winter rains. The barren areas around the new two story buildings have been transformed by the addition of trees, shrubs, groundcover, and bulbs. What a huge difference living plants make. See the before and after pictures.

Warrior Pride Newspaper: The first edition of the Warrior Pride newspaper is hot off the presses. Especially noteworthy is that this newspaper is the result of all volunteer time, both on the part of students and staff as budget cuts forced the elimination of both the yearbook and newspaper classes as elective options. Students work on their articles during lunch time in the Creative Writing Club under the watchful eye of Advisor Teresa Fasola. Ms. Larson's tech production students assisted with the typing of articles, and the formatting was assisted by Eileen Thorpe from the district Technology Department. Teachers Kevin Hesser and Kristin Ridders also provide additional support. Valley Springs News provided the printing of hard copies and the newsletter is also available on line on the Toyon Middle School web page.

Winter Band and Choir Concert: Families and friends were treated to a spectacular winter concert, featuring the TMS Intermediate and Advanced Bands and the TMS/CHS choirs under the leadership of teachers Angela Lang and Nichole Markle. The concert was held at the San Andreas Community Covenant Church to a packed house with standing room only. All that hard work paid off in an outstanding performance showcasing our fine performing arts programs.

TMS Gym Makeover: Our heartfelt thanks go to John Hayes, TMS Parent Club President, for the many, many volunteer hours he provided in painting the TMS gym. A painter by trade, John used his talents, with the supplies provided by the district, to provide a much needed professional paint job to the gym. The transformation is truly remarkable. Visiting basketball teams thought we had built a new gym because it looks that good. THANK YOU, JOHN!



TMS----Before



TMS---After

West Point Elementary....Thanksgiving Feast

What an amazing meal the students, staff, family members and community members enjoyed at West Point Elementary on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Even though it was snowing with almost blizzard like conditions, people arrived with turkeys, mashed potatoes, dressing, cranberry sauce, tamales, macaroni and cheese, rolls, pumpkin pies, apple pies, cookies, and many more items to share. The walls were adorned with hero posters made by the students, which honored the many heroes of our society from those who serve in the armed forces to those who serve as teachers. This Thanksgiving meal is a tradition that has been occurring at WPE for many years and it is a testament to West Point Elementary's commitment to community spirit. The students learn the value of giving and receiving through the example of the adults around them.

