

Welcome to the REACH 2008-2009 school year!

The REACH program is a collaborative endeavor involving a community of students, teachers, families, and SUSD staff. The goal of the community is to nurture the ability of all students to explore their unique gifts. Creative arts, strong academics, self-awareness, and hands-on learning are at the heart of the students' educational experiences. We are looking forward to another exciting school year as we continue the refinement of the REACH program.

This handbook is provided to you for your reference regarding the greater goals of REACH and to help establish excellent lines of communication throughout the year. Much of the information contained within this handbook is also available on the REACH website: www.reach-program.com. Changes to the information contained in this handbook will be communicated during the year via the website, e-mail, newsletters or mail. The website will also be updated and expanded throughout the year.

Regarding specific expectations that Brook Haven has for all of its student body, please read, review and abide by the Brook Haven standards found in the front of the student planner. There you will find guidelines for student behavior, dress code and procedures.

Collaboration & Communication

At REACH, collaboration amongst teachers, administrators, students and parents is highly valued. Parental involvement in supporting a student's learning is integral to the success of our program. Regular communication is essential for a successful program. To achieve this, a variety of communication avenues and support systems have been established.

- If you have a question **about the program**, (enrichment, scheduling or curriculum design) please contact the Program Director.
- If you have a question, problem, or a concern **about an academic matter** regarding your student, please go to the classroom teacher first.
- If you have concerns regarding **your student's interactions** with other students or teachers, encourage your student to go talk to the School Counselor.
- If you have concerns regarding the **Parent Foundation's goals** for curriculum, enrichment and/or social/emotional matters, please approach the Board President or RPF Parent Liaison.

Talking with school personnel

The teachers, administrators, and/or school counselor are happy to make time to speak with parents about questions or concerns. E-mail is usually the quickest and most effective way to have your questions answered from all. Phone calls are not transferred to classroom teachers during their teaching schedules.

- The Program Director is on campus for a limited schedule this year but she is very quick to respond to emails. Regular on-campus office hours will be published in the newsletter.
- Teachers are best reached by email and are often available at the end of the day for questions: however it is always best to schedule ahead of time by e-mail or note to arrange for contact with a teacher.
- Please do not plan to have conversations with the teacher before the day begins, since they are busy preparing for the day. However, you may send a note.

Contact information

4/5 — Maggie Peters	825-4590	mpeters@sebusd.org ,
6 Humanities — Kimberly Jatón	825-4590	kjaton@sebusd.org
7/8 Humanities —Claudia Dalessio	825-4590	cdalessio@sebusd.org
Team Math—Beth Canardo	825-4590	bcanardo.reach@gmail.com
Program Director — Karen Mirabelli	321-3793	reach.director@gmail.com
Brook Haven Counselor - J.T. O'Neill	829-4590	joneill@sebusd.org
Brook Haven Principal- Kent Cromwell	829-4590	kcromwell@sebusd.org
Band — Beth Ann Turner	829-4590	bturner@sebusd.org
SUSD Superintendent — David Wheeler	829-4570	dwheeler@sebusd.org
Brook Haven Office Manager— Kathy Courts	829-4590	kcourts@sebusd.org

Mailing Information

REACH Parent Foundation
708 Gravenstein Hwy N., #203
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Brook Haven Middle School
7905 Valentine Ave.
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Weekly Newsletter

The primary method of communication for REACH is through the bi-weekly newsletter that comes to families by e-mail on alternate Mondays, with email/calendar updates every other week. Be sure to read these messages each week as you will receive information about schedules, changes, events, requests for volunteers, and other information. If you do not have e-mail access, please request hard copies from the Program Director.

The newsletter editor is Diana Badger and she welcomes articles and pictures from parents, students, and teachers about program activities and events. Send your information to Diana by Friday evening for Monday publishing at dianabadger@mcn.org.

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Class and School Information

Permission slips and other forms will be sent home with students. Parents will need to check with students on a regular basis to see if any new forms have been sent home. The newsletter from the Sebastopol Union School District/Brook Haven is sent home with students monthly.

Web Site

Additionally, the RPF website is an excellent source for information about events and for copies of current and past newsletters. <http://www.reach-program.com> You can also find descriptions there of the Empower Program, which we will be re-instituting this year. This powerful anti-clique, anti-bullying program gives students and teachers the tools they need to make our vision of a supportive, inclusive, empowering environment in the classroom and on the playground come to life.

The website has information about the Scrip Program, and how you can use it to easily raise money for the REACH program.

Parent Meetings/Community Building

REACH holds regular parent meetings and sponsors social events. Please plan try attend at least one parent meeting and social each trimester. The calendar of our many events is towards the end of this handbook and any updates to the dates or times will be sent out with the newsletter.

Volunteering

It's not just a good idea-- it's essential to the REACH community.

Volunteering is another important contribution that each family can make to the program. **Every REACH family is needed for approximately 5 hours a month.** You will find opportunities for specific tasks listed in the Monday newsletter or on the website. Often there are sign-up sheets at parent meetings and other REACH get-togethers.

NOTE: If you plan to drive on field trips or would like to supervise an overnight trip, there are specific forms and background checks required, so get started early. Contact our Volunteer Coordinator or the Program Director for the forms required.

REACH Parent Foundation Board Members

The REACH Parent Foundation (RPF) is a 501(C) 3 non-profit California corporation that collects donations from parents and others for the purpose of providing an arts-enriched academic experience for the students in the REACH Program. RPF's goal is much broader than fundraising, however. The other purpose of this organization is to create a close, supportive community – where parents know and feel comfortable with each other and each other's children. There is a saying, "It takes a village to raise a child." The REACH Parent

Foundation is dedicated to making that village ideal a reality in this program. RPF does this by providing regular events for parents to meet and talk about issues of common concern and by creating a robust and supportive parent volunteer structure to support the students and teachers in this amazing program.

The RPF Board of Directors holds regular meetings that are open to all parents. Generally these meetings are monthly throughout the school year and at various times throughout the summer. For the 200-2009 school year, regular meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm. Reminders of the times will be published via the newsletter and website.

Please see the RPF website for a listing of current RPF board members and their positions.

Donations

The REACH Parent Foundation is a non-profit corporation whose mission is to provide classes and instruction that most schools and programs consider to be “extra curricular” such as drama, art, poetry, clubs, special performances, regular field trips, the weeklong field trips and more. Your donations also assist in providing specialized in-service training for the REACH teachers, such as training in the Empower Program and in Project-Based Learning. Additionally, Parent Education presenters and other specialized materials are provided through these funds. These enriching elements of the REACH program are reliant upon on the monthly donations and the annual activity fee pledged by all REACH families to support the program. The REACH Parent Foundation is a non-profit, 501(c)3 tax exempt organization committed to ensuring that all REACH students are able to participate in the program regardless of a family’s ability to pay.

Upon acceptance to the program, each family is asked to make an initial non-refundable donation which is held as a deposit and used as your monthly donation for the last June that your student attends REACH. The amount of the deposit check reflects your pledged monthly donation while your student is attending the REACH program. Each family makes the decision on the right donation amount for their family.

Pledged Donations are requested at the first of the month and checks should be made payable to the REACH Parent Foundation or RPF. Reminders of your pledge will be mailed electronically. Additionally, some families choose to make their donation for the full school year or a partial year. Please just make a notation on your check.

Please put your donation in the gold box on Kathy Court’s desk in the Brook Haven office, or mail the check to:

REACH Parent Foundation
708 Gravenstein Hwy N. #203
Sebastopol, CA 95472

Activity Fee: Each family is asked to extend their regular monthly donations to include July and August. These 2 extra payments cover the activity fee for the coming school year (in this case ‘08-‘09) and serve to offset the costs of the longer field trips. *Full payment of the activity fee is requested by September 30.* For families joining the program at the first of the school

year, please contact the RPF Treasurer if this creates a hardship, and a different payment schedule will be arranged.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your donation please contact the RPF Treasurer. Funding and under-writing of specific events or activities and additional donations are encouraged and accepted.

Scrip

The REACH program does not raise money via fundraising projects that are often part of the middle school experience. Scrip is an almost painless way to raise money for our program. Many merchants participate in Scrip as a form of advertising. To encourage you to shop with them, they donate a percentage of your purchase (usually 2-5%) back to the charity of your choosing. The great thing is, you don't shop any differently than you normally do! We encourage every REACH family to sign up. Just think, no wrapping paper, candy or bake sales!

There are three different ways for you to participate. You can use one method, or ideally, all three. Instructions with easy links are provided on the web site. Additionally, if you don't have easy computer access, the Scrip Coordinator will be happy to walk you through it or handle it for you.

Social Emotional Climate

The REACH Program supports the use of the "Owning Up" curriculum of the EMPOWER Program. The following is quoted from the program materials.

"Until recently, bullying was thought of as a bigger boy, often with low self-esteem and low social status, physically picking on a smaller boy. But this definition of bullying ignores its root causes. In contrast, the Empower Program believes that the root causes of bullying are founded on how people, children and adults alike define who has power, privilege, and respect in our culture.

One of the primary ways people define who has power and respect is how our culture defines masculinity and femininity. Within this context, girls and boys form relationships and alliances with their peers that are both a source of support and conflict. This in turn helps to create a complex social hierarchy that can dictate peoples' roles as perpetrators, bystanders, and/or targets for bullying.

Owning Up, a curriculum of the Empower Program, teaches boys and girls to analyze this dynamic and understand how it manifests itself in their everyday experience of cliques, popularity, bullying, gossip, crushes, and other relationships. Through participation in this program, boys and girls are empowered to bear witness and stand up against degrading behavior so that they can make their communities safe and inclusive for all people."

— The Empower Program

Enrichment

Enrichment for the students is an essential part of the REACH Program. Throughout the year your student will have access to Art, Drama, Poetry, Spanish as well as a broad range of

enrichment activities provided through our “Clubs” program. We also attempt to incorporate other visual and performing arts such as dance and music.

Clubs - Clubs are offered in 6-8 week cycles, and serve to further expand the range of enrichment classes so that students can try a variety of activities that may be of interest to them. Clubs also provides a time when students from different grade levels get to participate in an activity together. We attempt to repeat some of the more popular clubs throughout the year so that more students have access to them. At times, the students go off campus for their club activity. Parents have the opportunity to share their particular interests and skills by offering to sponsor and instruct a particular club activity. By filling in the volunteer sheet, parents can make known what special interests they would be willing to share.

Logistics

Schedule – The REACH program schedule differs from the rest of the Brook Haven campus to alleviate parking lot congestion and provide additional time used for the creative arts curriculum. The REACH Program runs from 8:00 a.m. to 3:05 p.m. Monday—Friday. The only exception is the schedule for advanced band students, whose day begins at 7:40. If your child is late, he/she must report to the Brook Haven office for a tardy slip.

Absences and sign out - If your student will be absent please call the Brook Haven School secretary to report the absence at 829-4590. If you need to take your student out of school during the regular school hours, please give advance notice by sending a note with your student or calling the school office. Any student leaving the school within the school day for any reason must first be signed out in the Brook Haven office. If your student becomes ill while at school and feels the need to go home, a phone call will be made to the parent at home.

Fees – There is a \$12 fee for planners and I.D. card for all students, and a \$35 fee for Gym uniforms for 7th and 8th graders. Checks are made out to Brook Haven School. All other class material fees are covered for your student by RPF.

Parking - Parents can park in front of the school, before and after school. Please do not park along the southeast parking strip adjacent the garden – this area is reserved for teachers. Parents are invited to visit with each other at dropoff or pickup at the tables in the quad by the REACH classrooms or at the tables in the lunch area behind the library. Classes are held around these locations so please be aware and keep voices low.

Parents on campus – Nametags will be made for parents to wear who come to school for regular assignments. Visitors to the campus need to check in at the office and get a temporary sticker. Visitors also need to complete a Volunteer Code of Conduct form and accompanying documents in order to be on campus on a regular or extended basis.

Lunch— Students in the REACH Program eat lunch in the quad in front of their classrooms. Once lunch is finished, volunteer yard duty supervisors escort students to the park and other recreational options. On rainy days, REACH Program students eat in their classrooms. Volunteer parents supervise the classrooms on rainy days.

Brook Haven cafeteria lunches are available to all Brook Haven students including REACH

students. Students can bring a check for \$25 which pays for 10 lunches. During attendance in the morning the teachers will ask for the lunch count. Students will go to the lunch line to pick up cafeteria lunches and take them back to the REACH quad.

Library – All students may use the library at noon recess and after school. They can check out books and work on homework if necessary. Books can be checked out at all those times and no library card is needed. Lost books have to be paid for, but there is no limit on the time a student can have to return a book.



Bicycles, scooters, roller blades, and skateboards – Students may ride bikes, scooters, roller blades and skateboards to school as long as they wear helmets securely fastened and do so in a safe manner. Bikes must go in the racks and be locked. Failure to follow these rules will result in a detention.

Dress code – Check out all the details in the student planner. No hats or caps in class. The 7th and 8th graders must buy and wear gym clothes provided by the school. No pajamas. No inappropriate messages on clothes. Stomachs covered.

Electronic devices - None of the following items can be observed or used at school: CD players, radios, Walkman, i-pods, or tape recorders. Cell phones cannot be out of packs during the school day.

Homework and Planners

Completing homework is important for many reasons. Not only does it reinforce learning by providing practice and application, but it also develops self discipline and responsibility.

- ❖ It is absolutely essential that your students do their homework every night and turn it in on time. Homework will be assigned on a daily basis and will cover the spectrum of the curriculum.
- ❖ A standard guideline for determining the amount of nightly homework equates to approximately 10 minutes per grade level. Therefore, you can expect the 4th / 5th grade class to have 40 to 50 minutes per night, 6th grade to have 60 minutes per night, and 7th / 8th grade to have 70 to 80 minutes per night. Since every student works at a different pace, these time guidelines are approximations.
- ❖ Each student will be expected to incorporate a minimum of 20 to 30 minutes of reading into their daily homework routine
- ❖ Students will have a yearly assignment planner. Each student will use his/her daily planner to record daily assignments and keep track of long-term projects. Teachers will specify particular requirements regarding parental signatures and review of homework planners. As a rule, during the first month of the school year, parents should check and sign off on completed homework assignments.
- ❖ As you can imagine, parent support as well as a quiet workspace can make homework easier and more productive.

Sports, Dances and Extracurricular Activities

After School Sports - 6th to 8th graders

The after-school sports offered by Brook Haven are available to ALL students in 6th, 7th and 8th grades. The sports offered in the past have been 6th, 7th, and 8th grade basketball and flag

football for boys, and 6th, 7th, and 8th grade basketball and volleyball for girls. There is also co-ed volleyball and cross-country.

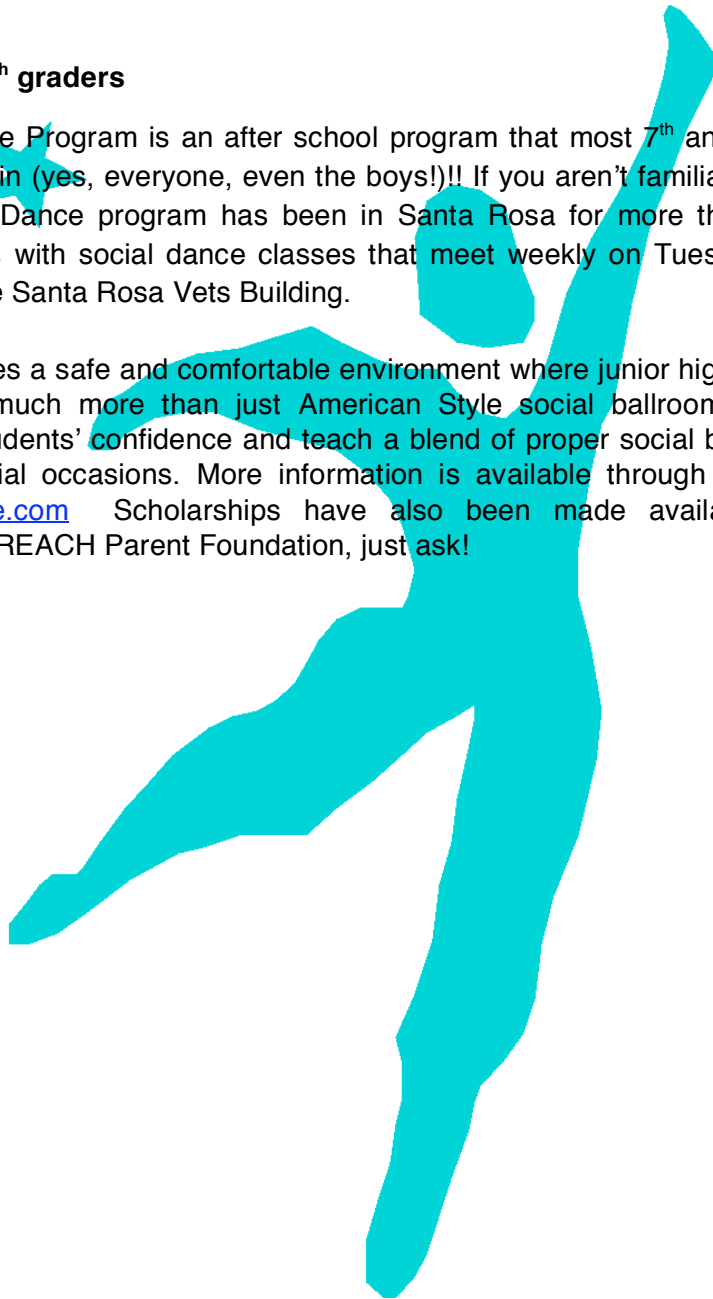
In order to participate in these activities, physical clearance must be obtained from a physician, copy of health card provided, and a liability waiver signed. There are often fees associated with participation on an athletic team. There will be a lunchtime meeting prior to the beginning of each sport for all students interested in participating. The forms will be given out at that meeting. Often the sports physicals can be hard to schedule at the last minute. If you know your child will want to participate we suggest you schedule their physical in advance.

Dances are scheduled through Brook Haven about every 2 months and information about each dance is published by Brook Haven.

Nordquist - 7th & 8th graders

The Nordquist Dance Program is an after school program that most 7th and 8th grade REACH students participate in (yes, everyone, even the boys!!!) If you aren't familiar with it, Stephen & Shirley Nordquist's Dance program has been in Santa Rosa for more than 30 years. They provide boys & girls with social dance classes that meet weekly on Tuesday nights October through March at the Santa Rosa Vets Building.

The program provides a safe and comfortable environment where junior high and high school students learn so much more than just American Style social ballroom dancing. These classes build the students' confidence and teach a blend of proper social behavior, manners and dress for special occasions. More information is available through their web site at www.nordquisdance.com Scholarships have also been made available through the Nordquist's and the REACH Parent Foundation, just ask!



REACH Calendar

Events for the school year are still taking shape, but here is a start at the calendar. Updates will be sent out in the Monday newsletter and e-mails as new information becomes available.

September

9/4	Thurs	Parents	Orientation/Parent Meeting, Library, 6:30
9/8	Mon	All grades	Zero period begins, school starts 8 am
9/10	Wed	Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
9/16	Tues	Parents	Back to School Night, Gym
9/18-19	Thurs-Fri	All grades	Westminster Woods
9/26	Fri	6-8	Shakespeare Much Ado About Nothing

October

10/8	Wed	Interested Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
10/10	Fri	4/5	Four Winds Performance Wells Fargo Cntr. (WFC)
10/29-30	Wed-Thurs	All grades	Parent Conferences/Early release, 1:30

November

11/10	Mon	All grades	No School – Staff In-service
11/11	Tues	All grades	No School – Veterans' Day
11/12	Wed	Interested Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
11/25	Tues	All grades	REACH Thanksgiving Celebration
11/26-28	Wed-Fri	All grades	No School – Thanksgiving

December

12/1	Mon	7 th	Romeo & Juliet Performance WFC
12/10	Wed	Interested Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
12/12	Fri	Everyone	Winter Social/Kids Activity Night
12/22-31	Mon	All grades	No School – Winter Holiday

January

1/1-2	Thurs - Fri	All grades	No school – New Years
1/14	Wednesday	Interested Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
1/19	Monday	All grades	No school – Martin Luther King

February

2/11	Wednesday	Interested Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
2/16-29	Mon – Fri	All grades	No School - Presidents/Ski Week

March

3/6	Fri	6 th	Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters Performance WFC
3/11	Wed	7 th & 8 th	Ailey II Dance Performance WFC
3/11	Wed	Interested Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
3/20	Fr	All grades	No School – Spring

April

4/6-10	Mon – Fri	6 th	Marin Headlands Field Trip
4/6-10	Mon – Fri	7 th	Ashland
4/5-10	Sun – Fri	8 th	Yosemite
4/8	Wed	Interested Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
4/13-17	Mon-Fri	All grades	No school – Spring Break
4/24	Fri	Everyone	Spring Social/Kids Activity Night

May

5/13	Wed	Interested Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
5/25	Mon	All grades	No School – Memorial Day

June

6/6	Sat	8 th	Graduation
6/6	Sat	All grades	Year End Pool Party & Pot Luck
6/10	Wed	Interested Parents	REACH Parent Foundation, Library 6:30
6/12	Friday	All grades	Last Day of School