



September, 2011

A Monthly Newsletter from the REACH School Board

A Note from the Director

After three-plus weeks of school, we are off and running into the 2011/2012 school year. With the help of many, we opened school with 58 wonderful children learning their schedules, meeting new friends and “adjusting” to the new 4 “R’s” agreement system. Every day the staff and myself are amazed at the need to be flexible and fluid in order to provide the rich Explicit (Standards-based) and Implicit (social-emotional) curriculum we have developed. *If you were not at back to school night or have a need to come to learn more, please let me know and I will make time at 8:50 in the morning or 2:30 in the afternoons to meet with you.*

In the past few weeks, we have started our clubs on Wednesday: Juggling, Gardening, Fencing and Choir. The clubs rotate every five weeks and the students get an opportunity to choose. If you have a skill/talent or interest to teach a club, please contact Julie Heinsen, Office Manager.

Additionally, we had our school pictures with an amazing photographer, Sari Singerman. The pictures will arrive on October 19th and retakes will be on October 25th. If you want to order the pictures, have questions or concerns please go to Sari’s website: www.sariphotography.com.

Student Council elections were held last week. We had just the right turn out for officers and class reps. Everyone who showed an interest will be in a leadership role. Student Council President: Colin; Vice President: Alex; Secretary: Alyssa; Treasurer: Gavin; 7th Grade Rep: Ryan C., 6th Grade Reps: Remi and Calla; 5th Grade Rep, Zack; 4th Grade Reps, Lydia and Rufus. This group of students will bring strong, dynamic leadership to our school. Everyone else will be encouraged to attend student council meetings on Tuesday at lunch to help offer ideas and make decisions.

Our annual Unity Retreat at the CYO Camp was held on September 8th and 9th. Thanks to Stella Rijeka for chairing the retreat, and all the chaperones and teachers for making this two day trip a memorable one. The camp was well run with great food, games, thought provoking exercises and an opportunity to engage in team-building for the students and adults who attended.

Thanks to Laniakea LaCourse and all the volunteers who participated in the Much Ado About Sebastopol Renaissance Faire. It was a beautiful day and a percentage of the funds generated by the two REACH booths, where kids of all ages were able to make crafts of the times, will come directly to us.

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www.reach-program.com

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, September 26
RPF Board Meeting
REACH School Library, 6-9pm

Monday, October 3
Important Parent Meeting
REACH School Library, 6-8pm
Child Care Available - \$5 donation

Monday, October 10
RPF Board Meeting
REACH School Library, 6-9pm

Friday, October 14
NO SCHOOL
Progress Reports

Sunday, October 16
Family Skate Night! 4:30-6:30pm

Tuesday October 18 & Friday, October 21
EARLY RELEASE: Parent/Teacher Conferences;
school out 12:20pm. No Lunch

Monday, October 24
RPF Board Meeting
REACH School Library, 6-9pm

Tuesday, October 25
Photo Makeup Day

Tuesday, November 1
NO SCHOOL
Teacher Work Day

**HAVE YOU TURNED IN
YOUR PLEDGE YET?**

Funding Challenge

Our school has a budget shortfall this year, and to close the gap, the REACH Parent Foundation is engaging in a multi-pronged approach to raise funds. Below we highlight the easiest way you can help...

The eScrip Challenge.

Did you know that eScrip is a way for you to donate without any additional expenses to you? All you need to do is sign up your credit cards and debit cards and when you make a purchase, a small percentage of the amount (usually 2-5%) is donated to the REACH school.

Our goal is to have 300 cards signed up through e-scrip this year. Simply meeting this challenge could bring thousands of extra dollars to the REACH School. This is an average of more than five cards per child currently enrolled—to meet this challenge, we will need YOU to sign up all of your cards and get your friends and extended family members to sign up all of their cards for the REACH School. You can even sign up specific store membership cards, like the Safeway card (which needs to be renewed each year).

To sign up:

1. Go onto the e-scrip website: www.escrip.com
2. Click on “Make a Difference in 4 Easy Steps”
3. Enter the REACH School ID# 154408796
4. Fill in your information on the form for each card



Fundraising Committee Update

The Fundraising Team met on Wednesday, Sept. 21, and will continue to meet regularly; please join us for this vital work for our school.

We are looking at getting 100% participation in pledges, every month, at any amount, and also setting a goal of 300 credit and debit cards signed up for E-scrip.

Upcoming fundraising events will be an all-school car wash and some dine and donates in town. Dates and more info to come shortly. Mark your calendars for the Saturday, November 19 West County Crafters and Sebastopol Grange Crafters **GALA CRAFTRAVAGANZA**. REACH will have a table there to raise money for our school. Get your crafty gift items ready to donate, and come and shop for new holiday gifts that are truly locally grown.

Long range planning includes some of our fabulous alumni families who are interested in working with us for a swell event in the new year. We will be looking for some of our own talented parents and students to perform at this gala. More to come, but please contact Laura Shafer at paulandlaura@pobox.com for more details.



Class Updates

4th Grade Update

- Mary Kraybill

We are ...

- learning about Native Americans;
- learning about fiber and how to spin (kids will come home with their own “recycled” drop spindles starting next Monday);
- continuing to read *Island of the Blue Dolphins*;
- starting our differentiated spelling program (most of the kids looks like super spellers so after we get the program down I’ll have a group of kids do a more advanced “spelling bee” list);
- continuing our extensive class careers by learning about idioms, meteorology, technical writing (procedural), autobiographies, comedy, and other school responsibility type careers;
- starting to have pets come into the room (snakes, possibly crawdads, and fish);
- continuing to bake bread (learning about how sometimes the batch doesn’t work out, so we try to figure out how to fix it the next time);
- continuing to learn Spanish ... last week was El Dia de la Independencia so we’re learning a little history and how the Mexicans celebrate their independence day;
- continuing weekly recorder lessons. Many of the kids know some songs already so Kevin will start new songs, and he is having them tie a piece of yarn around the recorder every time they perform a song in front of the room. It’s a nice incentive to have the recorder “bling”;
- continuing on with our implicit curriculum. The fourth grade has settled really nicely into the 4R’s system, and are working together really well;
- doing rock streak tests and will continue with hardness testing and on to rock polishing in a couple of weeks;
- we now have enough plastic bottles to start with our mini soil laboratories and are collecting soil samples;
- starting the process of getting ready for the October 6th Sonoma Mission field trip. It will be a great trip; taking us back in time to experience a child’s life in the 1820’s in a mission.

5th/6th Grade Update

- Calla R.

Reading: We’re reading *Hatchet*, answering questions about it, and starting a project where we start a survival kit and keeping a diary about as if we were Ryan, the main character who was in a plane crash and has to survive on his own. We are supposed to put how we would feel if we were in that situation. The survival kit is eight or more items, with a paragraph about each one—like, if we pick a hammer, we have to say why a hammer is useful, but Nydia said we could also talk about feelings—like courage, and why courage would be important—it doesn’t have to be just tools.

Writing: We are writing about our names. Learning to write an essay.

I like the writing and math is way better than last year.

7th Grade Update

- Rane B.

Every Thursday we work on the 7th Grade Community Project – I really like that, I think it’s really cool that we get to help out in the community. It’s a good idea to look at our skills and see how they help the community.

In Social Studies we are learning about the Mayan culture—in our table groups we have been coming up with our own rules for ball court games and then in PE we get to play the games by the rules we make up. That is one of the bigger things we’re doing, but we’re also learning about religion and the *Popol Vuh* (Mayan version of the bible).

In science we have been learning about different cells and cellular structures.

- Ash R.

Spanish: We are learning different words and we’re learning how to speak in complete sentences. “Yo estoy muy feliz.”

Environmental Studies: We are walking around the school and picking up trash. When it’s too hot, we talk about ways to help the environment.

Social Studies: We are learning about Mayans, Aztecs and the Olmec. Each table group is coming up with a ball game—ours is like freeze-tag soccer/capture-the-flag. We don’t have a name for it yet.

Band Update

Hi All!

Well, things in band are starting to shape up really nicely. I am very excited about this year and can tell it is going to be a great one! I just want to take a little time and thank all of you for all your wonderful help and assistance and let you know how much I really appreciate it!

In the few short weeks we have had band we are off to a great start! I was able to acquire a few more instruments from the Wells Fargo Center's Music For Schools program and from some parent donations. (Once again, Thank you!) We were also able to order method books for ALL the students in class. In the upcoming weeks we will begin sampling some repertoire and eventually establish a nice set list for a few concerts later on this year!

I am very happy with the way things are working out and I appreciate everyone's support and patience!

If anyone has any suggestions, ideas, or comments please feel free to email me! dan.hetzerband@gmail.com

Sincerely, Dan Hetzer

Kahn Academy

On Fridays, REACH students will enjoy math games, or they can choose to explore the Kahn Academy educational videos. Parents are encouraged to check out the site and let us know what you think. More info coming soon!

Salman Khan is a former hedge fund analyst who posts short lessons (over 2,400 so far) to his free website—khanacademy.org—where they help kids in dozens of countries understand everything from Hubble's Law to the French Revolution.

Khan started tutoring a young cousin remotely in 2004 after learning that she was struggling with math. Soon other relatives were asking him for help. When he posted a series of lessons on YouTube, they went viral, and donors like Bill Gates (who has said his kids watch the videos) offered to help him expand his efforts. In 2009 Khan quit his financial job to focus on Khan Academy; his videos have now been viewed more than 64 million times.

- from O Magazine

Gardening Club

The Gardening Club is learning about our campus from the ground up. What can we plant and when and where? Look for new plantings behind the library, in the 7th grade lunch area and the front barrel garden. Our wish list includes, 5 gal. buckets, gloves, (mainly women's sizes), small trowels and any plants and seeds from your garden you can share, and good quality mulch and compost. Your time and knowledge are always welcome in the garden on Weds. from 1:30-3:00pm. Please bring any donations to the Library.

Our grounds maintenance team is doing a great job of watering. Does anyone have a push mower they could donate or lend for the club to mow with?



Much Ado Thank You's!

I would like to thank all the parents who signed up, I have to admit I was a little nervous but everyone who signed up showed up. I even got some bonus volunteers!!!

I am sure that I am going to forget someone and in advance I'm sorry. I would like to especially thank **Laura Shafer** for helping with costuming. Whipping out bodices and hats galore, even assisting in full costumes and costume consulting. **Joan Cathcart** for making me take a break. All the parents on the 12-4pm shift thank you. My oldest daughter **Angel** put in 11 hours with me and did not complain once!! The **Fogetti family**, thank you for your wonderful juggling, singing, and music playing. It made people stop and look and smile. **Vincent Landucci** who is not a parent but a friend, he was the first one there and one of the last to leave. The last volunteers—we had lot of last-minute kids and they helped with smiles and to break down and clean up.

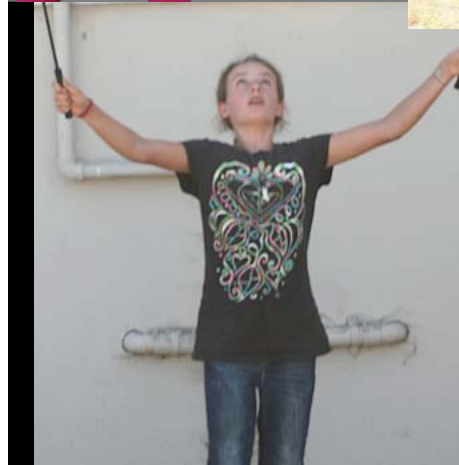
One more thank you is to **Stacey and Leslie** who worked endlessly on putting all the crafts together. Without them we would not have had a booth.

One last one is THANK YOU to all the kids that helped. I did not hear one complaint, one whine, one anything, you guys were nothing but respectful and helpful the whole day.

- Mahalo, Laniakea LaCourse



Juggling Club!



and more
playground fun

*(thanks to Rachelle for
the school day photos
and to Michael Eller for
the Unity Trip photos)*



Director's Notes, continued from page 1

A variety of meetings of committees such as Fundraising, Gardening, and 5th/6th Field Trips have happened and will continue to. Please join in and/or create a committee if something isn't getting done and there is a need!

Thanks to Paul Schwebel and Rich Gibson! We received our netbook computers and opened the technology lab thanks to their endless hours of set-up. If you have an interest in helping with technology during the day please let the office know.

Kevin Reid and Dan Hetzer, both credentialed teachers, have joined our staff. Kevin is joining us all day on Wednesday, teaching recorder to the 4th graders, music to the 5th and 6th grades, supporting 7th grade math, co-facilitating the Life Mastery classes and teaching choir in the afternoon. He will also be our main substitute teacher. Kevin comes to us via the River School and provides an in house anchor to the Ho'ala philosophy. Dan, full of ideas and enthusiasm, provides band four mornings of the week during zero period. Thank you to the parents who are committed to supporting band, getting to school at 7:30 and fundraising.

As you already know, Rachelle Steele has been doing an amazing job as the Volunteer Coordinator. Thank you Rachelle! Many of you are in the classroom and contributing so much. We still need parents in the class for support, running small groups, re-teaching, silent reading and grounding some of our more active children. Please review your schedule and see where you might want to come and participate with us at school.

The 7th Grade class has come forward in many leadership roles at our school. I am so excited with their ideas and I am committed to supporting them, when possible. When the students approach me, they need to have a proposal with a plan, what they need for adult support, and an agreement that their classroom participation and grades will not be affected.

Two students, Alex and Ryan S., have opened a school Snack Shack. This idea came to fruition even before our doors were opened! The boys were careful to research what kind of snack would be appropriate, have very good business sense and would like to grow the Snack Shack to include school spirit merchandise. I have advised them to keep it simple for now.

William, Eli, Ryan C., Caleb, Jaida and Lily are starting our school newspaper. Look for the first edition by October 1st. The group will have a blog as well as hard copies to distribute. The newspaper will include articles, homework, interviews, art, comic, photos and special contributions.

Gianna will be joined by others to work on the yearbook, Ash and Tristan are scrambling to come up with a way to introduce their passion for skateboarding to the school, and Spencer is writing a proposal to open the Technology Lab at lunch. The students are beginning to step into their interests and I am very supportive of that.

October 5th is International Walk and Roll to School Day with Sebastopol Safe Routes to School. If you would like to promote this and other activities throughout the year, please let me know.

I would like to thank Julie Heisen and Melissa (Mo) Vandever. The two of them have formed the best office support team I have ever worked with. With the support of Judi Sherrer, our amazing Board President, they are developing the day-to-day procedures necessary to run our school. Working endless hours, they are there to take care of bumps, scrapes, bruises, answer the telephone, set up Power School, support me and every person who comes into the office. Please be kind and offer words of encouragement whenever you are near.

In closing, I look for ways to celebrate each day. One day at a time, we will succeed in making the REACH School a place for one and all.

We would like your support in spreading the word for others to join our school this year. We want ten more families to enroll this year. You can help—please make a call, visit a friend and share the work that we are creating each and every day at this school. This enrollment campaign, plus your monthly pledges, will support the director position, teachers, enrichment activities, clubs and day to day running of our school this year. As I have seen over and over again already, we are building the field and they are coming. Thank you for your dedication, your hours of volunteering, your vision and commitment to making a difference, and for trusting us to provide an outstanding education to your child each day.

In Gratitude, Goldie



Unity Retreat

(thanks to Michael Eller for the photos!)

International



Walk & Roll



to School Day

**Get out your walking shoes & bike helmets &
Join us for this fun, healthy event!**

**Meet at the parking lot across from the Seb
Vets Memorial Building at 8am!**

Wed Oct 5

Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital
Petaluma Valley Hospital



A Ministry founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange

International Walk and Roll to School Day is brought to you by the Sonoma County Safe Routes to School Program