

Mar Vista Elementary School

PARENT NEWSLETTER

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www.marvista.pvUSD.net

CHRISTOPHER HERTZ, PRINCIPAL
April 10, 2008

OFFICE HOURS: 7:30 – 4:00
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April Character Theme: Put Out Put Downs

CALENDAR

Thurs	4/10	Pages & PJs Night / 7:00pm
Fri	4/11	Book Fair Begins (supports future library book purchases) (until 4:00pm daily)
Sun	4/13	6 th Grade Car Wash to support Fun Day (\$10.00) @ parking lot / 12:00 – 3:00
Thurs	4/17	Book Fair Open until 6:30pm
Fri	4/18	Book Fair Ends
		Student Council Spirit Day / "Crazy Hat & Hair Day"
Thurs	4/24	Walk-a-Thon Pledge Sheets go home with students
Fri	4/25	Lost & Found to Charity
Mon	4/28	STAR Testing Begins (do not schedule doctor/dentist appointments)
Sat	5/3	Family Fix It Day 2 of 2
Thurs	5/8	Deadline for Students make 1,000,000 word challenge / 25 book challenge
Fri	5/9	Walk-a-Thon Pledge Sheets due back to teachers/office
Mon	5/12	STAR Testing Ends
Tues	5/13	SSC 4:30 - 5:30, ELAC 5:30 – 6:00, MVP'S 6:30 – 8:00
Fri	5/16	Walk-a-Thon! (Benefits MVP'S General Budget and New Play Structure Fund)
Thurs	5/22	Open House (Spaghetti Feed @ 5:30 & classes open at 7:00pm)
Fri	5/23	Walk-a-Thon Pledge \$ Due to office
Fri	6/06	Last day of School
Mon	6/16	Summer School begins at Bradley (July 4 Holiday)
Fri	7/18	Summer School Ends
Tues	8/12	New Family Walking Tour of Mar Vista / 2:00 – 2:50
Wed	8/13	First Day of School

Principal's Message

In next week's Thursday Communication Folder you will find the Parent Survey Results. This year 30% of parents returned their surveys which is a drop of 2% from last year. Last year's survey's rate was a 13% drop from the year before. Fewer parents are responding. We received much positive commentary but we continue to search out areas for improvement. The three lowest scoring areas (computer literacy, playground choices, & academic challenge) were discussed by the Site Council and were included in the school improvement plans for next school year. Thank you to those parents who were able to give us feedback.

To improve our school we are working this summer to entirely replace our computer lab and to add many more computers to each classroom. With reliable computers our teachers will no doubt dedicate more student time to using them. The MVP'S have decided to work towards replacing the play structure. They will need parent help and you can do this by supporting the Walk-a-Thon. Lastly, if your child is under challenged, please regularly stay in contact with the teacher. Our teachers and parents need to stay in close contact to keep our students appropriately challenged.

State and Federal Testing is about to begin. Please help your child to "show what s/he knows" by being positive about testing, making sure your child has plenty of sleep, providing a filling breakfast, and making sure your child arrives at school on time. Students who arrive after 8:10 will unfortunately not be allowed into class until 9:45 so as not to interrupt the testing environment. Thanks for your crucial support.

Together for students,
Chris Hertz

Next Year's Teacher & Parental Input

Sometimes parents and guardians want to give some input into which classroom their child is placed next year. Parental input is valued and considered, however parents and guardians must understand that our larger goal is to create classrooms that are balanced according to the criteria below. We cannot promise a specific teacher. We want to create the best overall learning situation for the most students possible.

If your child does have a special situation or unusual learning need, then please let us know. Input forms are available through May 9. The teachers and administration take pride in our balanced approach, but we also recognize special considerations. However, **we cannot guarantee that we will be able to meet everyone's requests** because of the many variables to balance. When describing your child's unique educational needs, we ask that you try to avoid including teacher names or room numbers. This is because teacher assignments may change over the summer and even after the year begins. If you do include a teacher name, than we must remind you that **we cannot promise you a specific teacher**. Thank you for acknowledging our requests and for understanding our larger goal of creating balanced classes to meet the greatest needs.

Balanced Classroom Criteria

- Ability balance
- Student behavior balance
- Gender balance
- Even mixing of previous year's classes
- Student language needs / teacher certification
- Ethnic balance

Make Daycare and Travel Plans Before School

Way too many parents are calling to make travel changes for their child. (20 to 25 such calls a day, some at the last minute.) We can't sustain this. Parents need to make such arrangements with their child before school. Thanks for your cooperation.

STAR Testing Dates – Grades 2nd – 6th

The State & Federal STAR testing program will begin April 28 and continue through May 12. These are California and Federal mandated assessments. It is very important that students attend school, on time, so that we can complete the testing within the window allotted. Please do not schedule children's appointments during these weeks. If we do not test at least 95% of our students, then the state and federal government will automatically identify Mar Vista as an under performing school. Let's show everyone how able our kids are by being at school for STAR testing!

Statewide Standardized Testing and Reporting Program

Pajaro Valley Unified School District will participate in the California STAR (Standardized Testing and Reporting) Program using the **California State Standards**. Students in grades **2 – 11** will take tests aligned with the state language arts and math content standards. Students in grades **8, 10 and 11** take test aligned with social science. Students in grades, **5, 9, 10 and 11** take tests aligned with science. Once again students in grades 3 and 7 will take the **California Achievement Test – (CAT/6)** and will be compared with the performance of thousands of other children in the same grades who took the CAT/6 across our nation. Students in grades **4 and 7** have taken a state standards test in writing. Our school will administer all other tests to **students in grades 2-6 from April 28 – May 12.**

Testing results for all these assessments will be posted by the State Department of Education on the Internet next summer by state, county, district, school, and grade level (but not individual class or student) at the following website address: cde.ca.gov. Results will also be sent to districts by late September and mailed to parents. If a parent wishes their child to be excluded from all or part of the test, they may submit a written request to their school principal using a required form in the office.

Lost and Found Exploding Again

Jackets and sweatshirts are taking over the cafeteria and there is no more room. Please have your child look for their lost articles or come by yourself. Everything will be donated to charity on Friday, April 25.

Ben Jammin's Acting Class

We have another after-school acting class going on Wednesday's. There are a few openings left for students so please call Ben at 334-2121 to get the details.

Teachers Need New Refrigerator

One of our two staff refrigerators has stopped working and our teachers need a replacement. Please call our custodian Kirk Durand at 688-5211 if you are able to help our teachers out.

Superintendent's Accelerated Reader 1,000,000 Word Challenge

This year's deadline is May 8 for students in grades 4 – 6 to make the AR million words challenge goal. Students in grades 1 – 3 will need to have passed 25 quizzes on AR. One month is left!

Parent Leadership Vacancies

Our Site Council has one parent vacancy. This is a two-year term to review school goals and student achievement data; set new goals and set budgets. If more than one parent expresses interest, then there will need to be an election. Thank you to parent Karen Medina for being the parents' representative these past two years.

The MVP'S are still looking for two co-treasurers for next school year. This position helps our school greatly by making deposits at Wells Fargo, tracking fundraiser income, and writing checks to pay for things or field trips. If you are good with money and numbers and want to help please come to the next MVP'S meeting in May. Thank you to parents Mary Ann Gabay and Susan McAnerney for helping our school as co-treasures the past two years.

Mar Vista Tech Note

Great News! Mar Vista received a large shipment of more than 50 computers from Watsonville High over Spring Break that are going to upgrade and replace the laptops in the current lab. These Imacs are going to be put to excellent use in the soon-to-be constructed new computer lab and will allow more than 30 students to work at once. The new lab will begin construction in June and will be ready for the start of the new school year.

Play Structure BBQ Kick Off Nets \$400.00

Our MVP'S want a new play structure for kids and they received \$400 in donations so far. Thank you to parent Kyle Smith for organizing the BBQ and to parent Joe Del Colletti for heading the New Play Structure Committee. Look for opportunities to give input and to raise funds in the near future. This project will likely take several years to complete but we will do it!

Walk-a-Thon / Fundraiser of the Year

We want to earn \$14,000. The first \$10,000 will benefit the MVP'S general budget and the remaining will support the installation of the new play structure. Last year, 421 students walked a total of 5,345 laps. That was an average of 12.7 laps per student. If we want to raise \$14,000, each student must get pledges for \$2.62 per lap. A goal of \$3 per lap for each student is worthy. Last year we earned \$3,002.85. That only amounted to \$0.56 per lap. We have our work cut out. By the way, the max laps was 30. Perhaps this record will fall this year.

Mar Vista Students Do Well @ County Science Fair

Congratulations to the following students for placing in the finals. Log on to <http://science.santacruz.k12.ca.us/> to learn more!

- Demond Maack
- Catherine Randolph
- Peyton Spencer Hernandez
- Brandon Fierro
- Keisha Magua
- Anna Chavez
- Olivia Baum