

Monday Blue Newsletter



Ocean Shore School Laura Shain, Principal Pacifica, California March 1, 2010

Quote of the week: *“An arts education helps build academic skills and increase academic performance, while also providing alternative opportunities to reward the skills of children who learn differently.”*
(Gavin Newsom, Mayor of San Francisco, 1967 -)

Important Dates

- March 1 - OSS Readathon begins
- March 2 - *Read Across Ocean Shore* events begin at 10 AM
- Parent Council at OSS 7:30 PM
- March 3 - Earth Day Meeting at Sanchez Library
- March 4 - Math Fair 5:30 – 8 PM
- ‘Day of Action’ Education Budget responses AM and PM
- March 5 - Talent Show 7 PM
- March 8 - Diversity Leadership Group Meeting 7 PM (all welcome)
- March 9 - PTO Executive Board Meeting 7 PM
- Band Meeting 7 PM
- March 10 - Principal for the Day event 10 AM – 12 PM
- Student Spirit Day (see below for information)
- March 12 - Assembly
- Jump for Heart Stations (permission slips required)

News and Information

Occasionally we have electrical outages at Ocean Shore School due to transformer problems in the neighborhood. Twice this year we have been faced with the lack of electricity. Our teachers and students are able to manage quite well with the light that comes through the windows, and the students stay on task and are productive. During these outages we are not able to take phone calls but we are able to place calls with our emergency line. If you ever find that you are unable to reach us, please contact the district office at 738-6600. They can alert you to an outage we may be having, and are able to contact us if you have an urgent message.

It has come to our attention that some of our students are unfamiliar with the purpose of some of our special education programs. Their lack of understanding can show judgmentally. Students are most familiar and empathetic when issues certain students face are more dramatically evident. Our students are wonderful with the students who use wheelchairs, for instance. Students who receive modifications, accommodations, and use the services of the specialists to complete regular class work are less easily understood. Our upcoming Ability Awareness Day will address this issue.

Unless you are touched personally, often through family, friends, or professional connections, the entire field of special education can be mystifying for parents as well as students. The language and acronyms are continually changing. For instance, students who receive specialized instruction often go to the Resource Room a few times a week to work with Matt Tyler, our Resource Specialist Program (RSP) teacher. Students will work in a small group with Matt or with Dottie Borba, our aide, on reading, writing, and/or math skills to help the student make progress toward their goals. Each student’s goals are determined annually during an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meeting. Initial assessments usually follow one or more Student Study Team (SST) meetings.

Better understanding of special education can help alleviate any stigma that develops around this program. Our progressive community can comprehend that different learning styles and strengths enrich our student base. Students who receive special education services sometimes become self-conscious about their schooling differences. As a strong conscious community, we can work toward alleviating the stigma. Learning exists in great variety, but

certain styles of learning can be disabling given that our educational system tends to require certain strengths. In most instances, the style of teaching that special education students require is a benefit to all students. These modifications can include visual support during lessons, graphic organizers, partner work, organized presentations, thematic and project-based activities that draw on students' interests and prior knowledge, and rich discussion-based learning.

It is important to know that learning differences have nothing to do with intelligence or creativity, just as the ability to spell is only indicative of the ability to spell. Many of our very productive citizens, leaders, and industry innovators were enrolled in school special education programs during their youth. A school like Ocean Shore, where students have a variety of opportunities to be successful and where students' depth and breadth become known to their teachers and peers, can be a place where special education services are not seen as something that necessarily makes a student different. It is just one of the many ways each student is unique.

Our **Jump for Heart** stations will be on Friday, March 12 from 1:30 - 2:30 PM. Please be sure to send in signed permission slips for the students to participate. Donations go to the American Heart Association.

Library Lunch Program during the Read-a-Thon: For the duration of the Read-a-Thon the library will be open at lunch for checking out books and logging some reading time. There will be no computer usage or board games during this time. Our parent volunteers will be ready to assist students in finding just the right book.

The 10th Annual **Ability Awareness Day** will be held on Wednesday, March 24. We are looking for parent volunteers to help out between 8:25 AM thru 11:30 PM. We will need activity leaders and small group monitors. We are also looking for donated snacks (fruit, juice, breads, etc.) for the visiting presenters. If you can help or need more information please email Teri Voorhes at teriryan13@yahoo.com or sign up in the Parent Hallway.

Update on the **Haiti Relief Drive** for the Sirona Cares Foundation: Thank you for the incredible response from the Ocean Shore community. We will no longer be collecting donations at Ocean Shore School. Our greatest need now is volunteers to come help sort donations at our location in the San Francisco Presidio, and we need 18 gallon storage bins. If you can donate time or bins please contact volunteersirona@gmail.com for more information.

March 10 will be our Student Council sponsored **Spirit Day** event. Council Officers and Members selected "Superhero Day" as our first event. Students may dress as any type of superhero that appeals to them (appropriate, of course). Students may not wear masks. Student Council assured me that our students will be creative in how they portray a selected or created superhero.

Please let the school office know by March 9 if you are **not planning on returning to Ocean Shore** in the fall of 2010. We need to make district-wide projections with this updated information.

There is an **Earth Day** meeting on Tuesday, March 2 at 6 PM at the Pacifica Library. This year is the 40th anniversary of Earth Day in April. Even if you are not able to attend the meeting with this late notice, please contact Karen Ervin if you would like to be involved in planning events for our district and students. Karen can be reached at 650-438-2692 or Ervin.karen@gene.com.

The Child Nutrition Department of the Pacifica School District, headed by Karis Gulizia, is conducting a "**Kids Cooking Contest**" for 5th grade students. Teachers will hand out recipe

forms which are due to the kitchen by March 5. The recipes will be judged on nutrition, creativity, simple kid-friendly preparation, and fun kid foods. A winning recipe will be selected from each school and announced on March 15. Winners receive a certificate and a Chef's hat. The finalists will prepare their recipes for a cook-off on Wednesday, March 24 at Vallemar.

Our annual **Celebrate Diversity Day** is Wednesday, March 31, from 10:30-12:15. **We need about 20 parent facilitators to sign up now!** Our community focuses on topics celebrating the variety, strengths, similarities and differences of our families at Ocean Shore. Parent facilitators coordinate with the teachers on curriculum and run the sessions. Curriculum used in the past is available or you may develop new ideas with the group. Facilitating sessions can be a very rewarding experience and will make a difference in our students' perspectives and our community bonding. Please email diversityleadershipgroup@yahoo.com if you are interested in helping out.

Matt Hayden is in need of a gently used **couch** for his classroom. Please contact Matt at mhayden@pacificasd.org if you are able to help with either of these donations.

Psychomotor -- Need hours? We are looking for help/back-up substitutes on Mondays and Tuesdays from 9 - 11:30 AM. This is a fun, easy way to earn hours and work with the K-3 classes. If you have one morning a month, one morning only, several days available, come join our team. Contact Georgia Sjaardema-Evenhouse, Psychomotor Coordinator at 738-9712 for more information.

PPP - The March PPP is Sunday, March 7 from 10 AM - 2 PM. It's still a great time of year to plant, weed, and we also have more work to do on the Butterfly Garden. Bring the kids, and come join us for some outdoor fun that earns hours! Contact christinarimmer@yahoo.com if you have any questions.

Laura is looking for volunteers to help with the new **Peer Mediation Program**. Volunteers will help with training and program implementation. Hours earned are direct through work with students. Please send an email or call the school if you are interested.

Please support our **Student Council's SOCK DRIVE** efforts! We are seeking at least one pair of new, white, men's athletic socks from each of our students and staff (a total of 400) to donate to a homeless relief program. Socks can be given to classroom teachers or brought to the office Conference Room throughout February. Show our Student Council that we can effect change in small and large ways by education, compassion, and giving.

Friday, April 30 is **OSS Giants Night**. The Giants will be playing the Colorado Rockies at 7:15. I have 15 tickets left in our favorite Section 317. Tickets are \$13.00 each. If you would like to reserve seats, make out a check to OSS PTO and give to Connie Tse.
