

Monday Blue Newsletter



Ocean Shore School

Pacifica, California

January 3, 2011

Quote of the Week: "*One does what one is; one becomes what one does.*" (Robert von Musil, 1880 – 1942)

Important Dates

- January 3 - School resumes
- January 4 - Art Basket Raffle Tickets on sale (see below)
- January 6 - Diversity Leadership Group meeting 7 pm
- January 7 - Lice check
- January 11 - PTO Executive Board meeting 7 pm
- Band meeting 7 pm
- January 21 - Jump For Heart assembly

News and Information

I hope everyone had a wonderfully restful yet invigorating holiday break. As we look towards the new year, at the nearly halfway mark of the 2010-2011 school year, it's a good time for reflection and goal setting at school just as we do in our personal lives at home.

When I look toward 2011 at Ocean Shore, I think in terms of questions that can lead us into the future. **How can we deliver our curriculum to our students in ways that they find stimulating, accessible, challenging, and inspirational?** How do we honor our core educational vision within the paradigm of our new digital world? How do we take advantage of the power of, and our students' engagement with, new technologies while building upon the foundations of wisdom from our past. Our students need solid skills in reading comprehension, written expression, historical understanding, scientific process and knowledge, and mathematical problem solving and processes. They need opportunities to explore and practice a variety of creative endeavors, and to learn to appreciate the role of art in our inner and societal worlds. They need movement and interaction, and skills in group dynamics and independent learning. We need to be sure that our students continue to love learning throughout their years at Ocean Shore, and gain the abilities to evolve and learn throughout their entire lives.

How can we be sure to develop and foster a positive community at Ocean Shore as we grow in size and include new students, families, and staff? What impact does growing in size, demands from the economy and our work schedules, and our overall busy lives have on our sense of community at school? What can we do so that we all feel valued, welcomed, and enriched by our time together at school? How do we not let our different perspectives overshadow our common understandings? Are we offering our older students opportunities for involvement and social growth as they move into their seventh, eighth, and ninth years at school? Do our newer students, those who have transferred into Ocean Shore, find a place where they belong and can build new positive friendships? Are our younger students forming healthy relationships with their peers and learning to solve conflicts productively?

We must be careful in the educational setting to not become overwhelmed with the magnitude and pace of work that is demanded of us through increased expectations, access, and the cultural trend of multitasking.

Let's go into the new year with care in how we spend our time. The Russian proverb states, "If you chase two rabbits, you will not catch either one." By racing through our days and overloading our schedules we miss the opportunities to reflect, and clarify our focus and priorities. A fine classroom has a sense of structure, calm energy to balance activity, and clear achievable expectations. We need this in our everyday lives as well. From there, we can vow to take control of our time and slow down to build upon our partnerships, develop our community, and focus on providing wonderful educational opportunities for our students.

New Visitor and Volunteer Policies at the schools in the Pacifica School District: Our district has worked with the site administrators to develop consistent and safe policies for all our district schools. The only changes we will see at Ocean Shore are sign-in procedures for visitors and a new volunteer form that we will send out this spring. We already have highly developed volunteer policies and were able to share our practices as the district-wide decisions were made.

Visitors to the school include parents, family members, and community volunteers who are present to work in a classroom, in the building or on the grounds, or on a special project. Please sign in and out at the clipboard at the entrance to A-wing in the main hallway each time you visit the school in those situations. You do not need to sign in if you are driving on a field trip or dropping something off and will be there just briefly. These practices help us to keep our school safe, and to know who is in our building in case of an emergency.

Field Trip Reminders: Please be aware that discipline issues should be referred to the classroom teachers on field trips, as well as at school. Parent chaperones can help to prevent misbehavior by being aware and consistent in enforcing rules on trips. As always, our parents are role models for our students. Please refrain from using cell phones unless it's an emergency or logistical necessity. Student cell phones at school should be out of sight, unheard, and not used. Students may carry them for use after school dismissal, preferably off campus. If a parent sees a student using a cell phone while chaperoning a field trip, the parent should tell the teacher rather than taking the phone away.

At times a class will need more chaperones than drivers and will request additional participants. However, siblings are never allowed to join on field trips, and extra chaperones when not requested by the teacher, change the dynamic of the trip and is not allowed at Ocean Shore. While on trips, be sure to model great listening with the teachers and docents, and step back to allow the students to ask questions and respond first during group discussions at museums and sites.

While driving, observe extreme caution and drive safely. Do not make any unscheduled stops or offer students treats or rewards that are not part of the experience for the entire class and approved by the teacher. Please use appropriate language, address any negative or unkind behavior, and enjoy time with the students in your group.

Art Basket raffle tickets on sale Tuesday, January 4 to support the revision of the OSS Art Mural! Please consider buying raffle tickets (\$1 each, or 6 for \$5) to fund the revision of the mural that is outside of C wing. The art basket contains art supplies for the entire family, and a coupon for a student art activity for up to four students with Laura. Alumni artists will join current student artists under the direction of muralists Ellen Silva to realize the original intentions of the ocean scene mural. Colors will be adjusted, figures will be sharpened and outlined, and the mural will be sealed. Tickets are on sale at the front office or hallway, and outside, weather-permitting.

*Laura Shain
Principal*

Hours Reporting System Reminders (from parent Cynthia Kaufman):

If you've been wondering how the whole hours reporting system works at Ocean Shore, here are a few things I have figured out:

- * The most important one is that you can find all the rules and policies with respect to hours in the Parent Handbook which is in the PTO section of the super-deluxe school web site, under general forms.
- * There are binders by the parent folders for submitting some categories of hours. You can just write them in yourself. It says in the folders which type of hours can be recorded there.
- * Field trip coordinators submit those hours; special projects coordinators submit those; and the Ocean's Week coordinator figures out where those hours are posted; PTO job hours are done by the PTO, etc. All of those hours are submitted to the hours coordinator, and that person's identity can be found on the PTO bulletin board.
- * It is a good idea to keep track of your hours in case someone makes a mistake.
- * Hours are posted monthly on the PTO bulletin board. Alternative service hours (or payment in lieu of hours) are posted along with them.
- * And yes, the PTO knows you'd like an electronic hours reporting system, but that is very complicated and they plan to work on it in the spring.

Kindergarten siblings of students currently attending Ocean Shore School (who will be returning for the following school year) will have priority at our school until Friday, January 14, 2011. Please notify the office if you have a sibling who will be attending Kindergarten next year.

Our two remaining **lice checks** will be held Friday, January 7; and Friday, April 29. If anyone does not have experience performing lice checks and would like to help, training can be arranged. **NEED PARENT VOLUNTEERS FOR LICE CHECK ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 7.** If you can help, contact Jill at jillybean201@hotmail.com or 355-3707. I will need 28 volunteers for the day of the check on Friday, January 7 and a follow-up team of 10 parents that can commit in advance to do absent students and re-check of students with lice starting January 10. Thank you!

Aluminum Can and Plastic Bottle Drive This Friday. Please bring your empty aluminum cans and plastic beverage bottles to the turnaround before school this Friday, January 7. This recycling program is run by the 8th grade class and supported by the Environmental Action Team (EAT). Please save your cans and bottles for future drives to be held the first Friday of the month.

Our grand total funds raised for the **Winter Bazaar** is \$7,585.60! Wow! We gave \$4,000 to the Silicon Valley Community Fund where our donation will be matched to help the following organizations: Pacificans Care, Pacifica Library Foundation, Pacifica Resource Center and the Youth Service Bureau. We were able to support our OSS Family Emergency fund with \$2,000; and the OSS Field Trip Scholarship Fund with \$1,500. Thank you to all in our community (staff, students, and families) for all the effort and contributions!