

# THE SEQUOIA SPIRIT



April, 2014

Volume 3, Issue 6



## A Message From The Principal ...

**A**pril has begun. With only two months left in the school year, we still have so much to do. Our first graders will be heading to the zoo, fourth graders to the Gold Country and second graders to San Francisco.

I hope all of you spent some time reviewing your child's progress report. The purpose of these reports is to inform parents about the academic progress of their child and the behavioral conduct they demonstrate at school. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's progress report, please contact your child's teacher.

I am thrilled to report that Sequoia students have completed over

1.2 million math problems on IXL Math! This is a tremendous accomplishment. Two-hundred and twenty-two students met the latest IXL math challenge by becoming proficient in at least 50 different grade level math skills.

We should be hearing from the California Department of Education regarding our final approval in becoming a California Distinguished School. I will inform everyone once I receive our notification.

Sincerely,  
*Dr. Franklin, Principal*  
Principal



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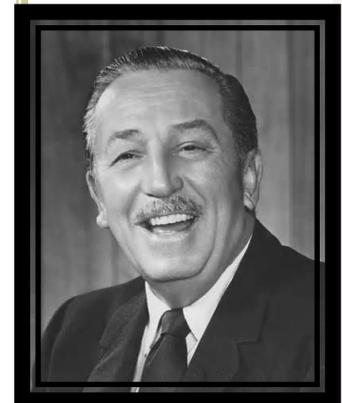
"If you can dream it, you can do it."

- Walt Disney

## OPEN HOUSE

Open House will be held on Thursday, May 22nd from 6:30—7:30pm.

I hope you can all join us!



# Parent Sign-In Procedures



We are still seeing parents on campus that have not sign-in at the front office. Please note that **ALL** visitors must sign in! Visitors are not allowed to enter campus without first signing in and getting a visitor's badge. **Visitors without a current badge will be asked to leave.** Parents having lunch with their child must sign-in and wear a badge. All parents volunteering with PE must also sign-in. The safety of all our students is very important to all of us at Sequoia Elementary School. Please help us keep our school safe by following all sign-in procedures.



# Smarter Balanced Assessment

## Preparing Students for Success after High School

In schools across the country, teachers are helping students meet the challenge of the Common Core State Standards—consistent guidelines for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level so they can graduate high school prepared for college and the workplace. These new academic benchmarks challenge students to develop a deeper understanding of subject matter, learn how to think critically, and apply what they are learning to the real world.

Teachers and college faculty from two dozen states are working together to develop high-quality assessments that provide more accurate and meaningful information about what students are learning. The Smarter Balanced assessments will replace existing tests in English and mathematics for grades 3-8 and high school in the 2014-2015 school year. Administered online, these new assessments will adapt to each student's ability, giving teachers and parents better information to help students succeed.

### Key Features

- End-of-year tests measure student achievement and growth in English language arts/literacy and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and high school. Mid-year tests allow teachers to check student progress and provide support for struggling students before the end of the year.
- Features for students with disabilities and English language learners so that all students can demonstrate what they know. Administered online with extended research, writing, and problem solving tasks that measure the skills students need for success.
- Expectations of student performance linked to international benchmarks and college expectations.
- Sample test items can be found here: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/sample-items-and-performance-tasks/>



# Attendance



During the 2012-2013 school year, Sequoia Elementary students had an average daily attendance rate of 97.56%, the best in the district. For this year, our goal will be 98.5%. A 1% increase in attendance district-wide represents one million dollars. We need to do our part. Every month, I will publish attendance rates by grade level. Let's make the commitment to have every child at school everyday, all day.

## An Excused Absence Verses An Unexcused Absence From the MDUSD Parent Information Packet

Reasons for excusing a student absence include:

1. Illness or injury of the student
2. Student attendance at a medical, dental, optometric or chiropractic appointment
3. Funeral service of an immediate family member
4. Exclusion from school due to head lice
5. Appearance in court
6. Observance of a religious holiday

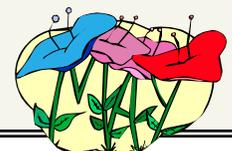
Reasons for an unexcused absence include:

1. Family vacation
2. Sporting event
3. Car problems
4. Birthdays or other personal celebrations
5. Cheerleading
6. Non-affiliated fine arts performances

**Notifying the office about these types of absences does not change the fact they will still be counted as unexcused!**

**All calls regarding absences must be directed towards to main office.**

Grade	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
Kinder	98.51%	98.33%	97.52%	98.02%	97.68%	98.45%	96.81%
First	97.60%	98.76%	97.85%	97.19%	96.42%	97.01%	96.67%
Second	98.73%	98.21%	98.42%	97.91%	96.15%	98.55%	96.66%
Third	98.42%	97.84%	97.95%	97.54%	97.83%	98.15%	96.96%
Fourth	98.78%	98.41%	97.75%	97.43%	96.09%	96.91%	96.05%
Fifth	98.73%	98.86%	98.08%	97.43%	96.77%	96.60%	96.19%



## STUDENT INFORMATION PROCEDURES

Providing your child with the most appropriate classroom placement in order to maximize learning opportunities is valued at Sequoia Elementary School. Parents are an important source of information and a part of this process. Therefore, parents are being provided the opportunity to give the staff information regarding their child.

As you can imagine, many factors need to be considered when classes are created. The following criteria will be considered in this process:

1. Total number of students divided equally in each class
2. Balance of boys and girls, including ethnic balance
3. Structure of class
4. Assessment of student's needs
5. Parent information regarding student's needs
6. A reasonable range of ability and achievement in each class
7. Separation of some students
8. Academic balance; leadership balance
9. Last-minute class configuration changes due to over/under enrollment

**A Student Information Form is on the next page of this newsletter. In order for the information to be considered, the form must be returned to the front office no later than May 2, 2014.**

Notification of class assignments will be at All In One Day in August.

Please remember that student enrollments change over the summer because some students move and others enroll. Flexibility must be maintained to readjust class placements to reflect these changes. **These changes may occur up until the day before school begins.**

Through this process, we hope to make the 2014-15 school year the most successful for your child.



**SEQUOIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**STUDENT INFORMATION FORM**

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Current Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Current Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Next Year's Grade (Circle)      K      1      2      3      4      5

Please describe the special needs and learning environment that you consider important for your child:

**Please do not include specific teacher names or classroom numbers on this form.** Staff will be reviewing this form to plan for the coming school year.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## ***Coffee With The Principal***

***Parents will have  
the opportunity to  
take the new  
Smarter Balanced  
Assessment!***

**Friday, April 18**

**8:30am**

Multi-Use Room

Sequoia Elementary School

