

THE SEQUOIA SPIRIT



January, 2015

Volume 4, Issue 5



A Message From The Principal ...

Happy New Year to all Sequoia families! 2014 was a great year at Sequoia, but I have a feeling the 2015 will be even better!

As we begin the new year, I am excited to announce that Sequoia Elementary is now a Google School. Students will soon be able to utilize Google Classroom. Google Classroom is an online learning platform where teachers can post assignments, announcements, and facilitate online discussions. Additionally, all students at Sequoia will be given their own school email address and Google Drive account! Students will be able to save documents and projects to the Google Drive and open them at school or at home, eliminating the need for flash

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

School will be closed on Monday, January 19th in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

drives to be brought back and forth from school to home. Students will be able to access their accounts in the two computer labs and on our iPads as well as any computer or tablet at home. Google Drive is also compatible with Edmodo.

I hope to have Google Classroom fully functional and ready for students by the end of the month.

I am also excited about starting a Student Council for 5th graders. This will give students the opportunity to have their voice heard in planning school events and programs.

Sincerely,

Dr. Franklin, Principal

Teacher In-Service Day

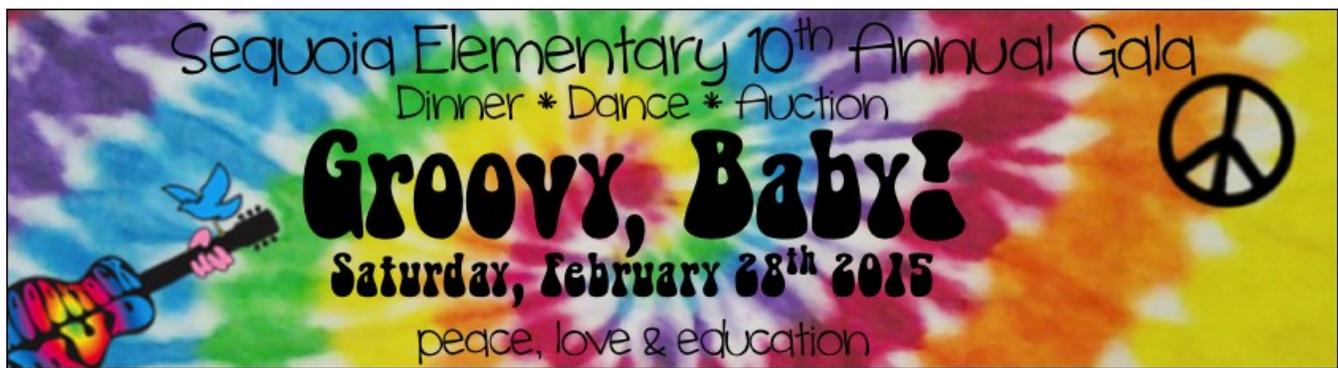
Monday, January 26th, is a non-student day. Teachers will be in professional development sessions.

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"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character".





Sequoia Auction & Gala Reminders

The Annual Auction and Gala is the biggest social event and fundraiser of the year for our Sequoia Parents Association (SPA). SPA helps fund many of our school programs, including our teacher assistants, class field trips, extracurricular activities, technology improvements, and more!

This year's **Groovy Gala** will be held on **Saturday, February 28, 2015**, from 5:30-11:30pm at the Pleasant Hill Community Center. This is an event you DON'T want to miss! **Tickets are still available** for purchase at sequoia.ejoinme.org/groovy. SPA also offers complimentary tickets to our wonderful teachers and staff members. You can **sponsor a teacher** to attend the gala at the same website.

SPA is challenging each family to bring in at least one donation in support of our auction this year. You can solicit a donation from a friend, neighbor or business; you can donate something yourself; or you can donate your time or talents to help make our gala a far-out success! Every donation helps raise money for your children!

We will also be having **donation stations** at school over the next couple months. We try to get as many of the beverages for the auction donated as possible, so that we maximize the money raised for the school. Donation stations will be located nearby school on **Horton Ct and Theo Ln**. Please bring any beverages you have to donate to these locations before or after school on **January 28, 29 or 30th (Wed-Fri)**. We will also be collecting other donation items and selling raffle tickets on these days, so stay tuned!

Please contact Auction & Gala Co-Chairs Connie Anderson and Derek Mims at sequoiagala@gmail.com if you have any questions. Stay groovy!

**Don't Forget! Donation Stations
before and after school on January 28-30!**

***At drop-off & pick-up times both on Horton Ct and Theo Ln
Please donate any thing you can spare for the Gala!***

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION DAY



Kindergarten registration will be held on Tuesday, January 27th, in the library. Parking on Boyd Rd. will be especially challenging on that day. Please be courteous to your fellow Sequoia families and to our families who will be joining us for the 2015-16 school year.

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

California Education Code 48260 states that a child must be marked absent from school if they miss more than 30 minutes of the instructional day. Since the beginning of the school year, students have been check out of school early 470 times. The vast majority of the reasons for leaving earlier meet ED CODE requirements for an excused absence which include an illness or doctor's appointment. However, students have been checked out for other reasons including leaving early after a field trip, transportation issues and convenience. Please remember that the school is required to follow ED CODE and we must accurately report reasons for leaving school early.



Attendance



During the 2013-2014 school year, Sequoia Elementary students had an average daily attendance rate of 97%, the best in the district. For this year, our goal will be 98%. 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 the they will still be counted as unexcused!

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

Grade	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Kinder	98.51%	97.55%	95.76%	94.71%
First	97.60%	96.75%	97.58%	97.26%
Second	98.73%	98.81%	98.32%	96.83%
Third	98.42%	98.18%	98.13%	98.07%
Fourth	98.78%	98.89%	98.84%	98.18%
Fifth	98.73%	98.14%	97.78%	97.25%

Parking Lot Concerns



December was not a good month in our parking lot. Here are a few of the concerns we witnessed:

1. Several cars speeding through the parking lot, narrowly missing students
2. Students attempting to walk across to the inside lane where their ride was waiting for them
3. Cars left unattended, blocking traffic in and out of the parking lot

Here, again, are some safety tips for all drivers to review. **Please share this information with anyone who picks up your children.** Grandparents seem to have the most trouble in the parking lot, especially if they don't pick your children up regularly.

Do not use the inside circle for parking.

Do not drop off or pick up passengers in the inside circle.

Do not leave your car unattended in the parking lot.

Please always pull forward to make room for other people picking up students at school.

Save your cell phone use for after you have exited our parking lot. Full attention needs to be paid to students and traffic at this time. Please abide by the hands free law effective 7-1-08,

Always follow the directions of school personnel guiding the parking lot procedures.

Do not cross (or ask your child to cross) the parking lot. This is extremely dangerous. We are requesting that everyone cross the lot at the crosswalk.





Why Your Child Can't Skip Their 20 Minutes of Reading Tonight

James

Travis

reads 20 minutes per night,
5 times per week



reads only 4 minutes per night
...or not at all

In one week:

100
minutes of reading



20
minutes of reading

In one month:

400
minutes of reading



80
minutes of reading

In one school year (9 months):

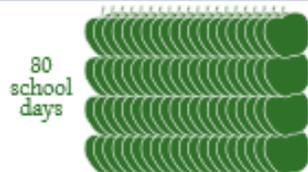
3600
minutes of reading



720
minutes of reading

By the end of eighth grade:

28,800
minutes of reading



5760
minutes of reading

- Which student would you expect to read better?
- Which student would you expect to know more?
- Which student would you expect to write better?
- Which student would you expect to have a better vocabulary?
- Which student would you expect to be more successful in school and life?
- How do you think each student will feel about himself as a learner?

