

THE SEQUOIA SPIRIT



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A Message From The Principal ...

Happy New Year to all Sequoia families! 2015 was a great year at Sequoia, but I have a feeling the 2016 will be even better!

I am excited to report that our SMART Boards have been installed and will be up and running in the next few days. This new instructional tool will allow teachers to create and deliver lessons at a whole new level. These SMART Boards are fully interactive and are fully compatible with laptops, ipads, and iPhones.

As we begin the New Year, please ensure that you are sending your child to school with warm clothing. It can get into the high 30s in the morning and we are still seeing

students in short pants and short sleeves without jackets.

Looking forward, I am excited about our upcoming field trips including our second grade trip to Chinatown, our third grade trip to the California Academy of Science, and our 5th grade Outdoor Education trip to Westminster Woods in Occidental.

I hope you are all using our blended learning programs (IXL, iReady, Accelerated Reader, Raz-Kids) at home. You can find all the links on our website or by clicking here: [Blended Learning Links](#).

Sincerely,

Dr. Franklin, Principal

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

School will be closed on Monday, January 18th in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Teacher In-Service Day

Friday, January 22nd, 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".



KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION DAY



Kindergarten registration will be held on Thursday, January 21st, in the MUR. 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 2016-17 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 checked out of school early 470 times. The vast majority of the reasons for leaving early 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. These reasons include 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 2014-2015 school year, Sequoia Elementary students had an average daily attendance rate of 97.5%, 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. |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Kinder | 96.68% | 97.67% | 98.27% | 96.16% |
| First | 98.45% | 98.78% | 97.58% | 97.19% |
| Second | 97.57% | 97.93% | 97.81% | 96.75% |
| Third | 98.23% | 98.29% | 97.44% | 98.22% |
| Fourth | 98.33% | 98.56% | 98.50% | 98.24% |
| Fifth | 98.41% | 98.41% | 98.59% | 97.91% |

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. Parents illegally making a left turn into the parking lot during restricted times
3. Students attempting to walk across to the inside lane where their ride was waiting for them
- 4. 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.** Infrequent visitors such as grandparents, aunts and uncles, and family friends 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):

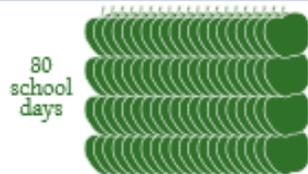
3600
minutes of reading



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?

