

# THE SEQUOIA SPIRIT



January, 2014 Volume 3, Issue



## A Message From The Principal ...

**H**appy New Year to all Sequoia families! As we begin this new year, I would like to look back at all we've accomplished over the past year.

The instructional technology program is bigger than ever. Students are utilizing our iPads to create, discover, manipulate, and research information. For the first time, Kindergarten students are going to the computer lab each week learning valuable computing skills. IXL math usage is at an all-time high with over 700,000 problems completed since the start of the school year and close to 40,000 over the Winter Break alone!

Our SPA Auction backpack hooks have been installed. The rest will be up shortly. The front of the school

### **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

School will be closed on Monday, January 20th in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

received beautification by adding family bricks. A big thank you to those of you who helped install the bricks.

Finally, Sequoia Elementary School has been selected to apply for the prestigious California Distinguished School Award due in part to our outstanding and comprehensive Response to Intervention program. Many students who have been struggling for years are now, for the first time, being more successful at school.

2013 was a great year at Sequoia Elementary School, but I have a feeling the 2014 will be one of our best ever!

Sincerely,

*Dr. Franklin, Principal*

### **Teacher In-Service Day**

Monday, January 27th, 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 ELEMENTARY IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE CA DISTINGUISHED SCHOOL AWARD**

The 2014 California Distinguished Schools Program directly focuses on California's students and their entitlement to an equitable and rigorous education. The California Distinguished School Award identifies and honors those schools that have demonstrated educational excellence for all students and progress in narrowing the achievement gap.

In order to be invited to apply for Distinguished School honors, schools must meet a variety of eligibility criteria including designated federal and state accountability measures based on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the Academic Performance Index (API) requirements.

Elementary and secondary (middle and high) schools are recognized during alternate years. For the 2014 cycle, eligible elementary schools are invited to participate. The criteria for school selection are based on the submission of an application, including a comprehensive description of two of the school's successful signature practices, and a successful application review. The two signature practices submitted for Sequoia's application were Response to Intervention and Instructional Technology.



# KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION DAY



Kindergarten registration will be held on Tuesday, January 28th, 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 2014-15 school year.

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## IXL Math Challenge Awards

Congratulation to all 272 students who conquered the IXL math challenge. Students who had completed 750 math problems since the beginning of the school year received a certificate on stage in front of the peers. Students who completed 1000+ math problems received a certificate and ice cream provided by Dr. Franklin. Thank you to all parents who were

able to make it to the awards ceremony that we held on Thursday, December 19th. Another IXL math challenge will be announced soon. Please continue to encourage your child to work on IXL several times per week to practice their math skills.



## Attendance



During the 2012-2013 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.

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### **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.**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Sept.</b>	<b>Oct.</b>	<b>Nov.</b>	<b>Dec.</b>
Kinder	98.51%	98.33%	97.52%	98.02%
First	97.60%	98.76%	97.85%	97.19%
Second	98.73%	98.21%	98.42%	97.91%
Third	98.42%	97.84%	97.95%	97.54%
Fourth	98.78%	98.41%	97.75%	97.43%
Fifth	98.73%	98.86%	98.08%	97.43%

# 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 speed 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. A minor accident after hours involving two cars
4. Cars left unattended, blocking traffic in and out of the parking lot
5. Violations of “Kaitlyn’s Law” prohibiting children under the age of six to be left unattended in a car

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.

Do not cross the street in front of the school. This is extremely dangerous. Please go to the nearest crosswalk.



## Breakfast in the Cafeteria

Our cafeteria is making some changes to the breakfast menu in order to provide our students with healthier options. Some items will no longer be available. These discontinued items include, but are not limited to the chocolate chip muffins, ham, sausage and egg sandwich and bagel and cream cheese. If you have any questions regarding the menu, please contact Linda Parish in the cafeteria.



## HOPE Holiday Drive



The response to Sequoia's HOPE Holiday Drive was tremendous! As a school, we were able to provide many families with meals, toys and clothing during the Holiday season. I want to thank all of the room parents who helped get the word out and collect and wrap all the gifts. The district office was blown away by the generosity of our school community.