



A Message from . . . Mrs. Michels



Above and Beyond... The Sky's the Limit at Fairlands School!

November/December 2011

Message from the Principal

As we head into another holiday season, the challenges we have faced in this difficult economy continue for many families. With these difficult times we are each given a special opportunity to make a difference in our community. We can give time, contributions, or other things to help a family in need. During the month of December we are focusing on building the character trait of Compassion,



"Compassion cannot be taught not in the ways we teach academic subjects or sports or tying shoe-laces or even good manners. But compassion can certainly be caught--observed and absorbed by those in its steady presence, and particularly by those who receive it."

*-Karen Zurheide, executive director,
Positive Tomorrows*

We live in a time where there are many conveniences and the pace of our daily lives move very quickly.

This is a season where people tend to rush more than ever. I would like to encourage each of our students and their families to **slow down**, and notice when and where you are seeing acts of compassion. Consider what you may do for each other in your immediate family and how you might contribute to your community and beyond. Contributions do not have to cost money. They could consist of your time. I would like to thank all of the families who participated in our Adopt a Family project which was run by our student council. The students collected many things which were bundled together and given to families in need to ensure they would have a wonderful holiday season. Thank you for your efforts in going *Above and Beyond* to support our community and I wish you all a happy and safe holiday season!



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Kimberly Michels, Principal



COMING UP...

December

- 20-22 Hot Chocolate Days
- 23 Minimum Day, school ends at 12:30
- 26 - Winter Break —
- Jan 6 Enjoy your Holidays!
- Jan 9 School Resumes
- Jan 16 School Holiday—NO SCHOOL
- Jan 18 School Holiday—NO SCHOOL
- Jan 27 Principal's Coffee, 8:30am, MPR

Traffic Update

While we know that walking or riding a bike is not always a viable option, we would like to encourage as many of our families as possible to choose these commute methods whenever possible. Despite our best efforts to improve our vehicle drop-off and pick-up procedures, congestion is unavoidable in our parking lot. To compound the problem, the more efficient we make our parking lot procedures, the more vehicles we get coming through! So consider walking or riding your bike to school with your children. When walking or riding a bike, ALWAYS use the crosswalks that have a crossing guard. Please do

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Curriculum Update

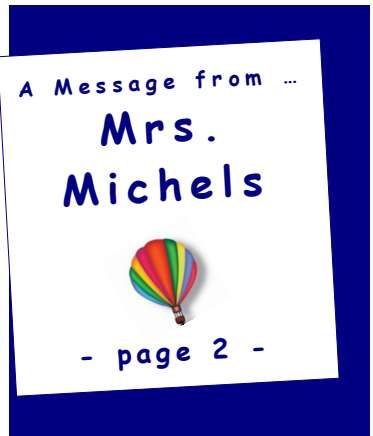
As we return from the winter break and begin the second trimester, we are well on our way to 2012! Parents have received report cards and have attended a conference with their child's teacher to gain a deeper understanding as to how their child/ren are progressing in school. This can cause some anxiety or celebration, depending on the data shared at the time. I want to encourage EVERYONE to remember that learning is a process. ALL children can learn and grow, but they do so at different rates. Just as each and every child learned to walk, he or she will learn to read, write and memorize the math facts. To ensure your child continues to learn and grow I want to encourage you to remember that play is a valuable component to learning. Students, who are in school all day, then attend school after school or on the weekend need to spend time playing, socializing with friends and building positive relationships while participating in non-academic activities. By doing so, you will help your child to actually achieve academically!

At Fairlands school we are committed to educating the WHOLE child. This includes academic, social and emotional growth. Rather than completing additional

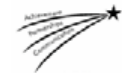
fill-in-the-blank worksheets encourage your child to play a board game or card games with friends. Read with your child. Choose a classic story to share that may be above your child's reading level to decode, but when he/she read with you, it will be completely enjoyable for you both. Challenge your child to go outside and explore the yard or the park, race on the grass, enjoy the sunshine and cool, fresh air. All of these things are important to ensuring your child will grow up to be a well-rounded, happy, contributing citizen in the community. As we approach the holiday season, it is a perfect time to explore gifts that will encourage your child to play, laugh, and grow.

If your child is struggling remember to work with your child's teacher to create a plan to address areas of need while continuing to grow your child's areas of strengths. Remember, struggle does not mean failure. It is a sign of learning. The learning is a lifelong journey and parents are an integral part of this journey. Together we can ensure that every child achieves his/her potential.

Enjoy your holiday season and thank you for continuing to be a partner in your child's education!



Pleasanton Unified School District



Traffic Update (con't)



not cross in front of the park, near the Chinese restaurant. If you do drive, consider parking a block or two away and walking the rest of the way. This will reduce stress both for you, your child and for our parking lot.

If you choose to drive and park in the lot, please note the first row of parking spots is designated as visitor parking. The next three rows are designated staff parking. Although the handbook also defines the staff parking as the farthest two rows we have now grown to a size where we are in need of designating staff parking in all three rows, families may park in either the first row of spaces or designated areas on the street.

LAST CALL

Please check the fence for jackets, sweatshirts, shirts, etc. **All items will be donated if not claimed.** There is a huge volume of items available. Lunch pails or bags that are not picked up are only kept for a few days as the contents left in them spoils and the lunch bag is then toxic. If your child is missing a lunch bag they are kept by the MPR for a few days and then tossed in the garbage. Thank you for your understanding.

Resolving Concerns or Complaints

The Pleasanton Unified School District has a process and policy related to the handling of concerns and complaints. Often concerns or complaints are the result of an unintentional miscommunication or a lack of needed information. That is why it is very important to first discuss concerns directly with the teacher or staff member in order to share information, problem solve, and attempt to resolve the concern together. In most cases, the concern can be resolved and, if needed, a plan of action can be developed together.

For your information, here are some reminders concerning the steps to follow should a more serious concern arise.

- Every effort should be made to resolve concerns at the earliest possible stage. If the concern regards a staff member, parents are asked to contact the staff member as soon as possible in order to meet and attempt to resolve the concern with the staff member personally.
- If the concern remains unresolved after discussing it directly with the staff member, parents may contact a school site administrator for further assistance in resolving the concern. In many cases, the school administrator will facilitate and participate in a meeting with the parent (s) and the staff member in order to discuss and attempt to resolve the concern.



- If these steps do not resolve the concern to your satisfaction, the district has a formal complaint process that can be initiated. Complaint forms are available in the school office and also in the district's Human Resources Department.

