

Terrapin Talk

Volume 9, Issue 23

Turtleback ♥ PTA Newsletter

April 4, 2008

Principal's Message

By Celeste Campbell, Ed.D.

STAR Testing Approaching...

Beginning April 21, your 2nd - 5th grade child, along with all public school students throughout California, will participate in California's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. Most students will take the California Standards Test (CST). Students in grades 3-5 will also take the California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition (CAT-6). Some students with cognitive disabilities will take either the California Alternative Performance Assessment (CAPA) or California Modified Assessment (CMA), as dictated by their Individual Education Plan. Spanish-speaking English Language Learners who have been enrolled in California public schools less than 12 months, will also take the Standards-Based Test in Spanish (STS).

Test results will be sent to each student's home in late August. Individual results are confidential and will only be shared with the student, their parents/guardians, and the student's teacher.

The STAR Program provides invaluable information about your child's academic achievement and the results are used to calculate Turtleback's Academic Performance Index (API) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status and rankings. Please know that high test scores are not my first priority, learning it, but our exceptional scores boost our reputation as a quality school and have a positive effect on your property values.

We expect all 2nd-5th grade students to participate. Non-participation requires a written request from the student's parent/guardian. Additional questions should be directed to Ray Wilson, the Director of Assessment and Accountability, at 748-0010, ext. 2279 or RWilson@powayusd.com.

Parent Voices Surveys due by April 18

We care what you think! Please take a few moments to complete the survey which will be sent home right after spring break and return it to your child's teacher by **Friday, April 18**. Thank you!

Budget Update

Please stop by the front office and grab a pink flyer entitled "The Budget Crisis: What You Need to Know." This document clearly lays out the future for public school students in California, PUSD, and at Turtleback specifically (should the governor's proposed cuts to the education budget come to pass). We've also pre-printed letters to the governor and 3 legislators that you can complete in mere minutes and our PTA will gladly mail to Sacramento for you. The most important thing you can do right now is to make your voice heard through letters, phone calls and faxes. Also, please send your child to school everyday (unless they are sick), as our funding is based on attendance. Visit the PowaySOS.org website regularly for updates on other ways you can help. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Character Counts!

Pillar

☺Caring

Talent Show was an a Tony Award-Worthy Extravaganza

Last Friday's talent/variety proved to be one of the best in years. As always, Lydia Bretschneider worked her magic (along with significant help from her family and friends Sue & Kim Brown). The show was truly marvelous. Congratulations to the magnificent performers and their families for supporting them through months of rehearsals. Thanks, too, to Sandy Buccat, Jane McGuire & Jo-Ellen Weber for supervising the "green room" and shuffling the kids in and out between acts. Bravo to you all!!

Kindergarten Orientation/ Enrollment for 2008

Kindergarten Orientation will be **April 30, 2008 at 3:00 pm** and Kindergarten/PEPP Enrollment will be **May 6, 2008, 8:30-11:30 am**. On May 6, we will also enroll first - fifth grade students who will be new to Turtleback next year. Information on enrollment and what will be needed for a student to enroll can be found on Turtleback School's web(www.powayusd.com/pusdtes/).

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Spring Break

NO SCHOOL
April 7-11
ESS & Preschool
Closed - April 11

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- 4/14 National Library Week
Parent Voices Surveys
Sent Home
PUSD Board Meeting
(Morning Creek ES)
- 4/15 2:45 pm English Language
Learners Parent Mtg.
Life Lessons/Character
Counts Classes Begin
- 4/17 6:00 pm PEPP Information
Night @ Sundance ES
8:00 pm Dads' Club Mtg.
- 4/18 Spring Pictures
Parent Voices Surveys
Due
- 4/21 STAR testing begins
Turn off the TV Week
- 4/22 Earth Day
- 4/25 2:00 pm Bishop Center
Dedication
- 4/26 Future Problem Solvers
State Meet
- 4/28 IMPACT - Final session
begins
- 4/30 3:00-4:00 pm
Kindergarten Orientation
Last day to submit Box
Tops this month
- 5/1 6:00 pm GATE Parent/
Student Night
6:30 pm Optional Life
Lessons Graduation
Ceremony @ Family
Karate in 4S Ranch

Book Fair Kudos

Thanks to all of you who purchased books and other items at this year's book fair. The money raised through the Book Fair goes directly to our library to update our collection. Special thanks to Brenda Chohan and Becky Peppers for doing a fabulous job organizing the event and keeping the shelves stocked. Thanks, too, to all the volunteers who helped with set up, take down, Donuts with Dad, and kept the registers running.

PEPP Information Night

If your child will turn 5 years old between June 1 and December 2, you might want to learn more about our PEPP kindergarten class, an alternative to our traditional one-year kindergarten program. In our 2-year PEPP kindergarten program, students get the benefit of an extra year to develop important social and emotional skills which are essential for school success. A PEPP Information Night will be held on Thursday, **April 17 from 6-7 pm** at Sundance Elementary School.

Math Olympiad Superstars

In the last contest of the year, two of our math wizards, Kiyoo and Tristan earned perfect scores. The overall leaders for the year include Angela and Richard who are tied for first place, followed by Tristan in second place. Top fourth grade math geniuses include Brandon and Kion. Congratulations to all of you on your hard work and a special thanks to the team's equally hard working coach, Dr. Cliff Matsuda.

Los Penasquitos Academy Information Nights

If you have wondered whether Los Penasquitos Elementary School's innovative and academically intensive Academy might be a good fit for your family, please plan to attend one of

their information nights on **Tuesday, April 15** or **Wednesday, April 16** at **6:30 pm** in the Los Pen Multipurpose Room. More information is also available at the LosPenAcademy.com website.

The Power of Play

By Tonya Edrington, School Counselor

Whatever happened to the days when "a good day" for a child ended with grass stains on their knees, rocks in their pockets and dirt in their hair? In an article by Peter Smith, psychology professor, and Rachel Biggins, nutritionist, entitled, The Trouble with 21st Century Kids, they argue that children are being stripped of their natural creativity by structured activities and hi-tech toys.

Through undirected play, children develop their creative thought process. This type of play allows children to learn to work in groups, and to practice the art of negotiation, conflict resolution and self-advocacy skills. Play helps children develop new competencies that foster the growth of confidence and resiliency that will help them face future challenges.

According to an article from the American Academy of Pediatrics, "when play is controlled by adults, children acquiesce to adult rules and concerns and lose some of the benefits play offers them, particularly in developing creativity, leadership, and group skills."

There are a myriad of advantages children acquire through free play. Allow your child the same opportunity many of us had as children to explore our world by building forts, digging in the sand, and playing tag.

Based on an article from The American Academy of Pediatrics, The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development and Maintaining Strong Parent-Child Bonds