

Wolverine News

Sutter Creek Elementary

Sean Snider, Principal

March 2010

Upper Campus 257-7200

Primary Campus 257-7100

Principal's Message

Notes from Mr. Snider:

March is here and we will soon be out for Spring break. The final day of school for this quarter is **Friday, March 12**. Students in grades 4-6 will be carrying home their third quarter report card on this day. School will resume on, **Monday, March 22**. Enjoy this time off with your family.

I am so proud of all our students for the tremendous progress they have made this year. As I walk through the classrooms, I can't help but think what a wonderful school we have. Please continue to support your students at home by encouraging them to read and practice math facts.

Teachers are pushing harder and harder as we approach the time when all students will take the state standardized tests (STAR Test). The time slot given to us by the state for this year's test is April 19th through April 28th with April 29th and 30th being makeup days. Check the Tuesday envelope in upcoming weeks for tips on how you can help your child do better.

You may already be aware, but significant budget reductions are coming next year that will directly affect your students. Please be sure to read the article later on in this newsletter for specific information.

Sincerely,

Sean Snider

Distinguished School Selection:

I am very pleased and proud to announce that Sutter Creek Elementary has moved to the second stage in the process of being selected as a California Distinguished School! This prestigious honor is given to schools that demonstrate academic excellence across all subgroups of students. The next step is for a representative from our county office to do a site visit to verify our application information at which point we will hopefully be selected. I will let you know as soon as I receive official notification from the state department of education.

Kindergarten Registration

The Amador County Unified School District will begin the process of registering Kindergarten students for the **2010-2011** school year. If your child will be five on or before December 2, 2010, your child qualifies for Kindergarten.

Sutter Creek Primary registration date is March 11th, between 2-5:30pm.

What you need to register:

- **County Birth Certificate
- **Immunization records
- **Proof of residency

If you have questions, contact the school office.



Last Chance!

Yearbooks \$15.00

Checks payable to

Sutter Creek Elementary

Last day to purchase is

March 26, 2010

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Budget Cuts for Next Year:

Due to the state's budget woes, there will be many changes you will notice next school year not only across the state of California, but right here at Sutter Creek Elementary School. If you watch the news, you can't help but notice that school districts across our region (statewide) are having to make huge cuts in order to balance their budgets. Amador County is no exception to this. The state economy and poor decision making by our legislators is to blame.

As former California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin puts it, "The children of California didn't create the budget mess in Sacramento, nor did they push the state government to insolvency. It is the politicians, who have been unable to make the hard decisions and say no to special interests, who have brought our great state to the edge of fiscal ruin. All the same, that hasn't stopped them from once again proposing to balance the budget on the backs of California's young children."

What this means for Amador county is a drastic reduction in funding from the state. Our district has been reduced by **\$14 million over a three year period** (last year, this year, next year). **We have made cuts elsewhere** (away from the classroom-central office personnel, maintenance, clerical, transportation) the last two years to address the first \$8 million of the \$14 million. Unfortunately, what is left to cut now will impact the classroom, which is the absolute last resort.

What you will notice immediately will be that class sizes will increase to 30 students per teacher in grades kindergarten through third grade. The junior highs and high schools will also have larger classes and less electives for students to choose from. Also being discussed is reducing the school year by 5 days. Again, none of this is desirable or good for students, but unfortunately it is about financial survival for our district. I am including the contact information for our legislators on the back of the March calendar in case you would like to let them know how these cuts are impacting our children. Please call / e-mail me if you have any further questions. Thanks.

Possible Help for You and Our School:

As economic conditions change and more and more families find themselves looking for ways to save a few dollars, I would like to encourage you all to fill out a free and reduced price lunch application. Not only could this help you save money on your child's lunches, but it could also bring \$20,000 – 30,000 in additional funding to our school. The federal government determines Title I funding for schools based on the percentage of families that qualify for free and reduced priced lunches. Schools with over 40% of their families qualifying receive these Title I funds. Our current percentage is 31%, so we have a ways to go, but if we can get there, it would help us be able to offer more services to the students of Sutter Creek Elementary.



Amador School District Website:

www.amadorcoe.org

A few things you can find on the District's web site are: Our Parent Calendar & Newsletter, Lunch Menus, Transportation Information, Snow Updates, Job Openings, and Links to the Amador County Recreation Department. Be sure to log on and check it out today!

"SPELLING BEAR" COMPETITION:

The school district will be holding its sixth annual "Spelling Bear" on March 1 at the Civic Center in Jackson. Congratulations to Ryan Busi and Caiden Falco (fourth grade), Audrey Busi and Stone Mason (fifth grade), and Dale Jacobs and Travis Andrews (sixth grade) for being the champions for Sutter Creek Elementary. A big congratulations to sixth grader Dale Jacobs for being the overall school champion! These students will be representing our school at the March 1 district competition. Come on out and cheer them on!

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Jamba Juice Fundraiser

The Jamba Juice Fundraiser was a huge success. Students raised \$97.20 for our school just by purchasing a Jamba Juice after lunch that day. We will be doing this one more time before the end of the school year on Friday, April 23. Flyers will be sent home again closer to that date. Great job!

ATTENDANCE:

Please help your child develop good attendance habits by getting them to school on time on a daily basis. Projects and practices inside the classroom are very important and consistent attendance helps kids to stay up on the latest information. We realize that sometimes it is not possible to come to school- illness is a primary reason. Try to schedule appointments for late in the day and **REMEMBER**, if your student is absent please send a note or call the school attendance line at 257-7144 (Primary) or 257-7244 (Upper). Absences not verified within 5 days automatically go down as unexcused.

4TH GRADE STAR WRITING TEST:

Due to budget cuts, the state of California has decided not to administer the fourth grade writing portion of the STAR Test this year. Only fourth and seventh graders were required to take the writing test each year. This portion of the STAR test was always administered separately from the rest of the test and was given in early March.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sharing family meals is more than just fun- it's educational! According to a recent study, children who take part in family mealtime conversation become better readers. They also score higher on tests of verbal skills.



PRIMARY CLASS OF THE MONTH:

Mrs. Kirkpatrick's Kindergarten

It has been a fun experience getting to know each other and seeing the children mature. We have a terrific class of 11 boys and 7 girls. On February 2nd, we celebrated our 100th day of school. All the kindergarteners participated in lots of "100" activities. We also predicted as to whether we would have six more weeks of winter weather or not. Now it's March, and we are wondering if it comes in like a lion, will it go out like a lamb-or vice versa?

February was such a busy month spent learning about Abe Lincoln and George Washington as well as exchanging valentines. Our reading buddies from Mrs. Nasiatka's class came to help us read them. We get together with our reading buddies once or twice a month to read and/or do a fun project. Both classes look forward to getting together.

Kindergarten is a time of great growth in academics as well as individual development. It is so exciting to see the children begin to sound out words and read as well as spell them. Come to Open House in May and see just what we have accomplished over the year!

UPPER CLASS OF THE MONTH:

News from Mrs. Grady's sixth grade class:

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January and February were quite eventful months with awards, special projects, and, of course, lots of academic development. If you've visited our classroom in the past two months, you would have noticed the exquisite sarcophaguses and beautiful artwork hanging on the walls. We were fortunate to have our art authority, Marchand, present four lessons in the past six weeks. We made kites with dragon cutouts as well as drew Chinese pagodas and Chinese words to coincide with our unit on ancient China. Our class also had a pizza party for having the fewest number of tardies last quarter. That says a lot considering we have a large class. We combined the pizza party with Valentine's Day fun by passing out cards and treats. It provided us with a tasty and fun Valentine lunch.

Academically speaking, we have been very busy. In Math, the students reviewed many of the concepts learned in previous grades by adding to their knowledge of ratios and proportions, applying percents, weights and measurements, analyzing data, and graphing. Along with reading multiple AR books, the students are also mastering the parts of speech, sentence structure, and vocabulary. As for written work, they have composed essays, narratives, poetry, and pages for the "Me" book in Language Arts.

In Science, many of our experiences at science camp have become relevant to our studies as we experiment with the Earth's energy systems. The ancient Chinese practiced three philosophies or religions (Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism). The type of philosophy presented each day for the Social Studies lesson was determined at random with the use of a spinner on the overhead. Four colors for each philosophy, plus Gradyism (a combination of teaching methods) were part of the selection. The students really enjoyed these

methods of learning, and they are now experts on the three philosophies.

The Read-A-Thon was a great success. We read most of the day and with the help of the students, we collected a substantial amount of donations to fund our student council events. We are actively learning so much that it seems as though this school year is flying by. It is hard to believe that our sixth graders will be leaving us in such a short time. The students seem very excited for the junior high experience and I hope the skills they have obtained in this class will help them to continue to further their learning.



Thank you for your support with our
Student Council Fundraiser,
Read-a-thon.

The total raised will be listed in
April's Parent Newsletter.