

# Forest Ranch Charter School

February 2, 2011

## EVENTS



### UPCOMING EVENTS

\* These events occur at school unless otherwise noted.

2/2/11- 2/3/11: Field Trips for 4/5 & 5/6  
2/9/11: Tea & Tour 9:15  
2/10/11: Father/Daughter Dance 6-9PM  
2/11/11: NO SCHOOL / Lincoln's B-day  
2/15/11: Public Lottery 10:30  
2/17/11: Math Night 5:30-7:30  
2/18/11: NO SCHOOL/ Staff dev. Day  
2/21/11: NO SCHOOL / President's Day-  
2/23/11: Field Trip for 4/5 & 5/6  
2/25/11: Assembly 8:30am  
March: STAR 4<sup>th</sup> grade writing standards testing  
3/7/11: Woodstocks fundraiser 5:30-8:30  
3/14-3/18/11: Spring Break- NO SCHOOL

## Director's Report

February is Enrollment Month (for 2011-12 already!) here at Forest Ranch Charter School. Intent-to-Re Enroll forms were completed in January. These forms ensure a place in our school for continuing students and their incoming siblings. Open Enrollment for remaining spots in kindergarten thru 6<sup>th</sup> grade ends on February 14<sup>th</sup>, with a lottery occurring on February 15<sup>th</sup> if necessary. We have done well with recruitment but still have spots left in K-2 at this time. Please help us by spreading the word and filling up our remaining spots.

The LifeSkill for the next two weeks is Curiosity. Please discuss with your child how Curiosity fosters learning. We will be choosing a LifeSkill champion for Curiosity by the next assembly. Possible choices may be explorers, scientists, or inventors. Help your child bring in a nominee.

Do you have a budding scientist in your home? The Chico Science Fair will be March 28 - April 1. Interested students can pick up an application in the school office. Applications are due by March 11. Students can enter a collection, a demonstration, or an experiment. We have many resources at school and are happy to support you in this process. Please let me know how I can help with this endeavor.

## Practically Perfect People

Special thanks go out to the students listed here for having PERFECT ATTENDANCE during the first half of the school year. Keep up the good work!

Robbie C., Kayla C., Gavin F., Kiya H., David H., McKenna L., Gabriel M., Antonio P., Abigail R., Nathan S., Elisia T., Jessie W., Skyler W.

Regular attendance is extremely important educationally and fiscally. One of our charter goals is an attendance rate

above 94.5%. If a student misses more than nine days in one school year we have not met our goal for this student. When students are not in the classroom for multiple days they lose the continuity of the lessons being taught. Fiscally the impact can be significant. Funding is not received for absences, excused or unexcused. If our attendance rate drops below 94.5% our budget is negatively impacted. Already this year we have lost over \$15,000 to absences.

### **Heard Around Campus**

Mrs. Palmarini's class is starting a unit on winter that includes winter-related sight word books, sensory poems, and snowflake crafts. They are moving from K level primary phonics to Level 1 to begin learning color words and begin writing sentences.

Mrs. Stearns's class is starting a literary unit on Fairy Tales, beginning with Cinderella stories from different countries which ties into a year-long theme of discovering time and place. Fun elements of this unit will include characters, setting, plot, cultural comparisons, and activities such as constructing 3D settings, writing letters to characters and acting out scenes.

Ms. Lyons's class is reading Charlotte's Web. They are beginning their unit on "Our Native History", studying Northern California Native Americans. Punctuation Theater with musical instruments is entertaining for everyone. Progress is being made with the Lifeskill of Organization.

Ms. Matoes' class is reading The Sign of the Beaver, which ties in with their Colonial history. The new Geometry unit would benefit from an architect or builder who is interested in setting up a hands-on experience or sharing how Geometry applies to the real world. The scientists in

this class have wrapped up their weather stories and are now learning about cells and the human body, think Jello edible cell models. The class is preparing for their overnight field trip to Immigration Station at Angel Island by learning about Asian immigration into the San Francisco area during the 1800's.

Mrs. Jimmerson's class is beginning 20,000 Leagues under the Sea. Recently, fraction smoothies made math healthy and delicious. Persuasive essays, photosynthesis using partner investigation and Power Point presentations, and learning about MLK Jr round out the fun things happening this month.

### **From the FRCS Board**

We hope this new year welcomes you with much joy and prosperity for your family. We are well into our school year as a new calendar year begins so we thought you might like a look at what goes on beyond, behind and sometimes through the walls of our school to further the education of your children. One of the many goals we strive for here is to provide the best environment we can for the children to develop an elementary education. In this electronic age we try to offer tools that will enhance and assist a student's education while at the same time encourage them to become proficient with these electronic tools. While I would have to be the first to admit that we don't necessarily have cutting edge or state of the art equipment, what we do have we make the most of. We get a lot of bang for our buck, as the saying goes, and we are far ahead of where we were when the elementary school closed. As a volunteer at our elementary school for many years I have been fortunate to watch as it has evolved from one era to the next. The old school (presently the Forest Ranch Community Center) had come to its end as

a functional school for the late 20th century generation of students. The closest thing we had to a classroom computer was an old relic connected to a small black and white TV. When the new school opened in 1991 (formerly Forest Ranch Elementary) we were thrilled with the possibilities that the new facilities would offer in the area of newer technology. Unfortunately computers were slow to follow the infrastructure, but we were able to add a couple here and a couple there until eventually we had a couple in each classroom. Grant money helped to complete an actual computer lab and upgrade some of the computers. The internet became available but was limited to select computers and file sharing was minimal and cumbersome. Two and one half years ago with the beginning of Forest Ranch Charter School we found ourselves starting all over again in so many ways, technology being one of them.

In that relatively short period of time we have caught up and even surpassed the technology capabilities of the elementary school. In everything from computer to student ratio, networking, file sharing, internet use, wifi, a wide variety of software and applications such as Google docs and Skype, we try to offer a variety of options for teachers and students to experience a modern education. The biggest challenge going forward is to continue to make the best use of limited resources to keep up with the fast pace of ever changing modern technology. Keeping equipment upgraded, networks secure and staying abreast of the latest software and computer applications will require dedicating adequate resources and a continued partnership between those knowledgeable about the industry and our faculty and staff. With the ongoing commitment of effort I continue to witness at our school I have no doubt that we can meet our future challenges and provide our students the environment to prepare

themselves for the opportunities that the 21<sup>st</sup> century will offer.

Best wishes for another successful school year.