

April, 2010

Howard Elementary

www.howardelementary.org

Volume 1 Issue 7

“An Apple Distinguished School”

“We seek to maintain a spirit of joy in learning, cooperation in doing, and optimism for success and the future. Our goal is to have every student exceed state standards in all academic areas.”

Principally Speakingby Suzanne Price

The dramatic economic downturn challenging the country has resulted in financial strains for districts across the state. While 4j is better off than many school districts, we will not escape cuts again this year. Last year, 4j cut \$21 million from its budget. We are faced with another \$5.9 million cut this year. At Howard, the loss of resources will cause us to closely examine our program and make reductions guided by our mission of “doing what’s best for students.” The good news is that initial plans allow us to maintain our current program offerings, but necessitate scaling back the breadth of these offerings. As one can imagine, this is a tremendously difficult process and we recognize that any time we are forced to make reductions, dissatisfaction is unavoidable. Throughout this process, we will be resolute in preserving strong instructional programs for our students as we operate with less funding. In times of challenge, we must all pull together to reduce our costs and increase our impact. The staff at Howard is committed to doing just that!

On a Different Note...

Howard Elementary Site Council is comprised of staff and parent members responsible for coordinating the development and monitoring of our School Improvement Plan (SIP). Last year marked the end of a three-year cycle for our current SIP. As such, the Site Council, in close cooperation with staff, has devoted much time and energy to the development of a new plan that will take us through 2013! To date, we have drafted new goals and are currently working on an action plan designed to bring these goals to fruition. In mid-March, the staff had an opportunity to review the draft of our SIP and offered valuable input. Site Council will incorporate this feedback into the plan and we hope to approve our new School Improvement Plan in May of this year. We are interested in your input as well. Please contact one of your Site Council parent representatives if you have ideas to share or questions about our SIP.

Parent Representatives: Jeff Minson (geominson@msn.com), Ann Wiltshire (badbear70@gmail.com), and Amy Stead (m_stead@hotmail.com).

Road Runner News

QuickTime™ and a decompressor are needed to see this picture.

PTO CORNER

Our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) kicked off March with a Fabulous 50's themed Scholastic Book fair and we exceeded our goal of **\$4,000**. Yippie!! Thanks to all the "grands" that came by for the Grand Ice-cream social, and thank you for the cash donations made to the "One for book" event. We raised \$304.60 in donations. The total, with both donations and book sales, was \$4,228.30. We were able to fulfill all the teacher's book wish list and our library will be getting new books! Thank you to all the parents who came to support the book-fair and all the hard-working parent volunteers! Our PTO is a volunteer based organization that is in partnership with Howard Elementary School. Our number one goal is our children's education and happiness. PTO is here to help provide monetary support for programs, activities, school supplies, and other items that are important to the education and welfare of the children and staff at Howard Elementary School. PTO promotes an open communication between the administration, faculty, parents, and the community to enhance our children's educational environment. Please join us at our next meeting on April 6 at 6pm in the school's library. If you have any questions please contact Lee Bretoi at pahlee@bretoi.com. Also, check out our "PTO Corner" bulletin board by the popcorn room. Our next event will be on April 15th at Papa's Pizza on Coburg Rd. We will be sending a flyer home with the students. Bring in the flyer and Howard School will get 50% of all food sales. Flyers can also be found at the "PTO Corner". Please come for a family fun night.
Beep! Beep! Be your best!!

Kidsports Scholarships Available

Once again, Howard Elementary has been fortunate enough to receive a limited number of full scholarships for the Kidsports programs. If your child is interested and committed to playing soccer or baseball this spring, but finances are prohibiting their participation, please contact our secretary, Lori. She will be happy to assist you.

Ship Shape Award

New at Howard is the *Ship Shape Desk Award*. This weekly award recognizes students who are keeping their work area clean and organized. Organization and positive work habits are skills that support success in school, and beyond. By recognizing students who have "ship shape" desks, tables, and/or chair pockets we are sending the message that having a clean and orderly work space is important. Each Tuesday, a student from each class is given the opportunity to win a Ship Shape Desk Award...ask you student about the program!

Emerald Valley Track Club: Spring Track & Field begins Tuesday, 3/10

Emerald Valley Track Club (EUTC) is an independent, non-profit, youth-based sports organization that is sanctioned by USATF and is in partnership with Eugene YMCA. The goal of the club is to encourage and help young people to develop physically, emotionally and socially through their involvement in track and field and cross-country. We provide opportunities for youth, ages 7-18, of all athletic abilities: Visit our website for more information. www.emeraldvalleytrackclub.org

Attention 5th Graders ~ Transition to Middle School

Howard Elementary feeds into Kelly Middle School. To help prepare students for the transition, 5th graders can look forward to a visit from middle school staff and students AND a tour of Kelly Middle School. Details will be shared via class newsletters as the May dates draw near.

Be Good for a Sub Recognition Continues

Congratulations to the following students for earning a "**Be Good for a Sub**" coupon for their **RESPECTFUL and COURTEOUS behavior during their teacher's absence**. Their positive choices add to the overall atmosphere at Howard. Thank you to Subway located on Barger/99 and in the Santa Clara Shopping Center for their support.

Siena – Rm. 1

Britney, Harlan and Kalum – Rm. 3

Joe and Miakel – Rm. 7

James – Rm. 18

Chloie – Rm. 19

Birthday Lunches with the Principal

I have thoroughly enjoyed eating lunch with the students each month. We gather together, visit about "kid stuff", enjoy some special fruit snacks, and leave with a birthday pencil in hand. The remaining dates for birthday lunches are April 30, May 27, and June 4.

Kindergarten Orientation

Howard Elementary is hosting our annual Kindergarten Orientation for all 2010-11 kindergarten age children on Thursday, April 22nd at 9:45 am. If you have a child (5 by September 1, 2010) that will be starting with us next fall be sure and join us for more information about our kindergarten program. Please share this newsletter with a friend or neighbor who has a kindergarten age child and encourage them to attend. Exciting things are happening at Howard and it all starts in Kindergarten!

Classroom Placement for 2010-11

We recognize there may be times when parents wish to share specific needs, concerns, or information regarding classroom placement. A **REQUEST FOR CLASSROOM PLACEMENT** form is available in the office for parents who wish to communicate specific information regarding the placement of their child. Parents should know that information provided will be carefully considered along with other placement factors in our effort to create well balanced classroom groups. Classroom placement is determined by a team of teachers working with the principal. The following factors are considered when making placement decisions:

- 1.) A balance in class size, boys and girls, academic performance, learning styles, social skills, and students with special needs.
- 2.) Consideration of the Request for Classroom Placement form.

It is important for parents to understand that individual classroom requests are not guaranteed through this process. **In order for parental information to be considered in the placement process, The Request for Classroom Placement form must be returned to the office no later than May 7th.**

Bike Helmets

With the nicer weather, more students are riding their bikes and scooters to school. Please be sure that your child has a properly fitting helmet and wears it while riding. Not only is it the law, but it will protect your child from serious injury should an accident occur. We take your child's safety seriously. Students that come to school without a helmet will be required to leave their bike or scooter with the principal until a parent is able to come and pick it up.

Dismissal Time

Please be sure that you or someone that you have designated as a prearranged contact is at the school to pick up your child/children at 2:05 (1:05 on Wednesday). There is no supervision available for students after dismissal. It is also just as important for parents of kindergarten students to be on time for their students as no direct supervision is available for them as well. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Parent Quiz – Are You Helping Your Child Learn Good Work Habits?

(Taken from *The Parent Institute, Parents Make a Difference* publication). The habits children develop when they are young can help them be successful all their lives. See if you are encouraging good work habits. Give yourself five points for something you do, zero points for something you never do – or any score in between.

- ____ 1. I teach my child that he can do anything if he works hard at it.
- ____ 2. We write due dates for schoolwork on the calendar.
- ____ 3. I encourage my child to check his work. I look it over, too.
- ____ 4. We don't procrastinate.
- ____ 5. We have a regular time for schoolwork every day.

How did you score? Above 20 points means you are teaching your child good habits. Fifteen to 19 is average. Below 15? Try some of the ideas in the quiz to help improve your child's work habits.

Children Can Do Most Work Alone

In some families, homework becomes a group activity. Children decide they can't do even the easiest tasks without parent help. If your child leans on you too much, try this. At homework time, have your child make two piles – "Homework I can do myself" and "Homework I need help with." At first, your child may put most things in the second pile. But the goal is to include only things that require two people – using flashcards or reviewing spelling words. Praise him as he completes tasks from the first pile. Over time, he will do more independently.

(Taken from *The Parent Institute, Parents Make a Difference* publication)

Asthma Control Checklist

This short quiz can help indicate how much asthma is affecting your child's life.

- Does coughing wake your child up more than 2 nights a month?
- Has your child recently missed school because of asthma symptoms?
- Does your child have to use a fast-acting inhaler more than 2 days a week?
- Has your child been prevented from going places or doing things because of asthma? (playing sports, going to a playground)

A Yes answer to any of these questions is a sign your child's asthma may not be under control. By talking with your child's doctor, you can build a partnership and start managing your child's asthma more actively.

The office staff is available to assist children with asthma medicine.

We will need a labeled inhaler and parent permission form to do so. Some doctors also prescribe an aero chamber. Older students that are independent and reliable may carry inhaler in their backpacks, but we need you to sign a permission form, this helps us be aware of who might possibly need assistance from staff.

With pollen season around the corner, it's a good time to consider if your child with asthma should have an inhaler available at school. Robin, our school nurse, is available for consultation, call her at 710-0345 if she can be of help.

Run, Jump, Throw . . . FREE Track Activities:

School District 4j is among the 20 local partners making up the Youth Track Network. For information, please visit www.tracktownusayouth.com. District 4j will be providing information about free opportunities for 4j kids, including clinics and events like this one coming up soon:

Eugene Marathon - Youth Marathon - FREE

Run a little each week to reach your goal of 25.5 miles . Register at: www.eugenemarathon.com/kids-marathon/

You can receive Tweets or Facebook updates about FREE activities. Search Track Town USA Youth!

From the Kitchen ~ Piloting a New Program

Beginning last week, a few changes were implemented in the school cafeteria. The students will now enter their lunch code information in the computer prior to getting their meals. Students with a negative balance on their meal account will be given an "emergency meal" which will consist of a cheese sandwich, milk and all-you-can-eat salad bar. To help communicate to families when students have a negative lunch balance, we are piloting a program that will help minimize overdraft charges. Starting the week of April 5, kitchen staff will use a fun smiley clock face hand stamp to let families know it's time to check in with food service about their account. If your child comes home with a clock face stamp, please contact Carolyn Tompkins, our Food Services Coordinator, at 541-790-4900; she is happy to work with you regarding your child's account.

As always, you can send in money with your student or you can add money to your child's account online. Lunches are \$2.15, or \$.40 if your family was approved for "reduced meal prices".

Important Dates

APRIL

- 6th: PTO Meeting 6-7:00pm
- 14th: Early Dismissal 1:05pm
- 15th: Papa's Pizza Family Night
- 16th: **No School; Professional Development**
- 19th-23rd: Kindergarten Registration Week
- 21st: Early Dismissal 1:05pm
- 22nd: Kindergarten Orientation 9:45-11:00
- 23rd: Apple Visit
- 24th-30th: Staff Appreciation Week
- 27th: Site Council 2:30pm

28th: 5pm

30th: Birthday Lunches with Principal

MAY

5th: Early Dismissal1:05pm

11th: PTO Meeting.6-7:00pm

12th: Early Dismissal 1:05pm

19th: Early Dismissal 1:05pm

25th: Site Council 2:30pm

26th: Early Dismissal 1:05pm

27th: Birthday Lunches with Principal

28th: **No School; Professional Development**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Howard Family Night Out!

Papa's Pizza on Coburg Road

April 15th

Fliers will be coming home soon with more details!

Keep those BOX TOPS and CAMPBELL'S soup labels coming!

