

Valencia View

OCTOBER 2009 CALENDAR

S 10/3 E-waste Recycling
Costume Exchange

Tuesday, Oct 6 – Friday, Oct 9
6th graders at outdoor science school

T 10/8 7pm Home & School Club
meets in library

F 10/9 **Spirit Day**
wear your PJ's to school
PJ's and books
Family Reading Night

Oct 12 – 16
12:00 dismissal every day
Parent – Teacher Conferences
Book Fair

W 10/14 **Toyota Ticket Sales end**
7pm District Board meeting

F 10/16 Picture make up day

T 10/20 9am–12noon
School Beautification
7pm Site Council meets in library

W 10/28 7pm District Board meeting

F 10/30 **Spirit Day** – wear orange
5:30 – 8pm
Dinner and Harvest Festival

S 10/31 **Time change**
fall back one hour

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Dianna Higginbotham, Principal
email: Dianna_higginbotham@pvusd.net
Grant Coffin, Vice Principal
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Visit our website: www.valencia.pvusd.net

A California
Distinguished School



Notes from the Principal

There is cause for celebration at Valencia School! Our California State Academic Performance Indicator (API) *increased* by 11 points to 866. All subgroups with a significant number of students increased. Hispanic students are up 13 points to 755, White students are up 13 points to 903 and students who receive free/reduced lunch increased 12 points to 725. However, on the Federal Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) we did not make sufficient progress in Mathematics with the sub-groups of free/reduced lunch and students with learning disabilities. School-wide, we showed growth in Language Arts of four percentage points and in Mathematics three percentage points. As a school staff, we will continue to look at our work to see how we can meet the needs of these under-performing groups and improve student achievement for all.

On another front, **Parent Conference week** is fast approaching. We hope that all parents will meet with their child's teacher. This is an important time for both parent and teacher to share information about the student and set goals for the year. Please make every effort to attend.

The character word of the month is **Respect**. It is our desire that all students show respect for each other, for adults, and for their school. We will be challenging the students this month to think about how they treat each other and their environment.

I am especially excited about our up-coming **Family Reading Night** on October 9th. Please come in your pajamas and enjoy some good books and good fun. The parents in the Home & School Club are really trying to make a difference for each and every student and this event supports what the teachers are doing in the classroom.

Thank you to the many families who have made such generous donations to our school which have recently included reams of paper, art supplies, cash donations, and of course your time and efforts. *Much thanks to all for putting Valencia first.*

Together we can make a difference! Go Seastars!

—Dianna Higginbotham

BOOK FAIR

OCTOBER 9-16 "Destinations"

Well, it's that time of year again. The **Scholastic Book Fair** is coming to Valencia Oct. 9-16 from 7:30am–4:30pm. We will be opened during Teacher/Parent Conferences so come on by. We will also be open October 9, 6-8pm during the Family Reading Night! Hope to see you there.

—Michelle Galipeaux (Mrs.G.)

P.S. Word has it that **Clifford, The Big Red Dog**, may be coming by!

Parent Speaker Series

Thank you to Lyn Olson for volunteering her time and expertise at Parents Back to School Night. The first in a series of H&SC sponsored parenting-related speakers, Lyn shared valuable research on different types of “mindsets” and offered suggestions for how parents can promote “growth” mindsets in their children. Her presentation will be posted on the school website for further reference, or in case you missed this valuable information.

After School Enrichment

The county-run After School Enrichment classes at Valencia are here! Several classes are being offered on the Valencia campus this fall including ceramics, drawing and Spanish.

To register, or for more information, contact: **Santa Cruz County Parks & Rec** at www.scparks.com/ or call 454-7901.

La Selva Beach After School Program

The La Selva Beach After-school Childhood Enrichment program (ACE) is an after-school program sponsored by the County of Santa Cruz Parks Department. Located at the La Selva Beach Clubhouse, the program serves children in grades 1-6. ACE program leaders meet the children at the school bus stop and walk them a short distance to the Clubhouse. The program operates from school release until 6pm daily.

The program offers a wide variety of activities such as games, sports, arts & crafts, cooking, special events and exciting field trips led by enthusiastic, experienced recreation leaders. There is also a daily homework time during which children are assisted by staff.

Registration is done on a monthly basis. Monthly fees vary, depending on the number of school days in the month. A variety of registration options are available: 100%, 60% (average of 3 days a week), 40% (average of 2 days a week), and a 15-day punch card to use whenever needed throughout the school year.

For more information about **La Selva Beach ACE** call 454-7923. To register please call 454-7941 or log onto www.scparks.com.

SPOTLIGHT ON VALENCIA

Each month we will showcase an important Valencia contributor, emphasizing the positive aspects of our wonderful students and staff. This month's spotlight is on **Patty Chavez!**



Patty is beginning her sixth year at Valencia Elementary as our wonderful Office Manager. Prior to coming to Valencia, she worked for 4 years as an Instructional Aide for grades K-5th for Alianza Charter School and H.A. Hyde Elementary School.

Patty's passion for her job and her caring nature is apparent from the moment you meet her. She very much enjoys the student and family contact, and feels honored knowing she can making a difference in our children's lives, whether it's by bringing a smile to their face as to they pick up their Monday morning Valencia Victory prizes, or through administering

T.L.C. Most of all, she enjoys watching the students succeed. She is always eager to assist parents by providing resources that can help them make important decisions in the education of their children. Knowing that she can help to bring about a positive outcome for both the student and parent/guardian is especially gratifying!

Patty has been married for 19 years to her very supportive husband, Rick. Together they have two children: a daughter Elyssa, who is a Junior at Aptos High School and is very active in sports; and a son Adrian, a Freshman at Aptos High School who has a passion for the arts and a Leopard Gecko named “Drac” (something mom had to get used to!). In her free time Patty enjoys family hikes, strolls on the beach, watching good movies, and get-togethers with her extended family. Her hobbies include scrap booking, bargain hunting at vintage stores and Goodwill, listening to music, reading and working out.

Patty has a few secrets up her sleeve that just may surprise you! She worked as a hair stylist over 15 years ago and continues to practice her scissor artistry with her children, husband and extended family. At the age of 15, she participated in a folkloric dance parade during the nine months that she lived in Mexico. It was then that she learned to appreciate other cultures. But the most surprising thing about Patty is that at the young age of four, Patty and her 5 year old brother defied their mother's instructions to not wander from their backyard and were chased by a full grown male African lion... in Watsonville... and lived to tell the story. She recalls her brother's words: “On the count of three run as fast as you can and don't look back”. Of course, we all know this is NOT what you are to do if you ever see a lion. Her children still find it impossible to believe! We're glad you're a fast runner, Patty!

Thank you for touching the lives of everyone at Valencia!

COLLABORATION TUESDAY

ON Tuesday, September 15, the second grade teachers from Valencia traveled to Mar Vista to meet with our cohorts from Rio del Mar, Bradley and Mar Vista schools for a discussion on teaching writing to second graders. The teachers shared how our students were performing at writing sentences and paragraphs and found that students in all of the schools shared similar strengths and weaknesses.

We chose to focus on teaching writing mechanics for a three week learning cycle. We developed a pre-assessment and post-assessment, and discussed strategies for effectively teaching students to correctly use capital letters and punctuation. After the learning cycle is completed we will meet again to share results and best practices. By meeting with teachers from other schools, we were able to gauge how our own students compare and we will learn new techniques that work well in other schools.

It was gratifying to see how well Valencia students “stacked-up” with students from other schools. We also valued the suggestions and new ideas shared by all of the teachers at the meeting.

—Kim Flynn

What's Happening with the Home & School Club

Thank you to the more than 120 people who have signed up to volunteer in some way over the course of the school year. Your contributions to the Valencia community make a huge difference. Imagine the lost opportunities without our parent volunteers. We're on our way to a busy and eventful fall! Lots of planning is currently underway for many fun events over the next few weeks including the Oct. 9 Family Reading Night and the Oct. 30 Harvest Festival. We're also looking into the future and beginning to define what the first *Family Spring Event* might look like. This is a new event and the sky's the limit (well, sort of!). If you want to be a part of shaping these fun events, let us know...we would love to hear from you!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Merchant sign-up drive last month. Please remember you can sign up for these programs at any time throughout the year. Our "Cash for Kids" program is doing fantastic! So far, *Valencia families have donated more than \$9,000* through this donation program, with many pledging additional donations throughout the year. This program is especially great because *100% of these contributions go directly to the school*. Valencia families, you are awesome! Speaking of awesome... Valencia put the pedal to the metal and took off in a fury with Toyota ticket sales! *Our families have already sold more than \$5,000 worth of tickets in just one week!* We're feeling the energy and on our way

to making it to #1 this year. Get ready for that big school-wide party when we make it to \$20,000!!

There's a reason for all this commotion about fundraising. Your efforts have enabled the school to hire a part time tech support person who will be here on Mondays to offer much needed and long overdue help. We have also recently approved funding for yard duty staff and a math specialist for the upper grades. These positions would not have been possible without your support, so thank you once again.

I hope you enjoy October's festivities. See you there!

—**Karin Kerber-Smith**
President, Valencia H&SC

Here's what the Home & School Club is doing this month...

Toyota Ticket Sales are HERE!!

Here's your chance to win a NEW 2010 Toyota Prius, \$25k in cash and 100 other fabulous prizes! Tickets are on sale through Oct. 14 at \$5 each or 6/\$25. Help is needed to sell tickets at locations throughout our community. Call Lisa (685-2085) or Jan (724-7025) to order more tickets to schedule a weekend ticket sale shift.

Family Reading Night: "Reading Can Take You Anywhere": Oct. 9, 6–8 pm

Come enjoy a free night for families to come dressed in PJs, relax and listen to stories. There will be snacks and activities available, as well as a guest appearance of Clifford! The Book Fair will also be open.

eScrip Safeway Receipt Collection and Redemption: NOW thru Oct. 9th

Collect Safeway receipts from friends, family and neighbors and turn them in to your child's classroom or the office. E-scrip members need not turn in their own receipts.

Beautification Day: Oct. 20, 9am–12noon

Join a team of volunteers to wash, sweep, prune, and plant new life around the Valencia campus! For more information, contact Kim Ferrell at 685-8544.

Annual Harvest Festival: Oct. 30, 5:30–8pm

Pasta dinner catered by Ristorante Barolo, games galore, prizes, haunted house, climbing wall, dunk tank and much more Harvest Fun!! Thank you to Janie Shoemaker and Pam Carrico for spearheading the Harvest Festival event this year. Join the Festival Team in making this popular community event a memorable one for all! Contact Janie at janieshoemaker@gmail.com or 724-8882. Bring baked goods to the event for the Country Store and Cake Walk!

Last Call for E-News Sign-Ups!

Beginning Oct 15, in an effort to save on paper and associated copy costs, Home and School Club News and many school events will be sent via e-mail and posted on the school website and on the exterior wall by the school office. Please be sure to sign up for e-news before Oct 15 to avoid missing out on important information about your child's school. Forms are available on the school website at www.valencia.pvusd.net and also in the school office. If you cannot receive information electronically and wish to continue receiving paper copies, please indicate this preference. Completed forms should be returned to your child's teacher.

Thank you for supporting this effort to go green and save money!

October Announcements

Earthquake Awareness: Emergency Snacks

If there were a major disaster, such as earthquake or road washout, and the school busses could not get through to us, we will keep your children safely at school. We ask that you send a non-perishable emergency snack to your child's class in a plastic baggie marked with your child's name and room number. Teachers store these snacks in the classrooms in case they are ever needed. A juice box and a granola bar are a few examples of items that you might consider including. Some families also include a small picture of the family. Thanks for your help in this matter.

Room Parents!

Thanks to everyone who has volunteered to serve as a Room Parent this year. Room parents can make a big difference for the teacher, parents and students. The following teachers are still in need a Room Parent, or team of Room Parents: Linda Gertsman, Heather Bellue, Kim Flynn/Susie Peoples, Susie Brown, and Freja Rasmussen. If you would like to volunteer or have questions about the role of the Room Parent, please speak to your child's teacher or contact Kate West-Douglas at katred@gmail.com/685-8183

Yard Duty

Parents volunteers to help Mrs. Galipeaux (Mrs G) with early morning yard duty (7:20-7:40 am) are greatly needed! Please contact Carol Galasso at carolanngalasso@gmail.com if you can help.

Valencia Website

Our Webmaster and team are always looking to improve and keep our site updated. If you would like to participate in discussions on ways to make this happen, please contact our webmaster, Bill Weinberg, at bilzinho@pachbell.net

SPECTRA

Thank you to everyone who stepped forward to volunteer for Spectra coordination this year! Kim DeSerpa and Kim Ferrell have been busy researching and speaking with potential visual artists for this year's Arts program. We hope to be able to begin soon...stay tuned!

Sight on Site Council

Hello Valencia Families—

I am Kim de Serpa, and I chair the **Site Council** this year. If you are new to Valencia, I welcome you to our wonderful school. Our principal, Dianna Higginbotham, did an exciting presentation at Back to School Night, which include some of results of standardized testing from last year. *Last spring, our 5th graders and 3rd graders scored the highest in the entire county in some areas of Math, Science and English Language Arts. WOW!* This says a lot about Valencia's dedicated and excellent teachers, our wonderful students, and their parents who lend so much in support. I'd like to highlight our staff's continued professional development through the Cotsen Foundation and through interest and participation in other master teacher programs. They have a true interest in becoming the best at what they do, and that translates to our children in the classroom. We have a lot to be proud of. *Thank you, Mrs. Higginbotham, for supporting your staff.*

Site Council is a governing body that each school must have in place, by education code regulation. Site Council is responsible for contributing to, approving, and having the oversight of the School Site Plan that is submitted to the District each year. The group meets once a month to talk about staffing, curriculum, administration, district issues, budget, campus culture, improvements, grants and capitol projects among other things. Participating are parents representatives combined with teacher appointees, classified staff appointees and members of our administration. This meeting is open to all interested parties at the school. We work closely with the Home and School Club to move initiatives and projects forward. Please feel free to join us the second Tuesday of each month in the library at 7:00 p.m.

Let's All Stay Well!

As the weather gets cooler and we begin staying inside, we are more likely to catch and spread illnesses, such as the flu. In an effort to keep our kids as healthy as possible, and to protect against the flu, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), is recommending the following common-sense precautions to protect you and your family's health.

Get flu shots

The seasonal flu vaccine is currently available. A 2009 H1N1 vaccine is currently in production and may be ready for the public in the fall. The 2009 H1N1 vaccine is not intended to replace the seasonal flu vaccine—it is intended to be used along-side the seasonal flu vaccine.

Stay home when sick

Individuals with flu-like illness should remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8° C] or greater), or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Sick students should go home

Students who appear to have a flu-like illness at arrival or become ill during the day should be promptly separated from other students and staff and sent home.

Hand hygiene

Students and staff are encouraged to wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective at killing flu germs.

Cover nose and mouth!

Influenza viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and throw the tissue in the trash after use.

Routine cleaning

Schools should regularly clean all areas and items that are more likely to have frequent hand contact (for example, keyboards or desks) and also clean these areas immediately when visibly soiled.

Kids can help!

Your children can help to make Valencia Elementary a healthier place by encouraging other children to practice good hand and coughing and sneezing hygiene.

How do you know if you have the Flu?

Influenza (also known as the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness. The flu is different from a cold. The flu usually comes on suddenly and may include these symptoms:

- *Fever (usually high)*
- *Headache*
- *Extreme tiredness*
- *Dry cough*
- *Sore throat*
- *Runny or stuffy nose*
- *Muscle aches*
- *Stomach symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, also can occur but are more common in children than adults.*

As always, if you have specific questions regarding the flu or other illnesses, please see your family physician. For more information, visit the school website: www.valencia.pvusd.net