

School Newsletter

Dear Parents,

Soon we will be entering 2006. As we travel through the changes every new year brings for each of us and our families, Sierra Vista Middle School will continue to focus on learning. Our commitment is always to educating your child.

The Sierra Vista Middle School dedication to student learning is school wide. Our goals include strengthening each student's present skills as well as teaching new content, with the ultimate goal being success at Sierra Vista, in high school, and in adulthood. One measure of academic success is often good test scores, but success in learning and life depends on more than test results. However, we were still happy to see that our school wide commitment to student learning resulted in an **Academic Performance Index (API) of 904** on the California Standards Tests (CSTs), an increase of 19 points over the prior test year. This is an extremely strong API score, and in addition, we met all of the state targets for all student subgroups. These scores are a testament to the strong teaching staff and our supportive parents and community. We're pleased to see that our students are learning so well!

At SVMS, learning to be a productive and contributing member of society is also important, however. Our IUSD school board policies support teaching the moral values of honesty, responsibility, compassion, perseverance, respectfulness, cooperation, and civic duty. Consequently, our students are collecting donated toys, food, and clothes, and our ASB students, under the supervision of Mr. Linville, ready them for donation to Families Forward. Our PTSA parents will help deliver the items, and the toys, books, videos, and clothes were soon on their way to families who needed them.

Parents and teachers use a variety of strategies to help ensure student success. As the school year moves forward, we have now finished the first trimester and are part-way into the second. If your child is not yet achieving his/her potential, our counselors and teachers are happy to offer suggestions on helping him/her. We at Sierra Vista Middle School wish each of you a wonderful, healthy, educational 2006! Please know that if you ever have any questions, concerns, or compliments, your child's teacher or teacher-advisor, Mr. Grasso, or I will be happy to talk with you. I can also be reached by e-mail at bwhite@iusd.org.

Sincerely,

Beverley Khalil-White, Ph.D.
Principal

Parking Lot Safety Reminders...

In order to facilitate a smooth and safe traffic flow in our parking lot, we ask you to be mindful of the following:

- The **WHITE** curb along the front of the school is for **LOADING/UNLOADING** only. Please do not park for extended periods or leave your car unattended there.
- School buses must be able to access the white curb in order to safely load/unload students. Please give these buses the right of way at all times.
- The **RED** zone opposite the white curb at the front of the school is a **FIRE LANE**. It must flow freely at all times to allow access for emergency vehicles (fire, police, etc).
- Residents of the surrounding community must be able to enter/exit their streets and driveways at will. Please do not stop or park blocking any driveways or streets.
- Above all, drive slowly and cautiously in our parking lot, and remember that our parking lot services two schools with children of all ages. Please be cautious in your driving and courteous in your manner. You are the model for students at two schools.

Fevers and Vomiting

Fever is a real 'hot topic'! If your child has a fever, your child needs to be **fever free for 24 hours** before coming back to school the following school day. If your student is sent home with a temperature of 100.6 at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, bring her back on Thursday morning, fever-free AND well recuperated from whatever it was that caused the fever in the first place.

And then there's vomiting. Not all vomiting is accompanied by fever. If your child has been up during the night, throwing up, and feels better in the morning please don't send them to school the next day. Any school age child, who has been up ill during the night needs to get some rest that next day. And of course if your child vomits in the morning before school, he must stay home to avoid sharing those germs with his classmates and teacher. Please keep them home to fully recover.

Following these simple guidelines will keep everyone healthy,

Vicki McRobbieralls, RN
Your School Nurse

MathCounts Competition!

Sierra Vista has entered the MathCounts competition this year! Mr. Zuercher is heading up the team this year, with the help of some great parent volunteers. The team is gearing up for the local chapter competition to be held in February. The team meets twice a week, with times e-mailed to students and parents as they are known. Any student interested is welcome to join practices to have some fun solving challenging math problems. Contact Mr. Zuercher at ezuerche@iusd.org if you have any questions regarding the program.

Please Join us for the Principal's Coffee

"Parenting in Tough Times"

January 24, 2006

9:00 - 10:30 am

Learn parenting techniques that can help anytime, but especially with blended families and during and after a divorce.

Our speaker, Ann Goldman, is a Marriage Family Therapist in Costa Mesa working with families, couples and teens.

Please join us.

We always leave time for questions!!

Student Safety and Supervision

Please note that by IUSD School Board policy, staff provide supervision for students fifteen (15) minutes before and after school. On a regular school day, this means from 7:45am-8am and from 2:28-2:43pm.

Students are to arrive at school no earlier than 7:45am and to leave school no later than 2:43pm.

There is no supervision past that time. If you pick up your child by automobile, be sure to do so no later than 2:43pm. If your student is assigned to the after school Extended Learning Program, please pick him or her up at 3:35pm.

School Office Hours

School office hours at Sierra Vista are 7:30am – 3:30pm daily.

Visitors

Safety news: To help ensure student and school safety, Sierra Vista has a closed campus policy. Students from other schools are not allowed to visit during school hours, and all visitors to the school at any time must sign in at the front office. Please remember: Visitors on campus must wear the visitor's badge at all times. This is one way we help ensure your child's safety.

Telephone Messages for Students and Forgotten Items

We are sorry, but it is NOT possible to accept and deliver telephone messages for students during the school day. Delivering personal messages or items to students during class time is disruptive to the teaching and learning process. If a true emergency arises, we will be more than happy to assist you and give your student the necessary information. Please make prior arrangements with your student regarding transportation or forgotten items. Parents may leave lunches, PE clothes, books, instruments, etc. (with their names on them), on the counter in the office. It is then your student's responsibility to check in the office for these items. Thank you for your support in this area.

Helping Students Become Wise Internet Users

IUSD web site policy prohibits linking IUSD computer web access to sites which ask for the student's name or ask students to respond to personal questions. There is also a firewall in place which limits student access to web sites which have specific words or phrases. Few of us can sit with our children all of the time they are on line, however, there are some two steps you can take to help ensure your child's on line privacy and safety whether at home or school.

1. Teach your student to never give out their name, e-mail address, home address, or physical location without first checking with you. Make sure they understand that this applies to everyone, including those they believe are students they've met on line.
 2. Spend time with your student on line. Tour new sites together and help them distinguish advertising and market-driven sites from editorial and educational sites. Discuss the possible effect of giving out private information to sites and/or people they do not already know.
-

Sierra Vista School Counseling

Sierra Vista Middle School has two counselors, Bonny Gillespie and Tonia Stewart. Both work closely with students, parents, the school and the community to support students. Mrs. Gillespie and Ms. Stewart are available to students to discuss any areas which concern them, and they are available to discuss parent concerns regarding their child's school progress, too. Mrs. Gillespie is on site Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday each week, and Ms. Stewart is at SVMS Monday through Friday each week.

Ms. Stewart also runs the Project Success program at Sierra Vista. This is a grant-funded program which supports the SVMS counseling program by assisting students and families. She will provide additional support to help students develop appropriate social skills, including decision-making, managing anger, communication skills, and problem solving.



Lunchtime Sports

Hi, Sierra Vista parents. This year's lunchtime sports program is in high gear. Your sons and daughters are participating and having a great time.

Lunchtime sports is a great way for our students to be a part of a school-wide activity, meet new people, learn how to communicate and work as a team, and lastly stay active. The numbers of students participating have been huge this year.

In September we played Flag Football (215 participants) and 6 on 6 Volleyball (57 participants).

In October we played Soccer (135 participants) followed by Pickleball (150 participants) in November.

Last week we had our Team Handball sign-ups with 120 students ready to play.

Check out my website at www.sierravistams.org/caldwell to see what sports are offered the rest of the year.

Thanks for all of your support.

If you have any questions please e-mail me anytime at ncaldwel@iusd.org.

2006 Irvine Public Schools Foundation Program Event Dates

IUSD Science Fair

March 2, 2006 (8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.)

Awards Presentation 7:00 p.m.

University High School

Parents Appreciating Teachers & Staff (PATS)

January 19 through March 10, 2006



Astounding Inventions

January 28, 2006

9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Irvine Valley College

Donald Bren Honors Concert

March 28, 2006 (Instrumental Concert)

April 4, 2006 (Vocal Concert)

7:30 p.m.

Calvary Church, Tustin



Innovative Teaching Award Program (ITAP)

Reception

May 16, 2006

Time: 3:30-5:00 p.m.

Location: TBD

Parent Volunteer of the Year Awards

Reception

June 1, 2006 Time: TBD (lunch)

Sierra Vista Middle School

2005-06 Calendar

(tentative/subject to change)

Parent Calendar

Correct as of 12-2-05

<i>Month</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Activity</i>
December	6	Band Concert, 7pm
	7	Orchestra Concert, 7pm
	9	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students
	13	Science Careers Options Conference, UCI
	15	Vocal Concert, 7pm
	22	Minimum day/ school dismissed at 12:10pm
Dec. 23 to	Jan. 6	Winter break
January	9	School resumes
	16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance; holiday
	17	PTSA, 8:30am
	20	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students
	27	Progress report #2

February	3	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students
	13	Lincoln's Birthday Observance; holiday
	20	Washington's Birthday Observance; holiday
March	3	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students
	7	Gr. 7 Direct Writing testing ; Late start for gr. 8 only; late start at 10am for gr. 8
	8	Band Concert, 7pm
	9	Orchestra Concert, 7pm
	10	End of trimester #2
	14	English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC), 9am
	14	Choral Concert, 7pm
	17	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students
	21	PTSA, 8:30am
	22 & 24	Musical, 7pm
	29 & 31	Musical, 7pm
April	11	PTSA, 8:30am
	14	Minimum day; school dismissed at 12:10pm
	17-21	Spring break; no school
	28	Progress report #3
May	1	Gr. 6 Parent Night—6pm GATE; 7pm General
	2	Gr. 6 Parent Presentation, 10am
	5	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students; Spring Dance 3-5pm
	9-12	CST/CAT 6 state-mandated testing
	12	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students
	16	PTSA, 8:30am
	18	Students dismissed at 12:10pm; Open House, 6:30-8pm; Eng. Lang. Advisory Com. (ELAC), 6pm
	19	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students
	24	Talent Show, 7pm
	26	Holiday per ITA/IUSD agreement
	29	Holiday--Memorial Day Observance; no school
June	6	Vocal and Instrumental Concert, 6pm
	9	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students
	16	Late start/ school begins at 10am for students
	13?	Gr. 8 Awards Night (<i>tentative date</i>)
	20?	Gr. 8 Dance (<i>tentative date</i>)
	22	Trimester #3 ends Last day of school -- students dismissed at 12:10pm Gr. 8 promotion

Trimester Progress Reports	End Dates*
Trimester 1	Oct. 21
Trimester 2	Jan. 27
Trimester 3	Apr. 28

Trimester Report Cards	End Dates*
Trimester 1	Dec. 2
Trimester 2	March 10
Trimester 3	June 23

Progress Reports and Report Cards are mailed home and usually arrive 7-10 days after the grading period ends.