



Korematsu Kids School Newsletter

January 10, 2011
Volume 5, Issue 7

Calendar

January

10 Mon 3:30 pm

- School Site Council meeting, office conference room.

17 Mon

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
— NO SCHOOL

19 Wed 7:00 – 8:30 pm

- KPTO meeting, in the library; all welcome.

26 Wed 1:45 pm

- Academic Talent Search testing for grades 4-6, in the library.

26 Wed 6:30 – 8:00 pm

- Explorit Science Night, in the MPR.

February

2 Wed

- Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution (daytime assemblies and evening program)

21-25 Mon-Fri

- President's Day and Workday reduction
— NO SCHOOL

Weekly

Tue and Thu 2:35 – 3:00 pm

- Running Club; on the grass field west of playground.

Thu 8:00-8:30 am

- Student banking, in the MPR.
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Next Korematsu Kids: February 7

From the Principal

Welcome to 2011! We hope you enjoyed the break with friends, family, and cheer. The new year is off to a busy start. Staff and KPTO are preparing to celebrate the first Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution on February 2nd. There will be morning assemblies for students and evening activities for families, community members and dignitaries. We are very excited to be part of this historic moment to honor our school's namesake.

A core theme or philosophy of our school is social justice. We will be reflecting on the works of several civil rights leaders. Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution and our annual Oral Language Fair will highlight the impact these individuals' voices had on justice.

This is a great time to discuss with students this theme, and the importance of celebrating diversity through inclusion and acceptance of all. Discuss with your child at home how we are all 'bound', connected to one another, and why this is important for our community.

- Mary Ponce

Help Needed for Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution

A recently enacted state law proclaimed Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution. To mark the occasion, we will have two daytime assemblies and one evening event on Wednesday February 2. Dignitaries including members of Mr. Korematsu's family have been invited. Volunteers are needed to staff activity stations. If you can help, please email: president@korematsupto.org

Explorit Science Night Wednesday January 26

Explorit Science Center will be offering many exciting hands-on exhibits and demonstrations at Science Night on Wednesday, January 26, 6:30-8:00 pm in the MPR. Parent volunteers are needed. Please email: president@korematsupto.org

(Explorit chose Korematsu to receive grant funding from Wells Fargo Bank to pay for their visit).

Register New Nugget Scrip Card

Please remember to register Nugget Market's new scrip card (online at www.nuggetmarket.com/community). The new card is easier to use, but requires annual registration. Korematsu receives up to 4% for every dollar spent. (Donations are on a sliding scale depending on the amount of purchases in the month.) This is an easy way to earn money for the school. For more information, please email KPTO fundraising chair Rebecca Detrick: fundraising@korematsupto.org

From the District Office: Knowing the Rules of Student Attendance

There has been a discussion in the media recently about attendance and truancy rates in our region highlighting the negative effects on a child's education as well as our school district finances. Beginning in January, the school district will mail letters to parents when unexcused student absences have been recorded.

When students are absent from school, the State allows the absence to be excused for a medical illness, appointments related to health, and other personal reasons.* Excused absences carry the right to make up work and a period of time to do that with no penalty. That is why it is essential for parents to inform the school staff of absences. In turn we try to keep parents well informed about their child's attendance via personal calls, automated calling systems, and Parent Connect.

We find that parents and guardians are frequently under the impression that calling in the absence to the school automatically excuses the student. It certainly accounts for the student's whereabouts which is paramount to keeping him or her safe. However, it is the reason for the absence, not the parent call that determines if the absence is excused or unexcused.

Absences are marked 'unverified'** until we hear from the parent/guardian within 48 hours of the absence. The absence then becomes either excused or unexcused. Other than the specified reasons allowed by the State, all other absences are unexcused. If no call is received after two school days, then the 'unverified' is an unexcused absence and cannot be changed thereafter, as required by state law. ***

When students are unexcused, they do not have rights to make up the missed work, and they are subject to intervention if they accumulate more than three days of unexcused absence (truancy). State law requires that the District send a formal letter after three days of unexcused/unverified absence and additional letters for any more truant absences. Therefore, it is also essential to avoid unexcused absences.

Please understand that this effort to determine the status of absences is unrelated to collecting school funding. The State does not fund a single day of student absence for any reason, not even the excused days. Keeping track of the reasons for absences is a requirement related to compulsory education and parent responsibility to make sure their child is in school. That is why when parents remove their children from school for vacations, the absences are unexcused and consequences may follow.

When children are ill, we all want them to recover sensibly and avoid infecting others. Likewise, extraordinary situations may occur which require being out of school. However, in the case of an elective absence, we hope parents will weigh the lost instructional time for their child as well as the lost funding (\$43/day) to the school. The district offers short-term independent study to students whose parents are removing them for five or more days. The missed days then become instructional days, the absences are excused, and state funding is allotted for those days so long as all the work assigned is completed.

Please call the school office if you have further questions or need more information. We want to work together for the benefit of all our students.

*Excused absences: illness; quarantine; medical, dental, optometry, chiropractic service; funeral for immediate family member, limited to one day in California, three days out of state; jury duty; medical appt for a child in the custody of the student; justifiable reason (court appearance, religious holiday/ceremony, employment conference) with written request of parent/guardian and approved by the principal or designee. *Ed Code 48205*. ** Unverified=no parent/guardian communication with the school. *** Unexcused= parent/guardian authorized absence but not for the reasons stated above.

Vaccine requirement for students in grades 6–11

The district office reminds you of a new state law: Pertussis (T-dap) booster vaccines are required after age 10. See your doctor or clinic. Submit proof of vaccination to the school office by May 2011. Your child cannot attend school in Fall 2011 without it!