

# RHEEMARKS

## *"Frank"ly Speaking...*

*February 20, 2017*

I hope this message finds the Rheem Team enjoying the last bits of an extended 4-day weekend in honor of Presidents' Day! It may be a bit soggy out there, but it's always nice to have some extra time for "PDF": **P**laytime, **D**owntime, and **F**amily Time.

The extended break was well-deserved after our students and staff celebrated the end of the **Greatest Read-a-thon on Earth** with a **Crazy Circus Hair Day** on Thursday, February 16. Unique and colorful hairstyles dominated campus, featuring sparking braids, sharp mohawks, and stylish do's adorned with a wide variety of accessories, including pipe-cleaners, Starbucks cups, and even the Eiffel Tower! At lunchtime, I had a great time reading Crazy Hair Day to the students -- a story about a young boy who confused Crazy Hair Day with Picture Day! The happy ending brought into focus our current theme of being "allies" to one another, as this boy's classmates saved the day by helping him "fit in" to the class picture -- can you guess how?

I am very proud of our students' efforts over this 4-week focus on reading, and I look forward to sharing the total hours read and acknowledging those students who completed a "Feat of Daring" poster at our Spirit Assemblies on Monday, Feb. 27. Thanks to all the parent volunteers who tallied weekly hours for each class, and special thanks goes to **Diane Johnson** (Henry's mom) for organizing this year's Read-a-thon.

### **This Week at Rheem:**

Monday, Feb. 20:

- No School – President's Day Holiday

Tuesday, Feb. 21:

- Rheem Site Council Meeting, beginning at 3:15 in Room 25
  - **Superintendent Burns will attend to provide information and get input regarding the district's [LCAP](#) (Local Control Accountability Plan)**
- MSD's Cultural Proficiency Committee Meeting, beginning at 5:00 in Room 25

Wednesday, Feb. 22:

- Safety Committee meeting, beginning 3:30 at CP (Rm. 7)

### **School News and Highlights**

- When the **3<sup>rd</sup> week Read-a-thon tallies** were all counted, Rheem students had logged 7,393 hours --- 831 hours more than the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> week time last year! WOW! Can't wait to find out how many hours were read in all!
- **Rheem's School Site Improvement Plan** was approved by the Moraga School Board at the February 14 meeting. This plan is developed and monitored by our School Site Council, and it features specific goals and action items in the areas of Math, English/Language Arts, and School Climate. This year's School Site Plan can be downloaded from the "Quick Links" section of our [website](#). Future issues of Rheemarks will provide updates on stated goals.
- Rheem students continue to use the **"THINK" tool** by asking themselves if their interactions are:
  - True?
  - Helpful?
  - Inviting?
  - Necessary?
  - Kind?
- **Recycle Woman** (in her human form, as "Jessica") returned to Rheem's lunchroom on Monday, February 13, to help our SWAT Team (Students Worried About Trash) conduct a second "waste audit" this year. The results of this audit will be shared with the students at our next Spirit Assembly to see if they've reduced their contributions to our landfills. Stay tuned for details!

## Teachers Go to School!

All Rheem teachers continue to participate in ½ day Readers' Workshop Lab days through February. Organized by MSD's Director of Curriculum, Dr. Carolyn Parker, and with the support and guidance of West Coast Literacy consultant Leslie Nash, and MSD's Teacher on Special Assignment, Terry Miller, our teachers are focused on providing differentiated reading instruction to students.

During the Readers' Workshop lab days, our K-3 teachers are focused on **guided reading lessons**. During a guided reading lesson, a teacher meets with a small group of students and reviews sight words, vocabulary, and text organization. Students are then coached by the teacher with prompts and scaffolds that help students process the information. Similarly, our upper grade teachers are focused on **strategy lessons** which provide instruction that supports individual readers in their classrooms. Both guided reading and strategy lessons allow for differentiated instruction for building strategic, independent Rheem readers.

In the coming week, all K – 5 teachers will be attending these Readers' Workshop lab sessions, resulting in your children having a ½ day sub at some point during the week. We appreciate your understanding so that the teachers can have this important professional development experience!

## School Climate Parent Survey

### *Students Enjoy School*

In the MSD School Climate Survey given in November, 2016, 186 Rheem parents responded as follows:

- 93% respondents agreed with the statement ***"My child enjoys going to school"***.

Actual Breakdown: 48% strongly agree; 45% agree; 6% neutral; 1% disagree; 0% strongly disagree; 0% don't know

We are very proud of this positive response. We believe that a student's enjoyment of school is directly related to his/her willingness to take the risks necessary for rigorous learning!

## **Rheem 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Variety Show**

### ***Save the Date – Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup>***

Mark your calendars for the evening of **Friday March 24th!** At the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Rheem Variety Show, Rheem students will showcase their talents and skills to the delight of friends and family. Auditions will be on **March 10th**, from 4-6pm in the Rheem Multi-Purpose Room. Informational fliers and audition forms were sent home in the backpacks, but can also be found [HERE](#) (or in the "Quick Links" section of our website). Please contact Variety Show coordinator, Courtney Pickering, if you would like to help out with this fun new event at Rheem: [cwpickering@gmail.com](mailto:cwpickering@gmail.com).

## **Hello from Roadrunners, *submitted by Eleanor Persons***

Boy have we had lots of rain these last few weeks! But, here at Roadrunner Club, it is warm and toasty and inviting. We have certainly become more creative with indoor games, crafts and activities!

Also in the last couple of weeks, we have celebrated Valentine's Day, Ground Hog Day, and Presidents' Day!!! We've enjoyed fun cooking projects, snacks, and trivia games (How many presidents were left handed?) We decorated valentine cookies, found out there will be six more weeks of winter (Mr. Phil) and that the two dollar bill has Thomas Jefferson on it. For our penny cleaning project, (to celebrate Presidents weekend), the kids guessed which cleaning solution shines the cooper penny best. The winner was vinegar and salt, second coca cola and baking soda, last was soap and water.

Just a gentle reminder Critters and Clay will start up on 02/28/17. If you have not done so, please complete an Activity Release Form. Also, please remember Permanent Reservations are due on the 12th of every month effective on the 20th of every month.

## **Did You Know?**

### ***Garden Buddies***

Each week, a different "Rheem Buddy Team" is assigned to visit the garden and complete on-going maintenance tasks. Although watering hasn't been a need recently, thanks to this year's generous rainfall, we fully expect weed-pulling to begin in earnest soon! To learn more about our School-Wide Buddies Program, see this week's "Last Word" article (below).

## **The Last Word...**

### ***"That's My Buddy!"***

Some things just make good common sense. We know that children learn best when they feel connected to their school. We remember how our own like or dislike of school was closely related to our sense of belonging and being accepted socially. We know how positive self-esteem benefits general health and promotes one's ability to persevere and succeed.

That's why, at Rheem, we are committed to building an environment in which students feel safe, cared for, and respected, not only by the school adults, but by their peers as well. Through a school-wide "Buddies" program, we hope that we can further develop this sense of "belonging" that makes Rheem such a special place to learn and grow.

At Rheem, our School-Wide Buddy Program involves every student, kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. All classes are matched with a "buddy class," an older or younger grade level that joins with them in a special year-long partnership. As referenced by the Developmental Studies Center, this unique buddy relationship "allows older students to experience themselves as caring, competent, and valued while the younger students can experience themselves as worthy of special attention and kindness." Further, children learn *through experience* that they are capable of building positive relationships and showing care, which in turn can provide the motivation for them to create similar relationships with others.

Not only does our Buddy Program allow students to use the skills learned from our Lifeskills focus, but we feel it can support our efforts to create a Bully-Free environment as well. When children of different ages have a chance to get to know one another, learn from each other, and have fun together, age barriers as well as stronger vs. weaker dynamics are broken. Suddenly, it is "cool" to help someone else and it is "OK" to receive help. More spontaneous helping behavior and less teasing are the result, thereby enhancing a school-wide atmosphere of trust and safety.

A very special thank you is due to the Rheem teachers who have embraced this program in an effort to allow all children, regardless of their age or classroom assignment to experience the positive effects of having a buddy. Fifth graders are paired with kindergartners; Fourth graders have first grade buddies; and our second and third graders are working together to create friendships that will hopefully last through the rest of their academic careers. Each teacher is working cooperatively with his/her own "buddy teacher" to provide meaningful experiences that support both academic and social/emotional goals. The 2016-2017 buddy pairings are as follows:

**Ms. Inzeo's K class with Ms. Gubser's 5<sup>th</sup> graders**

**Ms. Kathan's K class with Mr. Greer's 5<sup>th</sup> graders**

**Ms. Lorie's K class with Ms. Cavallero's 5<sup>th</sup> graders**

**Ms. Bailey's 1<sup>st</sup> graders with Ms. Culleton's 4<sup>th</sup> graders**

**Ms. O'Connell's 1<sup>st</sup> graders with Ms. McMullen's 4<sup>th</sup> graders**

**Ms. Strohmeier's 1<sup>st</sup> graders with Ms. Drury's 4<sup>th</sup> graders**

**Ms. Guidi's 2<sup>nd</sup> graders with Ms. Caraska's 3<sup>rd</sup> graders**

**Mr. Thomson's 2<sup>nd</sup> graders and Ms. Berkman's 3<sup>rd</sup> graders**

**Ms. Webster's 2<sup>nd</sup> graders with Ms. Ralph's 3<sup>rd</sup> graders**

As you can see, everyone benefits by having a buddy! And the excited, reciprocal exclamations of "That's my buddy!" can be heard on the playground, in the hallways, and even out in the community. We hope you'll ask your child about his/her buddy and see for yourself the positive impact a special buddy can have in a child's development.

**I love this school!**

Ms. Frank, Principal