



The Monthly Plunge

October 2011

A Note from the Principal's Desk

In this Issue.....

- Academic Performance Index
- Walk To School Day
- Dolphin Games
- Instructional Support
- Reflections Program
- Parent Conference Week
- School Picture Day
- Classroom Interruptions and Visitors
- Monthly Calendar

Wow! Although we faced some enrollment challenges that caused us to adjust classes and reassign a number of students this year, we have had a terrific opening this school year. The students are already hard at work and have settled into their classroom routine quite nicely.

Each school year, I spend numerous hours surveying the teachers, staff members, parents, and students in order to identify our school's areas of strength and those areas that need to be improved. Many changes that are made are a direct result of those conversations and the feedback given to me by the College Park staff and community. Adjustments continue to be made as necessary in order to provide a safe campus, an optimum learning environment, and a balanced, well-rounded educational experience for our students. With that in mind, please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

An example of College Park responding to the feedback received from the parent community was the improvement of our sound system and stage lighting in our multi-purpose room that took place towards the end of last year and throughout the summer. Our students and staff now have one of the most well-equipped sound and lighting systems found anywhere in Irvine elementary schools. It will be exciting to see the positive impact and enhancement this improvement will have in our upcoming school performances for many years to come. Thank you to our PTA who organized a jog-a-thon to raise money for this project, to those who participated and supported the jog-a-thon, and to our Student Council who contributed funding as well. It could not have been done without everyone's involvement.

As always, our staff will continue to look for ways to improve student learning and the overall education each child receives. If my staff or I can be of service to you or answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

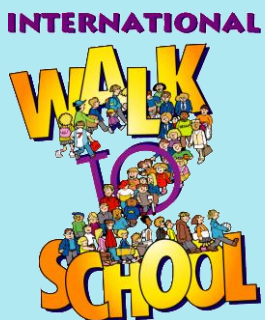
Alan Battenfield, Principal

Academic Performance Index

Awesome! Terrific! Exceptional! As you may have read, the California Department of Education recently released our Academic Performance Index (API) score for the 2010-2011 school year. The state target score is 800. The score is derived from a complex formula that includes a school's scores on the California State Standards tests. A school is considered "high performing" if it has an API of 800 or above. We scored **927** this year! This score is an improvement of 5 points from last year and College Park continues to be among those schools considered elite.

Our API score of 927 is particularly impressive considering that College Park experienced a significant increase in student enrollment and the amount of students who are still considered to be learning English over the last few years. In addition, students new to our school, on average, generally score lower on the California State Standards tests than their counterparts who have attended College Park for a minimum of 3 years.

Although we recognize that an API score of 927 is exceptional, the staff will continue to fervently analyze the data and develop strategies that attend to any areas needing improvement. Our staff also understands that a strong API score is not the only important indicator of an excellent school. We also value character development, the appreciation of the arts, physical fitness, and the development of the skills necessary to work cooperatively with others.



Walk to School Day

The International Walk to School Day began in 1997 as a day to bring community leaders and children together to create awareness of the need for communities to be walkable. By 2006, more than

2,294 schools from all 50 states participated in Walk to School Day.

College Park is excited to be continuing our participation in this Irvine Public School Foundation sponsored event. It will be held on Thursday, October 27, 2011. Every student is encouraged to walk to school. Parents are invited to join them.

The benefits of this program are numerous. Walking or bicycling to school gives children:

- time for physical activity.
- a sense of responsibility and independence.
- allows them to enjoy being outside.
- provides them time to socialize with their parents and friends and to get to know their neighborhoods.

Dolphin Games

Again this year, Dolphin Games will be holding its yearly preliminary event competition the week of October 10th. This program is designed to improve students' physical fitness and prepare them for the annual Irvine Junior Games. Organized by our PTA, in cooperation with our Lunch Time Activity Staff, and the support of our teachers, Dolphin Games will provide students with an opportunity to compete against other students and strive for individual physical fitness improvement. The final competitions will be held in March.

For those of you who may not be familiar with Dolphin Games, they are a form of track and field events designed to motivate students to achieve in the curriculum area of PE. The Dolphin Games consist of five competitive events aligned with the Irvine Junior Games. They are held twice a year at each grade level.

A list of the events is below.

1. Sprint (50 meters)
2. Distance Run:

- a. 1 mile for upper
- b. 1/4 mile for primary
3. Running Long Jump
4. Soccer Kick
5. Basketball Shoot for upper / Bean Bag Throw for primary



Reflections Program

All students will be recognized for their participation. The top five performers in each event at each grade level in the final Dolphin Games are honored at the last Student Recognition Awards Assembly of the school year. In addition, the top performers have their name placed on a plaque that will stay at the school.

Have you ever dreamed of having your child's drawing or photo framed and hung in a special art exhibit at their school? Can you imagine what it would be like to have his/her story or poem published in a school or PTA newspaper, or to play or sing in front of an audience a song he/she has written?

Instructional Support

In response to large class sizes, our IUSD School Board has allocated monies donated by the City of Irvine and IPSF to the district to be used for instructional support in all grades. As a result of this extra instructional support, we have seven credentialed support teachers on our staff. These teachers will provide instruction alongside our regular classroom teachers primarily in the areas of language arts and math. Each of them will be working 15 to 19.95 hours a week. Ms. Megan Vick will teach in 1st grade, Ms. Lacey Schones in 2nd, Mr. Patrick Stopford in 3rd, Ms. Kelly Gomez in 4th, Ms. Jessica Tarlton in 5th, Mrs. Paula Taylor in 6th, and Ms. Rachel Richardson will teach in both Mrs. York's 2/3 combination class and Ms. Schmidt's K/1 combination class. Please take time to thank these teachers for their help and welcome those who are new to our school.

If your child participates in the PTA Reflections Program, those dreams may become a reality. More important, your child will have an opportunity to demonstrate his/her creativity and express his/her artistic talents. Please encourage him/her to participate this school year. The rules and theme have already been provided to each of them at school.

Parent Conference Week

It is important to note, there are other support teachers and instructional assistants at College Park that have taught and supported our students in kindergarten, Title 1 programs, and special education for many years. Please take time to thank them as well.

Soon you will receive a letter from your child's teacher inviting you to attend a goal setting parent conference. Conferences are a wonderful opportunity to establish clear, meaningful home/school communications. All children learn in different ways. Each has his/her own unique personality, interests, likes, hopes, dreams, and fears. To aid their students in acquiring new skills and knowledge, teachers need to be aware of each child's special interests, concerns, and learning style. No one knows a child better than his/her parents. Teachers have valuable information about how your child works in a group setting, and how well they are mastering grade level standards and skills. The parent conference is a great way to encourage two-way communication. Conferences are meant to facilitate parent involvement in

students learning. At College Park, we believe students whose families are directly involved in their learning do better in school. Research supports this belief. A 1994 compilation of research entitled, "The Family is Critical to Student Achievement" edited by Henderson and Berla states:

"..... the evidence is now beyond dispute. The most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to:

1. Create a home environment that encourages learning.
2. Express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers.
3. Become involved in their children's education at school and in the community."

This year's first parent conference will be held October 18 through October 28. In collaboration with you, teachers will be setting goals for your child's learning. In addition, you will receive a report of your child's progress, but no report card. The first trimester report card will be available online in December following the end of the first trimester.

Fall Picture Day

Picture day is Friday, October 28, 2011. To receive a picture package, the payment must be made before or on picture day. There will also be an option to pay online with a credit card prior to picture day. Please make checks payable to Lifetouch. For detailed information, please refer to the picture flyer that will be sent home. Additional flyers will be available in our school office.



Classroom Interruptions/Visitors

Visitors are always welcome at College Park. In the interest of safety, we do ask that all visitors report to the office to sign in. At that time, visitors will be issued a badge to wear, indicating to the students and staff that they are authorized to be on campus.

The College Park staff makes a concerted effort to establish a learning environment that is conducive to the development of good study habits and uninterrupted academic learning time. We seek your cooperation and assistance in this effort. You can help us by:

1. Sending the teacher a note should you need to pick up your child early, thus eliminating the need for us to call the classroom.
2. Avoiding calling school and leaving messages for your child, unless it is an emergency. The telephone is made available to students only for emergencies.
3. Establishing a system that helps eliminate forgotten lunches, homework, money, musical instruments, etc. Parents bringing forgotten items to school should place them in the baskets located in our office. Children are encouraged to check these baskets for forgotten items throughout the day.

Please do not interrupt the classroom for any reason unless you are scheduled as a classroom volunteer or have an appointment with the teacher.

At dismissal, we ask that parents please wait outside the building until the bell rings and do not enter the building unnecessarily. Because of our staggered dismissal schedule, we often have students still receiving instruction in class or participating in a specialized program. We do not want them to be disturbed. In order to avoid entering the building, please set up a place outside the building to meet your children after school. This will reduce the end of school disruptions to our classrooms.

Upcoming Events

October 3	READ 180 Classes Begin
October 7	College Park Spirit Day
October 10-14	Dolphin Games
October 16	2011 Harvest Cup Tournament
October 17	Staff Development, Student Free Day
October 18-28	Parent Conferences, Minimum Day Schedule, 1 st -6 th Grade
October 18	Ask-A-Scientist Night
October 20	Great California Shakeout Drill
October 21	Progress Reports go home
October 24-28	Red Ribbon Week
October 25	Fall Conference Day, No School
October 27	Walk to School Day
October 28	Fall Picture Day

