



A Note from the Principal

Dear Plaza Vista Families,

I hope you enjoyed the fall break and made special memories with your family and friends. As we get back into the swing of things, I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate your support. Plaza Vista's mission is to promote academic excellence, instill in students the technical skills necessary to succeed in the world of tomorrow, provide them with the power to think and express themselves clearly, and focus on the values necessary to act well, appreciate life and contribute to society. We couldn't do this without you ~ our supportive, involved community.

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 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. Plaza Vista scored a 958. This score continues to be among those school considered elite.

Although we recognize that an API score of 958 is exceptional, the staff will continue to fervently analyze both local and state assessment 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.

The Plaza Vista staff, parents, and surrounding community share a common vision. High quality classroom instruction, students who are highly motivated to learn, a warm and nurturing learning environment, and a supportive and encouraging parent community make Plaza Vista a wonderful place to learn and work. It is our goal that all students will leave here able to read, write, and compute at successful levels that will enable them to experience academic success at the next level and beyond. To ensure this success, the Plaza Vista staff is dedicated to the use of sound instructional practices

and high quality instructional materials, including the integration of technology throughout the curriculum. Our instructional programs combine explicit skill instruction, such as phonics and mathematics skills, and instruction that is embedded within a meaningful context.

It is due to our common vision, highly skilled staff, "state of the art" instructional materials and equipment, and commitment to providing students with an environment that encourages ethical behavior that we move towards achieving our mission. This school is dedicated to providing each student with a safe and orderly learning environment; a rigorous, challenging, and developmentally appropriate curriculum; and the support necessary to develop students with integrity and character.

Thank you for all you do to support us in these endeavors.

With gratitude,

Heather D. Phillips
Principal, Plaza Vista School

Walk To School Day October 27th



In neighborhoods all around the world, the month of October means Walk to School. In the United States and over 30 other countries including Mexico, South Korea, India and Great Britain, adults and children will walk and bike to school together to raise awareness about:

- The importance of

teaching children safe walking and bicycling behaviors, such as how to cross streets, and how to select safe routes to school. Our students will be learning about Safe Routes to Schools during an assembly sponsored by the City of Irvine.

- How easy and enjoyable walking is! Adults and children spend healthy, active time together doing the world's simplest exercise—walking!

Stay tuned for more information from our PTA.

Upcoming Dates:

- 10/18—Fall Quarter Begins
- 10/21—Reflection Deadline
- 10/24 & 10/25—PBIS Implementation Days
- 10/24-10/28—Red Ribbon Week
- 10/26—PTA Bake Sale
- 10/27—Walk to School Day
- 10/27—Walk to School Day
- 10/27—5th Grade DARE Graduation
- 10/28—Middle School Halloween Dance
- 11/7—School Site Council Meeting
- 11/10—PTA Family Night: Magic Show
- 11/11—Veteran's Day Holiday
- 11/16—PTA General Meeting @ 5:30 p.m.

Informative Articles for Parents ~ Why Social Skills Are Key to Learning: Before they can learn academics, kids need to know how to behave in a group.

The following are excerpts from the article By Ellen Booth Church.

You may be hoping your child will learn how to read and write in the first few months of preschool or kindergarten. But there are many other skills she needs to master before an academic focus is appropriate. Studies show that the most important skills to learn in the beginning of the year are social: cooperation, self-control, confidence, independence, curiosity, empathy and communication.

In the first months of school, early childhood teachers are most concerned with children who have behavioral and attention problems. It's simple: If a child is not able to take turns, listen and sit in a group, how can she learn what is being taught? That is why teachers spend a good deal of time early in the year on the basic social skills of preschool and kindergarten. Even if your child has been in a child care center or another type of program, she still needs to learn the social and emotional dynamics of this new group. Luckily, her previous experiences with social interaction both at home and in other programs will help her make the transition. Once these basic social interaction and group behavior skills are in place, she is more ready and able to concentrate on academics.

Your child learns best with a balanced approach supporting her growth in social, emotional and cognitive (academic) skills. So if he is not yet coming home from school knowing new letters or numbers, don't worry! Most early childhood programs slowly introduce more academics as the year progresses. Recent research in brain development has shown that a child's ability to interact with others, control and express her feelings and take care of basic tasks independently are as (or even more) important for success in school as academic skills. The neural pathways needed for learning are actually constructed through positive interactions with others! Your child's teacher will use this brain research information to help your child make connections with others in the class, share and care, listen and speak in a group and feel confident when taking on new challenges.

The First Basic Skills: The Four C's Here are a few examples of teachers' goals for the beginning of the school year. Ask your child's teacher to tell you about her objectives and for her suggestions on how you can support these skills at home.

- **Confidence:** One of the first skills teachers focus on is the development of your child's sense of confidence or self-esteem. This means helping her feel good about who she is, both individually and in relationship to others. This is a lifelong skill that will help her feel competent now and as she continues in her schooling.
- **Cooperation:** Games, stories and songs help your child learn how to work with others – no small task at this age! This teaches him how to empathize and get along with others.
- **Curiosity:** Perhaps one of the most important skills she needs to develop at this stage is a true thirst for learning. Her teacher will use a wide variety of interesting materials and ideas to engage your child's natural curiosity. Recent research shows that novel or unusual activities and materials engage the brain more than predictable ones, thus causing the brain to pay close attention.
- **Communication:** Expressing himself and representing his ideas, feelings and knowledge about the world is a key skill for your child. It is at the core of all reading, writing, math, and science skills. If he feels comfortable talking about an idea or opinion, he will be more open to learning and taking the risks of thinking that are needed to learn anything.

Red Ribbon Week Scheduled for October 24th~28th

The goal of Red Ribbon Week this year is to raise the awareness that living a healthy life-style free of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs will help you succeed now and in the future. This year's theme is "Make Positive Choices". We will encourage our students to take the Red Ribbon Week pledge, "I pledge to make healthy choices, to be a positive role model for my friends, and to support the mission of Red Ribbon Week."

NO USE OF ILLEGAL DRUGS

NO ILLEGAL USE OF LEGAL DRUGS

With the help of our wonderful PTA volun-teers, Plaza Vista students will help raise awareness through the following activities during Red Ribbon Week:

Pennies for Prevention: Bring pennies to class every day, all week. There will be a pizza party for the classroom with the most pennies collected and ice cream parties for one class at each grade level with the most pennies. We will



determine this by weight. There will be a penny exchange table in front of Plaza Vista School from 7:45-8:15 a.m. and after school from 2:30-2:45 p.m. You are also welcome to bring in your own pennies!

Red Day! Wednesday is Red Ribbon Week Spirit Day. Wear as much red as possible. We will be taking our annual school-wide photo on Wednesday morning!

More detailed information about Red Ribbon Week will be coming soon!

Plaza Vista PTA Update

Reflections: The National PTA Reflections Program is one of the largest student arts recognition programs in the country. Each year, hundreds of thousands of students participate throughout the country. The deadline to enter is October 21st. Students may submit works in any of six arts areas: dance choreography, film production, literature, musical composition, photography or visual arts. Go to the Plaza Vista PTA website for rules and entry forms at teacherweb.com/CA/PlazaVista/PTA/page3.aspx

ACE: The ACE program is sponsored by the Irvine Public Schools Foundation in cooperation with IUSD. IPSF selects contractors who teach all sorts of classes from sports to academics to arts and, through volunteers at each school, offers these classes after regular school hours for nominal fees. Sign-up for Fall ACE classes by October 23rd. Classes begin the end of October. Go to www.acewise.org for class descriptions and times.

Plaza Vista Spirit Wear: Spirit wear will be distributed our first week back from break!

Jog-a-thon: PTA is sponsoring a "Design our T-shirt" contest! Stay tuned for more information!



City of Irvine, Irvine Child Care Committee, and the Irvine Children Youth and Families Advisory Committee to Host Event for Parents on Topic of Bullying



Bullies, Victims and Witnesses: What Parents Need to Know

Monday, October 24 • 6-9 p.m.
Irvine High School Theater
4321 Walnut Ave., Irvine
Cost: \$10 per person

Bullying can happen anywhere: face-to-face, by text messages or on the web. It is not limited by age, gender, or education level.


To help parents understand the dynamics of bullying and the important role they play in prevention and intervention efforts, the City of Irvine is hosting a community forum to discuss:

- What bullying is and what bullying is not;
- How bullying impacts more than just the victim; and
- What families can do about bullies, being bullied or being a bystander

Seating is limited. Register online at irvinequickreg.org or call 949-724-6610. ■ Course: #106584

For more information or to apply for payment assistance, call **949-724-6685**.

Irvine Unified Council
PTA
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IPSF-ACE Middle School Classes: History Day & Survivors of the Holocaust

Getting Prepared for History Day: Middle School students will be given a background on what National History Day is as it encourages “Students to showcase their scholarly accomplishments and advance as young historians.” Based on this year’s theme for National History Day, “Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History,” middle school students will then select a topic and pursue a project they wish to submit as an entry. Classes are held Thursdays, October 27th-January 26th from 2:40-3:40.

Survivors of the Holocaust: Students will learn about the Holocaust and its impact on the world. Studying real survivor’s stories will help students learn about the many people who are still with us 66 years later. Students will study personal stories, videos, and journals of the survivors. Classes are held Fridays, October 28th-January 27th from 2:45-3:45.

Both classes taught by Mrs. Perini. Register online at www.acewise.org September 19-October 23.

These classes are for grades 6-8 only.



IPSF's 2nd Annual Spirit of Excellence Gala

IPSF will celebrate Irvine schools' "Spirit of Excellence" by honoring distinguished alumni of the Irvine Unified School District (IUSD) at its 2nd Annual Gala & Auction. The black-tie event to benefit IUSD schools will be held on October 22, 2011. For the second consecutive year, this event is SOLD OUT! In addition to hearing the inspirational stories of our honorees, guests will have the opportunity to bid on a variety of items at our live and silent auctions. Live auction items will include:

The Disney Experience-6 one-day Park Hopper tickets to Disneyland and California Adventure, brunch or lunch at the exclusive Club 33, plus 2 copies of the *Finding Nemo* DVD signed by our 2011 Honoree Oren Jacob, former Chief Technical Officer, Pixar Films.

Pelican Hill Golf & Spa Luxury Getaway Package-Three night stay in luxurious 3-bedroom, 2,573 square foot Villa, with an ocean-view terrace, gourmet kitchen and around-the-clock butler services. Included in this package is your choice of two 50-minute Amber Gold Massages at The Spa, one round of Golf for two players, or a combination of the two.

Saturday Night Live Experience- Meet and greet with SNL cast and two tickets to a taping of SNL, courtesy of Irvine alum and 2010 honoree Nasim Pedrad. SNL tickets are paired with two round trip airline tickets and two nights of hotel accommodations.

Wall of Wine - A wall consisting of over 70 unique, hand-selected bottles of wine, from California's most acclaimed cabernets, chardonnays and pinot noirs to France's finest champagnes and Bordeaux. This unmatched array is an essential purchase for anyone who considers themselves a wine connoisseur, or who would like to become one.

We will also have mentorship/internship opportunities for students with corporate partners including MVE Architects, Churm Media, KSK Medical among others.

Guests that cannot attend the gala but are interested in placing a bid on auction items may contact cvancamp@ipsf.net.

IPSF Announces Funding for Naviance Career and College Counseling Program

With funding provided by Montessori International, IPSF is proud to make Naviance available at all IUSD middle and high schools beginning this fall. Naviance is a comprehensive, web-based career and college counseling program that will help counselors, students and families investigate, track and plan for college admissions and future careers. Look for more information at your school site about this exciting new initiative.

iShop Day at The Marketplace Coming on Saturday, November 19th

Mark your calendars for the 2nd annual iShop at The Market Place on Saturday, November 19th. Customers who make purchases totaling \$200.00 or more (cumulative throughout the day) at any stores or restaurants at The Market Place, will receive a \$20 center gift card, and The Irvine Company will make a \$10 donation to Irvine Public Schools Foundation (IPSF). Limit 2 gift cards and two donations/per customer, while supplies last. Center gift card purchases not valid toward purchase.

New Community Partnerships Benefit Irvine Schools

IPSF is proud to welcome **Sullivan Solar Power** as one of our newest community partners. Sullivan Solar Power recently launched Irvine's Solar Program to help residents take advantage of solar energy savings and incentives. The company has pledged to donate \$1,000 for each Irvine resident that mentions IPSF when signing up for the program. To learn more, attend their information session on Saturday, October 15th at 11 AM at Irvine City Hall or visit www.irvinesolarprogram.com. Don't forget to tell them you support IPSF!

If you have attended a football game in Irvine this fall, you may have noticed a new campaign to raise funds via text message. IPSF has partnered with **EveryPenny** to bring this innovative fundraising tool to our community. At all home football games this fall, text "IPSF" to 50555 to donate \$10. Proceeds from this campaign will be split between IPSF and IUSD high schools. Message & Data rates may apply.

We would also like to welcome **Irvine Girls Softball Association** as a new community partner. IGSA is a non-profit youth sports organization for girls ages 4 ½ to 14, dedicated to teaching softball through sportsmanship, leadership & coaching. Spring registration starts October 1st. Go to www.igsateams.org to register.

Spreebird (formerly Screamin' Daily Deals), one of our newest corporate partners, offers a chance to support your school's PTA & IPSF. Please take a moment to sign up to receive daily deals (50-90% off on the best getaways, services, and attractions in the area) from this Irvine-based company. When you register at www.spreebird.com, select the Irvine school of your choice and the school's PTA will receive \$2. Additionally, Spreebird will donate 10% of the proceeds from any purchases to the school plus a matching 10% to IPSF. It's absolutely free, and the deals are amazing. It's a win-win! Go to www.spreebird.com to register, select a school and start saving!

Thank you for your continued support of IPSF!

More information about IPSF Programs and Activities is available at www.ipsf.net. IPSF representatives are available at any time to speak to your group or organization. Please contact us if you need additional information or would like to arrange a presentation.

Wendy Bokota, Director of Community Relations wbokota@ipsf.net (949) 265-6415

Steffanie Early, Director of Community Relations searly@ipsf.net (949) 265-6405

Astounding Inventions Student Invention Competition



Inventors, now's the time to put on those thinking caps! Plaza Vista's Astounding Invention competition will be held in December. Each entry must come from one individual student; there are no group entries. Your invention should be an original object or system. It may also be an improvement of an existing invention. A drawing and written explanation must accompany the invention and should include the name of the invention, what need or problem it attempts to solve, how it works, how the invention is made and what materials are used in its construction. Interested students can request a student rule sheet and permission slip from Ms. Danielle DeFrank at ddefrank@iusd.org. More information will be delivered by homeroom teachers.

A NOTE FROM PLAZA VISTA'S PTA

Dear Plaza Vista families,

We hope you had a wonderful break. We are looking forward to seeing all of you during the upcoming quarter.



Thank you for joining PTA membership and participating in the pledge drive. With your contributions, we have the benefit of on site health clerk, the Meet the Masters art program and peace of mind that our school has updated emergency supplies. Computers, printers and other technical devices can be updated as needed and the classes are able to purchase required supplies. Furthermore, our students will be enjoying upcoming educational assemblies, and much more...

If you have not had a chance to join PTA or participate in the pledge drive, the forms are available in front office. You can join anytime and your contributions are always very much appreciated.

Thanks for all you do to make our school the best it can be,

Your Plaza Vista PTA

IUSD Presents Ask-a-Scientist Night

STUDENTS: Grades 6-12

Are you doing a Science Fair project? Would you like to ask questions and get advice from an expert?

Come to **ASK--A--SCIENTIIST** night!!!



WHERE: Rancho San Joaquin Middle School

4861 Michelson Drive (On the Corner of Michelson and Yale) Irvine, CA 92604

WHEN: Wednesday, October 19, 2011 from 6:30pm - 8:00pm

WHAT: Local scientists and engineers from our community e.g. from business, industry, UCI, etc. will be on hand to help you and advise you on your project. IUSD science teachers will also be present to advise you.

ALL STUDENTS MUST BE SUPERVISED BY AN ADULT THROUGHOUT THE EVENING!

PARKING: You may park on Michelson where it says "No Parking" for this evening only, as Irvine Police will not be ticketing for the event.