

South Sutter Charter School

Spring 2006 Newsletter



SSCS School Council Needs YOU!

Dear Parents,

We are approaching our goal of having enough parents present to conduct important school business that will facilitate readiness of a budget for next year and compliance with our authorizer's conditions for continued operation.

We are close to having our Council established and even if you can participate only an hour by phone once a semester, the benefit to all our children will be such a gift!

Call me to find a way to make it painlessly (maybe even joyfully) possible to join us for our first meeting of the 2007 school year by phone or in person.

All the best,

Michael Talerico

Co-Director
South Sutter Charter School
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“Community Development” theme for Spring and 2006-2007 school year

Our first semester of operation found everyone busy with new training, beginning new positions, getting computers, office and learning resource center set up, and just becoming comfortable with our multiple roles at SSCS. Very happily, the Co-Directors keep hearing such great things from our families about all of our ESs and what they are doing to serve you! Now it is time to address one of your biggest requests—SSCS must concentrate on developing a true school “community”.

Our theme this Spring and for 2006-2007 will be “Community Development”. Share with your ES your ideas, inspirations and visions of what is possible for community building where you reside currently, and if you have lots of community building activities and events happening already, share with us how we can spread your good work and ideas to our SSCS communities in all the counties we serve. Our parents are doing a lot of wonderful things with their students—let find ways to meet together informally to share those great ideas with others! Following are a sample of ideas that generate from an inspired parent-driven school!

–**For larger groups**, find a fun local activity from an approved vendor (PE resource) that parents/students can participate in on a once a month basis such as bowling, skating, a climbing wall, etc. Try to find an activity where parents will be able to talk and connect with each other, as opposed to some place where you will need to be with your children the entire time.

–**For “class” activities**, find out what you and other parents would be most interested in. Have park days or theme parties (Valentines day activities, etc) where the parents can take a turn hosting the activity for the students of similar ages in their area. ESs often attend because they have found that one park day (or similar activity) a week (or every other week) can save hours of delivering materials to individual homes, or time spent talking on the phone with parents/students individually, between scheduled LR meetings. In this way, any materials that have arrived for a family can be delivered at that time, and families can also give their ESs orders then. Save questions for that day, and all parents attending can benefit from the answers. At your first “class” activity, ask each other what you would like to happen additionally and what each is willing to contribute for the year (activity, location, planning).

Community development is a priority at SSCS and in partnership with each other, we will create truly exciting and supportive activities and events for all of our students!

Co-directors:

Michael Talerico
Janet Marsh Becky
Cote



Assessment Reward Announcement

We are excited to let you know that we are purchasing **Marine World Tickets** as a thank you for every one of our 2nd to 11th grade students who complete all required sections of their STAR Assessment Testing in April, 2006 (See the school assessment web page for details on STAR at <http://www.ieminc.org/Assessment/index.htm#STAR>).

We are purchasing the tickets with open ended dates so that you will be able to go to the park at your convenience, within a certain date window printed on the ticket. Your ES will give those students who earned the reward their Marine World Ticket at your May or June learning record meeting. Please make sure that all your students complete each required section of their STAR Assessment so that they will be able to take full advantage of these tickets!

Thank You For Your Anticipated Cooperation!



STAR Assessment Information

CAHSEE

The California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) is a requirement for graduation and for receiving a high school diploma. All 10th grade students must take this exam. Those who do not pass in 10th grade have additional opportunities each school year to pass the exam. A passing score of 350 is required in each area (Math and Language Arts) of the CAHSEE.

Please Note:

Make up dates are not offered at some of our test sites, particularly the smaller test sites. If a student cannot attend on the test date at their site, the family needs to inform their ES. The ES can then enter this information in the database so we can make arrangements and adjustments as necessary to have the student test at one of the makeup test sites. Check our Assessment page on our Website for the most current testing information:

<http://www.ieminc.org/Assessment/index.htm#STAR>

Early Assessment of Readiness for College Program (EAP)

The Early Assessment Program is for any junior year student in the state of California who wants to take the EAP voluntary portion on the STAR Multiple Choice Test. The EAP contains questions in the higher level CST Math portion and in the Language Arts portion of the test. There is also a separate EAP writing essay as well. This program is through CSU which has worked in collaboration with ETS Testing Services which administers the STAR test.

By participating in the Early Assessment of Readiness for College Program (EAP), the student's responses on selected test questions will be used to determine whether his or her knowledge and skills in English Language Arts and/or mathematics meet California State University (CSU) standards for placement into basic college-level English and/or mathematics courses. Please let your student's ES know if they plan on taking this portion of the test.

All our 11th grade students have the option of taking the EAP portion of the STAR if the student thinks he/she will go on to a university after high school graduation. There is no penalty for attempting this test.

STAR

These annual standardized tests are mandated by the State of California and in compliance with NCLB. 95% student participation is required for grades 2-11.

Dates for grades 2-11 multiple choice portion of the test are within the state mandated test window. Please check your school calendar for the test window and your specific test site schedules for specific dates and times.

The dates our students must complete the STAR assessment are mandated by the State Board of Education.

Students must test at the grade level indicated on their student agreement (with the exception of students with specific IEP statements).

Individual test scores are confidential and are sent directly to the parent/student by the assessment department usually in mid to late August, after they are received.

Scores collected by the State are aggregates and merged into group grade level reports by subject. Individual scores are confidential and are not collected by the State.

STAR study resources can be found online at the following link:

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>

Student will need to bring a lunch, snacks, water, and a quiet activity in the event they should finish earlier than other students.

EOC

EOC tests are a part of the STAR assessments. The Assessment Department will make sure all 9th through 11th graders have the correct EOC (End of Course) test booklet for Science if they are taking a science course that is California Standards Based and if they are on our list.

We will make sure all our 8th and 9th graders have the correct EOC (End of Course) test booklet for Math whether it is General Math, Algebra I, Algebra II, or Geometry.

We will make sure any 10th or 11th grader taking a higher level Math course will have the correct EOC (End of Course) test booklet appropriate for the course they are completing.

Student Behavior Policy at Test Sites

The following is our policy regarding SSCS student behavior during our various assessment administrations, most notably the STAR testing program. Please review this information with your students prior to arriving at the test location.

- An emergency contact number must be given to the teacher before testing can begin.
- We are using private property and the rules of the facility must also be followed.
- Do not go into other areas of the facility besides your testing room and designated areas.
- There will be no roughhousing, walking on benches outside or furniture inside.
- Supervising adults will be listened to and obeyed.
- There will be no talking, note passing, or noise making while anyone is testing.
- There will be no talking when the teacher is talking.
- During breaks, quiet talking is allowed. Hands will be raised for questions.
- Only one student at a time will be allowed to leave the room to use the bathroom.
- When tests are finished, students will stay in the classroom until all others are finished, students must bring quiet activities to engage in during this time (books, coloring/drawing materials).
- Respect will be shown for other's personal space and belongings.
- There will be no verbal or physical abuse. Threatening or violent behavior will not be tolerated.
- Profanity will not be tolerated.
- There is no smoking, drinking, or illegal drug use.

Breaking these rules may result in Suspension or Expulsion from any school group activities or if serious, from the school itself.

Parents will be called immediately and student will be sent home with consequences and return at a later date to make up the tests.

Students may not leave the facility until:

- Grades 2-8 parents come in and check students out from their teacher
- Grades 9-11 Students check out from their teacher with a signed letter from parent stating that they may leave on their own (if student does not have a letter, they will wait there until a parent or guardian can be contacted and talked with by an adult helper or teacher).

Testing Tips

- Make sure that your student goes to bed early and has a full night's rest prior to testing
- Make sure that your student has a good protein breakfast prior to testing
- Send your student with a snack and bottled water if needed for break time
- Prepare your student for testing by using test prep materials
- Let your student know that the results will not affect their grades; however we do want them to take it seriously and do their best
- Let the student know that they are not penalized for wrong answers so it's okay to make an educated guess.

Thank You for All Your Cooperation, Assessment Department



**Top 10 Reasons for your kids to
take
the STAR test
(a parents' perspective)**

By Mary Burns, Parent

10. Free tickets to Marine World (yes, there are even more important reasons than that!)

9. So you can tell your meddling mother-in-law that "Yes, we do regular

assessments so we know they're learning," even though YOU knew they were learning the whole time!

8. Test results are as private as you want them to be – the state only uses GROUP results, to ensure that your school is working.

7. Your kids will like it – it's probably easier than what they usually do at home. Remind them that it's multiple choice. And they can bring something fun (and quiet) to do if they're finished early.

6. Free childcare?! I mean, you can stay if you WANT to, but maybe you'll schedule that long-overdue massage instead.

5. You don't have to plan or prepare any lessons for two whole days!

4. It can spark some interesting conversations about how we learn, how we remember things, and what's important to learn.

3. Don't forget – even having them make their own bag lunches for that day can be educational!

2. All the information you could possibly need is conveniently located at <http://www.ieminc.org/Assessment/>

1. THE #1 MOST IMPORTANT REASON TO TAKE THE STAR TESTS: South Sutter needs 95% of its students to participate in the tests, according to our charter and CDE.

If you feel that the parent choice, freedom and support that SSCS provides your family's homeschooling efforts is worth preserving, then be sure to take the STAR tests!

LOOK AT THESE GREAT WEBSITES! !



<http://www.kidzone.ws/math/>
online math games, activities, worksheets

<http://www.janbrett.com/>
free website with 3,571 free activities

<http://en.wikipedia.org/>
an encyclopedia that a lot of college students use

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/>
requires personal payment of \$20.00 per year site membership, K-8th grade language arts, math, languages, geography/history, science

College Prep Info



Important Info on SAT I, SAT I, PSAT, AP & CLEP:

In order to be informed on the latest information on the above information, you will need to go to <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/calenefees.html> . The site will provide you with code searches, SAT registration, and answer questions you might have about the **SAT I** test. The SAT test is offered every year several times each semester along with a summer testing date. It is important to note that the SAT I is a reliable measure of college readiness measuring both verbal and mathematical reasoning skills. It is scored on a 200-to-800 scale, where 200 is low and 800 is high. On the average, students answer 50-60% of questions correctly.

The **SAT I** tests are the subject tests in English, history, mathematics, science, and languages. They are designed to measure students' knowledge and skills in particular subject areas. Some colleges specify the different subject tests that are required for their admissions. They can also be used for students that have not completed a-g courses for certain subject areas.

The **PSAT** measures verbal reasoning, critical reading, math problem solving, and writing skills. The scoring scale is 20-80. It is usually offered several times in the fall semester. It helps students get ready for the SAT tests and offers students different scholarship opportunities.

The **Advanced Placement Program (AP)** develops course descriptions and exams for 34 college-level courses in 19 subject areas. Over 50% of U.S. high schools currently participate in AP. Many students bound for the nation's colleges and universities participate with an AP policy granting incoming students credit, placement, or both for qualifying AP Exam grades. The students considering AP should visit at apcentral.collegeboard.com.

The **CLEP (The College-Level Examination Program)** provides students of a wide range of ages with the opportunity to demonstrate college-level achievement through a program of exams in undergraduate college courses. There are hundreds of colleges and universities that grant credit and/or advanced standing for CLEP examinations. The students considering CLEP should visit at collegeboard.com/clep.

The UC system will be enforcing a new testing requirement starting Fall 2006. Checkout this website: <http://www.ucop.edu/pathways/ucnotes/september03/admissionnews3.html>.

SSCS NEW VENDORS, Effective 3/22/06



Classmate Math, LLC

CD-ROM versions of its programs for homeschooling and home tutoring -- complete courses for Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1, and Geometry with an instructor built into the curriculum.

Sessions Online School of Design

Online courses for advanced high school students in graphic design, web design, multimedia, digital arts, business marketing design

Global Student Network

math items

Classical Academic Press

Latin - Logic Curriculum

European Educational Services, Inc.

Educational Services including Russian language & Culture

Lakeside Equestrian Center Inc.

Horse Riding Lessons in Loomis

GRC & Associates / Gold Rush Crafts

Ceramics, Craft Supplies & Instruction in Placerville

Northern Calif. Construction & Training

Vocational classes in Sacramento

Steve Spangler Science

Various science kits, literature connection kits, books & resources to make science memorable & fun.

Enki Education, Inc.

Educational materials

TFH (USA) LTD.

Special Needs Toys- They carry adapted toys, including some that can't be found anywhere else.

Lakeshore Learning Store (Roseville)

Educational learning materials

Action Reading Fundamentals

learn to read program

Little Readers - Megan Bolding

Tutor for reading K-8 in Citrus Heights.

Money Savvy Generation

Cross curricular personal finance materials addressing reading, writing & math strands

Realityworks, Inc.

Life Skills Education for middle school & high school

EducationalLearningGames.com

enriching educational kids board games from all over the world

Tout About Toys

supplier of educational materials

Kovar's Martial Arts Center (Elk Grove)

Variety of martial arts classes, ages 4-adult.

Kovar's Karate Center Inc. (Sacramento)

Variety of martial arts classes, ages 4-adult.

Starline Press Core Curriculum

Starline curriculum is a character based, individualized curriculum designed to allow each student to progress at his or her own pace, which may vary from subject to subject.