



# JOSEPH KERR MIDDLE SCHOOL

8865 ELK GROVE BLVD  
ELK GROVE, CA 95624



Administration (916) 686-7728  Attendance (916) 686-7736  Fax (916) 685-2952

**Cecil Q. Duke, *Principal***  
**Lisa Vartanian, *Vice Principal***  
**Dolores Moore, *Teacher-in-Charge***

APRIL/JUNE 2009

## IMPORTANT DATES

- 3/30-4/3 Spirit Week
- 4/1 Incoming 6th Grade Parent Night  
STAR Goal Setting Lesson  
Student of the TERM Breakfast
- 4/4 Band Competition (CSUS)
- 4/6-4/10 NO SCHOOL - Spring Break
- 4/14 Knowledge Master 7th Grade
- 4/15 Knowledge Master 8th Grade
- 4/15-4/16 Renaissance Sigh-ups @ Lunch
- 4/23 CAT-6/CST Testing  
Track & Field @ Rutter
- 4/28-4/30 CAT-6/CST Testing - Minimum  
Day -Dismissal 12:30 pm
- 4/30 Track & Field @ Albiani
- 5/7 Field Trip/Crocker Art Museum/  
Federal Court House -  
Goldsberry & LaVanaway  
Track & Field @ Smedberg
- 5/8 Spring Fair
- 5/9 Band Performs at Great America
- 5/12 Track & Field @ Kerr
- 5/13 Silver K Assembly
- 5/14 Band Concert
- 5/15 New Leadership Orientation  
Track Championships
- 5/22 Band Performs at Jazz Festival
- 5/23 7th Grade Discovery Kingdom Trip
- 5/25 NO SCHOOL - Memorial Day
- 5/27 Awards Night
- 5/19 8th Grade Promotion Dance
- 6/1 Yearbook Distribution
- 6/2 8th Grade Raging Waters Trip
- 6/3 8th Grade Promotion Practice
- 6/4 Last Day of School - Minimum  
Day - Dismissal 12:01 pm  
8th Grade Promotion



### E-MAIL

Do you have questions for Kerr? Please e-mail them to [askkerr@egusd.net](mailto:askkerr@egusd.net) and the school secretary will answer your questions or forward them to the appropriate person.

**SCHOOL LOOP** <http://www.ker.schoolloop>

**SCHOOL WEB SITE** <http://egusd.net/kerr/>

### EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have moved, changed telephone or cell phone numbers or use a new email address, please make sure that the school has the correct emergency contact information. Emergency contact information allows us to contact you in an emergency or when your child is not at school. It is important that we have the most current information.

If you need to change this information, add an email address or phone number, please contact us at (916) 686-7728.



### OFFICE TELEPHONE USAGE

Students are not allowed to use the office telephones until 15 minutes after the last bell rings (3:26 p.m.), unless it's an emergency. We realize the traffic in Elk Grove has increased substantially and we feel this will give parents time to get to the school to pick-up their student.

### CELL PHONES

Students may NOT use their phones during the regular school hours. Cell phones should be turned off and put away until after school. Students may use their cell phones after school. Please have your student see an adult for any emergency situations that require the use of a phone during the school day.



**K**NIGHTS SHOW... **E**FFORT, **R**ESPECT, **R**ESPONSIBILITY

## ACTIVITY DIRECTOR'S CORNER

### **SPRING FAIR**

Spring Fair is May 8th. To reward our students for all of their hard work and effort during State testing. If you would like to volunteer, please email me at [nfrench@egusd.net](mailto:nfrench@egusd.net)



### **RAGING WATERS TRIP - 8th GRADE**

The Raging Waters trip is June 2, 2009 from 9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Sign-ups will start on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Checks must be payable to Joseph Kerr Middle School. The cost is \$30.00 which includes admission, lunch, and transportation. After April 24<sup>th</sup> the price will increase to \$35.00 and must be cash. No checks after April 24<sup>th</sup>. This is on a first come, first serve basis. Sign-ups will take place in the Student Activities Center.



### **8TH GRADE PROMOTION DANCE**

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade Promotion Dance is Friday May 29th. The dance will be from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in the MP Room. We ask that parents contribute baked goods, chips and any other tasty food items for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders to enjoy. There will be a flyer going home with all of the end of the year activities and eligibility requirements. The flyer includes a form to complete to volunteer food for the dance.

### **YEARBOOK**

The Yearbook will be distributed on June 1st. Students will pick them up in the Gym and then have an hour to meet in the MP with their friends and sign their yearbooks. We will have refreshments, extra autograph pages and pens available for sale in the MP. The distribution party will start after school and end at 4:30 p.m.



*\*Please check out the "Activities" tab on School Loop (<http://www.ker.schoolloop>) for weekly activities updates.\**

## DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

### **SOCIAL SCIENCE**

7th Grade

We are right in the middle of learning about what was going on in Europe during the middle ages. Ask your students about feudalism, the crusades, monasteries, the black death and the Magna Carta. You will be amazed at how much they have learned!

The remainder of the year we will learn about the Reformation, Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, the Aztec and Inca societies and the Age of Exploration. There is a great deal to do in Term 4 so continue to encourage your child to get enough rest. Before we know it June 4th will be here!



8th Grade

In our last quarter, 8th graders will be studying the Civil War, starting with the "causes", leading into the war itself, and ending with Reconstruction, when America reunites and rebuilds. There are many Civil War books at Elk Grove Library that would help your child be better prepared for this time period! The Civil War dates from 1860-1865.

After the Civil War, the 8th graders may be working on the 2nd Industrial Revolution and Immigration.



Again, we encourage you to make sure your 8th grader eats a good breakfast, and has many "sharpened" pencils and colored pencils in their backpack. Cleaning out their binders and backpacks to start the 4th term would be an excellent idea! We want our 8th graders to stay focused and "on their game" until the end of the year. With many activities and sports, it will be up to all of us to make sure that happens by continuing to make sure our students check School Loop daily, check their TracKerrs, review their A.R.S.'s and, most importantly, putting lots of effort into being all they can be in their last term at J.K.M.S.!

Kudos to our 8th graders who come everyday to their Social Science classes with a smile and prepared to learn about history!

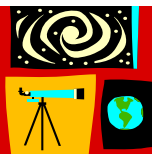
Congratulations to Joshua Lourence for finishing in the top 100 California middle school students in the Geography Bee. We wish him well as he competes on April 3rd at the State Geography Bee. Great job, Joshua!



Congratulations also goes to Tim Kreis and Sharon Vidauri in their participation in the County History Day competition. Tim placed third in the individual exhibit category! Both students represented Kerr well.

### HONORS SCIENCE

Honors Science Students are finishing Astronomy in 4th Term and will be finishing the school year with Geophysics and Physical Geography. The Standard 8th graders are finishing Motion studies and will be getting ready to do Astronomy as well. The 7th graders will be finishing Life Science studies and finishing the year with Family Life (more information to be sent home as the time approaches).

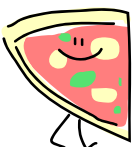
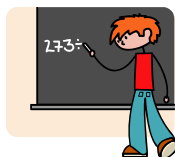


## COUNSELORS

We hope you are enjoying the warm spring weather as you read this. As usual, this time of year is full of fun-filled events and activities, as well as important information for students and parents. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us by phone or e-mail.

### CLASSROOM VISITS

During the month of March, the Principal, Vice Principal, and counselors visited **ALL** 8th grade classrooms to discuss some topics of concern with our students. Among the topics were: respect, academics, and behavior. If you have any questions regarding the above topics, please feel free to call us.



### STAR REWARDS LUNCH

On Wednesday, March 18th students who earned 14 or more stars on their STAR Cards enjoyed a pizza luncheon to celebrate their hard work on the STAR test last year. We look forward to planning our rewards lunch for next year, with all the great scores students earn on this year's test. Congratulations!



### COLLEGE INFORMATION

Over 100 parents and students attended Kerr's Annual College Night on January 28th. The evening began with a presentation of the PSAT and its importance for college-bound students. Outreach counselors from Cosumnes River College, Sacramento State University, University of California, Davis and the independent private colleges shared the differences between the college systems, admission processes, and course studies. Students learned they have many choices and how to navigate through the maze of choosing their college, meeting admissions requirements and accessing financial aid. Supplemental materials were provided to help students and their families continue developing their post-secondary goals and college plan. If you missed the college night and would like a packet of the college handouts, your student may obtain additional copies from the counseling office.

### 2009-2010 COURSE REGISTRATION

The buzz for the month of March was *registration*. The counselors visited the four feeder schools to deliver presentations about middle school expectations and course selection to the incoming 7th graders. On March 9th counselors presented to all current 7th graders to explain the course selection process for them. 7th grade students will be recommended for classes based on their current teachers' recommendation, classroom performance, and standardized test scores. In addition to the assembly on March 9th, the counselors from Elk Grove High School visited current 8th grade students on Monday, March 16th and Thursday, March 19th to assist them in course selection for high school.

### CREDIT REVIEW

March 27th was the end of the 3rd term. Selected students who are credit deficient received letters in February encouraging them to achieve a total of 30 combined credits on the third and fourth term report cards for promotion to the next grade level. Letters will be sent home to parents for those students who may be retained for the 2009-2010 school year by mid-May 2009. Please take the time to review your child's TrackKerr or the Joseph Kerr website (<http://www.ker.schoolloop>) for information regarding credits and promotion retention.





### **STAR TESTING**

It's that time of year for standardized testing. Our students will be taking the STAR tests in April.

Testing can be very stressful for students, as well as a source of much anxiety. Below you will find some helpful test taking strategies and preparation tips to help encourage your child to do their very best on these important state exams.

#### ***Getting Ready for Tests***

1. Get a good night's sleep.
2. Eat breakfast.
3. Come to school on time.
4. Listen carefully to the directions.
5. Read directions and questions carefully.
6. Remember, no one knows every answer.
7. Tests do not tell how smart you are.

#### ***How to Take Tests***

1. Have two sharp pencils and an eraser.
2. Read directions and follow them. Focus on key words in the directions.
3. Read the question and all the answers before you pick one. Focus on the key words in the questions.
4. If you feel nervous, take a slow, deep breath. Don't get stuck---keep going! If you don't know an answer, skip it.

Do as many questions as you can. Then, go back and try to do the questions you skipped. Pick answers that make the most sense. If you have extra time, check over your answers.

### **JOSEPH KERR SUMMER SCHOOL**



This year we are happy to be offering summer school here on our campus. This year's Summer School program is by invitation only. Priority will be given to those students needing to make up credits or students who need course credits to promote to the next grade level. The dates for summer school are June 10-29, 2009 from 8:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m. Classes will be held Monday through Friday.



### **COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

Counselors are available to meet with students and parents regarding academic, personal and/or social concerns.

Counselors are assigned as follows:

<u>Counselor</u>	<u>Student Last Name</u>
Mr. Farwell	A – G
Ms. Wolff	H – Q
Ms. Tsuda	R – Z

Patricia Allen-Hunter is the counseling technician and can assist you with any questions or concerns. The phone number where you can reach us is 686-7728.

## **LIBRARY NEWS**



### **LIBRARY**

The library would like to thank you and your students for supporting the Spring Book Fair. We were able to get several new books for the library! They are ready for checkout now!

The library also thanks its parent volunteers Cathy Medegovich, Lynn Jantzen, Kim Stahlman, Diane Ligh, and John Kaiser for their ongoing work in the library. Thanks so much!

We will be returning textbooks at the end of May. Remember to get all books in and pay all fines to be eligible for the end of the year activities!

Students may win a gorgeous Teddy Bear if they enter the Brooklyn Bridge reading contest. Check out books and get entry forms at the Kerr Library or our Elk Grove Public Library. Contest ends April 30th.

### **BOOK CLUB**

The Book Club is researching author web sites this month and will have its end of the year lunch in May.



## IMPORTANT INFORMATION



### IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL DUKE

Several Kerr students were suspended recently for allegedly playing a "game" which involves striking other students in the groin area, as described in the article below. One Kerr student required medical attention for this "game." As substantiated in the article, it is a growing concern of other middle schools across the country.

It is not my desire to implement a strict policy, as did the principal of the middle school in Connecticut, but this type of careless and dangerous behavior will elicit serious consequences at Joseph Kerr. It will not be interpreted as horseplay for students to be struck in the groin by other students, and striking students in any manner may lead to a suspension. I am requesting of all parents to please speak with your student about inappropriate touching and hitting. Thank you for your support.

### **Connecticut School Bans Physical Contact East Shore M.S. Outlaws "High-Fives," "Hugging" And Horseplay of Any Kind; Violators May Face Expulsion**

MILFORD, Conn. (CBS) —

A Connecticut middle school principal has laid down the law: You put your hands on someone -- anyone -- in any way, you're going to pay.

A violent incident that put one student in the hospital has officials at the Milford school implementing a "no touching" policy, according to a letter written by the school's principal.

East Shore Middle School parents said the change came after a student was sent to the hospital after being struck in the groin.

Principal Catherine Williams sent out a letter earlier in the week telling parents recent behavior has seriously impacted the safety and learning at the school.

"Observed behaviors of concern recently exhibited include kicking others in the groin area, grabbing and touching of others in personal areas, hugging

and horseplay. Physical contact is prohibited to keep all students safe in the learning environment," Williams wrote.

Students and parents are outraged. They said the new policy means no high-fives and hugs, as well as horseplay of any kind. The consequences could be dire, Williams warned in the letter.

"Potential consequences and disciplinary action may include parent conferences, detention, suspension and/or a request for expulsion from school," Williams wrote.

Many think the school's no tolerance policy goes way too far. Others said it's utterly ridiculous.

"Now it's almost as if it's a sanitized school. Where you have to keep your distance from everybody? And that's not what school is about," one father said.

"What if they are out on the playground at recess, or in gym class?" parent Kathy Casey wondered. "You know, gym class is physical."



### **WATCH OUT FOR GERMS**

Since we have had a few students recently diagnosed with Mononucleosis or "Mono," we thought it would be a good time to remind everyone how important it is to prevent the spread of disease. Mono is caused by a virus which spreads through saliva, which is why it is sometimes called the "kissing disease". Therefore it is important to remember to avoid sharing drinking containers, utensils, and lip gloss. Remember to sneeze or cough into a Kleenex or your elbow. **Hand washing is very important for prevention.** Wash hands before eating and of course after using the bathroom. If you have a cold or flu, frequent hand washing is the best way to prevent its spread.

## Ask Anne and Lisa

*The Ask Anne & Lisa column featuring District Dietitians Anne Gaffney, R.D. & Lisa Vorce, R.D., appears in EGUSD school newsletters and is designed to help families build healthy lifestyles. You can email questions to Anne & Lisa at [Communication@egusd.net](mailto:Communication@egusd.net).*

Dear Anne and Lisa:

I read about the importance of eating breakfast, but have a hard time getting my kids to eat breakfast before school. Do you have any suggestions?

Thank you, Breakfast Concerned

Dear Breakfast Concerned:

Many studies have shown that when students eat breakfast they perform better in school. They have better attendance, better test scores and they feel better. Here are a few tips to help encourage your child to become a breakfast eater:

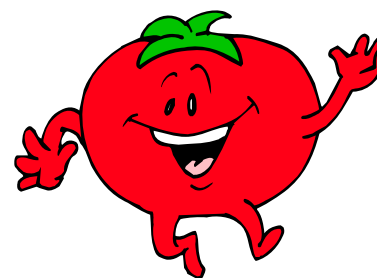
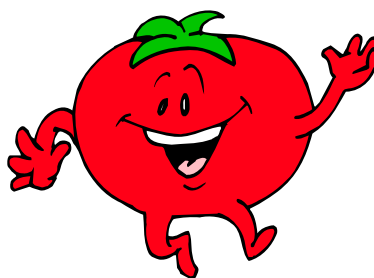
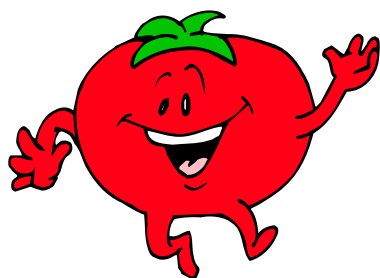
1. Keep quick, easy to fix foods available.
2. Involve your student in shopping for breakfast foods.
3. Discuss the importance of eating breakfast. We tell our kids the importance of brushing their teeth and washing their hands. We need to do the same with breakfast. Let your kids know that eating breakfast is one of the things they do every day to take care of their bodies.
4. Model being a breakfast eater. Let your kids see you eating breakfast. Modeling what we want them to do has a much greater effect than telling them what to do. (Besides, breakfast is important for adults, too. Also, research shows that adults who eat breakfast have an easier time maintaining a healthy body weight.)

Here are some quick breakfast ideas:

- Ready-to-eat whole grain cereal topped with fruit and 1% milk
- Whole-grain waffles topped with peanut butter, fruit or ricotta cheese
- A whole-wheat pita stuffed with sliced hard-cooked eggs
- Hot cereal topped with cinnamon
- Peanut butter on a whole-grain bagel or slice of toast with fresh fruit and 1% milk
- Breakfast smoothie (milk or yogurt and fruit, whirled in a blender)

Another healthy option is to have your student eat breakfast at school. Thirty-three of the elementary schools and all of the secondary schools serve breakfast every morning. There are hot entrees as well as fresh fruit, yogurt, and cereal offered every day.

Thanks for Asking, Anne & Lisa



# April 2009

## Joseph Kerr Middle School

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3	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">4</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p><i>CST Make-ups</i></p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">5</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p><i>CST Make-ups</i></p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">6</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p><i>CST Make-ups</i></p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">7</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="font-size: 8pt;">Field Trip to Crocker Art Museum &amp; Federal Court House - Goldsberry &amp; LaVanaway 8:30 a.m.-1:45 p.m.</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; font-size: 8pt;"> <p>Track &amp; Field @ Smedberg 4:30 pm</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">8</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Popcorn in the Library @ Lunch</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Spring Fair</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">9</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Band Performs Great America</p>																																																																																	
	Uncle Jer's Fund Raiser - Band																																																																																						
10	11	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">12</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Track &amp; Field @ Kerr - Jackman &amp; Pinkerton 4:30 pm</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Silver K Assembly 9:00-9:56 a.m. (MP Room)</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">14</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Band Concert 6:00-8:30 p.m. (MP Room)</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">15</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; font-size: 8pt; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p>New Leadership Orientation 9 a.m.-2 p.m. (EG Park)</p> </div> <p style="font-size: 8pt;">Popcorn in the Library @ Lunch</p> <p style="font-size: 8pt;">Teacher Appreciation</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; font-size: 8pt;"> <p>Track Championships TBA</p> </div>	16																																																																																	
17	18	19	20	21	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">22</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Band Performs at the Sacramento Jazz Festival</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Popcorn in the Library @ Lunch</p> </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">23</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7th Grade Discovery Kingdom Trip</p>																																																																																	
24	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">25</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>NO SCHOOL Memorial Day</b></p>	26	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">27</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Awards Night 6:00 pm (MP Room)</p> </div>	28	<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 24pt;">29</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>8th Grade Promotion Dance 6:00-8:00 pm</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Popcorn in the Library @ Lunch</p> </div>	30																																																																																	
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# June 2009

## Joseph Kerr Middle School

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																												
	1 Yearbook Distribution 3:15-4:30 pm (MP Room)	2 Raging Waters Trip 8th Grade	3 8th Grade Promotion Practice	4 8th Grade Promotion 7:30-9:00 am  <b>Last Day of School MINIMUM DAY - Dismissal 12:01 p.m.</b>	5	6																																																																																												
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28	29	30	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>May 2009</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <p>Jul 2009</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> </div> </div>				S	M	T	W	T	F	S						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31							S	M	T	W	T	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
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