

JOSEPH KERR MIDDLE SCHOOL

8865 ELK GROVE BLVD
ELK GROVE, CA 95624



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Cecil Q. Duke, *Principal*
Lisa Vartanian, *Vice Principal*

DECEMBER 2008/JANUARY 2009

IMPORTANT DATES

- 12/1 Adopt -a-Family Starts
- 12/4 8th Grade Basketball Games
@ Harris
Movie Night
- 12/5 Winter Dance
- 12/9 8th Grade Basketball Games
@ Kerr
- 12/11 8th Grade Basketball Games
@ Kerr
Band Concert
- 12/12 Adopt-a-Family Ends
- 12/16 8th Grade Basketball Games
@ Jackman
- 12/17 Geography Bee
- 12/18 8th Grade Basketball Games
@ Kerr
- 12/19 Minimum Day
- 12/22-1/2 NO SCHOOL - Winter Break
- 1/8 8th Grade Basketball Games
@ Eddy
Wrestling Match @ Kerr
- 1/9 Talent Show Site Competition
- 1/13 8th Grade Basketball Games
@ Kerr
- 1/15 8th Grade Basketball Game
@ Smedberg
Wrestling Match @ Kerr
- 1/16 Minimum Day - End of the Term
- 1/19 NO SCHOOL - Martin Luther
King, Jr. Day
- 1/21 Student of the Term Lunch
- 1/22 Wrestling Match @ Harris
- 1/28 PSAT College Night
- 1/29 Wrestling Match @ Eddy
- 1/30 Popcorn in the Library @ Lunch

SPELLING BEE

Congratulations to the following students who qualified as finalists in Kerr's Annual Spelling Bee on Thursday, November 20th.

7th Grade: Kimberley Bacon, Marissa Barber, Jessica Edgar, Monica Garity, Debbie Hernandez, Michael Joe, Kaylie Ortiz, Nini Nguyen, Maria Ramirez-Rieschick and Sofia Rios-Dominguez.

8th Grade: Gelene Amog, Riley Coyle, Courtney Cronin, Hannah Elmore, Mason Moulay, Keana Moore, Deanna Nguyen, Karen Nguyen, Tyler Nguyen, Reese Paxson, Jessica Read, Taylor Shaw, Anthony Smith, Casey Wilson and Edwyn Wong.

The winner is... Deanna Nguyen - CONGRATULATIONS! Deanna will go on to represent Kerr in our district's competition as well as The Sacramento Bee's Spelling Bee.



E-MAIL

Do you have questions for Kerr? Please e-mail them to 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.

KNIGHTS SHOW... **E**FFORT, **R**ESPECT, **R**ESPONSIBILITY

ACTIVITY DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Kerr's Fall Festival was a hit with students and teachers alike. The unanimous highlight was the head shaving of both Mr. LaVanaway and Mr. French as a reward for Joseph Kerr collecting over 3,000 cans for the KCRA Kids Can Food Drive. In the up coming months Kerr will again be participating in the annual Adopt-A-Family charitable project. Classes will be assigned specific people from needy families to collect money, clothes, and other necessities to make some one else's holidays more enjoyable. In addition, Kerr will sponsor a "Penny Challenge" where 7th and 8th graders compete against one another to see who can bring in more coins to benefit the Adopt-A-Family campaign. Other notable events include the "Winter Bash" dance on December 5th, and the Talent Show in January. As always check www.ker.schoolloop.com for the up to date activities list.

DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

ENGLISH

Both 7th and 8th grade classes are progressing through the district curriculum and will be taking the MYPAS (Mid-Year Progress Assessment) in January.

What is your 7th or 8th grader reading? Some popular choices are *The Twilight Series*, *A Child Called It*, *Bluford High Series*, any book by Walter Dean Myers, *Inheritance Series* by Christopher Paolini, and a variety of Graphic Novels. Your student should be reading independently for a minimum of 30 minutes each evening to develop vocabulary and comprehension skills.



The Kerr Library offers a wide selection of fiction and non-fiction books that appeal to adolescents. Another excellent source of reading material is the Elk Grove Library which opens in its new location, across the street from Kerr, on December 6, 2008.

"When you sell a man a book you don't sell him just twelve ounces of paper and ink and glue - you sell him a whole new life." - Christopher Morley



SCIENCE

8th grade classes are going over the chapters dealing with Atomic Theory and the Periodic Table. Seventh grade classes are just finishing the characteristics of life chapter and beginning the cell structure chapters. In Ms. Nierva's class there was a writing project on the Elements and the Periodic Table being done in the library the week before Thanksgiving Break. Honors classes with Mr. Meredith are finishing the unit on Chemistry and preparing for the Unit Exam. We will finish the term in Physics dealing with Motion and Gravity. In addition, the Science Department has begun the process of preparing a classroom as a dedicated laboratory classroom and are in the process of moving equipment and furniture over to it for both 7th and 8th grade. We hope to have it ready for use by mid-December at the latest.

SOCIAL SCIENCE

The Social Science Department is proud to say that our school wide "Election 2008" was a success! With the help of many Kerr parents, under the direction of Diana Ligh and Nicole Rogers, the social science department planned for a very exciting day! Social Science teachers used the Secretary of State's handout for students...an "Easy Voter Guide" (www.easyvoter.org) ...it is a collaboration between the state and the League of Women Voters...a brochure that reads..."Making Elections Make Sense". It is a "quick guide" to the candidates, issues, electoral college, political parties, and voting procedures. On October 30th, all students had a chance to vote on the President and Measure 1A. The results were sent to the Secretary of the State of California, who posted the results online. We posted how to access that information on School Loop. A BIG thank you to all the Kerr parents who planned, phoned, helped and decorated that day...you are parents showing Kerr Pride!!



Students learned about the great African medieval civilizations of Mali, Ghana, and Songhai at the beginning of Term 2. They are currently involved in the study of the fascinating Asian civilizations of the Middle Ages. These include China, Japan and the Mongols. They will learn about the geography,

achievements, government, religion and dynasties of these cultures. Please look at your students textbook. It has wonderful pictures and fascinating stories about each of the areas we are studying. Ask your child what he/she learned in social science and you may be surprised - they really do love history!

Some 7th and 8th grade Honors students participated in Knowledge Master Open, a tough computer competition, covering all core curriculum areas on November 18th and 19th. Names and results will be posted in the next newsletter.

Again, we urge parents to make sure your student has colored pencils, sharpened pencils and their binders organized in curriculum sections! Thank you for your assistance in this; when the kids are prepared, the class can move faster and accomplish a lot more!

The social science department will be hosting the "Geography Bee" on December 17th, under the direction of Mr. Margiott. Many 8th graders are researching and planning for history and state projects, as well!



Counselors will be visiting classrooms on a monthly basis to address issues of bullying/harassment, academic goal setting, and high school and post-secondary options. Registration for next year's classes will take place in March so stay tuned for more information.

Kerr's Annual College Night

Please mark your calendar for Kerr's College Night on **January 28, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.** Representatives from the UC, CSU, and Community Colleges will be presenting information on admissions, financial aid, and the various programs offered. Those students that took the PSAT will be able to get their results interpreted at 5:30 p.m. that evening.



STAR Rewards

To reward students for their hard work and motivation on the California standardized tests, STAR, the counseling department and staff of Kerr will be offering a reward program. The STAR reward program acknowledges performance and improvement. Each student will receive a STAR CARD that will display the number of stars earned on the 2008 test. A menu of reward items will be displayed in classrooms. Each item will cost a certain number of STARs which will be punched from their STAR CARD. A celebratory lunch will be provided to our SUPERSTARS who earned 12 or more stars.

COUNSELORS

Counselors

We are well into the second term and we hope you and your child are enjoying the middle school experience. It has indeed been a pleasure talking with so many of you and we appreciate your phone calls and emails regarding strategies to support your child's education.



Classroom Visits

In October, the counselors visited 7th grade Science classrooms to meet with students and provide an overview of the services we offer at Joseph Kerr.

We also discussed academic issues of earning good grades and the credit system used for promotion and retention decisions. The PSAT exam was administered to approximately 70 students on October 15, 2008. It is never too early to start thinking about and planning for college.

LIBRARY NEWS



Contests & Winners

The library is having a *Despereaux* contest! Students read the award winning book by Kate DiCamillo, *Despereaux*, answer two questions in the library, and are entered into a drawing to win a movie bucket which contains two movie tickets, popcorn, and candy! The movie will be out at Christmas. Contest ends December 18th.

The winners of our *Twilight* t-shirts were Gabrielle McDaniel and Mrs. Gesler! Thanks for those donations! The *Twilight* movie came out Friday, November 21. Many Kerr students and teachers went to the Saturday, Nov. 22 10:00 A.M. showing.

Fifty-three students read over 212 books in the Pizza Express Reading contest. They ate pizza and won prizes in the library.



Book Club

Book Club has finished with horror and mystery books and have moved on to Fantasy! At the Fall festival, book club earned over 600 tickets selling frozen yogurt! We will be ordering t-shirts this month.



Movie Night

We are planning our next **free movie night for Thursday, December 4th from 3:30-5:00**. Students are invited to watch a free movie in the library afterschool. There will be popcorn, drinks, and treats for sale. Students can win prizes too!

Save money by spraying backpacks with water repellent before the rain hits. Water damage to textbooks is costly!

YEARBOOK



Last Chance to Order Your 2008-2009 JKMS Yearbook!!!

The window for purchasing the yearbook at its cheapest price is closing. On December 1st, the price will go up to \$45, and after January 23rd, the book will no longer be for sale. This is the first ever full-color yearbook at Joseph Kerr, and it is of exceptional quality. Many parents have already purchased their copy for their students, so please don't miss out. There are multiple ways to order the book. The first and easiest option is to pay by credit card at jostensyearbooks.com. You can also download the order form off of School Loop, then send payment in with your student. If you do not have access to the internet, order forms are also available in the SAC, front office, or Mr. Coppola's room. 8th grade parents may also buy a dedication add (1 picture and 35 words maximum) for an additional \$25. Forty dollars is a small price to chronicle a year of your student's life at JKMS. PLEASE don't miss the opportunity!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

TERM 2 PROGRESS REPORTS

Our second Term Progress Report period ended on Friday, November 21st. Progress Reports were given to all students in their 6th period class on Tuesday, November 25th, to hand carry home. If a student received any grade below a C, a Progress Report was also mailed home. The 2nd Term comes to a close on January 16th and report cards will be mailed home shortly thereafter. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher(s) or counselor should you have any questions.



Each term Progress Reports will go home with your student and Report Cards will be mailed home.

DISTRICT INFORMATION

NO Excuses **Go to School**

The **No Excuses – Go to School** Attendance Campaign is in full swing. The attendance campaign offers students the chance to win incentives for having perfect attendance each month. Thanks to the generosity of local businesses, each month students with perfect attendance are eligible to win a prize.

As the holidays approach, please keep in mind the importance of having your student(s) attend school. Many exams are given during the holiday season and each day your student is present in class, they are learning and reinforcing important concepts to help them perform well on their examinations.

NO Excuses **Go to School**



Community Board Meetings: February 3, 2009

We're living in a digital age with technology everywhere. People use the Internet for school work, research, banking, entertainment and even shopping. Most likely, everyone you know uses the Internet for one purpose or another. Because of the increasingly wide use of the Internet, 2Webwatchers wants to promote student awareness that online activity leaves a digital footprint. A digital footprint is the amount of content that can be traced back to an individual, such as words, photographs, audio, or video. Students and their parents need to be aware that all photos and videos uploaded to sites like *flickr* and *YouTube* and all posts written on friend's MySpace and Facebook web pages become part of their digital footprint.

So why care about your digital footprint? Digital footprints can have a long-term impact that many students do not consider. Besides providing information to potential predators or identity thieves, students may unknowingly provide a negative image to potential college recruiters or employers, who will definitely "Google" their future applicants.

Q: What can you do as a parent to help your child understand the importance of their digital footprint?

A: Create an open dialog with your child about the danger of providing too much online information. Set aside the time necessary to do regular Google searches of yourself and your child.

Q: What can I do if my Google search turns up negative or slanderous information about my child?

A: Take a screen shot of the web page that has the negative or slanderous information. Save the file and then search for contact information from the website. Work with the company (e.g., MySpace, Facebook, YouTube) to remove the material.

Please visit us at:

<http://2Webwatchers.edublogs.org> to join in our blog discussion about digital footprints. The blog includes instructions on how to complete a screen shot. We value community input and welcome both your comments and questions.

Community members will have an opportunity to ask questions and get answers from EGUSD board members on February 3, 2009, at Community Board Meetings. Each year, EGUSD's seven trustees hold individual meetings at seven school sites as a way of bringing the board to the community.

The meetings offer an opportunity for the board to give an update about the district and to answer questions. In honor of the 50th Anniversary, this year's meetings will also include a screening of the fourth segment of a student produced film honoring the district's rich history.

The meetings are from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Snacks and water will be provided. Trustees will be holding meetings at the following locations:

Jeanette J. Amavisca -
Isabelle Jackson Elementary School

Pollyanna Cooper-LeVangie -
Elliott Ranch Elementary School

Priscilla Cox -
Joseph Kerr Middle School

Pamela Irey -
Helen Carr Castello Elementary School

William Lugg, Jr. -
Florin High School

Chet Madison, Sr. -
Charles Mack Elementary School

Brian D. Myers -
Arnold Adreani Elementary School

If you have any questions about the meetings, please contact the EGUSD Communications Department at (916) 686-7732 or communication@egusd.net.





EGUSD District Office Holiday Closures

The Elk Grove Unified School District's Robert L. Trigg Education Center and satellite district offices will be closed to the public from

Wednesday, December 24, 2008, through Friday, January 2, 2009.

Some departments and EGUSD Police Services will continue to work. To contact EGUSD Police Services, please call 916-686-7786. In the case of an emergency, call 911.

Questions regarding the holiday closures can be directed to Communications at 91-686-7732.

School Accountability Report Cards

The current School Accountability Report Cards (SARC), containing data from the 2006-2007 school year, are available online at the Elk Grove Unified School District website at <http://www.egusd.net/schools/sarcs/index.cfm>. Both a long detailed format and a short executive summary are posted for parents to learn more about the schools in our community.

Each school's SARC summarizes the school's mission, goals, accomplishments, and highlights the school's unique programs. In addition, state law requires that the SARC contain all of the following: demographic data, school safety and climate for learning information, academic data, school completion rates, class sizes, teacher and staff information, curriculum and instruction descriptions, postsecondary preparation information, fiscal and expenditure data.

The federal No Child Left Behind law requires that SARCs contain reports concerning the "adequate yearly progress" of students in achieving state academic achievement standards; Title I Program Improvement status; graduation rates at the secondary level; and the extent to which "highly qualified" teachers are teaching core academic subjects.

A hard copy of these reports can be requested by visiting your child's school office. Additionally, these reports have been translated in Spanish and Vietnamese at schools with large populations of families who speak these languages. Any questions regarding the SARCs can be answered by your child's principal or by contacting Learning Support Services at 686-7712.

Updated SARCs with 2007-2008 data will be published and posted online by February 1, 2009.

Reporte Completo de Responsabilidad de la Escuela Está Disponible

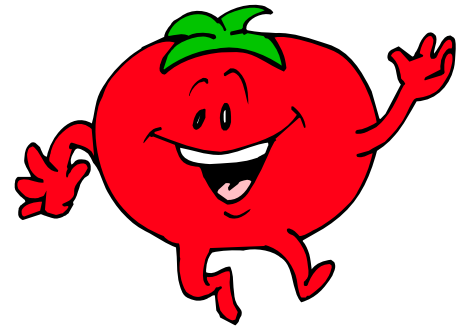
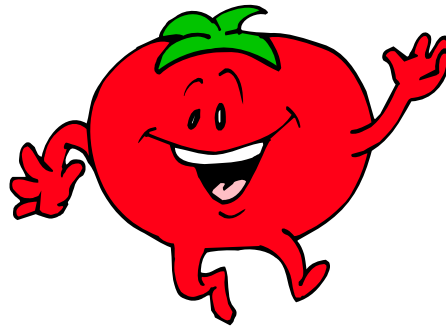
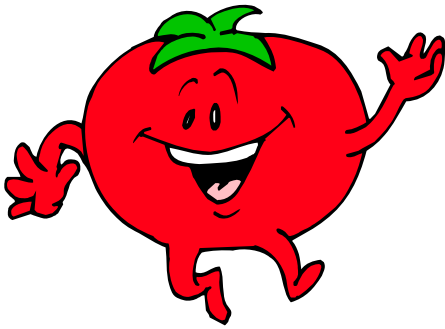
El Reporte Completo de Responsabilidad de la Escuela reciente (SARC), que contiene la información del año escolar 2006-2007, está disponible en la página del Internet del Distrito Escolar Unificado de Elk Grove en <http://www.egusd.net/schools/sarcs/index.cfm>. El formato largo detallado y el resumen corto están disponibles para que los padres aprendan más sobre las escuelas en nuestra comunidad.

El reporte de cada escuela, SARC, resume información escolar sobre la misión, las metas, los logros y los eventos más importantes de programas únicos de cada escuela. Además, la ley estatal requiere que el Reporte Escolar contenga la siguiente información estudiantil: demografía, seguridad escolar e información del ambiente de aprendizaje, información académica, tasa de graduación escolar, capacidad de clases, información de los maestros y del personal, descripciones del currículo y de instrucción, información de preparación post-secundaria, e información fiscal y de los gastos del presupuesto.

La ley federal de No Niño Dejado Atrás requiere que el Reporte Escolar contenga la información concerniente al "progreso adecuado anual" de los estudiantes logrando aprovechamiento escolar en las normas académicas; estado del Mejoramiento del Programa Título I, tasas de graduación a nivel secundario; y la magnitud en la cual los "maestros altamente calificados" están enseñando las materias académicas principales.

Una copia de estos reportes está disponible a petición visitando la oficina de la escuela de su hijo. Además, estos reportes han sido traducidos en español y vietnamés para escuelas con grandes poblaciones estudiantiles que hablan estos lenguajes. Si usted tiene alguna duda, el director de la escuela le puede responder o comunicándose al Departamento de Aprendizaje y Apoyo al 686-7712.

Reportes actualizados con la información del año escolar 2007-2008 serán publicados y anunciados para el 1º de febrero, 2009.



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.*

Hi Anne and Lisa,

How is a serving size determined? For example, if you look at two boxes of crackers, the calories aren't the same and the serving is not the same....

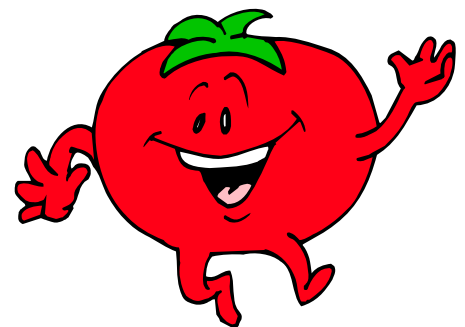
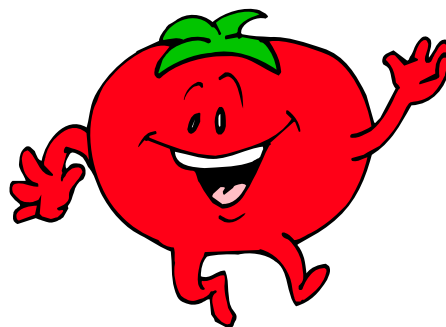
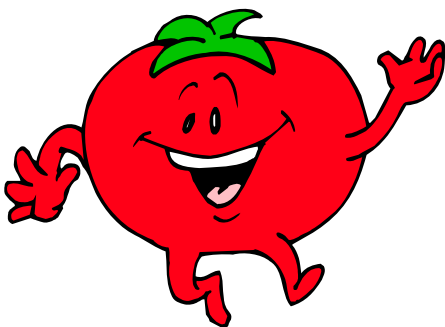
Thank you, The Label Reader

Dear Label Reader,

Nutrition Facts label serving sizes are based on the amount of food customarily eaten at one time (called the "reference amount") as reported from nationwide food consumption surveys. For crackers, the reference weight is 30 grams. So for each different type of cracker, the nutrition label information is based on how many crackers it takes to equal 30 grams. The gram weight listed may not be exactly 30 grams because only the weight of whole crackers is used. In other words, when comparing two different types of crackers, the number of crackers per serving maybe a little different, but the gram weight of the two portions will be very similar. For each portion (weighing approximately 30 grams), the calories and other nutrients will vary based on the ingredients in the different types of crackers.

The first place to start when you look at the Nutrition Facts label is the serving size and the number of servings in the package. Pay attention to the serving size, and especially how many servings there are in the food package. Then ask yourself, "How many servings am I consuming"? (e.g., 1/2 serving, 1 serving, or more) In the case of crackers, one serving may be listed as six crackers. If you ate 12 crackers, you would have eaten two servings. That doubles the calories and other nutrient numbers, including the % Daily Values shown at the right side of a Nutrition Facts label.

Thanks for Asking, Anne & Lisa



December 2008

Joseph Kerr Middle School

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January 2009

Joseph Kerr Middle School

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																													
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Dec 2008</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: x-small;"> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;"> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Feb 2009</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: x-small;"> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> </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	1 NO SCHOOL Winter Break	2 NO SCHOOL Winter Break	3
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4	5	6	7	8 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">8th Grade Basketball Games @ Eddy 4:30 pm</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">Wrestling @ Kerr vs. Johnson 4:30 pm</div>	9 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">Popcorn in the Library @ Lunch</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">Talent Show Site Competition 3:30 pm</div>	10																																																																													
11	12	13 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">8th Grade Basketball Games @ Kerr vs. Harris 4:30 pm</div>	14	15 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">8th Grade Basketball Games @ Smedberg 4:30 pm</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">Wrestling @ Kerr vs. Johnson 4:30 pm</div>	16 End of 2nd TERM MINIMUM DAY - Dismissal 12:01 p.m.	17																																																																													
18	19 NO SCHOOL Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	20	21 Student of the TERM Lunch @ Lunch	22 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">Wrestling @ Harris 4:30 pm</div>	23 Popcorn in the Library @ Lunch	24																																																																													
25	26	27	28 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">PSAT College Night 6:00 pm (Library)</div>	29 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-size: x-small;">Wrestling @ Kerr vs. Eddy 4:30 pm</div>	30 Popcorn in the Library @ Lunch	31																																																																													

