

ESPARTO MIDDLE SCHOOL

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December, 2003



EMS HONORED ONCE AGAIN

Thank you ...

for joining us this week for your child's student-led conference.

We hope you find the information in this newsletter helpful and informational. If you didn't get a copy of the courses of study for your child's grade level tonight, please feel free to drop by and pick one up at the office.

Please double check your child's planner at the end of next week to see what intervention classes s/he has been assigned for the next trimester. Some students will continue "as is" while others were dropped or added. We have also added and changed some of the classes.

This week State Supt. of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell announced the names of the 35 California schools nominated for the federal Blue Ribbon Schools program. EMS is one of only 10 middle schools on the list. This national recognition is among the highest that can be bestowed upon a school.

According to Supt. O'Connell, "These schools are proven leaders in raising student achievement and showing tremendous progress and accomplishment. They have remained focused on our vision that all children can and should exceed in school." The nomination is just the first step in a long screening process which will not conclude until September, 2004. In order to achieve even this nomination has taken the collective effort of our entire school community. To you, our parents and guardians, we offer our sincere thanks. Attending events, such as tonight's conferences, makes a positive difference in the achievement and growth of your child. Thank you for your support! Together Everyone Achieves More. Thanks for being part of our BLUE RIBBON T.E.A.M.

Besides recognition, we're often asked, "So, is there any financial reward in these awards?" Well, unbeknownst to us, the answer is, "yes." As a result of our Title 1 Achieving School award we received \$129,000. This is a federal Title 1 grant, so it must be used in the same ways we use our regular Title 1 funding. There is a little latitude in that it can be used for all students and must be used partially to "help" share our strategies for success with other schools throughout the state. Although there is no longer funds available, we have received approximately \$50,000 in API and High Achieving Schools funding in our district since 1999 as well. We plan to use a great share of the funds to improve "technology" hardware on our site. This includes equipment for student use, teacher instruction, and general school presentations.

HELPING MY CHILD

All assignments and homework must be completed in a timely fashion. You can help with this task. Students who do best in school are those who complete all assignments as they are given and are ready for the next day's work. How can you help your child?

1. Have a set time and place for doing homework every day
2. Make sure your child's homework is complete every night or every week. Make sure you know the requirements of the class. If not, call the teacher and find out.
3. If your child says that s/he has no homework, these are some things you can do at home:
 - a) every child should read every day for 30 minutes or more
 - b) all students need to practice their math facts (especially multiplication)
 - c) have them study their notes and reading material. Ask them questions and quiz them
4. If your child knows that saying, "I don't have any homework" means s/he will still have to spend time studying or reading, you can be sure homework will be more appealing.
5. Check your child's planner and homework. Make sure it is put away properly in the binder.
6. Look at your child's homework even if it is finished.
7. Communicate with your child's teachers. You can leave a message on their voice mail.
8. Ensure your child stays for his/her after-school intervention class (classes start again Jan. 5)

The natural consequences for not completing homework and studying is a low effort grade or lower achievement rate. Help your child achieve as much as possible.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(All calendar dates are subject to change. Changes are advertised in the next newsletter/and or via your child's planner)

December 8-19.....	Toy Drive
December 12.....	EMS Winter Dance—EES Cafeteria—6:30-8:30 PM
December 19.....	District Minimum Day—No Lunch @ EMS—Student Release—12:42 PM
December 20-January 4.....	Winter Break.....School resumes January 5
January 9.....	2nd Trimester Progress Reports (sent home with all students)
January 12.....	Site Council Meeting—7:00 PM— Room 20
January 16.....	PTSA sponsored school dance—Hawaiian Luau
January 19.....	School Holiday (Martin Luther King Day)
January 21.....	DATE IS TENTATIVE.....District Common Plan Day—No Lunch @ EMS—Student Release—12:05
January 30.....	Trimester 2 Progress Reports (sent home with all students)
February 6.....	EMS Valentine's Dance—EES Cafeteria—6:30-8:30 PM
February 9 & February 16.....	School Holidays -Lincoln's Birthday/President's Day
February 27.....	2nd Trimester Ends
March 5.....	7th Grade Field Trip—Mondavi Center—"Chi" performance
March 16.....	7th grade STAR writing test
March 26.....	EMS St. Pats Dance—EES Cafeteria—6:30-8:30 PM
April 8.....	Districtwide Minimum Day—No Lunch @ EMS—Student Release 12:42 PM
April 9-18.....	Spring Break.....School resumes Monday, April 19
May 14.....	EAOP 8th grade field trip—UC Davis28
May 31.....	School Holiday (Memorial Day)
June 1.....	8th grade Marine World Trip
June 2.....	Day On The Green (only for eligible students)
June 3.....	District Minimum Day—No Lunch EMS—Student Release 12:42 PM
Last Day of SchoolEMS Graduation.....Dance

CAHSEE

Students in the Class of 2006 will be the first California public school students who must pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) to receive a high school diploma. This graduation requirement is mandated by state law. Students in the Class of 2004 or 2005 are no longer required to meet the requirement. The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate competency in the state academic content standards for reading, writing, and mathematics. Information regarding the CAHSEE is posted on the California Department of Education Website (www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee>). If you have questions about the test, please contact Stan Dodd, EHS principal.

NEW SOCIAL STUDIES TEXT

We are in the process of adopting a new "temporary" 8th grade social studies text. The next state adoption is only two years away, but we feel we cannot wait that long without an updated book. If you are interested in reviewing the books under consideration, please contact Mrs. Hiltman immediately. We would like to go to the board of education for approval no later than the end of January. We will not be aligning exactly with the high school for this short-term update, but will consider district alignment in the next "full cycle" adoption. Our actions are a part of our involvement in a new history-social science county network and the addition of history-social science to the STAR tests.

THANK YOU

...to Judy Cordell Karlstad on behalf of Country Villa Mobile Estates who once again donated \$500 to EMS with a note, "Please use this money as you wish. We appreciate good neighbors and also feel that you are doing a good job educating your students." ...and again to John Madigan for volunteering as an assistance basketball coach for Larry Mayer.

ATHLETICS/CHEER SQUAD

With the onset of basketball season we have finally gotten a cheer squad together! The squad performed at the Dixon Basketball Tournament last weekend. Our basketball teams made a fine showing at the tournament. The girls won their consolation round game, and Ashlee Martinez received tournament honors.

GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION UPDATE

Students have been working on a "literacy" book seminar class taught by Mrs. Warde. Now that our construction is complete, students are continuing "bat-making" from last year. We are currently working on a field trip to a River Cats game in May for all G.A.T.E. and Honor Society students.