

Piner-Olivet Press

The Newsletter of the Piner-Olivet Union School District

Volume 1, November 7, 2008



District Celebrates 50 Year Anniversary!

By Marion Guillen, Superintendent



Congratulations to Piner-Olivet Union School District on its 50th Year! This is my 3rd year as Superintendent and my 31st year in the District.

I have been proud to be a part of our District over all these years. And during all these years, it has been of most importance for me to assure that our students receive the best education possible in every position that I've held in

the District from Classroom Teacher to Reading Teacher to Site Principal to Director of Student Instruction to Superintendent.

I would like to applaud the Piner-Olivet Union School District community for maintaining its high standards for student learning. The Governing Board, the certificated and classified staff, parents and local businesses of our District are focused on the academic achievement as well as the social and emotional well being of our students. We have and will continue to learn and work together to make a difference for each and every one of our students.

It is important that we communicate with our community and I hope that in reading this newsletter that you will become more informed about the District and each of our schools' programs. We plan to publish two more newsletters, one each at the end of the Second and Third Trimesters.

Thank you for your support of our students!



The Piner-Olivet Press is a tri-annual publication of Piner-Olivet Union School District. The newsletter is intended to keep families, and other community members informed about District updates, school programs, highlights, and events.

Student Learning – Newly Adopted Science Materials

By Karen Ricketts, Director of Student Instruction

Student learning flourishes when teachers, administrators, parents and students work together on best practices both in the classroom and at home.

To support student learning goals, the District's Science Curriculum Committee worked collaboratively to adopt new science curriculum aligned with California's standards. The Governing Board approved Macmillan McGraw-Hill Science and our students and staff are currently using these new instructional materials. This year, the adoption process will take place in mathematics.



District Technology Committee Update

By Karen Ricketts, Director of Student Instruction

On October 14, 2008, the District Technology Committee met to review the District's Technology Plan and identify priorities for this year.



Based on the components of the plan, several priorities were identified including curriculum benchmarks for our students, professional development goals, hardware, software and infrastructure needs. Committee members worked collaboratively

on webpage updates and familiarized themselves with new equipment that was purchased by the Piner-Olivet Education Foundation (POEF). A special thank you goes out to POEF for their generous donation of Epson PowerLite projectors, Canon digital cameras, and Lumens document readers for our students.

Piner-Olivet Union School District - Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence

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Efforts by the Jack London Staff Continue to Improve Student Achievement

By Jack Potter, Principal and

Liana Zavala, Technology Committee Member



The teaching staff and principal at Jack London Elementary School met on September 16th to review students' successes and note areas that need attention from the past school year. While the staff was pleased with last year's results, they were not completely satisfied. After reviewing the results for all students, the teachers established goals for the current school year for individual students, grade levels, across grade levels and for the entire school. After establishing goals, the teachers took time to review and share strategies which will help the school maintain and improve its academic results. The teachers' efforts focused on student learning and not just teaching.

To help meet those ends, teachers and students are using the Epson PowerLite projector, Lumens document reader and Canon digital camera, which P.O.E.F. recently purchased for the school. Teachers have also scheduled computer lab time to reinforce classroom lessons. Students enjoy using the technology to further their learning, and teachers appreciate the extra motivation their students are exhibiting.

In order for the Jack London learning community to be successful, the teachers, students, principal, other staff members and parents who form the community need to collaborate and hold themselves personally accountable for student learning. Parents help students learn by getting them to school on time and ready to learn, monitoring and helping with homework, and reading to them each evening. It is important that students understand that learning does not start when they walk onto the school grounds in the morning and stop when they leave in the afternoon. No one's learning ever ended when they finished school. Just like the adult members of the Jack London Learning Community, all our students will be learning for the rest of their lives. Please ask your child, "What did you learn at school today?" But also share with him or her something that you learned today.

Olivet Learning Community

By Emily Davis, Principal and

Pamell Gallagher, Technology Committee Member



Hello, my name is Emily Davis and I am the principal at Olivet Elementary. I am a first year administrator, and am thrilled to be a part of the POUUSD team. My focus this year is to learn all I can about the Olivet community and to find ways that I can help teachers increase student learning. Each day brings joy and learning to the students at Olivet. I am happy to be a part of this safe, responsible and respectful community of learners!

Our parent group, Olivet Families, plans fun family events, raises funds for our school, and volunteers their time to make Olivet a wonderful place.

The Olivet network infrastructure was completely upgraded this summer! Routers and switches were installed, and we are beginning to upgrade the school computer lab. Our hope is to have it up and running by Christmas, so that all students can use the lab on a weekly basis. We are beginning to use LCD projectors in the classroom, and newcomer students are using laptops to learn English. Teacher web pages are being designed and updated.



I know these efforts will impact student learning as we begin to access the amazing resources available online to augment classroom instruction.

Chris Campbell, Marco Vasquez, Emmaline Noar, Anuj Patel, and Fernando Aguilera, 6th grade students at Olivet School enjoy using the new technology equipment purchased by POEF.

Piner Elementary School Collaborations

By Joe Hamp, Principal



I am delighted to have the opportunity to introduce myself as the new principal of Piner Elementary School and tell you a little bit about myself. I have been living in the Marin/Sonoma area most of my adult life. Prior to coming to Piner, I worked for the Petaluma City School District as an elementary

teacher, administrator, and Special Projects Coordinator for the Petaluma City Schools Curriculum and Instruction department at the district office. My wife (also an elementary teacher) and I have been married for twenty-nine years; have two daughters, two dogs and a cat. When not at school, I can usually be found curled up with a good book or outside gardening (I have been called an obsessive gardener by my family).

I consider myself very fortunate to be working at Piner Elementary; its teachers are very professional and dedicated to their students. Currently, the Piner staff is working long hours to insure that your children receive a quality education that is both academically challenging and enjoyable for students. To accomplish this task, Piner teachers are looking at student data in order to understand where their most pressing needs lie and using this data to individualize their instruction. In addition, Matt Sokol, District Technology Committee Member is available to assist the staff at Piner Elementary School as they integrate new technologies that will enhance student learning.

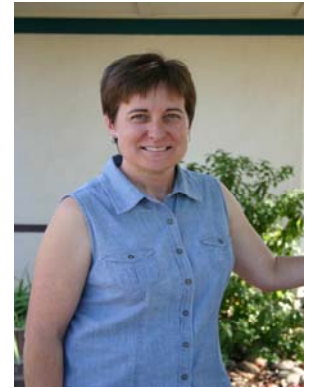


The Piner parent community is also a very important part of this work. Piner parents provide essential input through their participation on Site Council and the Piner Parent Organization. We are discussing a wide range of issues such as designing a safer parking lot to bringing back the Halloween parade. It is lots of fun and we are getting things done! We look forward to working with you and your child to have a successful year.

Schaefer Elementary School

By Jennie Snyder, Principal

Hello, my name is Jennie Snyder and I am the principal at Schaefer Elementary. I have had the pleasure of being a part of the Schaefer community for four years. Our teachers, staff, and parents are committed to the success of all of our students. My focus this year is to build upon this strength and help our staff to develop ways of meeting the diverse needs of our students.



Our parent group, Schaefer Families, plans fun family events, raises funds for our school, and volunteers their time to make Schaefer a wonderful place. We are grateful for all of the ways that they provide vital support for our students.

Last year our school received a grant from the Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE) to begin to implement a system for assessing student needs, developing ways of providing support to meet their needs and monitoring their progress toward specific goals. This year our school will expand on these initial efforts by participating in the Response to Intervention Pilot Project with nine other schools across the county. Through our participation in this project, we will be able to network with other schools throughout the county as we begin to examine and refine our instructional practices to help our students succeed.

Over the past few years, our students have utilized a variety of software in our computer lab to develop their academic skills. By using Read Naturally software, students have been able to improve their reading fluency and comprehension. In addition, Rosetta Stone software has helped students develop their skills in English. This year we are looking forward to expanding our use of technology on campus by incorporating e-Books for use as part of our Science and Social Studies instruction and by using recently acquired document readers, LCD projectors and laptops to enhance students' access of core curriculum.

Barbara Fedele and Jeff Dreitzler, District Technology Committee Members support staff at Schaefer as they expand the use of technologies on campus.



Career Academy's Extensive Online Coursework

By Keith Muelrath, Principal

Greetings Families & Friends



My name is Keith Muelrath and I am the principal of the Career Academy. This is my second year as an administrator and I am enjoying it thoroughly. After seventeen years in the classroom, I still miss teaching English; however, I take every opportunity to interact with the students. I visit every classroom every day. It is my goal to promote respect, responsibility and safety. These goals are not mutually exclusive as they blend to insure academic and social success for all. The Career Academy goals build upon these elements to prepare all students for a future that benefits the entire community.



Our extensive computer lab allows equal access for all the student body. Currently the entire junior and senior classes are taking on line course work for high school classes as well as concurrent college credit. Stop by sometime to view the exciting happenings at the Career Academy.



Jess Green, District Technology Committee Member supports students and staff with implementing a variety of new technologies at the Career Academy.

Piner-Olivet Union School District

Announces

Parent Course Offerings

C-BET

Community Based English Tutoring (C-BET) Program for adults is offered weekly. Classes are held at Schaefer School, Room 14 on Mondays and Tuesdays nights from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Childcare is provided. For more information, contact the district office at 522-3000.

Piner-Olivet Charter School's New Developments

By Diana Drew-Ingham, Principal



With the 2008-2009 school year, there are a number of new developments at Piner-Olivet Charter School, many of them centering on the use of technology. We are continuing to expand the use of new equipment that has

been purchased over the last couple of years, and this year online courses are being added to the schedule which students have access to both at school and at home. Additionally, we have added to our afternoon enrichment courses to provide a broader base of learning experiences to our students.

POCS is rapidly expanding technology use by both staff and students. Gary Jordan, District Technology Committee Member, assists both students and staff as they work with new technologies. POCS has a fully functioning computer lab, and all POCS classrooms have 3-5



student computers with internet use and instructional support. Students have access to standards-based skill support through Study Island both at school and at home. Students also use Apple Laptops with multimedia programs for student-made movies, music, and graphic presentations for core curriculum and enrichment projects. Teachers are incorporating the use of the internet, document cameras, and multimedia projectors in their lessons.

Enrichment classes offered during the school day are also being expanded, incorporating the new technology, new requirements for seventh and eighth graders, and band. A multimedia class provides instruction with the Apple Laptops developing projects that reflect students' skill level and interests. Seventh graders all participate in a new rotation wheel that includes keyboarding, health, and performing arts. Eighth graders are required to take Life Skills, which includes career exploration, and introductory foreign language with six weeks each of French and Spanish using Rosetta Stone. We are very excited about including Rosetta Stone in our curriculum since all students will have the opportunity to continue beyond the introductory level to higher levels of the languages for the full school year. While Vance Harris has provided band to our students two evenings a week for the past several years, this year he teaches band four days a week during our regular school day.