

# PLAIN TALK

## Quarterly news and views from Sierra Vista Junior High

### Important Information

#### Grading Timeline:

**September 21** End of Progress Report grading period.

**September 24** Quarter 1 Progress Report Grades MAILED home.

**October 19** End of Report Card grading period.

**October 22** Quarter 1 Report Card Grades MAILED home.

#### Canyon High School Football Games:

All junior high students attending games at CHS must be accompanied by an adult. Items such as skateboards, noisemakers, balloons, and face/body paint are not permitted. All students must remain in stands during game times, as loitering will not be permitted. Most importantly, in the event that a student will be picked up after the game, the games usually end around 9 PM, so please pick up your student at 9.

### Principal's Message

The 2009-2010 school year has started and, just like our incoming 7<sup>th</sup> graders, I am glad to be a Plainsman. As the new principal of Sierra Vista Junior High, it has been exciting working with our students, parents, and staff. We are off to a tremendous start to the school year.

First I would like to share with you the exciting news about our Academic Performance Index (API) score. Sierra Vista now has a score of 830. This score is a 30-point improvement over the previous year. This is the highest increase of any junior high in the Hart district. The API score is

based upon our students' performance on the STAR exams administered each spring. To put the score in perspective, the state sets the target API score at 800. All of our students and staff worked hard throughout the year to achieve this honor. Many other Hart district schools scored over 800 as well. The Hart district is the highest scoring district, grade 7-12, in the state. Congratulations to the entire Sierra Vista family.

As you visit campus throughout the year, you may notice a few changes. Sierra Vista is in the process of modernization. Over the summer the 500 classroom building and the Administration offices were reconstructed. Currently the 300 and 400 buildings as well as the library are being modernized. To accommodate for the lost classrooms, 10 new portable classrooms were added to the back of the campus. A larger portable is the temporary home of our library. The entire modernization process is scheduled to finish in August 2010.

Finally, a quick note to recognize two very special people: Congratulations to Ilona Pennay, our 2009 Teacher of the Year, and to Laura Schmidt, campus supervisor, voted as our 2009 Classified Employee of the Year. Both individuals want what is best for students and work hard to see that become a reality.

Let's have another great year at Sierra Vista Junior High.

*Mark Crawford, Principal*

## AP CORNER

One of our ongoing focuses here at Sierra Vista is bully prevention. It is our goal to create the safest school possible. On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, students and teachers attended the TEEN TRUTH Assembly. The focus of the assembly was to show how social issues can lead to school violence and drug or alcohol abuse. The personal speeches challenged students to think about how their reactions to these issues impact the lives of those around them. Ultimately, TEEN TRUTH LIVE challenged our students to have a positive impact on their peers, in order to make school a safer, healthier, happier place.

**Bullying** is a problem on every campus, and Sierra Vista is no different. As always, we continue to encourage parents to talk to their students about bullying. It is important that they understand what bullying is and to report it when they see it. Page 14 in the student planner is a great resource that details what Sierra Vista defines as bullying.

The TEEN TRUTH is one of many ways we have chosen to tackle this issue of bullying. This assembly sent a strong message that all of our students heard. It was powerful and motivating, and we have seen a great change in our students.

Currently, the following issues have been keeping the Assistant Principals busy. Please remind your students of the following policies:

**Skateboards:** Skateboards are not allowed on campus at anytime. Unfortunately, skateboards have become a nuisance. When skateboards are on campus, property damage and injuries occur. This also means students are not allowed to ride skateboards to school. Our office is also receiving complaints from our local businesses stating that skateboarders are also becoming a problem for them.

**Dress Code:** For the girls, please remember we have a two inch strap rule on tank tops and shorts need to be of modest length. For the boys, no oversized clothing or sagging pants are allowed.

## Notes from the ASB office:

### Checks

Please put your student's I.D. number on all checks turned in at school. Also, any checks returned to us for insufficient funds, closed accounts, etc. will be charged a \$10 return fee, and your student will be placed on the CASH ONLY list for the remainder of the school year.



### Gift Cards

Any donations of gift cards would be greatly appreciated. These cards are given out to students during the year as prizes and to show appreciation for doing something extra. Please send your donation to the ASB office, ATTN: Rose Wagenaar. If you have any questions about this, please call ext. 2012.

### TARGET REDcards program

When parents, teachers, and other school supporters use their REDcards, Target donates up to 1% of their purchase to the designated school. To participate, all you will need is a REDcard and also enroll in the program at [Target.com/tcoe](http://Target.com/tcoe) or by calling 1-800-316-6142

To learn more about the program, please go to [Target.com/tcoe](http://Target.com/tcoe).

## News from the Library



### Modernization News for the Library

The remodeling of the SV library has begun. During the construction, library services and most of our collection of books are available in a large portable near the tennis courts. We are hoping to return to a lovely updated building by the spring semester.

### New SRC Program

Scholastic has changed their *Reading Counts* program to a subscription service. We now have access to all 45,000+ quiz titles. Students may search for titles online, via a link on the SV library's home page at <http://www.hartdistrict.org/sierra/library/index.html>. Parents and students should keep in mind that the list includes titles with a large range of reading and maturity levels, from grades K-12. Most of our teachers still require a point value of 6 or higher, which reflects the length of the book. Students should check with their English teacher for his/her requirements. The library's collection of books will be getting new labels to assist students in locating the SRC books. This process will take about a month. Please contact Mrs. Fulleman at [ffullem@hartdistrict.org](mailto:ffullem@hartdistrict.org) if you would like to volunteer to help with this project.

### Databases:

Sierra Vista students have access to *World Book Online*, the *Gale Database*, and *Proquest*. The links to these great resources are available on the Sierra Vista Library's home page. E-books, newspaper/magazine articles, multimedia, encyclopedias, etc. are accessible through these online subscriptions at no charge to our students and their families. The username for *World Book* is sierravista1 the password is sierravista. For *Gale* and *Proquest* the passwords and usernames are the same: sierravista.

### Brown Bag Presentations:

Brown Bag Presentations are educational and fun shows held once a month during lunch time in the SV library. Students receive free tickets from their teachers. Students may bring in their own "brown bag" lunch and/or enjoy the free snacks and juice the library provides. Parents are always welcome to join us in the library for these presentations.

The first Brown Bag presentation was "Weird Science." Mr. George Lyle, a science teacher of Canyon High School, demonstrated interesting and fun physical science experiments for our 8<sup>th</sup> graders. On the schedule for October 30<sup>th</sup> is a visit from the Placerita Nature Center. "Creepy Creatures" will be shared. Snakes, an owl, a possum, tarantulas, etc. will be exhibited and discussed for 7<sup>th</sup> grade life science students. Parents are invited to attend as well. The presentation will be during either lunch period.

### Math Department



CONSUMER  
ELECTRONICS  
RECYCLING - The Math Department is again collecting used (working or not) consumer electronics for recycling. You can send your items to your

child's math teacher or take them to the office. The list of recyclables includes...

- ink jet and laser printer cartridges
- cell phones
- Ipods
- digital cameras
- digital video cameras
- personal gaming systems (DS, PSP)
- notebook/laptop computers

We do not need chargers, cases, etc. for the items, only the items themselves. The items will be sent to a company called EcoPhones who recycle the electronics. Email Mrs. Coleman ([kcolema@hartdistrict.org](mailto:kcolema@hartdistrict.org)) for more information.

## The Surfers

The SURFERS are off to a great start this year in all classes, and we are happy with the progress our team students are making. Congratulations to Scott Davis and Olivia Powers for being our September Students of the Month. Keep up the outstanding effort and behavior! Team T-shirts are now on sale!! This is a SURFERS fundraiser, so please support our team! Ask your student for the order form or print one from Mrs. Lennarz's webpage. Please continue to visit our Sierra Vista teacher webpages and SnapGrades for helpful information in all of our team classes.

In Pre-Algebra, we are continuing to work on our integer and rational number skills, adding and subtracting fractions, as well as working with decimals. In Algebra A, we will be working with integers, rational and irrational numbers, as well as working with number properties and terms. Chapter 2 Tests in both classes will be on Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>. The Quarter 1 Benchmark will be on October 12<sup>th</sup>.

In English, students are continuing to read The Outsiders while learning reading comprehension and grammar concepts. On September 25<sup>th</sup>, students will be given a take home quiz for chapters 7-9, and it is due on Wednesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. The free choice SRC is scheduled for October 6<sup>th</sup>, and The Outsiders final is scheduled for October 8<sup>th</sup> and the quarter projects are due on this day, as well. The quarter benchmarks will be given on October 13<sup>th</sup>, while the final notebook check of the quarter is October 16<sup>th</sup>.

During first quarter in History, we picked up with the Fall of Rome and subsequent Byzantine Empire. Students worked on their first mini-project of the year, which included creating a map of the Roman Empire at its height and timeline of significant events. Students then learned about the origins,

beliefs, and spread of Islam, and also created their own Middle East map by labeling various countries and bodies of water. Wrapping up 1st quarter, we will be focusing on the African kingdoms of Ghana and Mali. Students will also be participating in an Africa Mask Day where they will have an opportunity to create tribal masks using authentic symbols.

In Science, students showed great creativity and imagination in creating their Cell Project Models. Ideas ranging from shoe boxes to Matchbox trucks to cake (YUMMY!!) were all implemented to demonstrate their knowledge of how the organelles inside of plant and animal cells function. We will be finishing up the quarter learning about the different processes that cells go through in order to survive and make copies of themselves. Thank you for all your support at home!

## Extreme Team

Extreme Team t-shirts are now on sale! Please invest in a t-shirt designed by the Extreme Team's own Jensen Kilgore and Jocelyn Gonzalez!

Throughout this first quarter in Miss Clark's science class, we have been learning correct and safe lab procedures, and the process of scientific investigation. We just completed a microscope rotation lab in which we got to observe a number of interesting prepared slides, as well as live specimens. We are currently creating cell models in class; the materials we use are completely symbolic of the organelles' functions. Experiences like this make what we are learning about cells much more relevant and exciting! We will end the quarter by studying how different organisms create their own food for energy through the process of photosynthesis.



This quarter in Mrs. Caneday's English Language Arts class, we are focusing on analyzing characters, broadening our vocabularies, and responding to literature through our reading of the novel That Was Then, This Is Now. We have already taken our two SRC quizzes for the quarter and began working on our quarter project, a character yearbook, on September 25. This project will be due October 12.

### The Dream Team

The Dream Team teachers are still reeling with excitement at having so many excellent students on our team this year. Thank you, parents, to those of you who came out for Back-to-School Night; we hope the record turn-out marks the beginning of a record year for academic achievement as well.

Each class is in full swing as we head toward the end of the first quarter:

**Mr. Harper's history class** has finished its visit to the Islam Empire and is now engulfed in the riches and natural beauty of Africa. In **Miss Terranova's science class**, students have finished learning about safety in the lab, scientific inquiry, and scientific procedures. We are now focusing upon the basic building blocks of all living things...cells! Students should be finishing their cell projects which are due October 5<sup>th</sup>. In **Mrs. Skoczylas' math classes**, Algebra 1AB will be completing chapters one through four of the Algebra book, and Algebra A will be reviewing pre-algebra math concepts and completing through chapter two. Math tutoring will take place Mondays and Thursdays at lunch, so please encourage your child to come in for help as needed. If a student does not understand a math lesson and cannot complete a homework assignment, please sign their homework page. The student then has additional time to complete the assignment and come in for tutoring. It is the students' responsibility to show their make-up work as it is recorded as a zero until then. **Ms.**



**Stauch's English class** will be studying character, plot, and point of view while reading *The Outsiders*. On the grammar front, they've been tackling the eight parts of speech and sentence structure. Lastly, a reminder: Keep reading those SRC books! You can always test early by checking with Ms. Stauch.

Don't forget to check out the Dream Team website, which includes homework pages and a calendar of events for both students and parents!:

<http://www.staff.hartdistrict.org/nterrano/dreamteamwebsite>

### The Majestics

We kicked off the year in history reviewing geography and important terms. We then moved on to the colonizing of North America. Students are in the process of creating a project involving their understanding of the Revolutionary War. The students have been learning about the colonists that wanted to break free from the chains of a British monarchy and went on to claim their Independence. Students were introduced to the causes and effects of the American Revolution as well as America's emerging leaders. We will be completing the first quarter exploring our nation's Constitution as well as the events and people that influenced its creation.

In science we just finished learning about the States of Matter. Students have had to rethink their idea of what it means to freeze. Ask them about their Freezing Point Lab and the freezing point of stearic acid. Now we are studying Elements and the Periodic Table. We are zooming inside an atom to see its composition. Soon we will learn how atoms form molecules and compounds.

In English, Majestics have practiced effective paragraphs, written a narrative autobiography, studied figurative language, and elements of the plot. It has been a busy first quarter! In second quarter, your student will practice the skills necessary for writing a

research report: finding credible sources, taking notes, organizing thoughts, writing paragraphs with transitions and a balance of researched information and analysis, revising for word choice and sophistication, and presenting a summary of the final draft. Please continue to work with your student on the interactive reading homework, and, as always, please feel free to contact Mrs. Pennay ([ipennay@hartdistrict.org](mailto:ipennay@hartdistrict.org)) if you have any questions or concerns.

We would like to invite all our Majestic Families to our annual Munchies with the Majestics Night on October 26<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 p.m in Sierra Vista's MPR. Come on out to celebrate your student's successes so far this year, hear upcoming team news, play fun and educational games, pre-order your Majestic T-shirt, and of course enjoy the food and drinks. It is potluck style, so please sign up for a dish on our take home flyer that will be coming home soon. We are looking forward to a successful year and hope you continue to check your students' Binder Reminder and Snap Grades regularly. Majestic Team Teachers - Mrs. Pennay, Mrs. Parkinson and Mrs. Velazquez

### **The Goonies**

In English, the Goonies are finishing up their personal narratives about an event that happened in their lives. They have been working on plot and creating vivid descriptions using all five of the senses.

In history, Goonies students have been learning about how the 13 English colonies gained their independence from England and then began the United States government.



The next unit is on the Constitution and quite possibly one of the hardest. We have such great students this year that I know they will tackle the unit with enthusiasm and success.

In science, the Goonies are beginning to learn about the anatomy of an atom. We are working on our lab procedures and getting used to performing chemistry experiments. Soon we will be learning about chemical reactions and energy levels of electrons.

### **REGIONAL TALENT SEARCH PROGRAMS FOR GATE STUDENTS**

The practice of conducting systematic searches for students who reason extremely well mathematically and/or verbally was begun by Professor Julian Stanley of The Johns Hopkins University in the early 1970's. Giving a difficult test such as the SAT to middle-school students, who are much younger than the college-bound seniors for whom it was designed, results in scores that point out differences among bright students who all score well on in-grade tests. Today, about 150,000 7th and 8th graders participate annually in talent searches, and the concept has expanded to include testing for younger students as well. Regional talent searches are conducted by The Johns Hopkins University, Duke University, Northwestern University, and the University of Denver. State and local talent searches have developed as well such as the UC Irvine Talent Search.

Academic summer programs, year-round educational seminars, and early college entrance are among the services available to students who score exceptionally well on these out-of-level tests. Believing that such students benefit from advanced coursework in their area of strength, talent searches offer acceleration and enrichment options in the humanities, mathematics, and the sciences.

### **What does the Talent Search do?**

- ◆ Helps families better understand the extent of a child's verbal and math talent
- ◆ Provides an interpretation of test results to show how a student scored relative to highly able peers
- ◆ Introduces an important test, the SAT, to young students in a "low stakes" environment
- ◆ Recognizes outstanding ability with a Certificate of Participation from Johns Hopkins University
- ◆ Enables qualifying students to take summer courses or CTY distance education courses
- ◆ Invites families to attend conferences (lectures, performances, and workshops) offered by CTY

### **Johns Hopkins Talent Search**

Eligible: 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who score at or above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile on a nationally normed test or Advanced on a state test. You can register online or through the mail.

Fee: \$37.00 to CTY/JHU by **November 20 for January 23 SAT.**

Arroyo Seco School Code: 9135493

Rancho Pico School Code: 9138101

Castaic School Code: 9138408

Rio Norte School Code: 9135495

La Mesa School Code: 9135155

**Sierra Vista School Code: 9135179**

Placerita School Code: 9132178

You will receive SAT registration materials in the mail. You should register by December 15 for the January 23 test given at Canyon High School (#05170). You must pay \$45 to SAT. (There is **no junior high school code** for the SAT.) On the SAT registration form, write #5334 for score reporting to Johns Hopkins University. You cannot register for the SAT online if your child is younger than 13 years old at the time of registration. For more information, go to [www.cty.jhu.edu](http://www.cty.jhu.edu).

### **UC Irvine Talent Search**

Eligible: 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who scored at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile on a standardized test or Advanced on a state test or who have been designated GATE.

Fee: \$30.00 to UC Irvine by December 20. You will receive SAT registration materials. You should register by December 26 for the January 23 test given at Canyon High School (#05170). You must pay \$45 to SAT. (There is **no middle school code** for the SAT.) (However, you may take the PSAT at UC Irvine or UCLA for \$35.00.) On the SAT registration form, write #4859 for score reporting to UC Irvine. For more information, go to <http://www.admissions.uci.edu/ats.23>

### **Both Johns Hopkins & UC Irvine**

\$37.00 to CTY/JHU and \$30.00 to UC Irvine. \$45 to SAT. Total = \$110. Report scores to #4859 **AND** #5334.

For more information, please refer to the Sierra Vista Junior High School Website. <http://www.hartdistrict.org/sierra/>



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### Personal Display of Affection

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\_\_\_\_\_ 1/2 page \$200

Number of photos provided- Maximum	
1 for 1/8	
2 for 1/4	
4 for 1/2	

Mail or deliver to:  
Sierra Vista Junior High School  
Attn: Mrs. Wendy Aird  
19425 Stillmore Street  
Canyon Country, CA 91351  
waird@hartdistrict.org

Neatly print ad text below or write on a separate sheet of paper:  
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Payment-Ad and Payment Deadline are November 25, 2009

\_\_\_\_\_ PDA Check included payable to SVASB  
\_\_\_\_\_ Pre-Order Yearbook (\$55 until January 22, 2010)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Total Paid

