

# Kennedy Jr. High School Newsletter

Jan-Feb 2009

A publication of the Kennedy Parent Center



## Principal's Remarks by Carol Carroll, Asst. Principal

Here at Kennedy, we want kids to learn lessons that will be valuable throughout their lives. Some of these lessons include working hard, learning how to get along with people, learning how to follow directions, etc. In this issue of the school newsletter, we will be focusing on several of these "life lessons," beginning with being on time.

Because being on time is so important to success in school and work, we have a tardy policy to help our students learn the importance of time management. If your student is going to be late to school, please write them a note and we will excuse your student with your signed note. If a student does not come to school with a note that is signed by you, we consider it unexcused and there will be a consequence. If a student is tardy between classes, there will be a consequence after the 1<sup>st</sup> tardy. Please call the school if you have questions regarding this policy. Thank you for your support!

### No Hoodies in the Hall, Please!

We are seeing a lot of students wearing jackets in school. The dress code policy states that no jackets, unless they are dress code approved sweatshirts, should be worn in the classroom. We see a lot of kids with "hoodies" on in the hall and we have them take them off. We also see kids with "unapproved" jackets/hoodies in class. Just a reminder, jackets are not allowed in the classroom, unless it is one of the outside classrooms or seminary. This includes Dance Company jackets and Armor Staff jackets. Also, no jackets are allowed in the lunchroom. SBO's may wear their sweaters and cheerleaders may wear their jackets IF they have their uniform on.

### Important Yearbook Information

If you have not purchased a yearbook for this year, the deadline is March 15 and the cost is \$16.00. Turn your money in to Mrs. Vargo.

*La fecha final por comprar un anuario es el quince del Marzo. El costo es \$16.00.*

Main Office: 646-5214

Attendance Office: 646-5218

Counseling Office: 646-5216

Fax: 646-5215

Parent Center (cell): 386-0354

#### Kennedy Jr. High

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West Valley City, UT  
84120

#### Web site:

[www.graniteschools.org/jr/kennedy/](http://www.graniteschools.org/jr/kennedy/)

**\*\*PARENTS:** Community Council applications are due FEBRUARY 3<sup>rd</sup>. Community Council meets once per month and helps determine how the school's trust lands funds are spent. See the application inside for further details.

#### Website of the Month

Check out <http://www.coolmath4kids> for ways to get your children excited about math!

## Granite District Attendance Policy

Just a reminder about the Granite District Attendance Policy since we are half way through the school year: “Seven or more days (or equivalent of 28 class periods) of excused absences within a school year are considered excessive and a doctor’s note may be required to excuse subsequent absences.”

If your student already has seven excused days/periods, we will need a doctor’s note to excuse any further absences. If your student has not yet reached this many excused days (or periods), we will notify the parent/student when doctor’s notes will be needed to excuse any absences. Any time your student has a medical appointment, ask for a medical excused note to bring back to school.

Feel free to check with our attendance secretary concerning the number of excused or unexcused absences that your student may have.

## School Attendance: A Key to Success

By: Colorín Colorado (2008)

One of the most important things your child can do to achieve academic success is also one of the most basic: going to school every day. In fact, research has shown that your child's attendance record may be the biggest factor influencing her academic success.

### Benefits of daily attendance

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By attending class regularly, your child is more likely to keep up with the daily lessons and assignments, and take quizzes and tests on time.

There are other benefits as well:

- **Achievement: San Diego Unified School District** found that students who attended school regularly were more likely to pass reading and math assessments than students who didn't attend school regularly.
- **Opportunity:** For older students, being in school every day gives them a chance to learn more about college and scholarship opportunities, and to take the important exams they need to build a successful academic record.
- **Exposure to the English language:** Regular school attendance can also help students who are learning English by giving them the chance to master the skills and information they need more quickly and accurately — even in other subjects!
- **Being part of the school community:** Just by being present at school, your child is learning how to be a good citizen by participating in the school community, learning valuable social skills, and developing a broader world view.
- **The importance of education:** Your commitment to school attendance will also send a message to your child that education is a priority for your family, going to school every day is a critical part of educational success, and that it's important to take your responsibilities seriously — including going to school.

### When your child misses school

So what happens when your child needs to miss school due to a medical appointment or family trip?

Sometimes these situations can't be avoided. In such cases:

- **Contact the school immediately.** The absence needs to be excused, and talk with your child's teacher to make sure your child doesn't fall behind on any of the lessons that she missed.
- **Judge these situations carefully.** Mandatory student attendance is a policy that schools take seriously. Unexcused absences will go on a student's permanent record; the consequences of your child missing class can include falling behind on lessons, lower participation grades, and poorer performance on quizzes and tests.
- **Keep in mind that public schools lose money when their students are absent.** Public schools receive money based on the number of students who attend each day. When a student

misses just one day of school, the school loses money — imagine how much a school loses when many students miss many days throughout the year.

#### **What you can do**

- As a parent or guardian, it is possible to plan ahead in order to limit your child's absences, make school attendance a priority, and help your child from falling behind if it is necessary to miss a day of school. You can do this in the following ways:
- **Help your child get to school on time every day.** Babysitting, problems with a car or late bus, and the weather are not permissible reasons to miss school. Frequently coming to school late may also be noted on your child's permanent record, and will make it difficult for your child to stay caught up with the first lessons of each morning. Teach your child how to set and use an alarm clock, and keep the television turned off in the morning.
- **Follow the school's guidelines and attendance policy, and report excused absences immediately.** At the beginning of the school year, review the school's rules and make sure you understand whom you need to call if your child is going to be absent.
- **Check homework.** Check each night to see that your child understands and completes the day's homework assignments.
- **Take an active role.** Stay involved with your child's daily experiences at school by asking how the school day went, and then listening carefully to what your child shares with you — both the successes and struggles. Make it a point to meet your child's teacher and friends.
- **Locate potential sources of anxiety.** If your child frequently appears upset or reluctant to go to school and cannot tell you why, schedule an appointment with his or her teacher or school counselor to talk about possible sources of the anxiety.
- **Keep updated on school events and announcements.** Read the school documents that your child brings home and take note of important announcements and dates, such as back-to-school night and parent-teacher conferences.
- **Try to limit the amount of time that your child misses school due to medical appointments or illness.** If possible, avoid scheduling doctor's appointments during the school day. Allow your child to stay home only in the case of contagious or severe illnesses.
- Students who miss days, weeks, or months of school at a time will have a difficult time passing their courses and catching up to their peers. For older students, prolonged absences may make it very difficult to graduate from high school.
- **Schedule family events with your child's school schedule in mind.** Plan holiday celebrations or family trips during weekends or school vacations. In the case of family emergencies or unexpected trips, talk to your child's teacher as far in advance as possible and set up a way that your child can work ahead or bring important homework on the trip.
- **Plan ahead.** Encourage your child to prepare for the next school day by laying out clothes the night before and helping to fix lunches.
- **Promote good health.** Make sure that your child eats a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables, and has opportunities to exercise every day through a sports team or playtime outside.
- **Create a restful environment.** Finally, make sure that your child can relax before bedtime by doing something quiet like reading rather than do something stimulating, like watching television. Ensure that your child gets enough quality sleep — ideal amounts range from 8 to 12 hours. Getting enough sleep will help her get up on time, be refreshed in the morning, and feel ready for a full day of learning ahead!

By making your child's school attendance a priority, you will be taking an important step in supporting your child's school success, and setting a good example. Remember — every day counts!

**Open enrollment for 2009-2010 runs from Dec. 1 thru Feb 14<sup>th</sup>. You may pick up an application in the Attendance office.**

## Asistencia escolar: La clave del éxito

Una de las cosas más importantes que su niño puede hacer para alcanzar el éxito académico es también una de las más básicas: ir a la escuela a diario. De hecho, la investigación ha demostrado que el récord de asistencia de su niño puede ser el factor más importante que influye en su éxito académico.

### Beneficios de asistencia diaria

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Si asiste a clases con regularidad, es más probable que su niño pueda seguirle el ritmo a las lecciones y a las tareas diarias, así como tomar las pruebas y exámenes a tiempo. También hay otras ventajas:

- El **San Diego Unified School's District** — distrito escolar unificado de San Diego — encontró que los estudiantes que asistieron a la escuela con regularidad tenían mayor probabilidad de pasar las evaluaciones de lectura y matemáticas que los estudiantes que no fueron a la escuela de modo regular.
- En el caso de los estudiantes de más edad, su presencia diaria en la escuela les brinda la ocasión de aprender más sobre la universidad y las oportunidades de obtener becas, así como de tomar los exámenes importantes que necesitan para ir formando un expediente académico exitoso.
- La asistencia escolar con regularidad también puede ayudar a los estudiantes que están aprendiendo inglés, ya que les brinda la oportunidad de dominar con mayor rapidez y exactitud las destrezas y la información que necesitan -¡e incluso en otros temas!
- Además, con el solo hecho de estar presente en la escuela, su niño está aprendiendo a ser un buen ciudadano al participar en la comunidad escolar, aprende valiosas destrezas sociales, y desarrolla una visión del mundo más amplia.
- El compromiso que usted adquiere en cuanto a que su niño asista a la escuela también le enviará el mensaje de que la educación es prioritaria para su familia, que el ir a la escuela a diario es una parte crucial del éxito educativo, y que es importante asumir las responsabilidades de uno con seriedad -ya sea que se trate de ir a la escuela o de ir al trabajo.

### Cuando su niño tiene que faltar a la escuela

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¿Qué sucede cuando su niño tiene que faltar a la escuela debido a una cita médica o a un viaje familiar? A veces, estas situaciones no pueden evitarse. En tal caso:

- **Póngase inmediatamente en contacto con la escuela.** Tiene que justificarse la ausencia y hable con el profesor de su niño para cerciorarse de que el niño no se atrasará en ninguna de las lecciones a las que faltó.
- **No obstante, es importante juzgar estas situaciones con cuidado.** La asistencia escolar obligatoria por parte del estudiante constituye una política que las escuelas toman en serio. Las ausencias que no han sido justificadas se registrarán permanentemente en el expediente del estudiante; las consecuencias de que el niño falte a clases pueden incluir retrasos en las lecciones, participación más limitada y desempeño más deficiente en las pruebas y exámenes.
- **Tenga presente también que las escuelas públicas reciben fondos en función del número de estudiantes que asisten a diario.** Cuando un estudiante pierde tan solo un día de escuela, la escuela pierde dinero -imagínese cuánto pierde una escuela cuando muchos estudiantes faltan muchos días durante el año.

## **Lo que los padres pueden hacer**

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En su calidad de padre o tutor, es posible planear por anticipado a fin de limitar las ausencias de su niño, asignarle a la asistencia escolar un lugar prioritario, y ayudar a su niño a no atrasarse si es necesario que falte un día a la escuela. Usted puede hacer esto de las siguientes maneras:

- **Ayude a su niño a llegar a tiempo a la escuela todos los días.** Los problemas con los cuidadores de niños, el automóvil o por el retraso del autobús, y las condiciones del clima no son razones admisibles para faltar a la escuela. Con frecuencia las llegadas tardías a la escuela pueden también anotarse en el expediente permanente del niño, pues pueden causar que se le dificulte seguir el ritmo a las primeras lecciones de cada mañana. Enseñe a su niño a activar y a utilizar un despertador, y mantenga la televisión apagada en la mañana.
- **Siga los lineamientos y la política de asistencias de la escuela, y notifique inmediatamente las ausencias justificadas.** Al inicio del año escolar, repase las reglas de la escuela y cerciórese de saber a quién necesita llamar si su niño va a estar ausente.
- **Verifique las tareas.** Compruebe cada noche que su niño entiende y termina los deberes del día.
- **Asuma un papel activo.** Manténgase involucrado en las experiencias escolares cotidianas de su niño preguntándole cómo pasó su día en la escuela, y luego escuchando con todo cuidado lo que le comparte -tanto sus éxitos como sus dificultades. Procure conocer al profesor y a los amigos de su niño.
- **Localice los posibles focos de ansiedad.** Si con frecuencia su niño se muestra molesto o renuente a ir a la escuela y no puede decirle el porqué, concierte una cita con su profesor o consejero de la escuela para hablar sobre los posibles focos de ansiedad.
- **Manténgase al día sobre los eventos y avisos de la escuela.** Lea los documentos de la escuela que su niño trae a la casa y tome nota de los avisos y de las fechas importantes, tales como las de la noche de regreso a la escuela y las de las conferencias de padres y profesores.
- **Procure limitar la cantidad de tiempo que su niño falta a la escuela debido a citas médicas o por enfermedad.** Si es posible, evite programar las citas al médico durante las horas de escuela. Permita que su niño se quede en casa sólo en caso de que padezca de enfermedades contagiosas o severas.

Los estudiantes que faltan a la escuela por días, semanas o meses seguidos tendrán dificultades para pasar los cursos y para emparejarse con sus compañeros. En el caso de los estudiantes de más edad, las ausencias prolongadas pueden hacer más difíciles el que se gradúen de la escuela preparatoria.

- **Programe los eventos de la familia teniendo el calendario escolar de su niño en mente.** Planee las celebraciones de los días de fiesta o los viajes de la familia para los fines de semana o las vacaciones escolares. En el caso de las emergencias familiares o de viajes inesperados, hable con el profesor de su niño con la mayor antelación posible y busque la manera de que su niño pueda trabajar por adelantado o de que lleve consigo al viaje las tareas importantes.
- **Planee por anticipado.** Anime a su niño a que se prepare para el siguiente día de escuela haciendo que la noche anterior separe la ropa que se pondrá y que ayude en la preparación de su almuerzo.

- **Promueva la buena salud.** Cerciórese de que su niño coma una dieta balanceada que incluya bastantes frutas y verduras, y que tenga oportunidades para hacer ejercicio a diario participando en un equipo deportivo o realizando juegos al aire libre.
- **Cree un ambiente de descanso.** Finalmente, cerciórese de que su niño pueda relajarse antes de ir a la cama haciendo actividades que lo tranquilicen, como la lectura, en vez de actividades que lo estimulen, como ver la televisión. Asegúrese de que su niño duerma lo suficiente para que tenga un sueño reparador -el número ideal de horas oscila entre 8 y 12. ¡El hecho de dormir lo suficiente le ayudará a levantarse a tiempo, a sentirse fresco por la mañana y a sentirse que está listo para el día completo de aprendizaje que tiene por delante!

Al darle prioridad a la asistencia escolar de su niño, usted adoptará una medida importante para respaldar su éxito escolar y para ponerle el buen ejemplo. ¡Recuerde — cada día cuenta! (Nota: Esta información ha sido adaptada del sitio Web sobre la asistencia escolar **Every Day Counts!** (¡cada día cuenta!) publicada por el distrito escolar unificado San Diego Unified School's District. Este sitio Web contiene **hojas de consejos para los padres**, en múltiples idiomas, sobre la importancia que tiene la asistencia escolar.)

For registration next year you will be able to pay on-line. This will help you avoid long lines. We will have computer available at the school for you to use if you do not have a computer at home. We now take payment on line with Visa, Mastercard and Discover. If you have any questions, contact Mrs. Vargo at 646-5214.

## Reality Town Rocks!

In December, Kennedy held its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Reality Town activity for 9<sup>th</sup> graders. This year's event was made extra-special by a grant from Junior League of Salt Lake, which allowed the school (for the first time) to purchase Reality Town handbooks for each student. The handbooks provided details of each student's "income" (based on grade point average), "family," and "job." They also contained photos and costs of the different cars, houses, etc., that the students could buy. The handbooks helped the Reality Town activity run more smoothly and served as a great souvenir for students who participated.

A high turnout of volunteers from Junior League, USANA, American Express, parents and the community made this Reality Town the most successful ever. We would like to thank all the volunteers who helped out. We couldn't have done it without you! Now, here are some Reality Town comments overhead among the students:

BOY: "I just bought two cars!"

VOLUNTEER: "Why?"

BOY: "They both looked cool!"

BOY (to two girls): "Hey, my wife stays at home so I only had to pay \$12 for child care!"

GIRL (disgusted): "I wish I was a guy."

STAFF (to a group of girls): "So, why are all of you standing in the Supplemental Income line?"

GIRLS: "We're broke!"

GIRL #1: "No one told me three kids were going to eat so much!"

(At right, Mrs. Utah—and former KJH student—Emily Nelson and her mother assist with Reality Town.)



## Signed U of U Football Up for Auction!

Are you a big Ute fan? Then the Granite Education Foundation has a treat for you! On Friday, Feb. 27, the Foundation will be having its Annual Dinner Auction Gala in the Grand Ballroom at Little America (silent auction begins at 6 p.m.; dinner and live auction begins at 7 p.m.). It's not too late to buy tickets for this event! Tables for 10 can be purchased for \$650; individual tickets can be purchased for \$65 each. Maybe you could be the one to win the University of Utah football signed by the members of what many consider the #1 college football team in the nation (!).

The Foundation does marvelous things to aid students within the district. Did you know that they provide:

- Eye exams and glasses (approximately 30 per month)
- Scholarships for students in financial need
- Books and musical instruments
- Dental exams for elementary students
- Miscellaneous items such as coats, shoes, backpacks, etc.
- Mill Hollow fees for needy students

For information on purchasing tickets call or e-mail Wendy Fayles, Kennedy Parent Center Coordinator (386-0354 or [wfayles@graniteschools.org](mailto:wfayles@graniteschools.org)).

## KJH is "Off to See the Wizard"

Come join us on the Yellow Brick Road as Kennedy Junior High presents its annual spring musical, "The Wizard of Oz." It will be held Thursday and Friday, March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. in the auditorium.

Tickets will be \$5.00.



### Clases de Ingles Como Segundo Idioma Para Adultos (gratis)

**Cuando:** lunes y miércoles, 9-10 a.m.; y/o miércoles, 2-3 p.m.

**Donde:** Kennedy Junior High, 4495 South, 4800 West, en el Centro de los Padres (Parent Center) localizado en Relo C ubicado en el estacionamiento de la escuela al lado este.

## Food Drive a Double-Big Success!

(By Anna Fuller, with lots of help from Claudia Cuevas)

Thanks to everyone, even the parents, who made this year's food drive a success. The 7<sup>th</sup> graders took all when they won with 366 cans. (This means they get into the Valentine's Dance for free!) They won with their superior enthusiasm, which all 7<sup>th</sup> graders possess. They were there for the hungry people throughout to the end, even when the other grades were not. The 7<sup>th</sup> graders were followed by the 8<sup>th</sup> graders with 266 cans, followed lastly by the 9<sup>th</sup> graders with 249 cans. With it all added up we had 1409 total cans. That's double last year's total. We hope that we can get even more next year.

## News from the Kennedy Jr. High After-School Program

Happy New Year! I am so excited to get back to the program after the holiday break and see all the students!

We were very busy in the after-school program up until the last day before the break making hats for the homeless. The students, with some help from the staff, made 67 hats and scarves for the Road Home shelter. We took them to the Hunter Library where they were on display until December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

We celebrated our accomplishment with a trip to Boondock's for some laser tag, go-kart, and arcade game action! Needless to say we had a blast!

We have a lot of exciting projects going on this month! The students will begin planning a "Senior Prom" with the Kearns Senior Center, which will take place in May. We will also be working on short films around health topics the students chose before the break. Aside from that, we will continue our cooking classes, sports, bowling & rock climbing, and homework help.

Just a reminder, the **program ends at 5:30pm. Please note that if your student goes on one of our daily field trips he/she will be returning to the school at 5:45 pm.** Please let me know if you have any problems with this, and we can make special arrangements.

Sincerely, Jessica Holtzer, Program Coordinator (718-7740).

## Calendar

*NOTE: The Orchestra Concert date has changed! The orchestra concert will be on **Wednesday, February 25, 2009** instead of on February 18<sup>th</sup>. Please change this date on your calendars. The concert will feature both Cadet and Concert orchestras and a variety of solos and small ensembles.*

### February

Mondays & Wednesdays: Girls/Boys Basketball

Tuesdays: Academic Games

Feb. 5 & 19: MESA meetings

Feb. 12: Valentine's Day Dance (2:45-3:45 p.m.)

Feb. 16: President's Day (NO SCHOOL)

Feb. 23-27: Direct Writing Assessment Test for 9<sup>th</sup> graders

Feb. 24: Academic Games (Final 4)

Feb. 25: Orchestra Concert (7 p.m., Auditorium)

Feb. 27: Granite Education Foundation Dinner Auction (7 p.m., Little America)

**March 3 & 4 -- Parent/Teacher Conference!!!**

**CRTs: April 20 – May 27**

## Parent Workshop: Improving Communication with Your Teen

When was the last time you had a meaningful, enjoyable conversation with your teenager? If your answer is "kindergarten," you need help!

The Kennedy Junior High Parent Center is offering a free workshop for parents on how to improve communication with teenagers. Topics covered will include:

- How to improve your active listening skills
- Overcoming obstacles to good communication
- Choosing the best communication strategy for the situation

The workshop will be offered two different dates and times to accommodate the greatest number of parents. These dates and times are:

**Wednesday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m.**

**Thursday, Feb. 19, 9 a.m.**

The workshops will be held in the Parent Center, which is located in Relo C at the east end of the Kennedy parking lot. For more information, contact Wendy Fayles, Parent Center Coordinator, at 386-0354 (cell) or [wfayles@graniteschools.org](mailto:wfayles@graniteschools.org).

Kennedy Jr. High  
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