



# Torrance Unified School District

## TOWERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*A California Distinguished School*

5600 TOWERS STREET • TORRANCE, CA 90503 • (310) 533-4535 • FAX: (310) 972-6456



## PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

**Sandy Skora**  
Principal

**September 2011**  
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### **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year! I am thrilled to welcome back our returning families and likewise, it is with great enthusiasm that I wish to extend a warm welcome to our new Towers Families. We at Towers Elementary School are committed to making this school year another positive experience for you and your family. Your active support and cooperation, combined with our best professional efforts, will ensure academic success for your child.

It is critical at each juncture of a child's education that he/she be provided with the necessary skills to be successful in the future. The first step along the pathway to preparing our students for a bright future is at the elementary school level. Therefore, teaching and learning will continue to be our top priority, along with ensuring a safe and nurturing environment which all students can feel a part of and where everyone has access to high quality instruction. Our Professional Learning Community time will continue to help in this commitment. The PLC will give the teachers weekly time to attend professional development, collaborate with colleagues at our site and others, organize interventions, and conference with parents. This will continue to occur every Wednesday. Kindergartners will be dismissed at 1:50 p.m. First through third grade will dismiss at 2:18 p.m. and fourth and fifth grade dismiss at 2:27 p.m.

I look forward to the coming year as an opportunity to continue to grow as a school community. Our PTA leadership has been working diligently to plan programs and events to support our students and their families. The PTA and staff will continue to place emphasis on providing meaningful parent education opportunities to support you and your child's success. I hope you make the commitment to work with us on behalf of our kids. Learning is a life long commitment for all of us.

### **THANK YOU TO OUR TOWERS DONORS**

Public schools are mandated to provide all the basic supplies necessary for students to succeed in school. We are not able to provide families with lists of supplies that students might wish to have to supplement that which we have provided. We are still operating on minimal supply budgets, so if you would like to make a donation to the school or to your teacher's classroom your generosity is much appreciated. We are always in need of Xerox paper, #2 pencils, glue sticks, erasers, colored markers, Kleenex, hand soap, etc. You are welcome to donate supplies directly to your child's classroom to be shared with all of the students, and/or make a donation to the school and we will be glad to distribute it from the office. If you would like to make a monetary donation, we will deposit it and order bulk supplies.

FYI – our custodial budget has been reduced, like all budgets, over the past several years. If you would like to make a donation to ensure that we have the supplies to keep our campus clean, your generosity is most appreciated. If you choose to donate, please make your check payable to **Towers Elementary**, memo "Towers Custodial Supplies".

### **LOOK WHAT'S NEW AT TOWERS**

Over the summer we had some exciting changes take place to help update our campus. A new garden, blacktop, and grass on our field and around campus as well as improvements to our faculty lounge, student bathrooms, and new murals. We would like to thank Sharefest and Barnhart for helping to make this happen as well as Laura Brandt and Jeanine Nugent for their time and energy as the liaisons for our school. We're looking good!!

## **SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL**

This year's School Site Council will include: **Parents** Q. Scott Kaye, Stephanie Lee, Robin Arehart, Maria Sanchez-Yela, and Suzanne Gibson; **Staff** – Nancy Horvat (Secretary), Sandy Skora (Principal), Kelly Schneider, Theresa McCarthy, and Carol Grossi. Our first meeting is Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, at 3:30 p.m. in Room 19. Our agenda will include a budget review, our 2010-2011 STAR test data, and a discussion of goals for the school for the coming year. It's an open meeting and we welcome your participation.

## **JOIN US FOR BACK-TO-SCHOOL-NIGHT, Thursday, Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>, is our Back-To-School-Night. This is a time for parents and teachers to meet and discuss the coming school year. Teachers will go over their classroom expectations, grade level content, and any special plans they have for the year. This is not a good time to try to have a parent/teacher conference. If you have concerns relevant to your child only, let the teacher know that you'd like to set up a time to talk privately. This is an adults' only evening. Please make arrangements for your children to be supervised off campus. The evening schedule is as follows:

6:00-6:45	K-2 classroom presentations
6:45 – 7:15	PTA meeting in cafeteria
7:15 – 8:00	3-5 classroom presentations

Due to the evening program, **this is an early dismissal day for grades 1-5.** Kindergarten dismisses at 1:50. Grades 1-3 will be dismissed at 2:03 and grades 4-5 will be dismissed at 2:12.

## **FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH**

As you may know, the federal government uses the data from our free and reduced lunch applications to determine funding for our Title 1 sites. Schools that have higher than a 25% poverty rate receive additional funding from the federal government to provide additional services for students that may need additional assistance in achieving the state standards.

What you may not know is that this same poverty rate is utilized to determine whether our school may be eligible for certain financial grants. Many times throughout the year, grants were available but our district was just short of the minimum guidelines to be able to apply. We want to make sure that we aren't eliminated from possible funding opportunities for our students. Please make sure you apply for free and reduced lunch if you qualify.

## **ABSENCES AND REQUESTS FOR HOMEWORK**

Please help us by calling the office to request homework for students who will be absent two or more days. We discourage you from requesting work for a single day because the student can easily make it up when they're back to school and feeling better. If you let the office know before 10:30 a.m. we will do our best to have the work on the counter by the end of the day. When parents go straight to the classroom and ask the teacher for assignments it interrupts their teaching and makes it difficult for them to do their job. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

If you know that your child will be out of school for five consecutive days or more, we can prepare an "independent study" packet for them to take with them. This allows students to keep up with their class work and allows the school to continue to receive ADA (\$) for them in their absence. Please request an independent study at least two weeks in advance.

## **TUSD ENFORCES STRICT DRESS CODE**

In spring 2004 the TUSD Board of Education adopted the following dress code:

"In cooperation with teachers, students, and parents/guardians, the principal shall establish school rules governing dress and grooming which are consistent with law, Board policy and administrative regulations. Each school shall allow students to wear sun-protective clothing, including but not limited to hats, for outdoor use during the school day.

In addition, the following guidelines shall apply to all regular school activities;

- Shoes must be worn at all times. **Elementary students must wear flat, closed toe shoes.**

- Clothing, jewelry and personal items (backpacks, fanny packs, gym bags, water bottles, etc.) shall be free from writing, pictures or any other insignia, which are vulgar, profane, or which advocate racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, or religious prejudice.
- Sunglasses, hats, caps and other head coverings shall not be worn indoors. Only medically/religiously required headgear, approved by the principal may be worn indoors. Sun-protective clothing must comply with District and school site dress and grooming standards.
- **Clothes shall conceal underwear at all times.** See-through or fishnet fabrics, halter-tops, off-the-shoulder or low-cut tops, bare midriffs and skirts or shorts shorter than mid-thigh are prohibited.
- Swimwear, pajamas, nightgowns, and oversized clothing are not appropriate school wear.

Because we work hard to provide a focused learning environment, at Towers we discourage any style of dress, hairstyle and/or accessory that is hazardous or would be distracting to the student and/or other students. These issues will be handled on an individual basis. *We also request that all individuals volunteering on campus or visiting classrooms dress in a modest and appropriate fashion.*

### **STAR RESULTS ARE HERE**

We are presently in the process of analyzing STAR results and looking to see if any patterns emerge that we can use to improve instruction at Towers. Student test scores are used to help plan school improvement efforts, to identify students who are academically at risk and as an initial screening for the GATE program. The test data will help us to target interventions where they are most needed. Our test scores continue to rise. Congratulations to our awesome staff!

### **ENGLISH LEARNERS MULTICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ELMAC) MEETS IN OCTOBER**

Our first ELMAC meeting will be held on Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 a.m. right after our flag assembly, in Room 19. We encourage parents of our second language learners to attend this meeting to learn more about the program we offer at Towers and how we can work together to help your children succeed in school. This will be a very important meeting where we will be discussing the school plan and budget that support our English Learner programs. It's also a great time to meet other parents of your culture and make new friends. We hope to see you there.

#### **Month at a Glance:**

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|--------------|--------------|---|
| <b>Sept.</b> | <b>16</b>    | <b>Flag Assembly</b>  |
|              | <b>19</b>    | <b>Fall Pictures</b>  |
|              | <b>21</b>    | <b>School Site Council – 3:30 in Room 19</b>                        |
|              | <b>22</b>    | <b>Early dismissal grades 1-5, Back to School Night (See above)</b> |
|              |              | <b>6:00 – 6:45 K-2 classroom presentations</b>                      |
|              |              | <b>6:45 – 7:15 PTA meeting in cafeteria</b>                         |
|              |              | <b>7:15 – 8:00 3-5 classroom presentations</b>                      |
|              | <b>23</b>    | <b>Flag Assembly</b>  |
|              | <b>30</b>    | <b>Flag Assembly</b>  |
| <b>Oct.</b>  | <b>7</b>     | <b>Flag – citizenship</b>   |
|              |              | <b>9:15 – ELMAC in Room 19</b>                                      |
|              | <b>10</b>    | <b>Student Free Day/Staff Development</b>                           |
|              | <b>14</b>    | <b>Flag – Writing Wonder</b>  |
|              | <b>17-21</b> | <b>Red Ribbon Week</b>  |
|              | <b>19</b>    | <b>School Site Council Meeting – 3:30 in Room 19</b>                |
|              | <b>20</b>    | <b>District Wide Earthquake Drill</b>                               |
|              | <b>21</b>    | <b>Flag – Math Superstar</b>  |
|              |              | <b>Progress reports go home</b>                                     |
|              | <b>28</b>    | <b>Flag – Special Recognition</b>                                   |
|              | <b>31</b>    | <b>Book Fair Begins</b>   |
|              |              | <b>Halloween Parade –EVERYONE wears costumes, 8:50 on field</b>     |
|              |              | <b>(Remember to bring a change of clothes for after the parade)</b> |