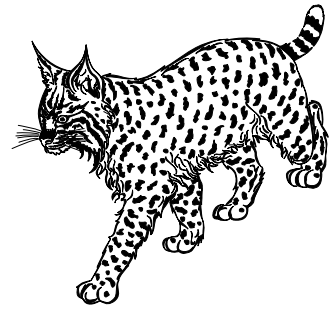


# MAYER'S MONTHLY MEMO – CHABOT ELEMENTARY

APRIL, 2008



## Hello Chabot Families:

Welcome to *Mayer's Monthly Memo*, the first issue of what I hope will become a regular newsletter to families updating you on some of highlights at Chabot from my perspective. We have so many wonderful activities now in place at Chabot. This month's theme is ***Keeping our Students Engaged***. From new programs to new challenges to new approaches to develop leaders, we are focusing on finding new opportunities to keep our students healthy, motivated and enjoying their time on campus. There's a lot to report.

This year, I've been working very closely with the **School Site Council (SSC)** with the goal of improving our school climate. Our objective is to provide a rich environment that incorporates cooperation, respect and teamwork along with our learning goals.

One of the most visible additions we've made is **Coach Jason**, who trained with Sports4Kids. Coach Jason is on the Chabot playground every day helping to "get our kids in the game" instead of standing around on the sidelines. The students are having fun learning new games that encourage teamwork and cooperation and teach basic skills. Keeping our children active and cooperatively engaged on the playground can help alleviate some of the drama that unengaged students can too easily experience. More importantly, when children are active and having a good time at lunch and recess, they come back to the classroom ready to learn.

We are also integrating the concept of "junior coaches" from the Sports4Kids philosophy. As part of this, we are training our 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to lead games on the lower yard and to help our younger students resolve conflict on the playground. Our students are learning that rock-paper-scissors is a great way to settle disagreements.

**HARD WORK PAYS OFF.** The focus of our physical and recreational program is on *doing your best*. It is **not** about being competitive vs. noncompetitive. We encourage our students to take pride in their hard work, progress and mastery of certain skills. Those are life lessons that go beyond their school and playground experience, and we are working to support the programs and activities that reinforce this.

For my part, I've been running each week with the 5<sup>th</sup> graders, and am very proud of them. They've been working very hard and it's paying off for them. Each one of our fifth grade students has dramatically improved their times. When we first started, all 85 could run a mile in under 15 minutes. Now 75 of them are under 11½ minutes! *Every single one of our 5<sup>th</sup> graders has dropped at least one full minute from their initial mile time.*

This is an important and admirable accomplishment. I am very proud of their progress and commitment, and hope you will join me in recognizing this big achievement.

**TURN OFF YOUR TV WEEK** is coming up next week -- starting Monday, April 21<sup>st</sup> and running through Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup>. We encourage you to turn off the tube for the entire week. **Did you know the average American child watches TV for 27 hours a week?! This is almost as much time in front of the tube as in front of a teacher!** More distressing, by the end of elementary school, that child has witnessed some 8,000 television murders and 100,000 acts of violence.

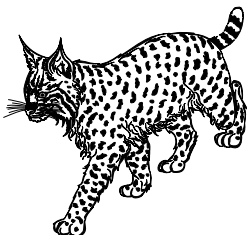
You can reduce TV viewing by requiring or promoting other at-home activities such as exercise, hobbies, crafts, playing games, tending pets, helping with household tasks, doing homework, keeping a journal, writing letters or **reading!** The Chabot PTA brilliantly scheduled the **Read-a-Thon** to coincide with Turn Off Your TV Week, giving you a terrific option to keep your child engaged *without* television.

**SPEAKING OF READING...** The Chabot teachers, staff and coaches do everything they can to keep your child mentally, physically and academically engaged during the school day. You can support this at home by encouraging him/her to **READ READ READ!** Reading comprehension is a critical element in academic success, and practice only strengthens it. The more your child reads, the more chance he or she will succeed.

**DON'T STRESS THE TEST...** Standardized testing is coming up for our 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. We hear a lot about testing, both positive and negative. The fact of the matter is that testing is part of your child's future – in school *and in the workplace*. We are required to administer standardized tests once a year. These tests tell us what your child has learned and where his or her areas of strength or weakness are. *Our testing window is between April 25 and May 16.* **The most important way parents can prepare a child for testing is simple. Just ensure they get enough rest and get to school on time with a good breakfast during the testing period.** *Don't stress, don't play it up.* Your children know the material. Remember, the most important thing is for your child to *do his or her best*. If they get to school rested, fed and on time, they will be prepared to do just that.

We appreciate all your support during this time of year so that we as a school can do our best. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

***Remember to tell your kids: learn a lot and have fun!***



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Home of the Chabot Bobcats