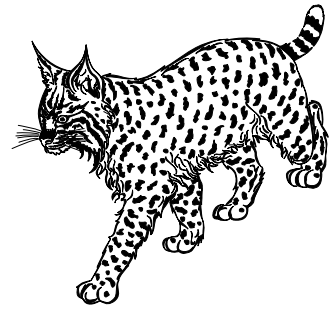


MAYER'S MONTHLY MEMO – CHABOT ELEMENTARY

MAY, 2008



Hello Chabot Families:

As we roll into the final weeks of the 2007-08 school year and look ahead to next fall, we are examining new ways to continue our instructional excellence. Chabot is blessed with an excellent group of teachers, and we are constantly looking at effective and innovative ways to support this valued instruction.

Next year, Chabot will be making some exciting changes to the curriculum. The first of these is to continue our focus on developing stronger writing skills across all grades. After much research, we've chosen to adopt the *Being a Writer* curriculum to supplement our Open Court language arts program. This new writing curriculum (for all grade levels) focuses on providing direct instruction, with a clear and consistent writing process that students will go through on a regular basis throughout the year. It also provides wonderful examples of quality writing for teachers and students to read and examine.

Art, music, and science for everyone, every week! After lengthy discussions with our teachers and the Enrichment Advisory Committee, we are revising our curriculum to include art **and** music classes weekly, in all classrooms, for the whole year. By combining PTA and school funds, we will be able to add one full-time, credentialed teacher to our staff to teach art, and then hire a music specialist to teach an expanded schedule of music, visiting all classes weekly. In addition, we will be able to hire someone who will provide support for our Hands-on FOSS science program by preparing and visiting each class once a week and work together with the teacher during this designated science period. Because these teachers will be on site every day and for the whole day, they will have more time to work with the individual classroom teachers to effectively align these enrichment topics with the ongoing classroom curriculum.

This new schedule will create more time in our classroom teachers' schedules to meet, increasing their weekly professional development time from one hour to two hours weekly. The additional professional development time from these changes will allow our teachers more chances to collaborate in their Professional Learning Communities as they refine their practice and determine how we can ensure that all students are supported and learn the grade level standards as well as how we can best differentiate to meet each student's needs. Another goal of this increased professional development time is for teachers to share more of their most successful practices and observe each other in the classroom. This peer level interaction will offer teachers the opportunity to discuss and address challenges they see in their various students at each grade level. With this scenario, teachers can exchange ideas and strategies that work in their classrooms and with their students, and help them develop a more robust team approach to instruction.

Speaking of Teachers... As we draw to the end of the year, the topic of next year's teachers is bound to come up. Parents, please be thoughtful about how you talk to your children about teachers for the next school year. We want to reinforce to all students that we have strong, kind, fun and engaging teachers in every classroom at Chabot. Children take on the anxiety and opinions of the adults around them and it's only fair that they get the opportunity to start each school year with a clean slate.

As far as class placement for next year... As we begin to assign students to classes next year, please understand that we work hard to create learning environments that bring into each classroom a variety of

students with their unique talents, characteristics and personalities. We take into consideration such factors as the numbers of boys and girls, leadership qualities, learning issues, combinations of particular students and behaviors and classroom diversity with the goal of creating classes with an equivalent number of students performing at a variety of levels in all academic subjects.

We believe that this is a key factor in encouraging positive and dynamic learning environments where our students can successfully grow and develop academically and as a community.

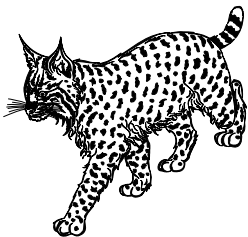
We are proud of the careful way in which we develop our class lists to create balanced classrooms, and we appreciate your faith in our professional judgment in this process. We are convinced that all students profit from being in well-balanced classrooms.

Our faculty is responsive to the occasional need for an *educationally based request*. If your child has specific needs that should be considered, please let me know in writing. Please note we do not consider requests for specific teachers, nor is it possible to make special accommodations to place your student in a class with special friends unless there is an educational rationale. Also, a family may have had a sibling in a class with a particular teacher previously. This is not considered a valid educational reason for placement. Each child's needs are unique and because a brother or sister liked or disliked a teacher does not mean the sibling will have the same experience.

Chabot's Open House and Lower Grade Science Fair is this Wednesday, May 21, from 5:30 – 7 pm. I hope everyone can come to this fun and important event. The evening is designed for you to learn as much about the types of projects the students have done this year. I encourage parents to spend as such time as possible in the room of your child's *current* teacher and celebrate what they've achieved together this year. While all classrooms are open for the Open House event, please allow teachers to spend time with their current families. Open house is also *their night* to celebrate the year and focus on the learning and projects that their students have accomplished. Also, please note that many rooms may appear rather bare. The state requires us to remove instructional materials from the walls during STAR testing, and *every teacher in a portable* will be moving during construction and has already packed away many materials for storage.

And finally ... Please plan to come to the June 3 community/PTA meeting. This is an important meeting that will address some of the changes you will be seeing on the Chabot campus as construction for the new building begins on June 16. Representatives from OUSD, the architects, construction personnel and others will be on hand to answer questions, so please plan to come. It is also the last PTA meeting of the year, so please join us to support the community.

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



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Home of the Chabot Bobcats

P.S. We are anticipating the first day of school for 2008-09 to be August 25th.