

From the Desk of Lyn Moreno

Assistant Principal

Internet Safety

Our children are bombarded with an avalanche of new technology every year. This has created both opportunities and challenges for parents and school staff that we never before considered. The following is data from recent studies:

- 87% of all youth ages 12 through 17 or 21 million teens use the Internet.
- Of those, 78% (16 million) report using the Internet at school. 19% (4 million) keep a blog and 38% read blogs.
- 49% of high school students have posted personal information on their Web pages such as name, age, or address – that could help a stranger identify or locate them.
- 50% of high school student “talk” in chat rooms or use instant messaging with Internet strangers.
- 65% of high school students admit to unsafe, inappropriate, or illegal activities online
- Students are increasing their use of technology at a rapid pace in all grades.
- 23% of students know someone who has been bullied online.

Parent Responsibility

As parents, we all want to keep our children safe whether on line or walking around the mall. Unfortunately, for many adults, the world of cyber space is expanding so fast that our children are exploring a community that we have little information about. The social networks are being considered the “mall” of today, where kids meet and talk on a regular basis. Students move around the internet with an ease and comfort that many adults cannot even imagine. A few suggestions I have for parents are:

1. Never permit your child to be on the internet in an unsupervised place. You would never permit your child to “hang out” in the dark corners of town. Don’t permit them to hang out unsupervised in the cyber world.
2. Become familiar with the social network your child might be exploring and frequently check their “page”. Many of the popular social networking sites like facebook and Myspace have age appropriate filters in place keeping personal information private. However, the minimum age is 14 in many cases so children lie about their ages to create an account, thus losing the benefits of those filters.
3. Cyber bullying cases are beginning to enter our civil courts. There is an increased potential for financial liability through civil litigation. Parents are responsible for the activity of their child and any bullying behaviors being initiated from their home computers. This is a changing world and parents need to be aware of the civil laws and their child/s activity on the internet. For more information please visit: <http://www.ikeepsafe.org/PRC/topics> and/or <http://www.netsmartz.org/netparents.htm>
4. Discuss internet safety with your child, just as you have discussed safe street crossing or other safety issues. Set age appropriate rules for internet use. Encourage your child to talk to you if:
 - They are upset and not sure about what to do
 - If anyone says anything that is inappropriate to them
 - If anyone they don’t know wants to meet them.
 - If they are being bullied or made fun of.
5. Review your child’s cell phone records/pictures frequently to assure they are following your family and our school rules (no cell phone usage /texting etc. during school hours).
6. Become educated in the world that your child is exploring. Visit the internet sites yourself frequently, create your own social networking account so you can visit your child’s site and see what is visible to strangers. Stay informed and involved in this changing world.

Dean's Dialogue April 2008

By Joanne Golden

No bird soars too high if he soars with his own wings. William Blake

As always, the year is absolutely flying by. Electives have been chosen for the upcoming school year. Eighth graders are looking towards high school. Everyone is thinking about summer vacation! But, it's important for all of us to work together to make sure that students continue to work hard for this last quarter.

A few reminders:

- I will be notifying families soon if it looks like your student will be required to take summer school for credit recovery. Students are required to go to summer school if they have not earned 50 of the 60 possible credits. Students are able to make up 5 credits only. There is no summer school available for students who "need a boost".
- June 12th is the last day of the semester. Work counts right up until the last day of school.
- Incoming 6th grade students, and current 6th and 7th grade students, have a STRETCH reading assignment to do over the summer. Check out the Sinaloa web site under Library for all the information.
- Once class schedules are made, they are virtually impossible to change. If there is anything you think we should know about classes or scheduling, please get it to us in writing before the end of the year. The deadline for teacher requests is May 10 and must be submitted on the district form.
- Remember to check the school calendar for important dates.
- Please refer to the testing tips and STAR testing dates in April's newsletter. STAR tests do count! STAR test results are used to help determine placement in math classes, high school English Honors 9, and intervention classes.

I'll end this month's column by borrowing from Annie Fox, M.Ed. These are a few of *Annie's 10 Tips for Improving Parent- Teen Relationships*. If you want more information or help with a parent/teen problem, Annie is available at annie@anniefox.com. Or you can visit her Online Parent Forum at: parents.anniefox.com.

1. **Remember that you are the parent-** Your job is to protect your child and prepare him/her to be a fully functioning adult. Being a leader and a compassionate teacher is more important than being your teen's friend.
2. **Remain calm-** Nothing gets resolved when stress makes it impossible to think clearly. Can't respond rationally? Then take a break until you can. Ask your child to help you learn B.R.E.A.T.H.E.
3. **Talk less and listen more-** Teen want to be respected and heard. Be a "safe" and available person to talk to.
4. **They're always watching-** Want your teen to be trustworthy, responsible, honest, and compassionate? Make sure you're modeling those values.
5. **Make your expectations clear and be consistent with your follow-through-** If kids know the consequences because they had input establishing the family guidelines, they're more likely to make healthy choices.
6. **Regularly make time to enjoy being a family-** Relaxing together, unplugged from digital technology, is a gift with long-lasting results. Go for a walk, plant a seed, or bake a cake.
7. **Lighten up-** Humor is a great de-stressor. Remember no one stays a teen (or the parent of a teen) forever!

WHEN STUDENTS ARE ABSENT, WE ALL LOSE OUT. ABSENCES DURING THE PERIOD OF

MARCH 3, 2008 THRU MARCH 28, 2008

RESULTED IN THE LOSS OF \$22,348.00 FOR
SINALOA.

(EACH DAY A STUDENT IS ABSENT THERE IS A
\$37.00 A DAY DECREASE IN THE FUNDING FOR
OUR SCHOOL)

IF YOU'RE SICK, YOU MUST STAY HOME. IF
YOU HAVE A CHOICE, COME TO SCHOOL

8th Grade Activities Update

The date of the 8th grade picnic has been changed to **Tuesday, June 3** (previously planned for Wednesday June 4). The location remains the same, the pool at College of Marin's Indian Valley Campus.

Reminder: There's still time to make your donation for 8th grade activities. Thanks to those 8th grade parents who have already made donations and a reminder to those who haven't yet. Please drop off your donation in the front office as soon as possible (\$40 per student is suggested to cover costs of both events). Checks should be made payable to Sinaloa PTA/8th Grade Activities. The 8th grade picnic and dance rely solely on parent donations, so let's make sure both activities are successful!

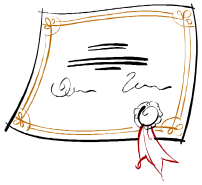


PROMOTION DANCE

The 8th grade promotion dance is scheduled for June 6th in the Sinaloa gym. Sometimes students get in a rush to experience the type of dances offered in high school. We ask that as parents, we keep the 8th grade promotion in perspective. Low key and middle school are the optimum thoughts. This is not a high school prom, it is a fun dance where we recommend that students

- come in groups, not as dates
- dress up (but not formal, or sexy, i.e. no minis, strapless, backless or tuxedos)
- no alcohol or drugs (make certain your child does not bring a purse or backpack)
- No limousines

Hopefully all of our 8th graders will have a safe and fun evening.



PROMOTION CEREMONY Thursday, June 12, 2:00 P.M.

This year's promotion ceremony for the eighth grade class will be Thursday, June 12 at 2:00 P.M. at Sinaloa Middle School. We hope you will be able to join us for the important event. Please keep in mind that the middle school promotion ceremony is in no way equal to a high school graduation; nor should it be. While it is an important event, it should be kept in proper perspective as an intermediate step to a more challenging and demanding educational experience that culminates with high school or college graduation.

Parking around Sinaloa can be a challenge. We will open our basketball courts for parking, be beware of the poles and the narrow entry. Entry to this parking is on Wilson Avenue.

Please remember that this ceremony is to honor our students transitioning to high school. The event will be held outside, so extra noise and conversations from the audience makes it difficult to hear the speakers. Please be considerate of everyone attending. Thanks for your cooperation.



Sinaloa's CJSF will be holding a car wash on Saturday, May 10th at Sinaloa from 10 to 2pm. Members of CJSF will be selling pre-sale tickets or pay at the car wash.



All cars will be \$10 and SUV's and trucks will be \$12. All proceeds will be donated to this year's charity, Pacific Diversified Services, a nonprofit organization that helps adults with developmental disabilities.



Thank you to Ms. Heyer's eighth grade art class for designing and producing the posters for the eighth grade dance!

A CALL TO SERVE ON THE SINALOA SITE COUNCIL/LEADERSHIP TEAM

Do you have a desire to participate in the budgetary decisions that impact the programs at Sinaloa? Do you want to learn more about Sinaloa, instruction, and schooling? Can you find the time to attend monthly council meetings (which occur at 3:00pm), periodic district meetings, and serve on an occasional subcommittee? Are you interested in maintaining and improving the quality of education for ALL students at Sinaloa? Are you willing to serve for 2 years?

If you answered yes to the above questions, please come forward to serve! The Sinaloa Site Council/Leadership Team has two openings for a parent member who will be elected for a 2-year term.

Please email the information listed below to Teresa Vance at tvance@nUSD.org by May 12, 2008 so we can prepare the ballots for the June election.

- ✓ Name
- ✓ Address
- ✓ Telephone number
- ✓ Children's name, school and grade
- ✓ A short paragraph about yourself for the ballot. (No more than 200 words).

Be sure to include in your paragraph:

- ✓ Education/business background and/or experiences
- ✓ Special interests, if applicable
- ✓ Reason (s) for serving

For further information, contact one of your present representatives:

Edie Ainsworth
Lety Bauer
Victoria Crawley
June Haugen
Lisa Nicklanovich
Gretchen Tara

Teacher of the Year



Recommendations are now being solicited for the Sinaloa Teacher of the Year Award. This award was created to recognize the outstanding contributions of a Sinaloa teacher. A committee composed of school staff and parents will review all nominations and select this year's recipient. Some previous recipients of this award are: Jillien Heyer, George Bousquette Steve Balok, Jill Gordon, Najla Saba, and Jason Eckl, and Karen Kenyon.

The following criteria are provided to guide you in your choice:

- Exhibits the ability to inspire students
- Shows concern for the student's academic and person development.
- Recognizes and responds to parents' need to be aware of student's progress.
- Challenges students to perform to full potential.

MY NOMINATION FOR TEACHER OF THE YEAR IS:

Please return to our Project Coordinator, Teresa Vance, by Friday, May 23, 2008

Comments: (please make comments brief and specific)

Name (please print)

Signature

Book Fair



Book Fair co-chairs Mary Kesler and Anne Taylor would like to thank all of the wonderful parent volunteers who worked shifts during the book fair. Some of you worked more than one shift and your help was greatly appreciated. A special thank you to Julie Hession who organized all of the fun student contests at the book fair and Denise Rasmussen who organized the Classroom Wish List. We also appreciate the help of Valerie Hill, Sinaloa's library clerk who helps with so much of the book reordering and scheduling classroom visits. Thanks, of course, to all of the awesome Sinaloa families who purchased books at the book fair to make it so successful. We raised \$2,477 for Sinaloa PTSA!



A BIG THANK YOU to all the volunteers that signed up to help with the 8th grade dance.

Kathleen Leonard Margo Hayman Elizabeth Wilmore

Debbie Robles Diane Jacob Wendy Roberts

Laura Dove Lara Giusti Laura Pullen

Laurie Dougherty Lisa Richardson Sue Wheeler

Marian Caldwell Julie Hession Carrie Sbragia

Laura Seyler

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU
THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Kelly Cox-Ghee, Dance Chair



Thanks

Thank you very, very much to the people who so graciously volunteered to fold the school newsletter month after month.

Thank you to: Susanna Boeck, Carmen Bower, Susan Brown, Julie Dearwater, Laurie Dougherty, Lyn Everly, Marci Frank, Patti Freeman, Lara Giusti, Sue Lundgren, Kim Oga, Diane Rankin, Maija Schaefer, and Deborah Sonntag

I will miss those of you with eighth graders who are moving on to high school-Best Wishes to you and your students!

Gratefully yours,

Teresa Vance

Project Coordinator

Support Staff Person of the Year 2007-2008



Recommendations are now being taken for the Sinaloa Support Staff Person of the Year Award. This award was created to recognize the outstanding contributions of a non-certificated member of Sinaloa's staff. This category includes secretaries, custodians, classroom aides, supervisors, clerks, and food services. A committee composed of school staff and parents will review all nominations and select this year's recipient. The following criteria are provided to guide you in your choice:

This staff member:

- Is very cooperative.
- Possesses well-developed professional and communication skills.
- Goes beyond their job description.
- Aids teacher in implementing a quality program.
- Is friendly and helpful to students.

This person stands out as taking the extra step, going the extra mile, and having the skills to make it work.

Past recipients include: Jackie Janusch, Diane Apple, Mary O'Keeffe, Teresa Vance, and Carolyn Gerrans

My nomination for Support Staff Person of the Year is:

Comment: (please make comments brief and specific)

Nominated by:

Please return to Teresa by Friday, May 23, 2008

SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION SEND AN APPLEGRAM

The teacher is the key to education - the vital factor in motivating and maintaining student interest in learning. This opportunity to have direct impact on the course of students' lives has always been one of the important rewards of teaching. To meet success-enabling students to learn and to feel appreciated for these efforts are the intrinsic rewards of teaching. During the past several months we have received letters commending the efforts of our staff, teachers, counselors, aides, secretaries, custodians - and for these we are most grateful.

As a parent, you have the ability to foster good teaching simply by acknowledging it when you see it. Lengthy letters aren't necessary, and busy schedules don't permit the time for them anyway. A few brief words of appreciation and encouragement can help keep the enthusiasm and love for teaching at an optimal level.

Please feel free to use the enclosed form (Applegram) to acknowledge someone on the staff (teacher, secretary, custodian, aide, counselor) who has contributed to your son's/daughter's education. Simply jot down a few words and mail or deliver the Applegram to school. We'll make sure the deserving person receives it. Please take a few minutes to complete an Applegram right now. We would like to present these Applegrams to teachers and staff the third full week of May. Teacher Appreciation Week is May 5th-9th, and Classified Employee Appreciation Week is May 18th-24th.

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Sinaloa Middle School

## APPLEGRAM



TO: \_\_\_\_\_

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*When you drink from the stream,  
remember the spring*

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature

# Parents, Teachers, Students Association (PTSA)

This wonderful school year is coming into the home stretch and heading for summer. Still hard at work are our teachers, staff, students and parents making sure we are academically ready for promoting to next year. We cannot thank you enough for supporting the school throughout the year by both volunteering your time and financial support.

We have two great events coming up:

**Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-9:30pm**

**Family Fun Night** where we can all get together before summer and share wonderful memories, enjoy staff entertainment, games, food, and an all out fun time for the whole family. Be sure you send in your form today.

**Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 8:00am-9:00am**

The PTSA Executive Board would like to invite everyone to our **Volunteer Appreciation Celebration**. Everyone volunteers and support the school in one way or another. Please stop by so we can personally thank you. Start the day off with coffee, tea, and sweets as our appreciation for everything you do!



- **Everyone** who returned the letters to The Honorable Jared Huffman and Honorable Carol Migden. We hand delivered over 300+ letters on Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>.
- **The Many Families** who joined the rally on Friday, April 25th and marched to the Civic Center to make sure the PTSA is heard all the way to Sacramento.
- **Kim Connolly** who not only coordinated Brown Bag Career lunches this year for the students, but also was a guest speaker in April. She was fabulous. This event could not have happened without the organization and planning Kim has done throughout the year. Look for more Brown Bag Career lunches coming in 2008-2009. The students were a wonderful audience and I know they walked away with many thoughts for their future.
- **Karen Pavone** who organized a Sinaloa booth at the School Fuel Cycling for Schools event held Saturday April 26<sup>th</sup>. Her team of volunteers represented Sinaloa with pride. The event was wonderful. I joined the bike riders for a great ride down Novato Boulevard. I hope many of you were able to attend and enjoy the day. The donations to School Fuel help support the NUSD – all schools in Novato. We are one community and together School Fuel wants to make sure all schools are funded with programs throughout the years. Your dollar makes a difference to every child in Novato.
- **Parents and Students** who helped with the move of our Emergency Container. We unloaded and reloaded the container, all in the same day. The crew was fantastic. We are now in the process of restocking expired items, and organizing the container with a more user friendly system. We will have this wonderful committee continue to ensure Sinaloa is ready and prepared for any emergency.



## Mark Your Calendar

- May 2 - 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Dance – 7:00-9:30pm – Sinaloa Gym
- May 7 - PTSA Meeting 6:00pm in the Library
- May 16 – Family Fun Night
- May 26 - Memorial Day – NO SCHOOL
- June 6 – Volunteer Appreciation Celebration 8:00am – 9:00am



## Family Fun Night Caribbean Island 2008 Friday, May 16th 6:00 – 9:30pm

We need your help with decorations and game supplies. This year's theme is "The Islands", Caribbean, Hawaiian, or Pirate, whichever you choose. We would like to collect many items to help make this night a success. If you have any of the following to lend, we would greatly appreciate the cost savings. Please make sure you label your item(s).

A donated tent – dome style – easy to pop-up  
Palm Trees  
Alligators  
Surf Boards  
Skin Boards  
Gutters (4) – old  
Ping pong balls

small jars – baby food jars  
plastic bottles – mustard/catsup size will work  
bags of colored sand  
kids play tube tunnel  
pogo stick  
skate board  
skeletons

**Please send your items in as soon as you can so we can make sure we have everything for the night of the event. If you have any questions, please give Hope Curry a call at: 897-2076 or email her at [hope.curry@verizon.net](mailto:hope.curry@verizon.net).**

# Sinaloa Spirit Wear is always available. Order your clothing today.

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR LAST PTSA MEETING FOR 2007-2008**

Sinaloa PTSA Meeting  
Wednesday, May 7, 2008  
6:00 p.m. in the Library

## AGENDA

|                                                                                                                                      |                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Welcome and PTSA Updates                                                                                                             | Kim Damico               |
| Minutes<br>Review & Approve April                                                                                                    | Melissa Chase            |
| Budget<br>Budget Review – revenue and expenses<br>Release Events and Funds – to be voted<br>April check reconciliation – to be voted | Jane White               |
| Emergency Container                                                                                                                  | Hope Curry<br>Kim Damico |
| Principals Update<br>Budget Updates                                                                                                  | Kit Gabbard              |
| New Business<br>Board Nominations                                                                                                    | Kim Damico               |

**See You Next Year!  
Our First PTSA Meeting will be September 3, 2008.**

Wishing you a fantastic month,

Kim Damico  
PTSA President



- Log on to the **Sinaloa website**: [www.sinaloamiddleschool.wordpress.com](http://www.sinaloamiddleschool.wordpress.com)
- Log on to the **School Fuel website**: [www.NovatoSchoolFuel.org](http://www.NovatoSchoolFuel.org)

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C/O The Novato Unified School District  
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