

Station 15 News

Student/Parent
Newsletter for
Mr. Snapp's 6th
Grade Class

Issue Number One

September 8, 2008



A New School Year

The start of a school year is always exciting. There are so many things to look forward to: a new grade, new curricula, some different staff members, etc. I've been teaching a long time, but I'm always looking to improve, and often try new things.

Many of this year's kids were in my class last year as 5th graders. They'll find much the same, but some differences as well. I look forward to getting off to a quick start, with the "veterans" helping the "new kids" learn my policies and procedures – at least the ones that haven't changed since last year.

6th grade is a big year. Besides the 6th-grade-only activities, such as DARE, the study trip to camp, and the end-of-the-year traditional activities, there's also the special position of being the oldest kids at Baywood. As such, they have an opportunity to set the tone for the rest of the kids. I know they'll take this seriously and be positive role models.

I look forward to working with all you parents as well. Please feel free to contact me whenever you have a question or concern. If you'd like to have a longer conversation, set up an appointment for a conference. We don't have to wait for Conference Week.

My home phone is 528-1236, and I'm happy to talk to kids or parents up until 9:00 p.m. A good way to contact me during the school day is via email. My computer is on all day, and I usually respond to email within a couple of hours. My school email address is gsnapp@slcUSD.org. If you'd like to send email after school hours, my home email address is gsnapp@charter.net. I check it before school, after school, and usually once more in the evening.

Blue Folders and "The Box"

I send corrected homework home on Mondays in the kids' blue folders. I ask that you sign them and send them back on Tuesday morning – in fact, getting a signature from you is a weekly assignment, and if a student shows up without the signature, he or she will receive a recess restriction.

Occasionally mistakes are made – either I enter a score incorrectly in my gradebook, or neglect to enter a score at all. Later, as we get near report card time, I'll send home a progress report. It may say that your child didn't turn in an assignment, and you are sure he or she did. "The Box" is something Mrs. Comeau told me about. It is a box (or drawer, or whatever) in which you keep all of the papers I send home

each Monday. If the progress report says your child didn't turn in an assignment, you can pull it out of "The Box", send it back to me, and I can correct the mistake. After you've received your child's report card, if there are no mistakes, you can recycle the papers.

This is different than what I did the past two years. I had the kids bring the papers back on Tuesdays and I kept them here. That didn't work as well. I'm going back to "The Box".

Back-to-School Night

I look forward to seeing everyone at **Back-to-School Night Thursday, September 11**. Please see the Newsbearer for the time.

I will present information intended to be useful to you: procedures, policies, etc. My intention is to tell you what I can to prevent problems later. I will also outline some of the special activities your kids will participate in this year, and suggesting ways you can help.

This evening is for parents only; kids are not invited. If you need child care, please let me know as soon as possible.

6th Grade Parents' Meeting

Your kids have been waiting a long time to be 6th graders so they could go on the study trip to Camp Ocean Pines. However, it won't happen unless the parents find ways to pay for it. The school district gives us no money for this.

We are scheduling a parents meeting on **Tuesday, September 16, at 7:00 in the library**. We'll give you some information about the camp experience, and then we'll spend the bulk of the meeting discussing how to raise the money.

It is important that every family be represented. We know that there can be unavoidable conflicts, but please try to attend if at all possible. Everyone needs to pitch in. Either all the kids go or none of them do.

It is the parents' job to raise the money. The teachers will be in charge of all the organization of the trip itself, as well as going and being in charge of all the kids for three days.

First Field Trip

On **Wednesday, September 17**, our class will be taking our first field trip. We'll be **walking** to the **Sweet Springs Nature Preserve**, which is located on Ramona Street, approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from school. We'll observe the flora and fauna, do some team-building activities, eat our

lunches, and do some drawing. We'll also be performing public service by picking up trash.

We'll be leaving school at 9:00 a.m. and returning around 12:30 p.m. The students will need to bring a sack lunch. School sack lunches are available for the price you normally pay for a school lunch. Food Services needs to be notified a week in advance if you need a sack lunch, so let **me know by this Wednesday, September 10** if your child needs one.

Here are some things to keep in mind to help the trip go smoothly:

- The kids will need a sack lunch.
- They should wear comfortable walking shoes and dress appropriately for the expected weather. (If rain is expected the trip will be postponed.)
- They should bring a backpack in which to carry their lunch and their drawing materials.
- They should bring a water bottle.
- They should wear sunscreen.
- There is poison oak at Sweet Springs. If your child is allergic, I'd recommend long pants and long sleeves.
- They might also consider bringing a camera, binoculars, and a bird-identifying book, although those are optional.

As always, parents are cordially invited to join us. If you have any comments or questions, feel free to call me at school (534-2856) or send me an email: gsnapp@slcusd.org

School Supplies

Most of the kids showed up the first day with most of the things they'll need this year. While the school will provide whatever your kids need throughout the year, I do have a couple of suggestions for things that will come in handy.

The first is a **3-hole-punch** – the kind that will fit in a binder. We often have a long line at the class 3-hole-punch. Kids who have their own get to avoid this.

The second is a **USB flash drive**. We will be doing a lot of work on computers this year. Kids who have computers at home will want to take files home, work on them there, and bring the updated versions back to school. A flash drive is the best way to do this.

There are many types available. I suggest getting something inexpensive. There's no need to spend a lot of money on one with a ton of space. Even a 1GB drive is probably more than we'll ever need. Also consider where your child will keep it when not actually using it. Some come with a lanyard, which is probably less likely to get left behind when a child gets up to leave a room. Others come with a ring for attaching to a key ring. I've seen kids put their flash drive on the same ring as their house keys. Whatever type you buy (should you choose to), make sure and put your child's name on it in permanent ink. It seems inevitable that every time we leave the computer lab, a couple of flash drives get left in computers. If they have a name on them, they're more likely to be returned to their owners.

Lastly, consider buying a water bottle for your child's desk. Our class drinking fountain doesn't work. I allow the kids to have water bottles, with the following stipulations: 1.

They must have water-tight lids on them, and they must keep the lids closed when they're not actually drinking from them. This is to prevent water getting spilled on someone's work. 2. They must only have water in them – no juice, no soda, etc. Also, I'm passing on the latest recommendations from health experts – that the plastic should be BPA free. (That's why I didn't buy the kids bottled water to start the year this year.)

Class Website

There isn't much new yet, but I'll be updating our website throughout the year. You can go there to see copies of this newsletter, download long-term assignments, etc. The address is:

<http://ba.slcusd.org/st15/home.htm>