



Manzanita Elementary



First Trimester Board Report

2013-2014

by Jessica Durrant

It seems that just yesterday we were putting the finishing touches on the classrooms in preparation for the start of school. Yet Winter Vacation is in just a few weeks! Each day brings new challenges and opportunities for our students to grow academically and socially. I am so lucky to work with such a dedicated staff and surrounded by a caring group of parents that want the best for our children. The following are some highlights and updates on happenings at Manzanita thus far this year.

New 4th grade class ~ After a larger than expected enrollment of 4th grade students, funds were allocated to make three full sections of 4th grade at Manzanita. Students are now able to receive more individualized instruction with the smaller class sizes. Carrie Gragg was hired as the new teacher and we are pleased to welcome her to the Manzanita staff. THANK YOU to the school board who approved the transfer of funds to make the additional class section a reality.



Dufour Conference and Mentor Training ~ Teachers spent quality time writing their student growth goals and professional goals during September and October. They will spend time working with their colleagues analyzing student data to drive instruction in the classroom. To better help them work in teams more efficiently, a group of staff attended the DuFour Conference in Portland. Jessica along with Teresa Northcross and Gloria Steimer attended the workshop where they learned valuable information to share with staff as they work in teams. Jessica also attended the Mentor Training in Medford in November. She learned how to effectively work with new teachers in developing their skills in the classroom. We are very fortunate to attend such informational, useful professional development to make our schools even better!

Field Trips ~ Learning takes place both in and out of the classroom. Students at Manzanita traveled around Southern Oregon extending their learning in Science and Math. 5th grade students went snow shoeing at Crater Lake, 1st grade students got to experience live animals through Bugs R Us, Kindergarten students learned about life cycles and plant growth at the Pumpkin Patch, 4th grade students explored the science behind the Oregon Caves, and 3rd grade students visited the Big Cats Park in Cave Junction. Students were thrilled to experience exciting venues in our own 'backyard' that enrich the learning they started in the classroom.



Incident Command ~ Student safety is paramount at Manzanita. It is very important to have a plan for a variety of situations, including evacuation off site. Working in conjunction with Deputy Ernie Fields, Manzanita is working on an evacuation plan including incident command positions for a variety of areas. Local businesses in the North Valley area have been contacted and they have agreed to be included in the plan to keep students and staff safe in the event of an emergency at Manzanita. Staff will practice these skills after we return from Winter Vacation. Staff and students will practice a lockdown drill in January to fine-tune the process.

Staff Development ~ On October 18th, Manzanita teachers spent the day working with other staff in the district on curriculum, instruction, and technology. They had an opportunity to collaborate with other teachers in the same grade level identifying best practice techniques to help students comprehend material. Time was also spent learning parts of the new student information system (Synergy), including how to do progress reports. It was a very productive day that allowed people to work with colleagues from across the district.

Fun Fun Fun ~ At Manzanita, we like to smile and laugh! Whether it's dressing up for the Dutch Bros. fundraiser, getting into costume during Halloween, or laughing with kids at the movies as part of a reward, we like to have fun! Here are a few pictures to enjoy. 😊



Thank you again for your support and enthusiasm for education. You are always welcome to attend one of our events, or even just come have lunch with us! We look forward to the new adventures and challenges the next trimester will bring.