

December 2, 2008

Dear Mr. Huber-Kantola and Esteemed Board Members,

It has been an exciting trimester here at Madrona. Although we lost one teaching position for this year, our class sizes have been larger, but reasonably sized. We have a two new teachers, Diane Leonard in our DLP and Brenda Phelps, third grade, who are doing their best to learn about our school, our curriculum and their students.

We are in the process of preparing our first set of report cards. Esis continues to be a challenge to us here at Madrona. My staff tries their best to be positive and are willing to try new things to make Esis work to its optimum. That can be a bit hard with Esis, but they do give it their best. Everyone did eventually get their cards printed out, but one teacher had to enter her entire class grades twice as the program did not save the data correctly.

This year we are trying some new things here at Madrona. We are beginning the study of PBS and how it can impact our school both behaviorally and academically. We continue to tweak our writing program with the addition of 6 +1 training and materials for our fifth grade teachers. We have also had Mary Nowland from the ESD in for more teacher and classified training in writing. I am seeing a big difference in what our third graders are able to do this year in writing so am hoping that same progress will finally show impact for our fourth grade writing scores this year. We have begun an after school writing program for 12 fourth students who need further support in the writing process. They will receive extra help through the end of January four hours per week, Monday through Thursdays. In February we will address students who have not passed their statewide exams in reading or math. Students will be offered the opportunity to work with assistants after school on those skills needed to pass the SWA. We will have a teacher designing the curriculum, training the assistants and monitoring the program. In the spring we will set up a similar session for our lower level readers in the primary grades. We have one of our retired primary teachers set up to coordinate the last session. We are hoping these new interventions will impact the success of more of our students in gaining the needed skills to pass their statewide exams and to become proficient learners.

Our PTO has been working hard the last several years to earn money for some big projects around our school. We now have a new outside communication sign that is bigger, and brighter than our old sign. We have also ordered a new curtain for our stage. This is a huge purchase which will not only brighten up our gym and future stage productions, but is made of a special acoustical fabric. This fabric will hopefully help mask out sounds from the gym. We will then be able to expand the use of the stage for different groups and needs throughout the year, making it a more useful space for our school all year round. This new curtain replaces the original 41 year old stage curtain. At least we can say we sure got our money's worth out of the old curtain!

As always, we look forward to seeing you at any Madrona event you can attend. We will be having a charming winter program on December 16<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:00 p.m. If you need a cute kid fix, please consider joining us!