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The Holidays Are Here!

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will be about a week away from the end of Quarter 2. The last day of the Quarter is **Friday, December 20, 2019** which is a minimum day with a 12:00 pm dismissal. We will be on Winter Recess beginning **Monday, December 23, 2019** and students will return to school on **Tuesday, January 7, 2020**. This will be the first day of Quarter 3. As students return to school from Winter Recess we all need to remember to be diligent in keeping students on track as we progress through Quarter 3 and into Quarter 4 as there are a number of activities and amazing events planned, particularly for 8th grade students, that they need to maintain academic and behavioral eligibility to participate in.

What a wonderful time of the year this is for most of our students and staff. We recently had an opportunity to focus on “Gratitude” as we transitioned into our Thanksgiving holiday, and pause for a moment to reflect on people in our lives who have left a meaningful impact on us. Many of us found the time to personally thank those individuals for their caring support. I was reminded, as I engaged in this activity with my own family, how fortunate I am for the many blessings in my own life. I was also reminded that some of our students and families are experiencing significant challenges which are often times exacerbated by the arrival of the holidays. I want to encourage all of you to help your children focus on the gifts and blessings in their lives. This is also a good time of year to encourage your children to find ways to make the lives of other students better in some way. Random acts of kindness are contagious!

As we end Quarter 2 and make our way into our Winter Recess, know that I am deeply grateful for the support you provide to your children and for the patience and kindness you show our staff here at Kerr. I wish all of you Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and a joy filled New Year!

Go Knights!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zachary Cheney".

Zachary Cheney
Principal

*Knights show...**K**indness, **E**ffort, **R**espect and **R**esponsibility*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 2019	EVENT	TIME
December 3, 2019	8 th Grade Basketball Games at Kerr vs. Eddy	Boys 4:00 pm & Girls 5:00 pm
December 6, 2019	Joseph Kerr Day - Wear Red & Black	
December 6, 2019	Jazz Band at Lunch (Quad)	Both Lunches
December 6, 2019	Popcorn Friday (Library)	Both Lunches
December 7, 2019	Band at SAC State Jazz Festival	
December 10, 2019	8 th Grade Basketball Games at Kerr vs. Johnson	Boys 4:00 pm & Girls 5:00 pm
December 10, 2019	Wrestling Match at Albiani/Kerr vs. Albiani & Jackman	4:30 pm & 5:30 pm
December 12, 2019	8 th Grade Basketball Games at Kerr vs. Harris (Gym)	Boys 4:00 pm & Girls 5:00 pm
December 13, 2019	Joseph Kerr Day - Wear Red & Black	
December 13, 2019	Spirit Day - Pajama Bottom Pants Day	
December 13, 2019	Lunch Time Activity "LTA"	Both Lunches
December 13, 2019	Winter Hot Chocolate Sales at Lunch (SAC)	Both Lunches
December 17, 2019	Wrestling Match at Pinkerton/Kerr vs. Pinkerton & Jackman	4:30 pm & 5:30 pm
December 18, 2019	Holiday Band Concert (MP Room)	6:00-7:30 pm
December 20, 2019	Minimum Day - End of Quarter 2 - Report Cards	Dismissal at 12:00pm
December 23-31, 2019	NO SCHOOL - Winter Break	
JANUARY 2020	EVENT	TIME
January 1-6, 2020	NO SCHOOL - Winter Break	
January 7, 2020	Royal Reader Contest Begins (Library)	
January 7, 2020	7 th Grade Basketball Try-Outs (Gym)	3:15 p.m.
January 7, 2020	School Site Council Meeting (Library)	3:20-4:30 pm
January 8, 2020	Leadership & Yearbook 2020-2021 Meeting (Library)	Both Lunches
January 8, 2020	7 th Grade Basketball Try-Outs (Gym)	2:45 pm
January 9, 2020	7 th Grade Basketball Try-Outs (Gym)	3:15 p.m.
January 9, 2020	ELAC Meeting (MP Room)	5:30-6:00 pm
January 9, 2020	LCAP Stakeholders Meeting (MP Room)	6:00 pm
January 10, 2020	Spirit Day - Disney	
January 10, 2020	Popcorn Friday (Library)	Both Lunches
January 10-11, 2020	Band at Capitol Sections Honor Band	
January 13, 2020	Sign-ups Begin for 8th Grade Disneyland Trip (SAC)	
January 14, 2020	Geography Bee (Library)	8:30-11:30 am
January 14, 2020	Wrestling Match at Smedberg/Kerr vs. Smedberg & Rutter	4:30 pm & 5:30 pm
January 14-16, 2020	Renaissance Sign-ups (MP Room)	Both Lunches
January 16, 2020	7 th -8 th Grade Course Selection Assembly (MP)	8:35-9:25 am

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY 2020	EVENT	TIME
January 17, 2020	Joseph Kerr Day - Wear Red & Black	
January 20, 2020	NO SCHOOL - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	
January 21-24, 2020	No Name Calling Week (Library)	
January 22, 2020	School Wide Fund Raiser Kick-off	
January 22-February 5, 2020	School Wide Fund Raiser	
January 23, 2020	Minimum Day	Dismissal at 12:00 pm
January 23, 2020	7 th Grade Basketball Games at Jackman MS	Girls 4:00 pm & Boys 4:00 pm
January 23, 2020	Incoming 7 th Grade Information Night (MP Room)	6:00-7:00 pm
January 24, 2020	Joseph Kerr Day - Wear Red & Black	
January 24, 2020	Food Fair (MP Room)	Both Lunches
January 24, 2020	Leadership & Yearbook Applications 2020-2021 Due	
January 28, 2020	2020-2021 Leadership Interviews (Room P-93)	1:09-3:05 pm
January 28, 2020	7 th Grade Basketball Games at Albiani MS	Girls 4:00pm & Boys 4:00 pm
January 28, 2020	Wrestling Match at Harris/Kerr vs. Harris & Johnson	4:30 pm & 5:30 pm
January 29, 2020	2020-2021 Leadership Interviews (Room P-93)	12:45-2:30 pm
January 29, 2020	College, Career & PSAT Night (MP Room)	6:00-7:30 pm
January 30, 2020	2020-2021 Leadership Interviews (Room P-93)	1:09-3:05 pm
January 30, 2020	7 th Grade Basketball Games at Pinkerton MS	Girls 4:00pm & Boys 4:00 pm
January 31, 2020	Joseph Kerr Day - Wear Red & Black	
January 31, 2020	Valentine Candy Gram Sales (MP Room)	Both Lunches

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

DON'T GET LOCKED OUT!

If you ride a bike, skateboard or scooter to school, secure it in the enclosed, fenced bike rack area when you arrive.



LOST & FOUND

LOST & FOUND

Items found at Joseph Kerr Middle School are turned into the Main Office. Every month sweat-shirts, sweaters, keys, glasses and miscellaneous other items are lost or misplaced and put into a bin. While announcements are made in the bulletin reminding students to check the lost and found, many items are not claimed. At the end of the subsequent month, the clothing and larger items are donated. Parents are welcome and encouraged to come into the main office during office hours to look for their student's lost item.

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QUARTER 2 AND QUARTER 3 PROGRESS REPORTS

Our second Quarter Progress Report period ended on Friday, November 15, 2019. Progress Reports were given to all students in their 6th period class on Friday, November 22, 2019, to hand carry home. The 2nd Quarter comes to a close on Friday, December 20, 2019 and report cards will be mailed home shortly thereafter. Quarter 3 begins on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, Quarter 3 Progress report period ends Friday, February 7, 2020. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher(s) or counselor should you have any questions.



Each quarter Progress Reports will go home with your student and Report Cards will be mailed home.

YEARBOOK

Don't miss out on capturing your Kerr memories. Yearbooks are only \$50 until December 31, 2019! After that, prices will go up to \$55. Yearbooks sell out **FAST**, so order yours right now! You can buy them in the SAC or go to www.jostensyearbook.com, find our school, and order. Also, parents interested in buying a Business or Baby Ad (popular with our 8th grade families) please go to this website to pay and design your advertisement: <http://jostensadservice.com/>.

ACTIVITIES CORNER

Winter Holiday Spirit Day

On Friday, December 13, 2019 we will be selling Hot Chocolate during lunch for \$2.00. It will be Pajama Bottom Pants Spirit Day.

Leadership and Yearbook 2020-2021

Attention 7th graders! Do you want to be a campus leader for the 2020-2021 school year? Come to the library during your lunch, Wednesday, January 8, 2020, to hear more about Leadership classes. These classes require an interview and application process that will be explained at this meeting. Don't miss out! Leadership Applications **2020-2021** will be due in P-93 on Friday, January 24, 2020.

3rd Annual Food Fair January 24, 2020

Our second annual Food Fair will be during lunch on **Friday, January 24, 2020**. More information to be announced.

DISNEYLAND/CALIFORNIA ADVENTURE TRIP for 8th Graders only

Dates: March 13-15, 2020

Estimated Cost: \$320.00 with an ASB sticker

\$330.00 without an ASB sticker

\$190.00 with Disneyland Season Pass

We will begin taking sign-ups for the Disneyland trip on Monday, January 13, 2020 in the Student Activity Center (SAC) at lunch.



On Monday, January 13, 2020, we will start taking sign-ups for the 8th Grade Disneyland Trip. Please refer to the following schedule of dates, times and location for the sign-ups.

- Monday, January 13, 2020 – Students may come to the Student Activity Center (SAC) at their lunch to sign-up. They will need to bring in the completed paperwork and payment (cash or check).

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- Monday, January 13, 2020 – Parents may come to the SAC after school from 3:05-4:00 pm to sign-up their student. They will need to bring the completed paperwork and payment (cash, check or credit card).
- Monday, January 13, 2020 – Students may come to the SAC after school from 3:05-4:00 pm to sign-up. They will need to bring the completed paperwork and payment (cash or check).
- Tuesday, January 14, 2020 – until the trip sells out – Students may come to the SAC at their lunch. They will need to bring the completed paperwork and payment (cash or check).
- Tuesday, January 14, 2020 – until the trip sells out – Parents may come to the SAC from 10:30 am-1:30 pm to sign-up their student. They will need to bring the completed paperwork and payment (cash, check or credit card).

ATHLETICS



BASKETBALL

Hey all you 7th grade basketball players. Basketball tryouts will be taking place on January 7, 2020. That is the 1st day back from winter break. If you do not have your physical and permission slip packet completed by January 7, 2020, you will not be able to tryout. So get your paperwork completed early and turn it into the front office or Mr. Palmiere.

COUNSELING CORNER

PSAT

On November 13, 2019 all 8th grade students were provided the unique opportunity to take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) free of charge during their school day through the district's "PSAT for All" program. Taking the PSAT provides an opportunity for students to practice taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT); an entrance requirement for many colleges and universities. Another benefit to taking the exam is the information provided about where students are being most successful. Often, there are students who are ready to take advanced classes, but may not realize their college potential. The PSAT results help identify those students who are ready for Honors and Advanced Placement courses in high school. Joseph Kerr Middle School PSAT results will be available after we return from winter break in January. On January 29, 2020 we will be hosting a PSAT/College night at 6:00 pm in the MP Room. Students and parents will be able to pick up the results from the PSAT, and listen to some presentations from a few colleges. Please contact the counseling department if you have any questions.

2012-2020 COURSE SELECTION

On January 16, 2020, there will be a course selection presentation for all 7th grade students to select their 8th grade courses for next year. Students will be able to hear from 8th grade teachers about opportunities for elective choices and honors classes prior to completing their course selection forms. Parents, be on the lookout for course selection forms to come home after our return from winter break.

COUNSELING DEPARTMENT

Counselors are available to meet with students and parents regarding academic, personal and/or social concerns. Counselors are assigned as follows:

<u>Counselor</u>	<u>Student Last Name</u>
Mr. Farwell	A – L
Ms. Espinoza	M – Z



The phone number where you can reach us is (916) 686-7728.

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DEPARTMENT INFORMATION



BAND

This holiday season, the Kerr Bands have a gift for you. The Gift of Music! The annual Holiday Band Concert is Wednesday, December 18, 2019 in the Joseph Kerr Middle School Multipurpose Room at 6:00 pm. Admission is free but a suggested admission donation of one non-perishable food item per family will be collected at the door for the Elk Grove Food Bank.

ENGLISH

7th Grade

Seventh grade English students are finishing our core novel, *Walk Two Moons*, studying plot, characterization, point of view, and theme. In Quarter 3 students will be reading a variety of informational texts with an emphasis on argumentative writing.

8th Grade

By the end of Quarter 2, eighth graders have studied elements of suspense, author's point of view, characterization, theme, and informational text elements. Quarter 3 brings a focus on argumentative writing with an emphasis on supporting claims with reasonable evidence as well as a dive into our core novel, *Refugee*.

On Thursday, November 5, 2019, sixty-five student finalists were invited to compete in the Annual Kerr Spelling Bee. After many rounds of elimination, seventh grader Hannah Need emerged as our school wide champion speller with Sam Derick our second place finisher. Hannah Need will go on to the district spelling competition on December 3, 2019 and will participate at the Central Valley Spelling Bee in March. Congratulations and good luck to Hannah Need as she represents our school.



The English Department would like to remind all parents and students that the winter break is a great opportunity to improve your reading and vocabulary development by reading every day. All students are encouraged to read daily in independent reading books. Don't forget to check out a great read at the Kerr Library before Friday, December 20, 2019.

SOCIAL SCIENCE

7th Grade

Seventh grade Social Science students will embark on an exciting adventure at the beginning of 2020. We will learn about Medieval European feudalism, castles, knights, the Crusades, the Black Death and much, much more. Be sure to ask your students what they are learning in Social Science and to check Synergy on a daily basis. You will be amazed at their knowledge of Medieval History. In January, each student will participate in the 2019 Geography Bee competition in their Social Science classroom. The winners of each classroom competition will compete in the school-wide Geography Bee. This is also a good time to check with your student to see if they need to restock any of their school supplies.

8th Grade

Congratulations 8th grade students on completing the Constitution Test! You should be proud of your efforts. For term two, our students will be analyzing important Supreme Court cases and creating our Presidential Trading Card Assignment. In Quarter Three, our eighth graders will be learning about the New Republic. Some highlights include the early expansion of our nation/Manifest Destiny, the War of 1812 and the Age of Jackson. In addi-

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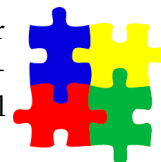
tion we will be exploring some of the main differences between the Northern and Southern states and how these differences ultimately led to the American Civil War. Don't forget that tutoring is available for Social Science classes every Monday after school; the schedule is posted in all Social Science classes.

LIBRARY



The Pizza Reading Luncheon in the library was a hit. Students ate lots of pizza and took home great prizes. Thank you English teachers for encouraging our students to participate - you rock!

Puzzle Club members are having a great time in the library at lunch! There is still room to join our puzzle club - just come in at lunch. We've finished A Map of the World made of flowers and the Statue of Liberty. The club is hard at work on the Pier 39 Sea Lion puzzle and The Simpsons puzzle. All students were invited to work on the Sikh Heritage Golden Temple Puzzle.



We celebrated Sikh Heritage Month with learning new games from India, henna tattoos, and learning how to say hello in Punjabi. Thank you to our Punjabi students who helped with the activities.

We celebrated Native American Heritage Month as well. Contributions to our culture were on display. Many books by Native American authors were available, and one of our students of Native American heritage brought her Native American flag to display!

The Royal Reader Contest begins January 7, 2020!! The contest will run until Friday, February 13, 2020!! Students participating read at least two of the eight California Young Reader nominees, answer questions from the librarian, and are invited to a donut breakfast in the library on Wednesday, February 19, 2020. Students can win Beats headphones, a yearbook, popcorn for a year, books, posters, t-shirts, candy, and more. The more books they read, the more prizes they can win at the breakfast. Students reading all of the titles will receive special prizes!

SUPPORT YOUR STUDENT

Students face a variety of challenges as they transition into middle school. It takes the combined efforts of students, teachers and parents for students to make this transition a successful one. Here are a few ways in which parents can support their middle school students.

- Use Synergy ParentVUE to verify what work is assigned and what is expected.
- Help your student stay organized, prioritize assignments and manage time effectively.
- Show patience with your child as they develop the skills necessary to become a successful middle school student!

GOOD NEIGHBORS! GOOD FRIENDS!



We love our neighbors!! When you arrive in the morning and depart after school, please be aware of your surroundings as you navigate in and around Joseph Kerr Middle School. Remember to park in designated areas and pay close attention to our neighbor's drive ways and parking lots. Please refrain from parking in our neighbors parking lots, blocking exits and bike lanes in front of the school. Thank you and bear in mind, we love our neighbors!!

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HELPFUL REMINDERS



Parents who need to take their child out of school early for an appointment need to pick up their student by 2:50 pm on regular day schedule, 2:15 pm on Wednesday schedule and 11:45 am on minimum day schedule. We do not pull students out of class until the parent arrives on site, and so 15 minutes before the end of the student school day is the latest time that we can honor a request for a student to leave early. Please be prepared to show picture ID (driver's license or state ID card).

Parents who need to drop off a lunch, lunch money, homework or a project for their child should bring it to the Front Office and we will call your child up to get it.

Parents are always welcome on campus, but they need to sign in at the Main Office and get a visitor badge. Please be prepared to show picture ID (driver's license or state ID card) . If you would like to visit a classroom, we request that you give the teacher 24-hour notice of your visit. Our classes are full and so we need to be prepared for you.

Please encourage your child not to bring large amounts of cash or expensive items to school. Expensive, high profile items are temptations for other students and account for 95% of the thefts on campus.

As we move into hat and scarf season.....Please remind your student to not share hats, scarves, or hooded sweat-shirts. Head lice are tiny bugs that live on the hair and scalp. They are spread from one person to another by direct contact or from shared combs, hairbrushes, hats, or clothing. They can also be acquired from upholstered furniture, bedding, and stuffed animals. If you suspect your child has nits (lice eggs- 1/16th of an inch in size, oval shaped and white or gray) or head lice, please consult with your doctor or pharmacist for treatment instructions. If your student has head lice or is treated for head lice, please let the school know. All returning students must be checked and cleared by the office before going to class.

KERR CLOTHES CLOSET

In an effort to respond to the needs of our students, we have started the first ever JKMS Clothes Closet. We are receiving donations of new or nearly new sweatshirts and jackets, in all sizes, to be given to students in need. As the weather becomes colder, we want to make sure students have access to clothing that will keep them warm.

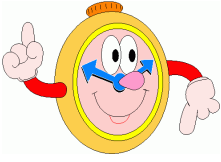
If you are able to give sweatshirts or jackets please bring them to the front office where we will receive them and stock them in the Clothes Closet for student distribution.

Thank you for your continued support and for partnering with us in this important endeavor.



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PARENTS NEED TO ESTABLISH A BACK-UP PLAN IN CASE OF EMERGENCY



Each month we have a number of parents who call the school at 2:45 pm (or later) frantic because they are not going to arrive at school at the time they told their child they would pick them up at the close of the school day. Of course, our office staff works hard to try and rush out a message to the student before the close of the school day, but sometimes we just do not have enough time to reach the student before the bell rings. Parents need to provide their children with a **back-up plan** in case they are unable to arrive on campus in time to follow the normal routine. Students need to know where to wait on campus and who to call should their designated ride home fail to show up at the normal time.

In addition, parents need to know that we are having more and more students arrive late for first period at 8:30 am, and this is becoming a problem. Joseph Kerr has already built in a plan to handle late students first period, and yet we are still having way too many students arriving 10-15 minutes late after the start of the school day. Please make every effort to have your child at school prior to 8:30 am.

Thank you!

NEWS FROM ELK GROVE HIGH SCHOOL

Elk Grove High School Freshman Parent Orientation Night

All parents of 8th grade students that will enroll as 9th graders at Elk Grove High School for the 2020-2021 school year are invited to attend the Freshman Parent Orientation Night that will be held at Elk Grove High school on Thursday, February 13, 2020 at 6:00 pm starting in the Gym.

The Elk Grove High School Counseling Department will discuss:

- Information about academies, Honors/AP and special programs
- District graduation/college admission requirements, four year planning
- Athletics and athletic eligibility
- Career guidance program
- Course selection

There will also be an open house in our cafeteria after the main presentation for parents/students to preview our programs/academies/electives and talk to teachers and student representatives.

Course selection for in-coming 9th graders for 2020-2021 school year will be at Joseph Kerr Middle School through English classes in February.

Make ups will be arranged for students who are absent.

If you have any questions, please call EGHS counseling office at 686-7768.



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