

## SCHOOL EVENTS

**Report Cards Coming:** You should receive the next report card in the mail by Saturday, February 9. Please call the office if you have not received one by then (879-2060).

**Newsletter Coming:** The February issue of "From the Harte" was mailed out yesterday.

**Important ! SSC Meeting:** The February SSC meeting has been re-scheduled and will be on **Wednesday, February 6 at 5:30 pm**. Middle School Network 2 Executive Officer Harriet MacLean (oversees Bret Harte and several other middle schools) will be attending to discuss our Program Improvement Year 4 status. This topic is very important to our school's future, so please try to attend this meeting.

**Walk Audit:** A Walk Audit is going to be done for Bret Harte, as part of the Safe Routes to School program for **Thursday, February 7**, at the end of the school day. This requires some emailing and phoning, so please contact Shawna Brekke-Read (PTA President) at [brekkeread@california.com](mailto:brekkeread@california.com) to let her know if you're available to help with this.

Many thanks to Gail Widener (parent of a 7th grader) for volunteering to coordinate the Safe Routes to School program at Bret Harte. As a parent volunteer, Gail will be the community liaison with Transportation and Land Use Coalition (TALC), the grant-funded lead agency who is operating the program. Please contact Gail if you would like more information, or if you would like to help in any way, 530-0518.

**Important PTA Meeting:** The February PTA meeting has been re-scheduled and will be on **Wednesday, February 6 at 7 pm**. District 4 School Board Member Gary Yee will be present to discuss the attendance boundary and other school district issues. Also, the PTA will be discussing a new dress policy for Bret Harte for next year at this meeting. Community input is being sought regarding what the policy will be and how it should be advertised.

**Oakland Public Schools Jazz Festival:** Bret Harte's Jazz Band is one of ten public high school and middle school jazz bands that will be participating in the 6th Annual Oakland Public Schools Jazz Festival on **Thursday, February 7**. This afternoon/evening event will conclude with an exciting student performance. The public is invited to attend the **free show at 6:30 p.m.** in the Rawley T. Farnsworth Theater at Skyline High School, 11 2250 Skyline Blvd.

**Yearbooks:** Get your 2007-2008 Bret Harte Yearbooks now! Buy them during lunch at the Attendance Office window or in Room 301 (before/after school). They are only \$30, so get one before they sell out! The first payment (\$15) is due by March 7<sup>th</sup>. The second payment (\$15) is due by May 9<sup>th</sup>.

### Information for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents:

- The Eighth Grade Dinner Dance will be on Thursday, May 29.
- Eighth Grade Promotion will be on Wednesday, June 11.
- There will probably be a picnic for 8<sup>th</sup> graders on campus. This is not final.

## OUSD & COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Community Forum on the 2008 California Budget Crisis:** Assemblymember Sandré Swanson in collaboration with Assemblymember Loni Hancock invites you to “State of Urgency: A Community Forum on the 2008 California Budget Crisis.” Get an overview of how the state budget works and hear an update on the current budget crisis and how it will affect you. Become a part of the solution.

**Saturday, February 2, 10 a.m. to Noon.** There will also be a Resource Fair from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Hosted at the Lake Merritt United Methodist Church, 1330 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland.

**Skyline Jazz Benefit:** On **Sunday, February 3 at 2 p.m.**, the Skyline Jazz Band will be hosting a benefit concert at the Farnsworth Theater. This event, dubbed “Jazz in the Afternoon,” will feature performances by the renowned Mike Vax Jazz Orchestra and Skyline’s Jazz Band. Although there is a conflict with the Super Bowl, we hope to experience the usual high level of support for this exciting concert. Tickets are \$18 for adults, \$10 for students, and are available in advance from the jazz band members or at the door when the box office opens at 1:30 on Sunday. For information about the Mike Vax Orchestra, go to [www.bigbandjazz.net](http://www.bigbandjazz.net). Skyline’s Jazz Band has already kicked off its season with a tremendous showing at the CMEA festival on January 19th. They were ranked "Superior" in a unanimous decision by all four judges. Under the steady guidance of Ted Allen, the Skyline Jazz Band has evolved into one of the best high school bands around.

**Public Talk on the Racial Achievement Gap:** This invitation was posted on the Oakland Public School Parents listserve ([oaklandpublicschoolparents@yahoo.com](mailto:oaklandpublicschoolparents@yahoo.com)).

Montera Middle School PFSC presents “Who Speaks for the Children? Parent Engagement and The Racial Achievement Gap!” with speaker Will Walker, Ph.D. on **Monday, February 4, 7:00 to 8: 30 p.m.** at Montera Middle School. Learn how the OUSD parent community can work together to help ALL children succeed!

Dr. Walker works with parents, teachers and administrators across the country to address the racial achievement gap. He has conducted research and/or created curricula in the areas of cross-cultural leadership, after-school program development and community partnerships for the Rockefeller Foundation, California Endowment, Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. and On Track Program Resources. Dr. Walker earned his Master and Doctoral degrees from Princeton University in Religion, Ethics and Politics.

**GATE Conference:** Here is information about the 2008 GATE Conference for Parents & Caregivers.

Date: **Saturday, February 9, 2008**

Time: **9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** (Continental breakfast and childcare are provided.)

Place: Fruitvale ! Elementary School  
3200 Boston Avenue, Oakland

No cost to attendees.

Who should attend and why:

Who: Parents/caregivers of GATE identified students, and of high potential students of all ages. Teachers are also welcome.

Why:

- Learn more about strategies used for GATE students in the classroom
- Learn techniques for helping your child

- Share ideas about GATE with other parents

Sessions:

- Helping Your Capable Child Achieve – Parenting the GATE child
- Are There GATE Kids in Here? – finding out what should be happening in the classroom for GATE students
- My Teenager is Already in College? – Understanding Advanced Placement
- Driven to be Perfect – understanding the Social and Emotional Needs of the Gifted
- Roundtable Discussions – more topics of Interest (e.g. summer programs, parents' choice, etc.)

Translation services will be made available in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Cambodian. Contact information: Juanita Jackson at 879-8433 or Shelly Weintraub at 879-8477 or [shelly.weintraub@ousd.k12.ca.us](mailto:shelly.weintraub@ousd.k12.ca.us).

**Marcus A. Foster Institute Family University:** Mark your calendars. The Marcus A. Foster Educational Institute is offering one more Family University Session to the Bret Harte community. The last session will be on **Saturday, February 9 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.** For more info, call 835-0391 or <http://www.mafei.org/>.

**Mills College Event On Education And The Achievement Gap:** The first in a series of "Community Conversations" will be held at Lisser Hall on the Mills College campus on **Wednesday, February 20 from 6:30-8:00 p.m.** The subject is public education and the achievement gap. Why are so many students falling behind? Is the educational system failing our children? This will be an on-stage conversation with a live audience, primarily of young people. It will be taped for broadcast on public radio KQED (88.5 FM) and KALW (91.7 FM) in March.

**A Day @ Law School:** UC Hastings presents the 4th Annual "A Day @ Law School" on **Saturday, February 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.** at the University of California, Hastings Law School, 198 McAllister St @ Hyde St., San Francisco (San Francisco Civic Center BART).

A free event for youth ages 5-18. Attend law school for a day, learn steps to succeed in high school, and receive information about college and legal education. Breakfast and Lunch Provided. You can also win Door Prizes and Free School Supplies!

RSVP Before February 16th by calling (415) 264-1166 or emailing: [hastingsyouthmentors@yahoo.com](mailto:hastingsyouthmentors@yahoo.com)

**Something to Watch:** Mr. Mates told us about this link to a popular online video with an important message. You may like to watch it with your child - <http://storyofstuff.org>.

## **STUDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Announcements read to students on January 29:

- Ms Promes' cooking club will meet today at the beginning of lunch. If you are signed up, come to room 107 and don't be late!!
- No student leadership team meeting tomorrow, January 30<sup>th</sup>.

- &nbsp; The academic vocabulary words for this week are: fragment and illuminate. Try to use them in a creative way and impress your teachers!!
- Yearbooks are on sale at the attendance office during lunch and in room 301 before and after school
- Good friends are hard to find so treat them well.

**Bret Harte Middle School Announcements:** If you have items to include in our weekly email announcements, please call us or send them electronically to [bhparentcenter@yahoo.com](mailto:bhparentcenter@yahoo.com). If we receive them before 11:30 a.m. on Fridays, they will be included in the messages posted on Friday afternoons.

Have a great week!  
The Parent Center  
Room 102  
879-2068