

Dear Parents, Guardians and Community Members,

I would like to let you know that I will be working reduced hours at the Parent Center beginning the week of December 3. I have made this decision because the Parent Coordinators have not yet been compensated for the hours we have worked this school year. Bret Harte is working hard to get our paperwork completed, so hopefully it won't be too long before I can resume my full duties.

Until then, I will only be working on Fridays from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. to complete the tasks with the highest priority. For now, Eva and Gerarda will work their regularly scheduled hours.

Sharon Higgins, Parent Coordinator

SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

School Tours: Bret Harte school tours will be offered on Wednesday, December 5, Friday, December 14, and Tuesday, December 18. Tours start at 9 a.m. in the Parent Center, Room 102 and last about 1 ½ hours. Please let your friends and neighbors know about our tours!

OUSD School Options Fair: The OUSD School Options Fair will be on **Friday, December 7** (Representatives from high schools available from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.) and **Saturday, December 8** (Representatives from all OUSD schools available from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) Location: The East Side Club at the Oakland Coliseum. Students, parents, and community members are welcome at all times! Parking and BART access is available. For more information, contact enroll@ousd.k12.ca.us.

Buses will transport eighth grade classes to the Options Fair in the morning of Friday, December 7.

Newsletter Submissions Deadline: The deadline for submissions for the January newsletter is **Wednesday, December 12**. Short articles (about 200 to 300 words), announcements and useful tips are welcome. Please send your submissions electronically to bhparentcenter@yahoo.com. Thank you!

Winter Music Concert: Enjoy a fantastic performance by our instrumental music students under the direction of the spectacular Mr. Duane Worm. Bret Harte's annual Winter Music concert will be on Wednesday, **December 12 at 7 p.m.** in the Cafetorium. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children ages 12 and under. Proceeds go to the Music Department.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Skyline Tours Have Just Been Added: Tours of Skyline High School will be held at 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. on **Monday, December 3 & Tuesday, December 4**. Reservations are required. To make a reservation, call Mr. Chen at 879-3060 ext.102 or email him at julin.chen@ousd.k12.ca.us

Skyline's annual 8th grade **Preview Night will be on Tuesday, December 4 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.** The event begins in the Skyline High School Theater where students and their families learn about Skyline's program and academies, and meet the administrators. After a general meeting, prospective families will form groups that will meet in classrooms with teachers and current students.

Senate Education Committee Hearing: State Senator Don Perata has announced that the Senate Education Committee will be holding an important legislative hearing this coming **Monday, December 3 at 9:30 a.m.** in the Oakland City Council Chambers (City Hall).

The Committee and speakers will examine the role of the State in restoring fiscal solvency to school districts under its control. There will be limited time for public comment at the end of the hearing, based on a first come, first serve sign-up before the hearing begins. If you are unable to attend the hearing or do not have a chance to speak, you may submit written comments to the Senate Education Committee at the hearing or by mailing to: Senate Education Committee, State Capitol, Room 2083, Sacramento, CA, 95814.

The Nutcracker: Ronn Guidi, artistic director of the Oakland Ballet, is producing two Nutcrackers. One is a semi-professional production at Holy Names University from December 14 to 16. This is an affordable, lovely production, especially good for those new to ballet, those on limited budgets, and those with very young children (but no younger than 5). For information, see <http://www.obacademy.com/performances/index.html>

The other is a professional production (with the Oakland Symphony) at the Paramount Theater in Oakland from December 21 to 24. Monday morning, the 24th, there will be a special, reduced-price show for children. For information, see <http://rgfpa.org/performances/nutcracker.html>

A recent Bret Harte graduate, Katharine Mayer, will be dancing in both productions.

Marcus A. Foster Institute Family University: Mark your calendars. The Marcus A. Foster Educational Institute is offering two more Family University Sessions to the Bret Harte community. Learn how to chart a financial plan for college, identify, understand and support diverse learning styles, create an education plan with clear and measurable goals, effectively advocate for your child's educational needs, and more.

January 5, 2008	8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
February 9, 2008	8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Families will receive a **FREE** refurbished computer if they complete at least 3 Saturday workshops in the series. Breakfast, Lunch, Childcare and Raffles are included. The cost is \$25 per family for all 4 sessions. Limited scholarships are available. Workshops will be held at the First Unitarian Church at 685 14th Street, Oakland. For more info, call 835-0391 or <http://www.mafei.org/>. Stop by the Parent Center to pick up a registration form.

STUDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Here is a sampling of the student announcements for this past week:

Cheerleaders!!!! Please meet for an important meeting at lunchtime today. Bring your lunch.

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!!

Congratulations to the winners of the spelling bee!!! Round 3 will be held in the conference room on Friday, November 30 at 10am. Molina Butler, Sebastian Covarrubias, Megan Pendleton, Gareth Tidball and Linh Tran!!!! Good work guys!!!!

Effective immediately all lunchtime games will stop at 1:15. All basketballs and footballs will be collected by Mr. Burl or Mr. Roth. This announcement applies to students personal sports balls also, because they are not allowed at school!!

The basketball game between staff and the 8th grade honor roll students will be held on December 14th at lunchtime.

The library is open from 8am every morning for quiet study. Please enter through the back door.

Electronic devices are not allowed during school hours!! If you bring one to school you must turn it off and put it away until after school. This includes cell phones, mp3s, Ipods, video games. If an adult sees it during school hours it will be confiscated for the remainder of the day. If it continues to happen a parent will be notified. If it continues still, you will not get it back until the end of the school year.

The academic vocabulary words this week are: compare and contrast. Ask your teachers how you can use these words in your daily life.

Remember whether you think you can, or whether you think you can't, you are right!

HELPING BRET HARTE

Sometimes parents would like to feel a greater connection to Bret Harte but aren't sure how to make it happen. If you feel this way, here are some ideas for you.

SPECIAL HELP NEEDED: Can you help staff Bret Harte's table at the Options Fair and help recruit new families to our school? Only 1-2 hours of your time is needed on **Saturday, December 8** between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. You will talk with families who are looking at their options for middle school enrollment. The Options Fair will be at the East Side Club at the Oakland Coliseum. Parking is free. Please email Ms. Williams at teresa.williams@ousd.k12.ca.us to let her know the hours that you can volunteer.

Adopt the Teacher's Copy Room: If you would like to improve the quality of life for our teachers, in one small way, then you could volunteer to tidy the Teachers' Copy Room. This would take an hour or less of your time every week or two.

EcoMetro Guides: EcoMetro Guides quickly sold out and more are being ordered. These coupon books make a great gift for friends, family, neighbors and teachers. The books sell for \$20 and Bret Harte's Yosemite Planning Committee receives 50% of each one sold. One parent emailed the Parent Center to report, "I wanted to BROADCAST that I love my Eco-Metro Local Green Coupon Book. I saved over \$20, the cost of the coupon book, in my first 3 grocery shopping trips!" To make your purchase, please contact Ms. Warner at annekwarner@gmail.com or in Room 208.

Public Library Amnesty: Until Friday, December 14, the Oakland Public Library is holding an amnesty campaign. During this period, anyone who returns overdue items or who requests forgiveness for lost materials checked out before November 1, 2007 will have their fines and fees cleared by coming to any Oakland Public Library location. While this forgiveness campaign will apply to all users, the Oakland Public Library especially wants to encourage youth and families to return and enjoy the many resources of the Oakland Public Library.

Sincerely,
Sharon Higgins, Eva La and Gerarda Gonzalez
Parent Coordinators
Bret Harte's Parent Center, Room 102
879-2068