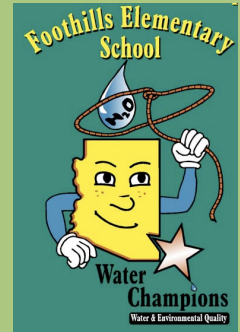


Firebird Newsletter



December 18, 2008

Foothills Elementary School “Stewards of the Earth”

Please stop by and visit our beautiful “Desert habitat” that was dedicated on November 5th, 2008. Each grade level is studying ways to be stewards of the Earth thru field trips and thru classroom science and recycling projects.



Message From Your Principal

The Best Gift

I don't need to point out that the current pace of today's living is extraordinarily fast. Particularly for those who are trying to make ends meet in a topsy-turvy economic environment. No matter what your circumstances, no matter what your beliefs, you can give the most important gift during this festive season. It doesn't have a big price tag, it doesn't have to be difficult to find, and years from now it will be remembered more than anything else. Please make it a priority to give the gift of time to those close to you! You will have two weeks to create memories that will last forever.

From Mr. Reiley and the entire Foothills Staff

Calendar of Upcoming Events

January Events

- 1-5 3rd Quarter Begins
- 1-7 Student Council Mtg. at 3 p.m.
- 1-12 Oratory Mtg at 3 p.m.
- 1-13 Early Dismissal at 12:30 p.m.**
- 1-14 Spirit Assemblies: 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.
- 1-15 Classroom Pictures taken today
- 1-15 Third Thursday Recyclathon
- 1-16 Governing Board Mtg. at 7 p.m.
- 1-19 MLK/Civil Rights Day Recess**
- 1-21 Biotech Showcase Night for grades 2nd, 3rd and 6th.
- 1-23 District Spelling Bee
- 1-26 thru 30 Parent Conferences
- 1-26 Oratory Mtg. at 3 p.m.
- 1-28 Student Council Officers Mtg. 3 p.m.
- 1-29 and 30 Early Dismissal**

Tax Credit Donations

The **deadline is Dec. 31st** to make a tax-credit donation for 2008 to Foothills Elem. School.

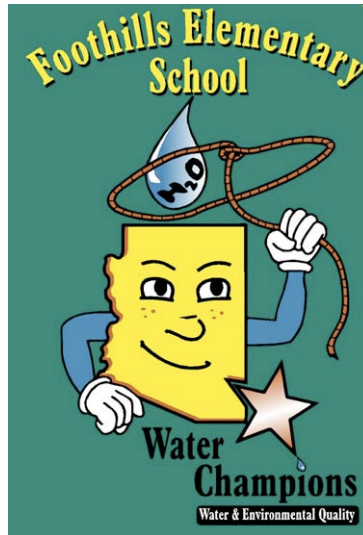
These funds are used for extracurricular activities such as Struggling Readers, Cross Country, Harmony Garden, Video Club, Knitting Club, Field Trips, our new Biotech Program, Oratory Club, etc. This includes fees you pay for your own child.

Last year Paradise Valley Unified received \$2 million in tax credit donations. It's easy to do! If filing a married taxpayer joint return your maximum amount allowed is \$400, if you are a single taxpayer or head of household the amount is \$200. Tax forms are available at our office or on the school district web site. Checks must be dated before January 1st, 2009.

You may designate this money for general fees, athletics, visual/performing arts or any of the clubs listed above.

Tax credit can be claimed on personal tax returns only. Contributions from businesses are always welcome. Such contributions are deductible, but cannot be used to claim a tax credit. Our mailing address is:

Foothills Elementary School
17835 North 44th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85032



OUR NEW SPIRIT SHIRTS ARE IN!

Above is our new "Biotech" logo for Foothills Elementary. The shirts are available in the Front Office at a price of \$11 per shirt. We have a display of the shirts in the Front Office.

On Monday & Friday mornings our PTSA will have a table set up out front of the office for your viewing pleasure. The shirts come in White or Teal. Youth sizes include: Small thru Large. Adult sizes include: Small thru XX Large.

If writing a check for your shirt(s) please make the check out to "Foothills PTSA" and if paying cash, please have exact change. If you send in money with your child to purchase a shirt please write on your check the size(s) requested.

Stop by and pick one up today and show your "Foothills Pride".

Recycle News

Catalog & Magazine Tower Contest

From Dec. 15th thru Jan. 16th each class is collecting to see who can build the tallest tower. The magazines collected will be turned in to help pay for AR tests for our reading program here at school.

Who's class will win the "Green Room Award"?

We Want Your Bags!

We are collecting plastic shopping bags, clear newspaper wrappers, etc. to help out with our before & after school clubs. For each 60 gallon trash bag that we fill, Wal-Mart will give us \$5.00. We have filled three since the beginning of the school year and need to collect more before the March 31st deadline. We can accept all plastic bags (except for black). Please turn these into the front office.

Thank You!

Abitibi Collection Bin

Don't forget to continue to bring in your newspapers and other paper discards to our bin by the carpool lane. We are paid by the weight collected and are always trying to bet the previous month's collection weight. So instead of throwing all those holiday flyers, magazines, etc. in the trash, load them up in your vehicle and drop them off here at the school.

We appreciate your Donations!

Spelling Bee Winners



Congratulations Brice and Sam!

On Wednesday, December 17th we held our annual Spelling Bee for grades 3rd thru 6th. Our participants from third grade were Orlando Acevedo & Shawn Strahl. Fourth grade was represented by Shaelynn Waters, Mya Downs and Kaylee Lacy. Fifth Grade was represented by Ashley Leiker and Taylor Clark. Sixth Grade students were Sam Small, Brendon Best and Brice Bailey. After several rounds with words such as “Prescription”, “Chinchilla”, “Diplomat” and “Earthenware” we found our winners. Our winning students were Brice Bailey and Sam Small. These 6th graders will now move on to the District Spelling Bee on January 23rd, 2009.

Message From The Front Office:

Absence From School: When your child must be absent from school, you must call the school office no later than 9:30 a.m. on each day of absence. The attendance phone number is **449-7401**.

Use Of School Telephones: Students may not use the school phones except for emergencies. Students will not be allowed to call home for forgotten homework, lunches, band instruments, to get permission to go on a field trip, or to make arrangements to play at a friend’s house after school. We are happy to help your child call home if necessary. If a message is left for you please read the message first before calling us. We have over sixty phone extensions at the school and will not know who called you without a name or room number. Thank You!

Classroom Interruptions

Studies show that when a student is interrupted during class (message over loudspeaker, visitor to class, etc.), it takes 7 minutes for the student to refocus on the task being done before the interruption. This means that we need to limit the number of interruptions in classrooms so students work time can be successful for them.

Although your child may have no trouble refocusing, other students in the classroom may. **Please be sure to take care of plans with your child before school.** This includes scout meeting reminders, pick-up plans, where to meet after school, etc.

Message from the Superintendent of PVUSD

PVUSD Governing Board Members: John Kriekard, Ed.D., Superintendent

Anne Greenberg, President

Sue Skidmore, Ed.D, Member

Nancy Case, Member

Tom Ohmart, Member

Jill Hoogendyk, Member

On November 4th, voters in the PVUSD approved the continuation of the K-3 override but defeated the Maintenance and Operation budget override. That will impact every employee in our district in some way.

We have work to do to make appropriate decisions for dealing with the loss of approximately \$5 million in revenue from the Maintenance and Operations override, in addition to the loss of revenue we face due to declining enrollment. This has created a serious deficit and a serious issue, but it is not a crisis. Education will continue.

My advice to all of our employees and our parents is - Don't Panic. We will do what we always done in this district. We will take measured, comprehensive approach to find ways to balance the budget, and in July 2009, our Governing Board will vote on a balanced budget. In the meantime, for the remainder of this school year, and for next school year, education will be our major focus.

In the spring, district administrators will follow a budget process that includes communication with school administrators and leaders of the employee groups and United Parent Council. We will gather input; we will make suggestions; we will meet with the Board; we will go back to the stakeholder groups; and then we will decisions. My pledge to all of you is that we will collaborate in this process, and we will work together because we are all in this together.

I believe that we can find places to cut that are not comfortable, but will allow for the high level of education that this community expects to continue. But, it will not be the same comfort level that we have come to understand over the last 20 years. Above all, I want to emphasize that education will remain our mission. We will move forward with training and programs and support for those educational programs that are important to the achievement of all of our students. We probably will put some things off, and we will make some adjustments. Jobs may change, but I will recommend to the Board that we RIF (Reduction in Force) regular, contracted certified employees. It is my hope that we will not need to RIF any classified staff, but until decisions about how to make the significant cuts are made, I can't promise that won't happen.

I truly believe that this district, with our history of working together, can get through this and can continue to provide education in the way that we have provided it in the past. That is, where students are challenged, where students are taught, where students learn. We will continue to fulfill the promise of delivering the best education we can within the budget we are provided. I appreciate the efforts of all of our employees to see that this happens.

Thank You,

John Kriekard, Ed.D.