

Happy New Year!

It's hard to believe the halfway point to the school year is here. Our educational programs are running at their peak; in this continuous learning environment, staff is analyzing student progress, instructional effectiveness, successes, challenges and always thinking about how to improve! Even in times of fiscal crisis, we work hard to make sure each child has a positive, supportive school environment in which to thrive. Thanks to all of our partners in helping make it so.

I wish we had better fiscal news to share. Once again, a state budget crisis is upon us. The bad news—we have programs and budgets to analyze, evaluate and make more efficient (do more with less). The good news is we've done it before and we'll do it again, with dignity and success. Part of our budget development process includes working with constituent groups in the district to provide them with accurate information in terms of the effects of the Governor's budget on our local school district budget. Even though there is still a great deal of ambiguity about the fiscal impact on our district budget, we can educate ourselves on revenues, discuss processes for reducing spending and bring as many people (staff, parents, community) into the loop as possible!

In terms of the Larkspur School District's budget, we have two tasks to undertake over the next few months: 1) make reductions to this year's budget, as per the possibility of mid-year cuts by the state, and 2) develop a budget for 2008-09 based on less revenue, as there is the potential for 10% cuts across the board. While this will not be an easy job, we will be involving both school and district level advisory groups, administrative and site councils, PTA's and the Corte Madera Larkspur Schools Foundation in the budget education and development process. We will also work with our community partners wherever possible to keep programs in place. It will take a joint effort to protect the most important educational programs and those that provide a rich, rigorous, relevant and engaging curriculum for our children.

Our Board of Trustees will begin budget discussions relative to the impact of the state budget at each monthly meeting beginning January 29. The Superintendent, community and staff blog is a venue for questions, answers and dialogue regarding budget, curriculum, instructional programs and community partnerships. Log in on the Larkspur School District's website! –

www.larkspurschools.org.

Upcoming Dates of Interest

Parent School Partnership (group whose focus is to provide a forum and venue for parents of students with special needs and anyone interested in promoting ability awareness at our schools). January 16 – 6:00P - Neil Cummins' Staff Room for a POTLUCK style dinner. RSVP to Michelle Walker at mwalker@marin.k12.ca.us

NEW DATES/TIMES – The January 22 and 25 Superintendent/Board Coffee Chats have had to be rescheduled. The new dates/times are February 4 at 5:30 p.m. and February 8 at 8:30 a.m., both at Il Fornaio
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – January 21 – School Closed
Countywide Staff Development Day – January 28 – School Closed
Facilities Master Plan Committee Meetings – January 28 – 6:00P – Hall Library
School Board Meeting – January 29 – 6:00P – Hall Library