

LEADERBOARD Newsletter

December 2013

1993– 2013: 20 years of learning!
20 years of being student-centered, community-driven!



Nurturing our World

Making a lunch for charity... Page 4

Open Classroom Leadership Magnet @ Conejo Elementary School



280 Conejo School Road
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362
(805) 495-7058
www.oclm.net



The LeaderinMeTM

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It has been a strong start for Open Classroom this year. Our teaching team is synergizing weekly in order to plan and execute project based learning in the classroom. Often times as I give a tour I find myself saying, "Our classrooms are noisier than most." This is because our students are encouraged to collaborate and communicate around their learning. Parents are facilitating learning and the teacher is encouraging our students to talk and share consistently. I would have to say the other thing I notice is smiles. Our kids are happy, they are learning and discovering in an open, trusting environment where they know they can seek guidance and have their individual needs met in

the classroom. Touring season is just around the corner and I am excited to share our engaging and enriching environment with new families.

One final note, I have an open door policy. What this means to me is that I am available to hear and address concerns you have at our school. While I always encourage you to discuss classroom issues with your child's teacher first, I also understand that sometimes parents just need a perspective or guidance regarding their child and I am here to help in any way I can. Please access me for this, even if you just come to coffee on Tuesdays to talk.

Dena Sellers, Ed.D.
Principal
Conejo Elementary School
Open Classroom Leadership Magnet
(805) 495-7058

Meet our new OCLM Teacher!

Mrs. Natalie Smith
2nd/3rd Grade



Natalie Smith earned her B.S. in Elementary Education/Early Childhood from the University of North Texas and a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction with a specialization in Literacy from the University of Texas at Arlington. She is a proud graduate of Texas public schools and enjoyed spending the first 12 years of her teaching career giving back to the program and families that influenced her life tremendously!

Natalie and her Westlake-native husband moved to the Conejo Valley in August 2012 in order to be closer to their families. Natalie often makes the drive to visit family in the Mojave Desert, which is certainly closer than having to drive from Dallas!

In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, doing arts/crafts, attending church, walking on the beach, and reading while drinking coffee and snuggling with her two cute kitties.

Natalie loves making learning fun and believes that teaching children how to think, work with others and become life-long learners are the most important parts of her (wonderful) job! Incorporating the 7 Habits fits naturally into her teaching style, since it fosters independence in learning and the building of one's community. Above all, she is thrilled to join the OCLM family!

The Leaderboard Newsletter is a publication of Open Classroom Leadership Magnet at Conejo Elementary School.

The next edition will be published in February 2014.

Please send your comments, corrections, or ideas to Lauren Todd (sprflychic44@gmail.com) or Suzanne Luce (rsluce@yahoo.com).

On the Cover: OCLM Fall Festival

OCLM Students participating in the Make a Lunch Center on November 22, 2013

Photo courtesy of Lauren Todd

Read the full story of Fall Festival on Page 4 .

Nurturing Our World,

Head to Toe, Plant to Plate

Caring for ourselves and our community.

Each fall, our Open Classroom Leadership Magnet community enjoys a full-day, off-site educational event planned and put on by our teachers and parents. Fun Friday groups (made up of students from a range of grade levels) prepare for the event by completing projects on campus each Friday morning for five weeks. At Fall Festival, these groups rotate through centers with hands-on activities designed to help the students discover various aspects of the chosen theme. After a morning of centers, the groups come together for lunch as a community and finish the day with a closing activity and whole-school Circle of Appreciation.

This year's Fall Festival theme of "Nurturing Our World: Head to Toe & Plant to Plate" explores ways that we nurture ourselves, our gardens, and our community. The event will take place on Wednesday, December 4 at the Conejo Valley YMCA located at 4031 North Moorpark Rd.

These five, fun learning centers will be run by parent volunteers at this year's Fall Festival:

Bonsai Tree Farm - Christa Clippinger

Caring for Ourselves and Others - Liz Beaven and Lauren Todd

How Do You Sharpen Your Saw? - Kim Sachs

Animal Center - Debbie Niebolt

Plant Anatomy in Action - Michelle Garcia and Nancy Bates

On Friday, November 22, as part of the Fall Festival theme, Open Classroom students made lunches for a local shelter, which were distributed at lunchtime through Lutheran Social Services. They each made a sack lunch for themselves and one for someone at the shelter with a handwritten note or drawings. The students also brought canned goods to school that day for Manna to provide future meals for the needy.



HelloHarvest

real food, to you

HelloHarvest Delivers Organic Produce to Conejo Elementary

HelloHarvest delivers organic produce boxes to Conejo Elementary every Thursday from 1:30-2:30pm and we receive a \$1 donation for every box delivered.

A small box contains 3-5 types of vegetables and 2-4 types of fruit and costs \$39 when delivered at Conejo. Larger boxes are also available.

To learn more about HelloHarvest or to sign up for deliveries at www.helloharvest.com. Sign up for the weekly box or every other week, which ever you prefer. You can securely pay online, and edit your exclusions there as well. Just be sure that you put a note in the delivery instructions to be delivered to "Conejo Elem."

*** Enter coupon code TRYIT & receive 50% off your first delivery. And, enter coupon code CONEJO to receive 11% off subsequent deliveries.

OCLM Flamingo-ing Fun!

For a \$25 Donation to OCLM, you receive:

Thirty 3 foot flamingos delivered to a family or friend of your choice along with our banner that reads, "You have been flamingo-ed by a friend or family from Open Classroom Leadership Magnet"

The delivery may be made anonymously or include a personalized greeting from you. The flamingos roost for 48 hours before moving on. A small souvenir flamingo is left behind with the opportunity to join in on the flamingo fun.

To order a flock delivery, please email oclmflamingo@gmail.com

And in the spirit of flamingoes, family, and friends... have fun!!



Thanks to Miss Megan, each of our OCLM classes participated in a fun hands on science experiment. Each class learned what happens when you mix water, dry ice, and soap together... Ghost Bubbles!



Spotlight on...Personal Leadership

At **Open Classroom Leadership Magnet**, personal leadership goes beyond developing traditional leadership skills such as strong communication, conflict resolution and problem-solving. Our program also teaches students to work collaboratively with others, make good choices, plan ahead and participate in their community in a meaningful way. It's a unique approach that values both the individual talents of each student, and their ability and willingness to contribute in a group setting.

The 7 Habits of Leader in Me





A set of timeless principles, borrowed from Stephen Covey's 7 Habits, creates an environment on campus where staff and students strive to be proactive, and pursue their personal best rather than compete with others. The 7 Habits help them:

- Take responsibility for the choices they make and actions they take.
- Develop goals based on their values and have a plan to get there
- Listen well, collaborate with and respect others
- Balance social, physical, spiritual, and intellectual activities

Mentors as Leaders

At Open Classroom, students learn in multi-age classes, meet for special projects with their "buddies" from a grade or two ahead, and work in larger groups made up of a range of grade levels. When students mentor each other, they build confidence in their own skills and gain patience in teaching others to do what they may already do well. They also learn to model compassionate, help-

The 4 Pillars of Open Classroom:

-  Personal leadership
-  Multi-age classrooms
-  Small learning environments
-  Parent and family involvement

ful behaviors to fellow students and begin to discover their role in the community.

Community Leaders

Our school community acts as a microcosm of the local community, especially at events such as Fall Festival and Stepping Up. These annual events bring the students together in mixed-aged groups to explore various aspects of a particular theme through experiential activities. They also meet in these groups on Fun Fridays in the weeks prior to the events. Their ideas and interdependence as a group become the focus, and yet personal leadership shines in each of them.




OCLM 3rd Graders Join Build A Bear for Charity



Fall Festival Fun Fridays!

This year's theme of Nurturing Our World, Head to Toe & Plant to Plate created some fun and unique Fun Fridays. Everything from cleaning farm foods and eating them, poem writing, using 5 senses with herbs, smoothie making with healthy foods, and creating a perfect soil to grow foods!



Build-A-Bear Workshop created a newly imagined store design that merged the love of a teddy bear with the best of technology. OCLM 3rd graders had a very special opportunity to not only introduce the grand re-opening of Build A Bear, but they also had a very unique chance to make a teddy bear for Build A Bear's "Stuffed With Hugs" charity. Stuffed with Hugs™ is a charitable program of Build-A-Bear Workshop now in its twelfth year of helping kids in need around the world by providing teddy bears to children's causes. Stuffed with Hugs was created to give children the chance to help others. Since Stuffed with Hugs began in 2001, more than 450,000 teddy bears have been made and donated to children in need of a hug. Stuffed with Hugs partners have included adoption agencies, children's hospitals, firefighters and police officers, the USO, UNICEF, Ronald McDonald House and other worthy organizations. 



Every once in a while,
you find a school
that *Feels Like Home*



A place where **students** bring their ideas and personality into the curriculum, **teachers** support a variety of paths to success, and **parents** participate in the classroom so that small groups, mentoring and hands-on learning happen everyday.



student centered. community driven.

Stop in and visit us today
or learn more
at www.OCLM.net or 

A K-5 CVUSD Magnet
at Conejo Elementary  The Leader in Me

280 N. Conejo School Rd, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362 (805) 495-7058

SCOPE

Supporters of Conejo Open Classroom Endeavors

SCOPE is the parent organization that supports the Open Classroom Leadership Magnet. Like our Conejo Parent Faculty Association (PFA), parents and teachers on SCOPE volunteer their time to enhance the rich school culture at Conejo Elementary and Open Classroom Leadership Magnet.

With the help of parent volunteers and faculty, the SCOPE board helps to coordinate fundraising projects that benefit the school, as well as help raise money for art, music and other school-wide programs and events, including the annual Fall Festival and Stepping Up Ceremonies.

Led this year by SCOPE President, Nancy Bates, SCOPE meetings are held monthly in Room 26. Stop by for a meeting and see what we are all about! Visit our website at www.oclm.net for more information.

2013/2014 SCOPE Officers

President	Nancy Bates	nlmaup@yahoo.com 805-516-3373
Communications	Suzanne Luce	rsluce@yahoo.com 805-558-1962
Grant Advisor	Kelly Kazmirchuk	kellykaz805@gmail.com 805-338-7172
Fundraising	Michelle Garcia	michymom@gmail.com 818-429-9184
Treasurer	Lauren Todd	sprflychic44@gmail.com 818-284-9817
Secretary	Marielle Bowers	mbowers21@yahoo.com 805-405-5414

2013-2014
SCOPE
Meetings

Thurs. Dec. 12, 2013	Thurs. Mar. 13, 2014
Thurs. Jan. 9, 2014	Thurs. Apr. 10, 2014
Thurs. Feb. 13, 2014	Thurs. May 8, 2014

8:15 am in Room 26.

SCOPE

Student-Centered, Community-Driven



We describe ourselves as student-centered, community-driven because, in our 20-year evolution from 1993 to the present, these unique qualities have been a part of the foundation of the Open Classroom Leadership Magnet and continue to draw families to the program.

Gail Small, one of the early founders of the "open classroom" program at Conejo and author of *Joyful Volunteering*, visited our campus last year to talk about the role of parent volunteers in the classroom. She described her experience as a teacher in the program--how each year was different because her students helped shape the curriculum. She was eager to teach what excited the students and what would inspire them to be life-long learners. And, she considered the close collaboration between teachers and parent volunteers essential to the success of the program's hands-on, experiential approach.

In recent years, our community of students, parents and teachers has added a new tool to promote respect, personal responsibility and teamwork. The 7 Habits of Leader in Me provide a common language and attitude on campus to help us encourage our peers, interact with integrity and find shared goals, even as we each strive toward personal leadership.

The foundation and community we have built are 20-years strong. Here is what parents are saying about Open Classroom Leadership Magnet today...

"OCLM is truly a special place. You feel the warmth as soon as you enter the school. The children are happy and I have been lucky to have seen them grow emotionally, physically, and educationally over the years. Most of all, I don't have to ask my son what he's learning or doing in school each week, I get to actually be there and learn with him." - Teri, Hunter Kershaw's Mom 3rd grade

"OCLM teaches our children to be responsible and accountable members of our society. The method of teaching enforces independent thinking. The changes I have seen over the years, in both my kids, assures me that my kids are learning to become positive contributing members of society. We love our OCLM family." - Ursula Nanson

"From the moment you step foot in an OCLM classroom, you see the thoughtful, kind, and caring students our teachers strive for them to be. It has taught my children to be the strong, caring, and thoughtful kids they are, yet allowing their own individuality to prevail in the best way possible, not only at school, but at home and in the community as well." - Lauren Todd

"We could not be more impressed with OCLM. Not only is our daughter thriving academically, it is the hands-on, school-wide experiences that is making her elementary education pleasantly unique. Witnessing the whole school come together at events like Fall Festival and Stepping Up has made us so appreciative that we chose OCLM. We are all part of a family here." - Michael and Marielle Bowers

"We feel our children are gaining important leadership skills as well as being taught, through hands-on learning, how to navigate through their day making choices that are safe and kind for them and those around them." - Michelle & Brendon Garcia

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