

Laurel Elementary School

Sylvia Chinn, Principal

PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

From the Principal's Desk...

April 10, 2008

Laurel Elementary School Receives Top State Award...

Yesterday, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell, made an official announcement that 343 out of approximately 5,600 California elementary schools were selected as California Distinguished Schools for 2008, and *Laurel Elementary School* has been named a recipient of this distinctive honor!! Statewide, of the 1,500 schools who, based on Academic Performance Index and Adequate Yearly Progress results were eligible to apply, only 839 schools submitted applications this year. Within San Mateo County, there are 110 elementary schools and 43 were eligible to proceed. Twenty-two schools applied and only ten, including Laurel, will be receiving this mark of distinction. Laurel is the only school being awarded in the San Mateo-Foster City School District.

Our successful achievement of this award is credited to our dedicated staff, our supportive parents, and our wonderful Laurel students. The application process began last fall. Our leadership team was comprised of Mrs. Kellin Armstrong, Mrs. Janet Chappell, Mrs. Amy Matatyaou and myself. The team guided the faculty and parent representatives from P.T.A. and School Site Council in a self-study process. Areas that were addressed in the application included: a standards-based system of education, leadership and collaboration, professional development, students with special needs, student support, family and community partnerships, and school environment and culture. Our team of writers included the three teachers from the leadership team listed above, Mrs. Jane Danbold, our school district's literacy coach and Mrs. Shari Golan, a parent and School Site Council member. Mrs. Tish Busselle, former assistant superintendent, and I served as editors and finally, credit goes to Ms. Karin Bender, our school secretary, who spent days working with the many drafts to produce the final completed version.

A team of local educators, representing the State Department of Education visited Laurel on March 18th. After interviews with students, staff, parents and community members, Laurel was judged to be an outstanding school by the team. We received many commendations and accolades regarding our processes and procedures for our academic achievement, interventions for various student groups and our social responsibility component.

A school team consisting of three staff members and two parents will be traveling to Southern California on Friday, May 16th, to officially receive the award at a ceremony reception and banquet sponsored by the California Schools Recognition Program.

This is the first time that Laurel has received this award and we want to include our families and community in the pride that our staff feels with this accomplishment.