



Dr. Laura Schwalm, Superintendent

Garden Grove Unified School District
Garden Park Elementary School

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Gary M. Gerstner, Principal

Dear Parents,

April 2010

The other day I purchase a charming puzzle from a local retail store. The picture on the box was one of Speed Racer charging down the race track. As I opened up the box and poured out the pieces, it became evident that there were a significant number of individual pieces. These pieces had to be put together to create the amazing picture on the box. My wife, son, daughter, son-in-law, and I worked diligently together flipping pieces over, identifying the corners, linking the borders, and connecting the inner pieces. After an hour of working together, the amazing picture on the puzzle was complete. Working together enabled us to experience a sense of accomplishment, unity, and camaraderie.

Over the past year, we have been putting together a puzzle called Garden Park Elementary School. Like the Speed Racer puzzle, Garden Park Elementary School has a lot of individual puzzle pieces. Each piece is significant and vital to the complete Garden Park picture. These pieces are the students, parents, teachers, classified staff, and PTA. As a collective group, each member has put their best foot forward and we have begun to see noticeable results.

Here are a few things I have noticed:

- Every grade was represented in the Gecko's Got Talent 2 show.
- At the end of the 2nd Trimester, our students have read over 80 million words (approximately 7,150 books).
- Twenty-three individuals read over 1 million words before the end of the second trimester.
- 157 students met and/or exceeded their individual reading goal for the 2nd trimester.
- The PTA has paid for every grade level student study trip and, if needed, transportation.
- Every tree (approximately 30) and every bush (approximately 45) were purchased with donations made by individuals, families, student council, and local organizations.
- Over 20 families, five teachers, and numerous students volunteered their time to disperse three tons of compost for our two school gardens.
- Our Family Night Activities (i.e. Art Night, Science Night, and Reading Night) are well attended with students at all grade levels present.
- The Garden Park Elementary School website continues to evolve into a valuable resource (<http://www.ggusd.k12.ca.us/gardenpark>).

Coming together like the pieces in a puzzle gives everyone of our students the opportunity to experience a sense of accomplishment, unity, and camaraderie. As each day passes, the picture becomes more visible and the individual pieces become less individual. The active and heartfelt participation of each group has helped create the picture we call Garden Park Elementary School. Thank you for collectively enriching the academic and social lives of our students.

Best Wishes,

Mr. Gary M. Gerstner



Please note the following:

- Parent/Teacher conferences will be March 25th - April 1st. Students in grades 1-6 will get out at 01:05 pm during parent/teacher conferences.
- Spring Break begins on April 12 and ends April 16.
- April 9th we will have our Academic Awards Assembly for the 2nd Trimester.
- Walk-4-Technology will take place on April 23rd.