



Mrs. Carter, Principal

Principal's Message

May, 2015

May is a busy month for our students as we begin to celebrate their hard work and dedication over the past seven months.

- Our sixth grade students are heading off to Thousand Pines camp to learn about science concepts in the ultimate hands-on experience while at the same time bonding with their fellow classmates and taking the next step in being responsible individuals. Students return from camp every year more knowledgeable about the natural environment with which they live and more confident student learners.
- Open House is just around the corner [May 14]. Students and teachers are looking forward to sharing snapshots of work samples that represent the growth and skill development of students over the last seven months.
- On the 19th, we are excited to provide our incoming Kindergarten students an opportunity to visit our campus, tour the kindergarten classrooms, and learn how to be prepared for the first day of school.
- This month, our fourth and fifth grade students have an opportunity to try out for Ensemble for the following year. We wish all of our students luck in making the singing group.
- In an effort to showcase some of our students' talents, Talent show tryouts and practices are this month in preparation for June's presentation celebrating our students' musical talents to the student body at a show during the school day.
- On the 27th, we will be hosting a Math Parent night designed to help parents learn how math is being taught during the school day. The University of California Irvine will be presenting information to parents and providing grade level small group discussion sessions in an effort to support parents of all grade levels in a differentiated environment.

Great things are happening! Be sure to join us for some of our events.
Go Rams!

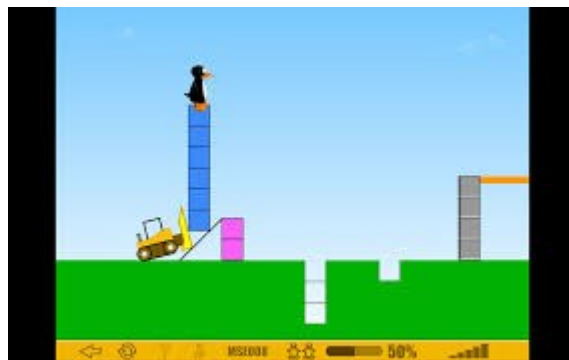


Mrs. Carter, Principal

Principal's Message

April, 2015

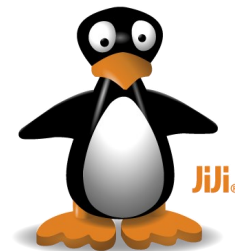
You may have seen the posters on campus introducing JiJi Math and the JiJi penguin as this month we were able to start a pilot of the math program. This program teaches math to students in a picture, puzzle, and game format. Puzzles start off simple and get more challenging as students progress. The goal for students is to help JiJi, the penguin cross, the screen without hitting an obstacle. Mathematic puzzles must be solved in order to ensure that JiJi can cross the screen safely.



JiJi Math was created by MIND Research Institute as an instructional software for K-12 to boost math comprehension and proficiency through visual learning. ST Math incorporates the latest research in learning and the brain and promotes mastery-based learning and mathematical understanding.

Students are able to use JiJi math at school and at home. To learn more about accessing JiJi Math at home, visit the Ramona webpage to download instructions.

Go Rams!





Mrs. Carter, Principal

Principal's Message

March, 2015

What is a Google Classroom?? We answered this questions this year and are on our way to building multiple classrooms that are providing students with the opportunity to learn how to navigate the Google environment. At Ramona, our teachers are learning how to create Google classrooms wherein students access assignments, research topics, organize evidence found in articles, and type reports using Chromebooks in their own classroom. Lessons are designed to ensure that students are learning 21st Century skills that students will need as they continue on their path toward future careers and college.



This is also the first year that our students will be required to take the State test for English Language Arts and Math on the computer. Unlike previous State testing where students were asked only multiple choice questions, now they are asked to write short responses and an essay on the computer. The time students spend on Google classroom writing about topics is indirect practice for testing on-line.

Our goal is to create more classrooms next year utilizing the Google classroom format for research and writing during class.

Go Rams!



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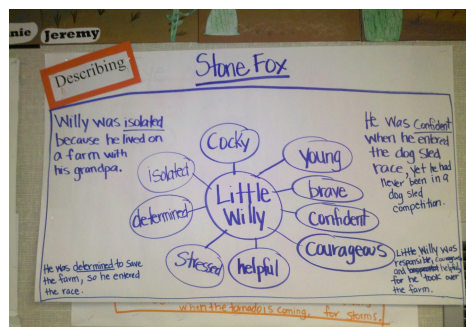
Principal's Message

February, 2015

When you read an article, do you automatically notice how the article is organized? Is the article comparing and contrasting ideas, detailing causes and effects, or sequencing information? This skill that you have did not “just happen.” You had to develop the skill.

At Ramona, students are systematically learning how to think about their thinking by using Thinking Maps. There are eight Thinking Maps: one each for defining, describing, categorizing, sequencing, comparing and contrasting, analyzing whole objects or concepts and it's parts, making analogies, and analyzing causes and effects of events. Students determine the thinking they are doing while reading and writing and organize their thoughts using a Thinking Map.

The map below shows a description of “Little Willy” and notes along the “frame” using this information to think deeply and critically about the character.



The scholars at Ramona use Thinking Maps to be critical and deep thinkers.

Thinking

Go Rams!



Mrs. Carter, Principal

Principal's Message

January, 2015

As Ramona, students learn how to solve mathematical problems using multiple strategies to find their answer. This year, our students are using the Eureka Math program which introduces students to new ways of learning math concepts. Memorization and practices are still utilized in the math classroom; however, now students are learning why an answer is correct and can explain how they solved the problem.

Instead of merely solving seventy eight plus nineteen, students are decomposing (changing) the numbers into words:

$$\begin{array}{r} 7 \text{ tens, } 8 \text{ ones} \\ + 1 \text{ ten, } 9 \text{ ones} \\ \hline 8 \text{ tens, } 17 \text{ ones} \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} 78 \\ + 19 \\ \hline 97 \end{array}$$

$$1 \text{ ten} \setminus 7 \text{ ones}$$

$$8 \text{ tens} + 1 \text{ ten} + 7 \text{ ones} = 9 \text{ tens, } 7 \text{ ones} = 97$$

Students are learning how to explain how they solved the problem using place value and what numbers mean. When students learn concepts such as fractions, multiplying, and dividing in the upper grade, they continue to build off of their place value knowledge gained at earlier grades.

Eureka Math creates parent tip pages for each unit of study. These tips are in the format of a flyer and provide vocabulary and examples. Visit <http://greatminds.net/parents> to watch videos and find ideas in how to support your child as they learn to solve math problems this year.

Go Rams!



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Principal's Message

December, 2014

As the students at Ramona learn how to read critically and persevere in solving everyday math problems, they are also learning how to be 21st Century learners. This year, the Bellflower Unified School District has purchased and facilitated installation of new technology in the Ramona classrooms. The new technology included a laptop, document camera, LCD projector, and Mimio pad for the teacher.

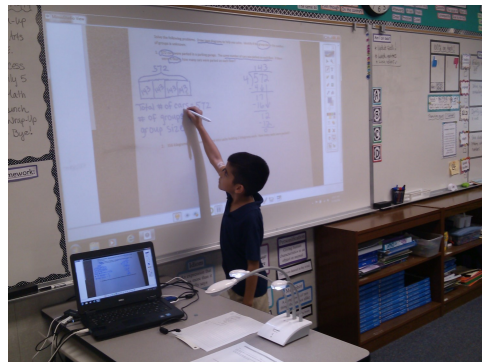
Using the Mimio pad, the classroom teacher is able to access the laptop and display documents, PowerPoints, and videos on the whiteboard all while walking around the classroom and supporting students. This allows for our students to receive timely feedback and instruction as teachers are able to write on the whiteboard using the Mimio pad as they move around the classroom freely.

Not only are teachers incorporating use of this technology during their lessons, they are also incorporating opportunities for students to learn how to use the technology which enhances our students' learning experience. Students are now able to use an interactive pen on the whiteboard that turns the "old" whiteboard into an interactive learning experience. The pen can be compared to the mouse of a standard computer. Among other things, it can be used to write on the document being projected from the laptop in multiple colors and fonts, highlight text, select options, and erase.

The use of this new technology in the classrooms and the possibility to interact with it during lessons immediately engages our students making learning fun as they work toward being the leaders of tomorrow.

21st Century Learners

Go Rams!





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Principal's Message

November, 2014

At Ramona, our students are able to participate in a quality physical education program provided by BUSD. Our students participate in PE 2—3 times per week and learn from highly qualified instructors. Lindsey Bartels, the PE teacher, is supported by Sandra De Hoop and Lorenzo Ramos, PE coaches/assistants as they teach our students using the SPARK (Sports, Play, and Active Recreation for Kids) program which was named an “Exemplary Program” of the U.S. Dept. of Education. SPARK research has shown that students who participate in moderate to vigorous PE classes each week do as well or better than others on standardized academic test scores.

SPARK PE involves activities that are inclusive, highly active, integrate academic and wellness concepts, and are fun for all students. Additionally, instructional units are designed to develop students’ motor, cognitive, and social skills.

This is the “new PE” you may have read about. Students won’t waste time waiting in lines for a turn. During PE all students will have many opportunities to practice and participate in high levels of moderate to vigorous physical activity. Everyone will feel successful each lesson.

If you’d like to learn more about the program, visit the PE website [<https://sites.google.com/a/busd.k12.ca.us/busd-elementary-physical-education/>].





Mrs. Carter, Principal

Principal's Message

October, 2014

The highlight of October is parent conference week. October 13—17 students are dismissed early so that teachers are able to meet with parents and students to review student goals for the year. This is a great time to ask questions and create a plan for frequent home-to-school communication.

This month students have also had an opportunity to learn in the garden. Our school community recently came together to raise money to fund the building cost of the garden, and over forty volunteers including parents, students, BUSD employees, Brethren Church staff and members, Kaiser Permanente staff, and EnrichLA employees helped to build the garden. A ribbon cutting at Back to School Night officially opened the garden to the school community, and thanks to grant received by Kaiser Permanente, a garden ranger teacher visits our school every Tuesday to turn our garden into an outside classroom where students learn life science standards and the benefits of eating healthy.

Below is a picture of students during the first outside lessons in the garden learning how to plant a seed and what a seed needs to grow. Other classrooms that visited the garden in October, began to plant the seeds in the garden beds for future care and harvesting.

Every classroom will learn in the garden five times this year. Ramona's garden committee (Faith Bletterman, Liz Walton, Cathy Perez, and Katie Dunne) are currently fundraising to ensure that the garden ranger returns next year and continues to instruct our students. If you would like to donate to the garden project, please call the front office at (562) 804-6532.

Go Rams!





Mrs. Carter, Principal

Principal's Message

September, 2014

September not only brought the beginning of the school year, but it brought an opportunity for old friends to share new stories and for relationships to be created with new friends. Students started the year with learning about what it means to be a Ramona Ram.

They learned that Rams: Respect Others,
 Act Responsibly,
 Make the Best Choices, and are
 Scholars: everyday, everyday.

This motto is recited everyday at morning assembly along with the Ramona pledge and, on Fridays, the Ramona call. The Ramona motto was created as part of a new approach (PBIS) that Ramona is taking this year to support positive behaviors and meet the needs of our students socially and emotionally as well as academically. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a school-wide approach to discipline that focuses on building safe and positive environments in which all students can learn.

One of the components of PBIS is to explicitly teach students the positive behavior expectations for all areas of the school: cafeteria, library, computer lab, playground, etc. During the first weeks of school, teachers toured the campus with students and used the Ramona motto as a foundation for teaching positive behavioral expectations school-wide. It only took a few days, and our students had the new motto memorized!

Also in September, we invited more than twenty organizations to join us at Back to School Night for our annual Community Faire. Parents not only joined us to meet teachers and get information regarding what their child will learn this year, they also had an opportunity to visit the Faire and receive free resources and information regarding programs supporting families and children.

What a great way to start the year.
Go Rams!



Mrs. Carter, Principal

Principal's Message

August, 2014

Soon we will be starting the new school year and sharing stories of our summer experiences and excursions. For those students and parents new to us this summer, we are happy to have you join our family. Our mission at Ramona is to maintain a positive school climate that encourages students to flourish socially, academically, and behaviorally. Students will be valued and engaged, empowering them to become productive citizens and lifelong scholars. To support student success, we have added a full-time assistant principal, intervention teacher, and a part-time guidance intern to our staff this year. We also will continue to participate in a pilot physical education program where students are taught PE by a physical education teacher weekly.

Students that attend Ramona Elementary quickly realize that the staff expects nothing less from students than their best. At Ramona, we believe in teaching the whole child and frequently remind our students that they are scholars. Being a scholar means that they are more than a student that attends school, but are students that come to school daily, prepared, and eagerly engaged in their learning. We believe working together as a team (student, parent, and school) will help build a foundation for our scholars to be successful in the future.

We also believe that our students have the best chance of succeeding when a strong connection is built between the school and home all year long. To connect the school and home, this year, our parents will be able to maintain contact with teachers by using the e-mail link on the BUSD website for Ramona Elementary (www.bUSD.k12.ca.us/ramona.htm). You can also be involved in your child's education by joining the PTA, attending school events and meetings, and making sure your child is prepared and ready to learn everyday.

We look forward to seeing you at Back to School night and to working together this school year. Don't forget to show your Ram Pride and wear red on Fridays.

Go Rams!