



Robert Down Principal's Update

May 2, 2024

Principal's Message

Dear Adult Otters,

1. This week we had a Drop, Cover, and Hold On drill for the school. While this is a fairly benign drill for the kids where they get under desks or tables and hold on for 30 seconds, the real test during this drill is our communication from staff to the office accounting for every student, staff member, and visitors to the campus. We have a system for staff to use a Google emergency chat to tell us if anyone is missing so we can send out a team to find them. I'm happy to say that our system worked well and within 5 minutes we accounted for every person on campus. We will continue to refine and practice emergency procedures. Next month, we will practice a modified lockdown drill. I will give you tons of details on how we will do that in next week's email.
2. As you may know, I was the PG High School principal before I "retired." There, we stressed the importance of being ready for success in college and career as a guiding principle for everything we did. But we noticed that there was a disturbing pattern of kids who would go away to college only to boomerang back home after a semester or two. We found that often these kids had not been prepared for the inevitable setbacks one experiences when they leave home to attend college or career. Let me explain.
As parents, we hate to see our kid skin their knee, or to be cold when they forget their jacket, or

to go hungry when they leave their lunch on the counter at home. We often will rush over to a child who falls down on the sidewalk and comfort them before they have a chance to know that their knee hurts, or bring them their jacket or lunch before they even know they forgot it. I can't tell you how often I heard of parents who stayed up to 1:00am helping write an essay for their kid who procrastinated.

But the kids who have not experienced setbacks in their life also don't develop the resiliency to recover from the setback. But when a child is allowed to fail occasionally, the minor setbacks and inconveniences don't result in tantrums and misbehavior. The resiliency they develop helps students spring back into action rather than to give up. It also opens them to new experiences. This also develops responsibility as the natural consequences of their action helps them learn. A child who forgets their jacket and gets cold at recess will remember to bring their jacket the next day. A child who receives a low grade for a poorly written essay will learn not to procrastinate the next time.

Being overprotective (a snowplow parent in the younger years for folks who "clear the snow" for their kids, or the helicopter parent who "hovers" around their kid in high school or college) actually do their child a disservice as these kids simply won't have the skills developed that they will so dearly need in life because mom or dad have always come to the rescue.

Lastly, as should be obvious, there are some things that are just too big to allow our kids to fail at. Playing in the street has too high a consequence to allow your kids to "fail" at. That being said, give your kids room to fail. It will strengthen them in the long run and develop skills that they will use for the rest of their life. And, they are way less likely to be a boomerang kid when they go off to college. If you are interested in some reading in this area, try *The Blessing of a B-* by Wendy Mogel. The book is more geared towards teens, but it a great read.

3. We will be doing State testing next week and the week after for 3rd-5th grades. The state testing does not count toward any grades, but gives both you and the school a bit of a metric to measure growth for the student and for the school. We downplay any stress that the kids might feel and want to do the same for you. While the scores are important for faculty to measure whether our instructional techniques have been effective, we don't want students to stress. That being said, if your child is 3rd-5th grade, please make sure they get lots of sleep next week and a good breakfast before coming to school.

Matt Bell, Interim Principal, Robert Down Elementary School

RHD Upcoming Events

May 7 - PTA hosted: Teacher and Staff Appreciation, see sign up below

May 9 - PGUSD Board Meeting, 6:30 PM

May 14 - PTA Dine Out, Taste of India

May 17-18 - 5th Grade Campout, RHD Field

May 21 - Famous Person Reports, 4th Grade, 10:15-11:45 AM

May 21 - PTA Meeting, 6:30 PM



May 23 - PGUSD Board Meeting, 6:30 PM

May 24 - Toolbox Assembly, 3rd Grade, 11:35 AM

May 31 - Senior Memory Walk, 9:00 AM

May 31 - 5th Grade Promotion, 11:00 AM

May 31 - Last Day of School, Minimum Day, dismissal 12:10 PM

5th Grade Camp Out - Please RSVP

Hello fellow 5th grade families!

We are fast approaching our **5th Grade Camp Out** to celebrate their graduation and move to middle school.

All RSVPs are needed on or before Wednesday May 8th. Please click this link below to open the Google Form and register your child.

Registration Link: <https://forms.gle/S3M3dE2isfQkNfUd6>

Event: Friday May 17th 5pm - Saturday May 18th 8am

Location: Robert Down Elementary School Field.

Please enter through the field gate on Junipero Avenue across from the Community Center for the event. All Gates will be locked.

- 1 Chaperone required for every 2-4 students
- Participants required to provide camping gear
- This is a Phone Free / Device Free Experience
- This event is for 5th Grade Robert Down Students only
- This is a nut free event

The PTA will be providing pizza dinner and a popcorn snack. Parent help is needed for other snacks and breakfast foods, please help us make this a success.

[https://www.signupgenius.com/index.cfm?go=s.signup&urlid=8050445AEA82AA0FA7-49251911-5thgrade#/
49251911-5thgrade#/](https://www.signupgenius.com/index.cfm?go=s.signup&urlid=8050445AEA82AA0FA7-49251911-5thgrade#/)

Our event committee is looking for 8-10 parent volunteers for set up and help with dinner 4pm - 6:30pm. If you are able to volunteer your time please email Lucie Hazen: ljhazen@gmail.com

Many thanks,

Sarah Fontecchio, 831-214-9462



Office Reminders...

1) Please have your child to school on time. Gates open at 8:30 AM. Warning bell rings at 8:40 AM. **Final bell rings and instruction begins at 8:45 AM.** When a student is tardy it is disruptive to the office and classroom. In addition, students miss important information and announcements from their teacher first thing in the morning.

2) Did you know that you can report your child's absence with your ParentVUE app? Simply log into your ParentVUE account to send the office a message about why your child is absent.

*** Ways to report a student absent ***

- a) ParentVUE app
- b) 24 Hour Absence Line (831) 646-6663
- c) Email Annie Deis at adeis@pgusd.org

3) Please make sure to relay afterschool plans with your child **PRIOR** to the school day.

The office and teachers are getting phone calls and emails from parents daily about what their child should do after school. This is disruptive.



Volunteer & Chaperone Clearance

If you plan on being a **VOLUNTEER** on campus or a **CHAPERONE** for a field trip, please be sure you are fingerprint cleared with our district. To make an appointment at the District Office please contact Bree Nehring by calling 607-8892 or emailing bnehring@pgusd.org

Before coming to campus to volunteer, please check with your child's teacher to schedule a time that works best for them.



Robert Down Birthday Books

This notice is to tell you about our **voluntary** program designed to build the RHD library and foster your child's love of reading.

Here is how it works: To join the Robert H. Down Birthday Book Club fill out the information below (scroll way down to the bottom of this message to print the Birthday Book forms) and deposit it in the Drop Box at school along with a check for \$20.00 (please make the check payable to the P.G.U.S.D. and write R.H.D. Birthday Book on the memo line).

When your child's birthday month comes around Ms. Scanlon will present a new book in honor of your child's birthday. Your child will be the first one to check out and read the book that has been

donated to the library to celebrate their birthday. A bookplate with your child's name will be affixed to the inside cover for all future readers to appreciate.

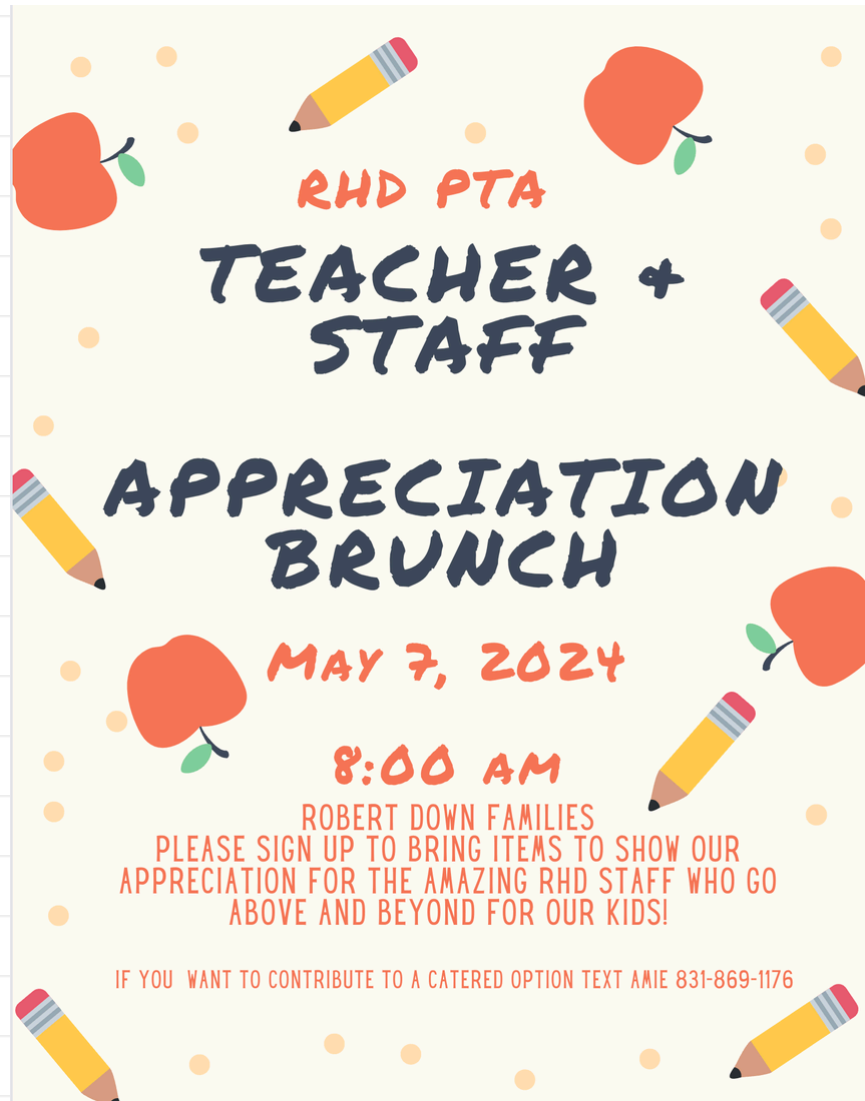


Birthday Book Club.pdf

Download

280.3 KB

SIGN UP for Teacher & Staff Appreciation



PG GROWS HEALTHY

A Home Gardening Program for Pacific Grove Families

Heidi Feldman, the School Garden Coordinator for Robert Down School, along with her colleague Keith Larson, have been teaching your children how to work in our garden and grow organic food for their school lunches. The kids love their time in the garden, getting their hands dirty and planting lettuce and veggie seeds!

Now Heidi would like to let you know about the new **PG GROWS HEALTHY** home gardening program. Members of the Pacific Grove Community Garden, along with Sustainable PG, are offering to help local families grow healthy, seasonal food...right where they live. Community garden members will share basic instructions about garden bed design and construction, soil composition, planting of seeds and seedlings for vegetables and pollinator plants, seasonal crop rotation, harvesting, and preparation of healthy meals using their own, very locally sourced vegetables. Mentorship will include meetings in the Community Garden, lessons about tried-and-true gardening techniques, and problem-solving on location in the home garden. Funds for the new program were raised with the recent MC Gives campaign.

Participants in the PG GROWS HEALTHY project will receive a GARDEN TO GO:

A raised bed kit, garden tools, soil and a packet of organic seeds.

To find out more about the program and to apply to participate, contact Heidi at feldman.heidi@yahoo.com or 831-521-8196.



The **WAVE** Summer Programs

Registration
Now Open!

SUMMER 2024



MATH MATES

Math Enrichment Course

June 3-7 @ TBD

Mon-Fri • 9am to 1pm

Led by **Cristopher Rosas**, a PGHS alumni and standout student-athlete. Rosas founded Math MATES in 2020 and graduated valedictorian in 2022.

He attends **Harvard University**, where he studies Applied Math with an emphasis in Economics and Computer Science.

Math MATES is for ambitious PGUSD students entering the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades in the fall of 2024.



WAVE WRITERS

Creative Writing Course

June 24-27 @ TBD

Mon-Thur • 9am to 1pm

Led by **Hailie Atkinson**, President of the Young Writers Club, and an accomplished singer, musician, and aspiring actress. She is a published poet with Just Poetry Anthology, Scheherazade Magazine, and a winner of the Elliot Rushowitz-Roberts Poetry Award. She will be attending

UC Berkeley as an English major.

WaveWriters is for all incoming 4-5th graders heading into the Fall of 2024.

thewaveprogram
OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REGISTER ONLINE www.thewaveprogram.org

FOR MORE INFO: (408) 960-5194



RHD PTA FUNDRAISER

**TUESDAY,
MAY 14th**

**11AM- 2:30PM
5PM - 9:30PM**

**20% of purchases will
be directed to Robert
Down Elementary PTA!!**



Pacific Grove Unified School District neither endorses nor sponsors the organization or activity represented in this document.



NOW OPEN!

**AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM
WINTER/SPRING 2024**



**MON-WED
& FRI
3PM-6PM**

**THUR
2PM-6PM**

YOUTH CENTER

302 16th ST.
Pacific Grove CA, 93950

PACIFIC GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NEITHER
ENDORSES NOR SPONSORS THE ORGANIZATION OR
ACTIVITY REPRESENTED IN THIS DOCUMENT.



ATTENTION INCOMING 6TH GRADERS

**PGMS
XC TEAM**

2024 LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING

SUMMER CONDITIONING

JUNE 17TH AT 5:30 PM - PGHS TRACK

*If you plan to join the team in fall, we hope to see you in June
as we gear up for a great season. Three days a week ~
Optional but strongly encouraged!*

More info - email runclubpg@gmail.com



Pacific Grove Recreation

Summer 2024

Registration opens March 27 at 12pm

Swim Lessons
Tot Swim Lessons
Youth Sports Camps
Youth Adventure Camp
Preschool Adventure Camp
Play-Well TEKnologies LEGO® Camp
Pacific Chess Academy Camp
Afro-Latin Jazz Dance
Ballet & Tap Camp
Yoga for Kids
and more!

For more details call 831-648-3134 or
visit www.cityofpg.org/recreation



PACIFIC GROVE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NEITHER ENDORSES NOR SPONSORS
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SIGN UP FOR THE WAVE PROGRAM HERE!

Registration
Opens Feb 1st

The WAVE Program

A Fun-Filled, 2-Week Summer Experience for
ALL rising 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th Graders

July 8-18 @ PGHS
Mon-Thur • 9am to 4pm

SUMMER 2024

Culinary | Basketball | Boxing | Dance
Baseball | Softball | Soccer | Lacrosse
Backyard Games | Swim Lessons
Tennis Wrestling | Water Polo
Track & Field | Volleyball

Join Us!
THIS SUMMER

MAKE NEW FRIENDS &
GREAT MEMORIES THIS SUMMER!

Eligibility Requirements:

Must be entering 4th, 5th, 6th
or 7th Grade in Fall 2024

AND

Attend a PGUSD School
or Live in PGUSD boundaries

REGISTER ONLINE

www.thewaveprogram.org

Registration includes \$125 donation
per family. Scholarships Available!

FOR MORE INFO: (408) 960-5194

- 2024 -
MAY

NEW SALAD BARS NOW DAILY

**Pacific Grove Unified
School District
Elementary Menu**

BREAKFAST

Cereal Variety Offered Daily

Monday: Mini Maple Pancakes

Tuesday: Cinnamon Bun

Wednesday: Bagel

Thursday: Donut Variety

Friday: Fruit Smoothie or Yogurt Parfait

Served with Whole Fruits or 100 % Fruit Juice

All Meals FREE for ALL Students

Gluten Free Alternative Breads & Items Available at Each Site as Needed

© 2023 Simply Good Food, LLC

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Menu is subject to change. A variety of milk is offered each day.

MONDAY

6 Mozzarella Stuffed Breadsticks w/ Marinara
Chicken Nuggets & French Fries

13 Crispy Chicken Sandwich
Cheese Lasagna

20 Mozzarella Stuffed Breadsticks w/ Marinara
Chicken Nuggets & French Fries

27

MEMORIAL DAY

TUESDAY

7 Corndog
Macaroni & Cheese

14 Cheese Quesadilla
Crunchy Beef Tacos

21 Corndog
Macaroni & Cheese

28

Chef's Choice

WEDNESDAY

1 Orange Chicken & Rice
Homemade Chicken & Cheese Taquitos
Chef Choice Vegetarian Option

8 Orange Chicken & Rice
Grilled Cheese

15 Orange Chicken & Rice
Homemade Chicken & Cheese Taquitos
Chef Choice Vegetarian Option

22 Orange Chicken & Rice
Grilled Cheese

29

Chef's Choice

THURSDAY

2 Cheeseburger/ Hamburger
Bean & Cheese Nacho

9 Cheeseburger/ Hamburger
Homemade Bean & Cheese Burrito

16 Cheeseburger/ Hamburger
Bean & Cheese Nacho

23 Cheeseburger/ Hamburger
Homemade Bean & Cheese Burrito

30

Chef's Choice

FRIDAY

3 Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni
Deli Sandwich

10 Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni
Deli Sandwich

17 Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni
Deli Sandwich

24 Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni
Deli Sandwich

31

Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni
Deli Sandwich

CLICK HERE to ORDER RHD Spirit Wear

Otterly Adorable









A series of horizontal lines for writing, starting with a red line followed by several grey lines.



Lined area for writing or drawing.



Please Read: Allergy Alert Letter



Allergy Alert Letter August 2023.docx.pdf

[Download](#)
520.1 KB

Hello Robert Down Families,

This year, we have some schoolmates in grades 2 through 5 with life-threatening allergies to eggs, tree nuts, peanuts, and milk requiring Epi-Pen treatment if exposed to eggs and foods containing tree nuts, peanuts, and milk. To maintain the highest level of safety, all of the 2nd grade classrooms will be compulsory egg, tree nut, and peanut-free classrooms. We ask that all Second Grade classroom families not send foods to school with their child which contain tree nuts, peanuts, and eggs.

Mr. Keller will be discussing with all grade levels the importance of being safe at the lunch tables and not playing with milk cartons by purposely pouring liquids onto trays, onto the table tops or ground, and not stomping on cartons to hear them "pop". He will also share with students the importance of using hand wipes or washing hands after eating any food allergy products to keep playground equipment safe for all students.

The best way to determine if foods are allergy-free snacks is to read the label since most brands have a warning statement or allergen list. Be aware of phrases like this:

- May Contain Peanuts
- Processed on shared equipment with Peanuts
- Manufactured in a facility that also processes Peanuts
- Contains Peanut or Peanut Ingredients



In addition, we will encourage students to care for their food properly at school by not sharing food with others, not throwing food, and not carelessly spilling food onto others in order to eliminate food allergy exposure and cross contamination in eating areas shared by multiple grade levels.

The following resource link and attachment can assist you in teaching your children how to support friends with allergies and how to keep them safe.

<https://community.kidswithfoodallergies.org/blog/8-ways-to-teach-children-about-food-allergies>

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Thank you very much,

Katrina

Katrina Powley, RN, BSN, CSN
District School Nurse
Pacific Grove Unified School District
kpowley@pgusd.org
Google Voice: (831) 275-5396

How To **AVOID** a Food Allergy **REACTION**

The only way to **AVOID** having an allergic reaction is to **AVOID THE FOOD YOU'RE ALLERGIC TO**. That's why it's important to follow these rules.



Wash your hands
before eating.



Don't share
food or drinks.



Read labels twice or
ask an adult. **NO**
LABEL? DON'T EAT IT!



Always tell whoever
is making your food
about your food allergy.



Don't take chances.
If you don't know what's
in your food, **DON'T EAT IT.**



Food Allergy MYTHS



MYTH: Eating a little bit of a food you're allergic to won't hurt.

FACT: For someone with a food allergy, **even a small amount** of a food allergen can cause a **serious allergic reaction**.

MYTH: Peanut allergy is the most dangerous food allergy.

FACT: Any food can cause an allergic reaction. **No single food allergy is more dangerous than another.**

MYTH: Food allergies are *not* serious.

FACT: Food allergies are **VERY serious**. People with food allergies must be careful about what they eat **all the time** and **always be prepared for an allergic reaction**.

MYTH: A food allergy always develops in childhood, then you're stuck with it for life.

FACT: A person can develop a food allergy **anytime**, even as an adult. **Kids may outgrow a food allergy**, especially allergies to milk, egg, soy, and wheat.

A person can
be allergic to
ANY food...

...but in the
United States, the
most common food
allergens are...



MILK



EGG



WHEAT



FISH



SHELLFISH



PEANUTS



**TREE
NUTS**



SOY



SESAME



Tools for the Journey

Creating a World of Kind, Connected Human Beings



Breathing

I calm myself and check-in.

Quiet/Safe Place

I remember my quiet/safe place.



Listening

I listen with my ears, eyes, and heart.

Empathy

I care for myself. I care for others.



Personal Space

I have a right to my space and so do you.

Using Our Words

*I use the "right" words, in the "right" way,
at the "right" time, for the "right" reason.*



Garbage Can

I let the little things go.

Taking Time

I take time-in and time-away.



Please & Thank You

I treat others with kindness and appreciation.

Apology & Forgiveness

I admit my mistakes and work to forgive yours.



Patience

I am strong enough to wait.

Courage

I have the courage to do the "right" thing



Practices of a Peaceful Warrior



TOOLBOX
BY DOVETAIL LEARNING

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www.dovetaillearning.org



ROBERT H. DOWN
Elementary School

Robert Down Elementary School

Website: <https://robertdown.pgusd.org/>

Location: [485 Pine Avenue, Pacific Grove, CA, USA](#)

Phone: (831) 646-6540

Email: RHDOOffice@pgusd.org



Robert Down Elementary School

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[Create a newsletter](#)

