



Robert Down Principal's Update

MAY 16, 2024

Principal's Message

Dear Friends,

1. As you are aware, the District will be looking for a new principal to lead the Otters through next year and beyond. We need your input as to qualities that you most value in a principal. Dr. Linda Adamson, PGUSD Superintendent, will be leading a **Parent Input Meeting next Wednesday, May 22, from 6:00pm-7:00pm in our Ottertorium**. Your input is super important, so please come if you can.
2. Principal Mary Riedel is back as my co-pilot on the SS Otter for the remainder of the year. We will be tag-teaming days until school lets out.
3. Are you tired of emergency drill reports? Thankfully, this is the last you will get for this year. Yesterday we had our Lockdown/Barricade drill. We found a few things that need to be addressed such as how long the PA system will let you talk before shutting down as well as areas that need blinds. Feedback from our consulting group, staff, and students was good and we are now better prepared. We will do another Lockdown/Barricade drill some time in the fall.
4. **ALERT: On Tuesday and Wednesday, May 21-22, the outside lanes (Tuesday) and the inside lanes (Wednesday) of Pine Avenue will be closed for construction. At this writing, I am unsure how things will work and whether the other lanes will be open. Sooooo, in all caution, I strongly recommend that you stay off of Pine for those two days. Take a bit of a longer walk**

to bring your kids to school, or consider parking on Junipero. Please be patient as I'm sure we'll have a bit of a PG Carmegeddon going on. We'll update you as we get more detailed information.

5. As long as I am sharing some of my experiences with you about raising my kids, I might as well share one of my failures and continued struggle. A long time ago in a galaxy far far away, I had a 6 and 3 year old and was principal here at RHD. Both boys would usually be asleep when I left for school. As was common (and still is) I had meetings that night and came home for a quick bite with the family before going back to school. Before I left, I proudly announced to the kids that I would be home before they went to bed and would read them a bedtime story. You know how this is going to go. The meeting went late, I pushed a few more papers around on my desk, and as I came home, most of the house was dark. I came in the door and found my three year old, Timmy, asleep in a chair in the living room. He told Linda, my wife, that I would be home before he went to bed and that he would wait up for me. The sight broke my heart.

It's times like those that I felt like a washing machine when the load is unbalanced and it starts bumping and clunking during the spin cycle. My priorities were out of whack. All of us have to juggle a variety of demands on our time: work, chores, time with our family, time to ourselves. We live in a world that pushes us to spend more time focused on work at the expense of our families and ourselves. But if we want the greatest return on our investment of time, then our priorities must place time spent with our children near the top. Not only do we need to tell our children that we love them with our words, we must show them that we love them with our actions. There simply is no greater gift that you can give your children than your time. This is an investment that will reap benefits that no mutual fund or stock investment could compare. I have to tell you that when I see so many of you walking with your kids to school each morning and picking them up in the afternoon, it warms my heart and brings a tinge of guilt to me as I missed that opportunity. You are investing time in your kids. I simply could not do that when I was a full-time principal given my job expectations and suspect that many of you are in the same boat. But you can invest in different ways. A note in their book bag, a text telling them you love them (outside of school hours, please), dinner with them every night, time with them at night and on the weekends, etc. While we all struggle to keep our own lives balanced with all of the demands on our time, keeping our kids and family at the top of our priorities will pay the biggest dividends in the long run.

6. The lost and found is looking a bit like an overfilled thrift store. Please come by to see if that missing sweatshirt, lunch box, or jacket is there. It is in the back of our cafeteria. Over summer, we will collect all that is left and give it to a local charity.

Matt Bell, Interim Principal, Robert Down Elementary School

RHD Upcoming Events

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#/
/](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

Butterfly Bazaar Needs Your Help!



For many years, Pacific Grove children have welcomed the monarch butterflies to PG with a parade and festival in October. The festival, known as the Butterfly Bazaar takes place immediately after the parade. The Butterfly Bazaar games, food and entertainment is completely coordinated by parent volunteers and helps raise money for all PGUSD school PTAs. We will not be able to continue this tradition without help from more PGUSD parents! Currently the Butterfly Bazaar committee is looking for volunteers to help with the following positions:

- Secretary: meeting notes and keep meetings on track
- Treasurer: track funds before, after and day of event
- Ticket Sales: Distribute flyers and sell tickets for games
- Food Coordinator: Set of food sales and vendors
- Games Coordinator: set up games and coordinate game volunteers
- Musical Cakes: Organize cake donations and musical cake game

We will not be able to continue to have the Butterfly Bazaar without more parent volunteers!

If you are interested in helping with any of these positions please email:

pacificgrovebutterflybazaar@gmail.com

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

Registration
Now Open!

SUMMER 2024

Summer Programs



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.



REGISTER ONLINE www.thewaveprogram.org

FOR MORE INFO: (408) 960-5194



**PGHS
BREAKER GIRLS
DANCE TEAM
KIDS CAMP**

PERFORM
IN OUR
SPRING
SHOW!

SATURDAY, MAY 18

Grades K-5

+Lunch & Snacks provided!

SIGN-UP AT EVENT!

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

\$60 PER PARTICIPANT

Location: PGHS Dance Studio

Made with PosterMyWard breakerdance@pgusd.org





NOW OPEN!

**AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM
WINTER/SPRING 2024**



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

**THUR
2PM-6PM**

YOUTH CENTER

302 16th ST.
Pacific Grove CA, 93950

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ENDORSES NOR SPONSORS THE ORGANIZATION OR
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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

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

		WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
		1 Orange Chicken & Rice Homemade Chicken & Cheese Taquitos Chef Choice Vegetarian Option	2 Cheeseburger/ Hamburger Bean & Cheese Nacho	3 Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni Deli Sandwich
MONDAY	TUESDAY	8 Orange Chicken & Rice Grilled Cheese	9 Cheeseburger/ Hamburger Homemade Bean & Cheese Burrito	10 Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni Deli Sandwich
6 Mozzarella Stuffed Breadsticks w/ Marinara Chicken Nuggets & French Fries	7 Corndog Macaroni & Cheese	15 Orange Chicken & Rice Homemade Chicken & Cheese Taquitos Chef Choice Vegetarian Option	16 Cheeseburger/ Hamburger Bean & Cheese Nacho	17 Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni Deli Sandwich
13 Crispy Chicken Sandwich Cheese Lasagna	14 Cheese Quesadilla Crunchy Beef Tacos	22 Orange Chicken & Rice Grilled Cheese	23 Cheeseburger/ Hamburger Homemade Bean & Cheese Burrito	24 Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni Deli Sandwich
20 Mozzarella Stuffed Breadsticks w/ Marinara Chicken Nuggets & French Fries	21 Corndog Macaroni & Cheese	29 Chef's Choice	30 Chef's Choice	31 Domino's Cheese or Pepperoni Deli Sandwich
27 MEMORIAL DAY	28 Chef's Choice			

CLICK HERE to ORDER RHD Spirit Wear

Otterly Adorable







Lined writing area for notes or observations.





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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

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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.*



## Listening

*I listen with my ears, eyes, and heart.*



## Personal Space

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



## Garbage Can

*I let the little things go.*



## Please & Thank You

*I treat others with kindness and appreciation.*



## Patience

*I am strong enough to wait.*

## Quiet/Safe Place

*I remember my quiet/safe place.*



## Empathy

*I care for myself. I care for others.*



## Using Our Words

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



## Taking Time

*I take time-in and time-away.*



## Apology & Forgiveness

*I admit my mistakes and work to forgive yours.*



## 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.com



## 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](mailto:RHDOOffice@pgusd.org)



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