



# In The District

The official newsletter of the SALT LAKE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

440 East 100 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah

Aug 18, 2005  
Vol. 33 No. 2

## First Day Impressions

The new school year means many people making first impressions about your school and the people in it. First impressions begin before people even get in the building. The following checklist can serve as a starting point for determining any problem areas that may need attention.

### ■ Does your school building and grounds send a message that effective learning is taking place inside?

- Any litter and trash in the entrance area?
- Any old weeds? Any old leaves?
- Have shrubs been trimmed to attractive size?
- Are there any dangerous cracks in the sidewalk or steps?
- Any graffiti near the front entrance or surrounding area?
- Is there evidence of "old litter" around the doors and corners?
- Are windows clean and sparkling?
- Are parking lot and exterior lights in working order?
- Are signs up-to-date, welcoming and friendly?
- Is there any work that requires the help of central facilities staff?
- **Does your front office project a positive image?**
  - Is it bright and cheerful for visitors and students?
  - Is there a sitting area for

adults and children?

- Are materials about the school (PTA newsletter, community event flyers, Principals News, handbook, etc.) within easy reach? Small touches such as a bowl of candy on the counter or plants and posters, say a lot about your schools's attitude.

### ■ Do your hallways look attractive?

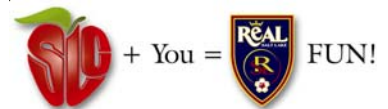
- Are they brightly lit, and are all lighting fixtures working properly?
- Are the walls freshly painted?
- Are there appropriate displays of posters and announcement, and they look dingy and cluttered?
- Are the entrances halls clear of cartons and unused furniture?
- Are the drinking fountains clean and inviting?

■ **Does your cafeteria or lunchroom spark your appetite or squash it?** Like the hallways, this room says a lot about your school's attitude towards its students. Is it clean, set up in a good grouping for students with lots of trash cans?

■ **How about your bathrooms?** Nothing says more about a school, especially to parents and the students, than an orderly and clean bathroom. Nor could a job be tougher and less rewarding for the custodial staff. However, keeping the bathrooms clean and reminding students about their role in maintaining them is very important, plus it gives the staff the

opportunity to remind students about good bathroom hygiene, which should become a lifelong habit.

*Source: NSPRA'S PRincipal in the Public*



On August 1, year round school students and teachers got a Real treat on their first day back to school: free Real soccer tickets and special guest appearances by Real soccer team members! This activity will be duplicated on Wednesday, August 24, when traditional calendar schools begin! The culminating Welcome Back to School activity will be Saturday, September 3, when the district attends the Real soccer game with lots of pre-game and half time activities featuring our students and our schools! See you there!

## Timeline

### Calendar Dates:

Aug 22 - Welcome Back 8:30a.m.-  
10:00 a.m. @ Highland  
Aug 24 - School Year Begins  
Sep 3 - Real Salt Lake Game  
Sep 5 - Labor Day- No school

### Board Meeting:

Sept 6 - Board Business Meeting  
6:30 p.m.

### Newsletter Deadlines:

Sept 1 - Articles Due  
Sept 8 - Publication

# Teaching Tip

## Taking action now will save you time all year

Maybe you're a first-year teacher wondering how you'll ever find the time to teach. And maybe you're a veteran who has vowed not to spend all weekend, every weekend, getting caught up.

Teaching is hard work. Taking a few steps now can save you time throughout the rest of the year. Here are some teacher-tested ideas:

- Don't do for students anything you can do with them. Instead of spending hours decorating a bulletin board, ask students to design it and help you put it up.
- Keep one "to do" list. Many teachers attach it to the inside of their grade books. Include supplies you need, phone calls you need to make, Internet research you want to do, etc.
- Create a substitute folder now. Include basic information about classes, schedules, students and procedures. Don't leave this until the night when you're fighting a massive case of the flu. A downloadable sample of a substitute folder is available at [www.teacher-institute.com/bt/resources/subfolder.pdf](http://www.teacher-institute.com/bt/resources/subfolder.pdf).
- Use an overhead transparency for often-repeated instructions—everything from your class rules to procedures for handing in late work.
- Create files and use them. You'll avoid the time you waste "hunting and gathering" and searching for the lost IEP or field trip permission slip on your desk. Color-code your files. Use different colors for each class period, for lesson plans and for important school paperwork.

*Reprinted with permission from the September 2005 issue of Better Teaching® (Secondary Edition) newsletter.*

## Online Science Resources

Last year's tsunami increased awareness of earthquakes. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has developed a comprehensive and fascinating website for students. Sections include The Science of Earthquakes, Today in Earthquake History, as well as a glossary of earthquake images. There's a section called Cool Earthquakes Facts and one that outlines suggested science projects. Visit <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/4kids/>.



USDA's Agricultural Research Service offers a wealth of resources to turn youngsters into scientists. At [www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=1274](http://www.ars.usda.gov/Services/docs.htm?docid=1274) you'll find links to many free teachers' and parents' resources: WhizKid

Activity Packet; science fair project ideas; an Image Gallery full of downloadable photographs for use in reports, projects and bulletin boards; and more!

## Congratulations

Congratulations to Mike Harman, the counselor at Emerson Elementary. Mr. Harman has been named the Utah Elementary School Counselor of the Year.

## Quote: \_\_\_\_\_

Books are the bees which carry the quickening pollen from one to another mind.

~ James Russell Lowell~

# Communication Corner

## Quieting the group gossip

Since the grapevine thrives on lack of information, honest communication is your best weapon against gossip. Are you giving your team the accurate, timely information it needs? Remember these communication "don'ts":

**Don't meet rumors with silence.** Destructive gossip feeds on hushed tones and awkward silences.

**Remedy:** Encourage staff members to come to you for clarification. Answer any and all questions and fears as best you can. It's the only chance you have to correct misinformation before it causes harm.

**Don't shoot the messenger.** If an employee

repeats a rumor, don't chastise the person. Instead, diffuse the gossip by welcoming it and immediately correcting it.

Example: "It's true that cutbacks are coming, but management's more concerned with reducing overtime than with eliminating any positions."

**Don't ignore the gossiper.** The impulse to gossip often stems from misdirected social energy. Channel that energy for the good of your team.

Examples: Ask the gossiper to write the company newsletter, keep the bulletin board updated or post e-mail messages for common interest.

From the Editors of Communication Briefings, August 2005