

Dear Sycamore Ridge Community,

The classroom teachers of Sycamore Ridge School are writing this letter to the families of our students to share with you the profound effect our Extended Studies Curriculum (ESC) has on your child's days at school. We, like you, want the very best for your child. **Our ESC program provides the very best. ESC not only offers the best in art, music, science, physical education and technology** for your child, but it also allows classroom teachers to offer the best program in a variety of ways. Please take a few moments to read about the **value and hidden benefits ESC provides** your child in the classroom and consider making a donation to the Del Mar Schools Education Foundation.

ESC affects your child's daily school experience by providing:

- **happier students!** There is enhanced excitement on the part of students for their school experience not only because of the ESC classes themselves, but also because of the additional programs the ESC teachers provide like organized recess games, musicals, participation in the school art galleries, student council, lunch clubs, Science Night, and so much more.
- **an approach that values the "whole child."** ESC helps develop well-rounded students who are given the opportunity to explore their potential in a variety of ways.
- **support for teachers from specialists for art, music, physical education, science, and technology.** Through classroom teacher and ESC teacher collaboration, curriculum delivery is enhanced providing multiple exposure to enrich and differentiate the learning. (For instance, John Sink our P.E. teacher trains staff in P.E. instruction and regularly shares lessons. Stephanie Ilkhanipour reinforces content standard acquisition through song, dance and movement. Art teachers, Jackie Folgner and Cat Gilbert lead our children in thinking about standards in creative ways, expressing their understanding of curriculum through right brain thinking. Jen Oliveira provides technical support and instructional expertise so teachers can incorporate more technology as a tool for learning. Kelsey Dumoff offers hands on science lab experiences that reinforce our classroom science curriculum.)
- **frequent opportunities for teachers to meet and collaborate on building program.** (When teachers are given time to collaborate multiple experts are working together to develop a program instead of many working in isolation. The difference in what we are able to accomplish is significant. Assessments are created, analysis of students needs more comprehensive, curriculum is improved, and instructional strategies are fine tuned.)
- **frequent opportunities for teachers to evaluate student progress and plan instruction.** (The time it takes to prepare a quality day for your child is considerable. Time also needs to be spent on grading and parent communication. We are all working well beyond our paid hours. We cannot deliver the same quality of program without ESC. We believe ESC is one reason for our outstanding API score of 959 that placed us in the top 10 schools in all of San Diego.)

A season of gift giving lies in front of us and there is no better gift you could give your child's teacher, or your child, than a gift to support our school. The teachers ask that in lieu of personal holiday gifts this year you give to the foundation and preserve the quality of what we can provide your child. Funding for our school has been cut so dramatically that without a concerted effort on the part of our community our unique and valuable program will be eliminated and the remaining years your child will spend at Sycamore Ridge detrimentally impacted. We currently have ONLY 16% participation by our families at Sycamore Ridge. The size of the gift does not have to be large. **The number of families participating does.** *Please join the many teachers who have donated part of their salaries to the Foundation and make your gift before the February 15th deadline.*

Respectfully, *Sycamore Ridge Teachers*

