

# SCES Newsletter

## SERRANIA CHARTER FOR ENRICHED STUDIES



*Serrania's motto:  
Inspiration,  
Imagination,  
Innovation*

**August 2014**

After a year in development, the parent and staff volunteers of the "Friends of Serrania" are thrilled to announce the launch of our new school website!

## Welcome back!

The 2014/15 school year is taking off like a rocket as we launch our new school website. The main goals of the project are to make it faster, easier to navigate, and easier for us to update, so we can share our news with you as soon as possible.

You are sure to enjoy the improved look, but the new website is not just about beauty. It is also packed full of new online educational resources and other features. You will find a special class page has been set up by your teachers in order to better communicate classroom information and ideas.

Most of all we want to help you get to know your school a better, ensure the entire Serrania family becomes a more efficient environment and make school life a little easier for you in the 2014/15 school year (and beyond!)

A blue rectangular graphic with white and yellow text. At the top, it says "10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1..." in small white text. Below that, in large white capital letters, is "WE HAVE LIFT OFF!". Underneath is "NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH" in smaller white capital letters. In the center is a white rocket ship launching upwards, leaving a trail of white smoke. Below the rocket is a yellow box with the website URL "www.SerraniaCharter.org" in black text. At the bottom, there is a list of features in white text: "\* Latest News \* School Calendar \* Teacher Contacts", "\* Classroom Information \* Online School Store", "\* Additional Educational Resources \* Social Links", and "\* & much more!".

10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1...

# WE HAVE LIFT OFF!

## NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH

[www.SerraniaCharter.org](http://www.SerraniaCharter.org)

- \* Latest News \* School Calendar \* Teacher Contacts
- \* Classroom Information \* Online School Store
- \* Additional Educational Resources \* Social Links
- \* & much more!

Available in Android, iPhone, Tablet, PC & Mac and in 26 languages including English, Spanish, Hebrew, Chinese, Russian, Arabic and more!

As you look around the site, we think you'll get a pretty good idea of who we are, what we do and, more importantly, how we

can help everyone get the best education possible. You will even find opportunities for school merchandise and spirit wear at the new online school store.

All of this, and more, are now available on any computer, tablet or even your smartphone.

The new website is an integral part of Serrania's online initiative to include many other online resources and other social media sites.

Search for "Serrania Charter" on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter and be sure to stay in touch with regular visits to [www.SerraniaCharter.org](http://www.SerraniaCharter.org)

# PRINCIPAL'S CORNER *By Theresa Wedaa, Principal*



*Home computers are being called upon to perform many new functions, including the consumption of homework formerly eaten by the dog. ~Doug Larson*

Welcome to the Serrania Charter for Enriched Studies 2014-15 school year. August is a month of transition, from the slow, winding pace of the summer schedule to the timely, organized pace of the school schedule. From great summer memories with family, friends, vacation and camp, to making memories during the upcoming school year. From summer goals of reading, resting, playing, vacationing, to school goals centered on school community and academics. What are your goals as parents? What are your goals for your children this school year?

As students transition into the new school year, Serrania is focused on building community. We began with the kindergarten playdate and new parent/student orientation where I was fortunate to meet many parents and students. I am looking forward to the Grade Level Parent Coffees and Back to School BBQ as an opportunity to welcome and get to know more families. In the first days of school I will be asking students to tell me about their summer and what their goals are for the new school year. Part of building school community is teaching the students character and manners. Every morning I will begin the day with students by sharing "Words of Wisdom." Please ask your child what they learned that day, and how they put it into practice. And check out our new website!

## **SCES** *Life Skills Academy*

By Asia Mape

Are manners and etiquette really that important? After two years of remarkable success with our award winning 5th grade "Dancing Classrooms" character building program, we think the answer is a resounding 'YES!'

As a result, FOS is sponsoring a new program; The SCES Life Skills Academy. The goal of the program is to help our children better understand the importance of learning the social skills needed to achieve success in school and in life. This is an exciting opportunity for our entire school. During this first year, the program will start in the 4th grade with Ms. Tenzer, Ms. Czigler, and Ms. Vassallo working in conjunction with The Next Step, a company that specializes in respect, manners, etiquette and life skills

training. The program will embrace the entire 4th grade during the course of the school year. The curriculum involves our SCES students, teachers and



**It doesn't have to be like this...**

parents. If successful, we hope to eventually roll out the Academy to the entire school, K-5. If you are interested in learning more about the program or would like to be involved, please email [FOS@serraniaavenue.org](mailto:FOS@serraniaavenue.org)



# IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL BBQ TIME!

by Scarlett Manganaro

It may be back to school time, but that doesn't mean the summer fun has to end!

To help kick the year off right, join us Friday, August 22 for the Serrania Back to School BBQ! This annual event is the

perfect time for some end-of-the-summer family fun together with the chance to catch up with old friends and meet some new ones.

This year's event will be just like a good ole' family picnic! We'll have an expanded food menu as well as a variety of desserts through our bake sale. What's more, we've scheduled lots of fun activities the whole family can enjoy – including 'old school' relay races, face painting, a photo booth, and contests galore (can you say dance off)! It's definitely an event you won't want to miss.

So, **mark your calendars** today and make plans to join our amazing Serrania family at this fun-filled event!

**Date: Friday, August 22**

**Time: 5:30 – 8:00 pm.**

**Place: Serrania Campus**



**When:** Tuesday, September 2, 2014

From 4:30-7:30 PM

**Where:** McDonald's of Tarzana

18909 Ventura Blvd.

Tarzana, CA. 91356

## Serrania Restaurant Night Returns... at McDonald's!

'You Deserve a Break Today...' and the chance to support our school!

Come join your Serrania friends and family at our first Restaurant Night of the new school year!! Your teachers, Principal and Serrania staff will be there to serve you fresh baked cookies and ice cream during your meal.

Remember - 20% of your entire purchase goes to support Serrania! All Serrania Restaurant nights help to fund FOS enrichment activities.



# A FACELIFT FOR THE STAFF LOUNGE: STAFF APPRECIATION CONTINUED!

By Jen Cole



Last year during our highly successful teacher and staff appreciation week, a number of volunteer parents transformed the Serrania staff lounge into a mini “spa” style retreat. The teachers and staff loved the new feel of the lounge and many asked if we could keep it like this all year long. Recognizing all the hard work and dedication our teachers and staff demonstrate every day, the volunteers thought this was an excellent idea - so over the summer a group of hard working, creative volunteers got to work.

Together, they thoroughly cleaned out all the cabinets, lined the shelves and re-stocked them with fresh supplies. Beautiful pictures, inspiring quotes and a fresh coat of paint now adorn the walls. In addition, a new relaxing seating area has been created. FOS hopes that our wonderful staff will use the revamped lounge as a place to escape the stresses of the day, eat lunch together and build new friendships.

FOS would like to thank Shannon Hall, Amy Klosterman and Jennifer Termini for spearheading this project. Thank you to Jim Riley, Yvette Peterson, Lucia Downey, Lauri Aud, Christine Guerra, Jessica Gillearn, Ken Hammamura and Tonya Rasmussen for helping making this venture such a success.



We Love Our Teachers & Staff at Serrania

# SCES *FREE* Parenting Seminar Series Returns!

By Aidie Lara

As we look ahead to another great year, we're happy to announce the return of our monthly SCES Parenting Seminar series!

These informal one hour sessions, held in the Science Lab (Room 2) on the first Tuesday of each month from 8 – 9 am, are intended to help parents build the skills they'll need to support, reinforce and constructively discipline their kids as they help them become the happy, balanced people they were meant to be. Each session focuses on sharing loads of practical solutions and tips for improving communication, building positive relationships and other useful parenting skills.

Leveraging the positive input and direct requests gathered during last year's program, we've created what we're sure will be a series that addresses a number of the new and unique challenges facing parents today. We look forward to seeing you there!"

Be sure to check your monthly SCES Newsletter for more information.

**Don't miss out .....Mark your calendars**

**FREE Parenting Seminar Series - Open to ALL**

Location: Science Lab, Room 2

## **Dates, Topics and Facilitators 2014-2015:**

All sessions will be facilitated by volunteer Ryan Rosen, executive director of Camp Kinneret, with the exception of our December session.

### ***8 a.m., Tuesday, September 2***

Becoming a More Calm, Loving, Nurturing and Engaged Parent

### ***8 a.m., Tuesday, October 7***

Helping Your Child Deal with Gossip

### ***8 a.m., Tuesday, November 4***

What's the Right Age for Kids to Walk to School, Be at the Mall by Themselves?

### ***8 a.m., Tuesday, December 2***

The Parenting Balancing Act: How to Balance Your Own Needs and Priorities with Those of Your Child

Lauren Appelbaum, PhD, CPCC; Founder & President, LA\*PhD

### ***8 a.m., Tuesday, January 20***

When and How Should We Start Talking about Drugs and Alcohol?

### ***8 a.m., Tuesday, February 3***

When Your Child Says They are Being Bullied: All Sides of the Bully Problem

### ***8 a.m., Tuesday, March 3***

What Type of Parent Are You? Does it Matter?

### ***8 a.m., Tuesday, April 7***

The Importance of Playing Outside without Toys

### ***8 a.m., Tuesday, May 5***

Should Parents Be Their Kids' Friends?



*Written by Heather Olson*

Accelerated Reader (AR) is Serrania's wonderful 'FOS' (Friends of Serrania) funded on-line reading comprehension program – designed to develop fluency, vocabulary, and a life-long love of reading. Students read a book, independently take a quiz, and earn points for awards and prizes. Points are calculated based on the success of the quiz. Grade level appropriate goals are increased each month based on individual student success.

### **Summertime Success!**

This summer, students of all ages were hard at work reading great books and taking quizzes at the Woodland Hills library. Throughout the summer, a gratifyingly large group of students successfully completed nearly 80 quizzes – earning themselves a head-start this year as well as a mountain of points and great rewards. You can learn more about these 'AR' All-Stars by visiting the Serrania website or joining us for a special assembly where they'll be recognized for their dedication and hard work. The Accelerated Reader program will again be available to students at school beginning this September.

### **About Accelerated Reader**

As we move deeper and deeper into the information age, it is likely that all of us recognize that becoming a skilled reader is essential to the success of all of our children. Whether it be the study of science, math, history or the arts, or every day activities like understanding directions or successfully navigating the bus / rail system – all require the ability to effectively read and understand the written word. Studies after studies have established that strengthening our kids' reading skills are the surest way to set them on the path to success.

Among the fundamental driving forces behind this program is the recognition that "less than 50% of families read to their kindergarten-age kids each day." Let's not allow that statistic be true of Serrania families. While most children will learn to read by age seven, it is critical to help them build more advanced skills to ensure the development of the required life-long reading habits so important to success. According to the 'Reading is Fundamental' web site, most kindergarteners can retell stories, use descriptive language to discuss them, begin to match

written and spoken words, and even write short stories. First graders can predict, retell and ask questions about stories they hear or read themselves. Children who are read to and begin building these skills early in life are significantly more likely to build advanced levels of fluency with sight words, letter-sound recognition and overall comprehension.

The 'Early Moments' website lists ten reasons why we should read with our kids. Among these are; development of speech and communication skills, increased logical thinking, exposure to new experiences thru literacy, and enhanced concentration. Reading time is an opportunity to slow down the day and regroup. It's a time to snuggle with a care-giver and share the day. Last and perhaps most importantly, the fundamental lesson taken from a moment shared with a book is that reading is fun!

Accelerated Reader provides a trusted avenue to develop our children's love of reading. Additionally, there is a "school-to-home connection" that allows students to work independently while providing parents with email confirmation of their child's work. As Serrania's AR coordinator, I've been using the program for nearly 15 years as both a teacher and parent. I look forward to helping build our long-term reading success.

For more information on Serrania's participation in the Accelerated Reader program, please visit

[www.SerraniaCharter.org](http://www.SerraniaCharter.org)

**A Reader Today, a Leader Tomorrow. Happy Reading!**



# *Friends of Serrania 2014-2015 - Working Together For Success!*

*By Shannon Hall & Yvette Peterson, FOS Co-Presidents*

On behalf of our entire FOS (Friends of Serrania) organization: **Welcome to the 2014-2015 Serrania School Year!**  
We are pleased to introduce the 2014-2015 Officers, Board, and Committee Chairs below.

FOS is our volunteer driven parent-teacher organization. We are parent volunteers who, in collaboration with our teachers and staff, work hard to raise critical funds for Serrania enrichment programs and plan fun events that make our school a true community. We encourage YOU to get involved in some way. Our meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month from 6:30-7:30 p.m. **Come check out the first meeting on Thursday, August 21st at 6:30 p.m. Child care is provided!**

## **Volunteer Today!**

Not a member of the Board or serving on a committee? Don't worry! There are still lots of opportunities to get involve, big or small, whatever works best for you!

FOS meetings are open to EVERYONE, not just current Board members. Attending FOS meetings is an excellent way to get more engaged with the pulse of our school and meet more of our dynamic families. There are still lots of opportunities to get involved -- big or small -- whatever works best for you .

Please feel free to contact any of us if you have any questions about how FOS works or how you can get more involved. WE NEED YOU! [FOS@serraniaavenue.org](mailto:FOS@serraniaavenue.org)

## **2014-2015 FOS Officers:**

**Co-Presidents:** Shannon Hall, Yvette Peterson

**Secretary:** Jen Cole

**Treasurer:** Wendy Salazar

**Faculty Representative:** TBD

**Vice President, Communications:** Orit Bonver

**Vice President, Fun Fair:** Debi Shaolian

**Vice President, Fundraising:** OPEN

**Vice President, Outreach:** Marc Blaiwes

**Vice President, School Events:** Neil Manganaro

**Vice President, Shops:** Christine Guerra

## **2014-2015 FOS Board Members:**

Theresa Wedaa, Principal

Jodye Alcon

Adrianne Doty

Lucia Downey

Zoraida Flowers

Jessica Gillearn

Amy Lichtenstein

Asia Mape

Jim Riley

Carolanne Valvo



## **2014-2015 FOS Committee Chairs:**

**Accelerated Reader:** Heather Olson

**Back to School BBQ:** Neil Manganaro

**Birthday Marquee:** Jeff Sturges

**Book Fair:** Christine Guerra, Jim Riley

**Box Tops:** Ilisa Pasternak

**Collating Tuesday Packets:** Melissa Mandyam,  
Ilisa Pasternak

**Earnings for Learning:** Adrianne Doty

**Fun Fair Advertising:** Jeff Sturges

**Fun Fair Auction/Baskets:** Adrianne Doty

**Fun Fair BBQ:** Neil Manganaro

**Fun Fair Game Booths:** Jen Cole

**Green Team:** Jennifer Termini

**Holiday and Valentine Gift Shops:** Christine Guerra,  
Shannon Hall

**Hospitality:** Marc Blaiwes

**Ice Skating Event:** Adrianne Doty

**Jamba Juice Thursdays:** Aide Lara

**Kids in the Community Cut-a-thon:** Yvette Peterson

**Kids in the Community Relay For Life:** Yvette Peterson

**Kids in the Community Toy Drive:** Adrianne Doty

**Kinder Orientation:** Adrianne Doty and Jen Cole

**Menchies Wednesdays:** Debi Shaolian

**Movie Nights:** Lucia Downey and Ilisa Pasternak

**New Student Welcome Bags:** Asia Mape

**Newsletter:** Orit Bonver

**Original Works Art Fundraiser:** Jen Cole,  
Carolanne Valvo

**Parent Seminar Series:** Aide Lara

**Pizza Tuesday:** Neil Manganaro

**Popsicle Friday:** Lucia Downey

**Restaurant Nights:** Adrianne Doty

**Room Parent Liaison:** Yvette Peterson

**Shine on Serrania Campaign:** Amy Klosterman

**Spirit Wear:** Jeff Sturges

**Sponsorship:** Debi Shaolian

**Teacher Appreciation:** Amy Lichtenstein

**Walkathon:** Asia Mape

**Website:** Marc Blaiwes, Todd Doty

**Looking for a way to get involved? Here are some important committees looking for your support!**

*Halloween Arts and Crafts Event: OPEN*

*Ralphs / Vons / eScript: OPEN*

*Kids in the Community Food Drive, Halloween Candy/Costume Drive: OPEN*

*School Dance: OPEN*

*School Tours: OPEN*