



Oakview Elementary School PTA

THE ACORN



Principal's Report **Dr. Phillip Reavis, Principal**



Oakview Students Take Field Trips To: Ellis Island, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium and International Wolf Center in Minnesota

In this April edition of the *Principal's Report*, I'm continuing my series of *Ten Year Reflections* as I mark my tenth year as Oakview's principal. This month, I'm focusing on the changes in instructional technology that have occurred and the opportunities that technology has afforded the students at the school.

When Oakview opened in 1995, the school was indeed *state of the art*. With three data drops in each classroom, the school was unique among its counterparts. Within only six years, however, the school was showing its age and the process of upgrading technology hardware, infrastructure, and software began. The following is a brief list of changes in Oakview's technology program over the last ten years.

- New data drops added to all classrooms
- Second hardware computer lab added
- Promethean Boards installed in *all* classrooms

- 7 mobile wireless laptop computer labs purchased
- Student handheld voting devices integrated into instruction
- Individualized assessment via *Measures of Academic Progress* (MAP)
- Individualized web based instruction via *Compass Learning*
- Distance Learning Lab established

Space does not permit me to describe in full the numerous infusions of technology on Oakview's campus. To be certain, however, the impact has been significant. Most recently, the school has broadened its reach into the world through the establishment of a *Distance Learning Lab*, where students take *virtual field trips* to locations such as **Ellis Island, Columbus Zoo and Aquarium**, and to **Minnesota's International Wolf Center!** Without packing a lunch or loading a bus, students have access through video conferencing equipment, a Promethean Board, and the internet, to experts around the world! Learning leaps off the pages of the textbook through these interactive field trips!

The money spent on technology is wasted, however, if it does not translate into im-

proved student achievement. When reviewing PASS results, our students continue to improve their scores each year. This is a difficult task considering Oakview's long standing record of high state rankings on PASS. When looking at MAP data, the same pattern appears with some students increasing their scores by as much as 30 points from fall to spring! Gains such as these have been credited to *Compass Learning*, an individualized web based instructional program available to *all* Oakview students! Please ask your child's teacher about this program if you are not already using it!

The advances in technology the school has accomplished over the last ten years are a direct result of PTA's financial support, the faculty's never ending desire to integrate technology into their daily instruction, and the student's continued high levels of performance which have garnered the school award money from the state. *Team Oakview is indeed the Winning Tradition!* I look forward to seeing how technology will change and improve teaching and learning at Oakview over the next ten years!

President's Corner **Kelle Corvin, PTA President-Elect**



It's hard to believe that Spring Break is almost upon us and that the end of the school year is almost at hand! We've had quite a spring at Oakview!

Despite the week-long snow break, we've managed to accomplish a lot!

Square 1 Art went out to parents on **Friday, April 1** and were to be returned by **Friday, April 8** for orders to be before *Mother's Day*. This is a great way for the kids to express themselves and is a wonderful program in that it benefits the student and the school. Our *Bingo Nights* had outstanding turnouts

at all three events! This continues to be a very popular family night out and it's a wonderful way to help Oakview and enjoy a school community outing at the same time!

The *Book Fair* was also a big hit! It worked well that the opening day coincided with the Second & Third grade bingo night at school! The library and PTA opened the *Book Fair* doors early so that bingo night attendees could shop! We've heard good things about this and have had positive feedback.

Our *Restaurant Nights* have been a huge success this year! The rotation schedule for

our restaurants is on the Oakview website under PTA if you need a reminder. There may be a special restaurant night announcement for early May, so be sure to check the PTA website for updates! We've exceeded fundraising expectations this year.

Upcoming events for May include *Teacher Appreciation Week* the week of **May 2**. Be sure to help your room coordinators celebrate our teachers and the outstanding job they do! There will be several opportunities to help celebrate this week.

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President's Corner Kelle Corvin, PTA President-Elect

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The general PTA meeting is scheduled for **Monday, May 2** beginning at **6:00pm**. We will have a brief business meeting followed by the *Spring Choral Concert*. Hope to see many of you there!

Remember also that we are nearing the time of year when PASS testing will begin in May. Please check with the front office if you are scheduled to volunteer in the building to make sure all testing is complete, otherwise, no volunteers are permitted in the building during PASS testing days.

Finally, *Field Day* is coming to Oakview! Please check announcements regarding the dates for your student's class. Thanks for all of the volunteer hours that everyone puts in to make Oakview the best it can be. If it weren't for our volunteers, many goals would not been achieved.

Legislative Updates Karen Akerhielm, Chair

As our Oakview teachers and staff are well aware of, the past few years have seen significant cuts in public school funding.

Greenville County Schools' funding from the state has been reduced by \$53 million over the last two years, while student enrollment has increased by over one thousand students. The district has responded by elimi-

nating three hundred fifty-six positions, including one hundred eight-seven teachers, increasing the student-teacher ratio. There have been cuts in: science labs, computer labs, after-school programs, middle school language and music programs, instructional supplies, workbooks and copy paper. About a quarter of Greenville County's school buses are more than twenty years old, with

multiple breakdowns per day. I would encourage all concerned parents to contact their representatives in Columbia to express their views on these matters. I would also suggest learning about comprehensive tax reform and the recommendations of the *South Carolina Taxation Realignment Commission* (TRAC) committee, regarding how our schools are funded.

Reflections Brooke Clayton and Jana Circle, Coordinators

I am proud to announce the following Oakview winners at the State Level Competition:

Manasvini Ranganathan
Second Place State Level
Intermediate Film & Video Production



Charlie Hyman
Honorable Mention State Level
Intermediate Visual Arts



Thank you to all participants, and congratulations to our winners!

All Oakview level *Reflections* winners are invited to attend an awards ceremony at school on **Wednesday, May 4** at **9:00am**. Parents are welcome. A listing of all winners along with pictures of all winning Visual Arts and Photography entries can be found on the school website.



The *Reflections* theme for 2011-12 is *Diversity means...!*

Box Tops Christi Yenser, Coordinator

The *Box Tops* Bonanza was a huge success! Congratulations to the following classes who collected the most *Box Tops*:

1. **Mrs. Bradt** – Third grade – 1,087
2. **Mrs. Jones** – Third grade - 708
3. **Mrs. Bolt** – Fifth grade - 583
4. **Miss Meyers** – Second grade - 561
5. **Mrs. Haarsgaard** – Fifth grade - 532

Each class celebrated with a special treat of their choice. The *Box Tops* Bonanza brought in over fifteen thousand seven hundred *Box Tops*. As a result, Oakview will receive a check for around \$1,570. We couldn't do it without each of you - thank you for supporting this vital program! Also, I would like to say a huge thank you to those who gave their time helping clip, count, and bag all those *Box Tops*. They are:

Celeste Bliston, Jodi Cloer, Danielle Colby, Patti Funderburk, Bridget Helmer, and Andy Yenser.

Fifth Grade Day Maggie Taylor, Coordinator

Every year at Oakview, fifth graders celebrate the end of their elementary school years with a full day of fun including games, a talent show, picnic lunch, deejay dance and more!

This year's *Fifth Grade Day* will be held on **Thursday, May 26**. The *Fifth Grade Day Committee* welcomes your volunteer assistance in decorating the fifth grade hallway on **Wednesday, May 25**. Additionally, monetary donations are still needed to offset

the cost of food, games, prizes and decorations for our two hundred-forty fifth graders.



This year's t-shirts are sponsored by **Dr. Fogle** of *Fogle Orthodontics*. Thank you Dr. Fogle! In order to insure your child receives

the correct t-shirt size please remember to send back your order form before spring break. If we don't receive an order form back for your child, we will order them a youth large.

Thank you to everyone that is working so hard to make this a special day for our fifth graders!

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Maggie Taylor at wagtaylor@msn.com.

Environmental and Science News

Kathy Miller, Clare Wood, Clare Laye and Betsy Shuler

Science Fair

And the winners are - all of the students who participated! Each of the students who entered a *Science Fair* project used science, math, and language arts skills to create an experiment and to communicate the results. We are proud of all students who entered! Congratulations to the following students whose projects qualified to enter in the *Greenville County School District's Science Fair*: **Kernen Frey, Connor Nicholson, Faith Bloomstran, Kennedy Madden, Shashank Conmandur, Emma Kate Seckinger, Kate Harrison, Medha Tirumalai, Meral Hardwicke, Grace Crowder, and Sarah Yu**. Congratulations to the following teams who qualified to represent Oakview in the team portion of the *District Science Fair*: **Mrs. Jones, Mrs. McCurry, Miss Gerard, Mrs. Laye, Mr. Roehl, Mrs. Satterfield and Mrs. Bolt**. Way to go, Oakview Scientists!

General Electric Partnership

Oakview's fifth grade students participated in a partnership with *General Electric Corporation* (GE) called *A world of Motion*. During

science lab, engineers from GE teamed with **Mrs. Miller** to lead lessons where students designed cars while learning about force and motion. Students were faced with challenges as they tested their cars: Why did my car curve left? Are my axles straight? Are my wheels rubbing? Is my nozzle curved? How will weight affect the distance and speed of my car? Students experienced success and frustration as they worked as engineers in groups to correct problems with their cars. They had fun as they reviewed *Newton's Laws of Motion* and saw applications in the real world.



Summer Garden Maintenance

We need everyone's help in maintaining the schoolyard habitats over the summer. Please consider signing up for a week of summer garden maintenance. We schedule three families per week in the butterfly garden and in the South Carolina Garden. This is a fun activity for the *whole* family! The

sign-up sheet is on the desk in the lobby at the front entrance. To learn what's a weed and what's not, we invite you to attend one of the *Summer Garden Maintenance* meetings in the science lab. They will be held on **Wednesday, May 25**, and on **Thursday, May 26, at 10:00am**.

Bi-Lo Invention Convention

Thank you to all of the students who participated in the *Bi-Lo Invention Convention* in March. It was a great event with many creative ideas. We are proud of **Keyes Thrasher** and **Emmy Klaeser** for their great ideas and would like to give a special mention to **Diana Pitman** and **Jordyn Pomar**. These two girls from Mrs. Bell's fourth grade class won second place for their invention, *The Critter Feeder*. The girls won a \$75 savings bond. Congratulations, Diana and Jordyn!



Calendar of Events

April

- Apr 18-22 Spring Break - NO SCHOOL
- Apr 26 Stevie B Restaurant Night
- Apr 27 PTA Board Meeting
- Apr 29 Spirit Day
- Apr 29 Interim Progress Report

May

- May 2-6 Teacher Appreciation Week
- May 9 SIC Meeting

School Information

Oakview Elementary School PTA

515 Godfrey Road, Simpsonville, SC 29681
(864) 355-7100 School main phone number
(864) 355-7118 PTA phone number

Find State PTA information at: www.scpta.org
Find National PTA information at: www.pta.org

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Dr. Phillip Reavis

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Mr. Stephen Deyo Mrs. Carrie Prochaska
Mrs. Terri Wheeler-Hawkins

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The *Acorn* can be found online at:

<http://www.greenville.k12.sc.us/oakview/parents/pta/acorn.asp>

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