

# Matsuyama Elementary School

## *From the Desk of Principal Montgomery Parent Volunteers! The Great Testing Debate*

Parent Involvement: As I write this message the school is a buzz of activity as parents and teachers quickly work to transform our campus into a Cherry Blossom festival. The smell of teriyaki chicken, mochi and other savory foods wafts through the office. Volunteers were making homemade sushi all day, and there has been an air of excitement amongst the students all week as they anticipate the arrival of this day. None of this would happen without our dedicated PTA and volunteers. My fear is that these moments, the very moments that make Matsuyama such a great place, may become a thing of the past. Many of our PTA board members have children moving on to middle school and few are stepping up to take the reins. As of today we do not have anyone interested in becoming the PTA president. Without a president there will be no PTA. Without a PTA there will be nothing exceptional about our school community. It is time that we all take a look inside and ask, "Am I truly contributing all the time and talent I can to keep my child's school exceptional?" If the answer is no, consider taking on a leadership role. I do not beg very well, but I can honestly tell you, I am begging...we need someone, or a couple of people, to step up. Our kids deserve nothing but the best!

The Great Testing Debate: Regardless of what our opinions are about standardized testing, they have always been a part of our educational process and most likely will continue in some form or another. Students will be taking the test between April 27th and May 22nd. Testing will be held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays between 8:15 and noon. It is vitally important that all students in grades 3-6 be at school and on time during this time period. Opportunities for make-up sessions will be very limited! It is expected that each student will have about 6-8 hours of testing over that time period. The CAASPP is an online test that involves performance tasks that include classroom discussions prior to the assessment portion. Gone are the multiple choice questions, and in their place are multiple step questions that involve writing and critical thinking skills. In addition, (continued page 2)



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## From the Desk of Principal Montgomery (continued from cover page)

the test is aligned with the new common core standards. Parents will receive individual student test results; however, scores will not be used to rate schools this year.

Having said all that I ponder the question, "What is a measure of success?" Is it a test score? Is it growth over time? Is it a willingness to take on new opportunities and challenges and learn from our failures and successes? Is it that "I did it!" feeling that comes with mastering a difficult or new task? Is it being happy with who we are and what we contribute to our family, community, society and world? It is probably a bit of all of the aforementioned and then some. We all measure success differently, but I challenge that success is definitely more than a label assigned to us by the results of a standardized test. While the test is an important measure of our growth as a school community, please keep it in perspective...it is but one measure!

Calendar dates: April-4/10-4/20 Mixed Bags Fundraiser, Week of April 13th Jog a thon (all proceeds goes to improve our technology equipment, 4/17 talent show auditions, 4/21 Lunch with a Scholar, 5/1 PTA General Meeting & Talent Show, 5/3 zPizza restaurant fundraiser 25% of your tab goes to our PTA , 5/6 Bike to School Day, 5/20 Lunch with a Scholar, 5/25 No school Memorial Day, 5/26 PTA General Meeting - (tentative 3rd & 4th performance), 5/26-29 Staff Appreciation Week, 5/ 27 Open House, 6/11 Last day of school

## Student Staff Spotlight

### Meet Mr. Duff By Samantha Leigh-Kendall



Mr. Duff is a super awesome and cool science engineer who comes on Wednesdays and Fridays to Mr. Mullen's class. He shows experiments in class so that we can learn how things work.

He attended a science high school, freshman year, when he was 15 years old. He thought everything was so fascinating! He likes science because it's interesting and he can learn so much about mass, inertia, volume, and everything. He even finds fun ways to memorize science facts. He likes engineering because he says that engineers create things that don't exist while scientists seek to discover the truth. His favorite class was biology, he even took chemistry twice because he finds everything so fascinating.

In his spare time he likes to build and grow things. He hopes to predict soil temperature during solarization to reduce the amount of methyl bromide in the air. He like science because he finds it interesting to learn new things you don't know anything about. He wouldn't quit science, he finds it too fascinating, and he enjoys the process. His favorite scientific figure is America's greatest physicist, Richard Feynman, because he says things like, "I don't know what mass is, but this is how it acts."

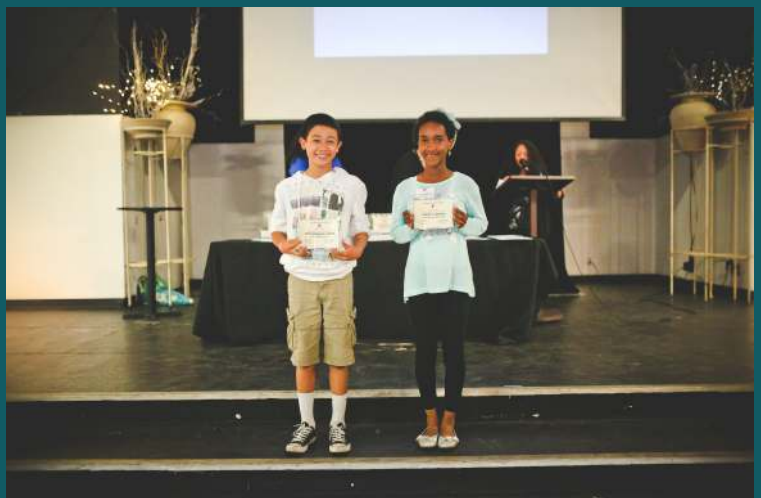
If you want to become a science engineer he says that you can take however many years of schooling that you want, even forever. Some classes are physics, maybe fundamental science, and math.

A fun fact about him: He was in a travelling Chilean circus, which is totally awesome! Mr. Duff is one of the coolest science teachers ever!

1. Matsuyama Baton Twirling Club 2. Koyasan Taiko 3. Thank you too all of our supporters and sponsors who made our Cherry Blossom Festival so successful! 4. Ali & Ne Fashion Accessory booth, thank you for donating all of the items. Ali & Ne is located at 3257 Folsom Blvd 5. Ms. Glover's Club Matsuyama singing "Haru ga Kita" 6. Congratulations Bereket Chapman who received the Award of Excellence at the PTA Reflections District Awards Ceremony



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