

DRAGON'S LAIR

Genevieve Didion K-8

November 2018



Highlights from our November issue:

IN THE KNOW

- Scholastic Book Fair
- 4th-6th Grade Thanksgiving Program
- Didion Athletics

DIDION GARDEN NEWS

From watermelon to popcorn, read about our Fall plantings and see what our students will be growing in winter.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Get to know Middle School Language Arts teacher Mrs. Pamela Tateishi

UPCOMING EVENTS

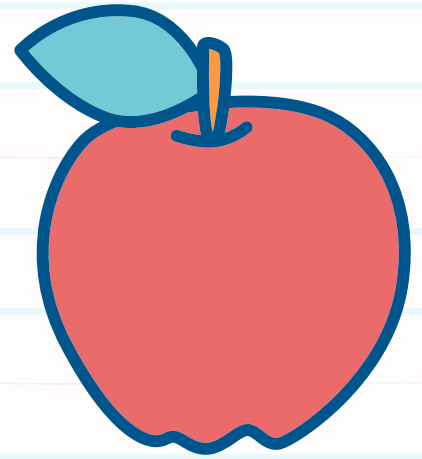
- Nov. 2 End of 1st Quarter/7th & 8th Grade Shortened Day
- Nov. 5 Picture Make-Up Day
- Nov. 8 School Kine Cookies Distribution
- Nov. 9-16 Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Nov. 9-16 Shortened Days for 1st -6th Grades
- Nov. 12 School Closed - Veteran's Day
- Nov. 13-16 Scholastic Book Fair in Library
- Nov. 16 4th-6th Grade Thanksgiving Program
- Nov. 19-23 School Closed - Thanksgiving Holiday
- Nov. 29 See's Candy Distribution in Staff Lounge
- Nov. 30 End of 1st Trimester/1st-6th Grade Shortened Day

STAY CONNECTED

- **Sign up for Dragon Text Blasts.** Text @dragonbl to 81010
- **Download the school app.** Search Genevieve Didion in iTunes or Google Play

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

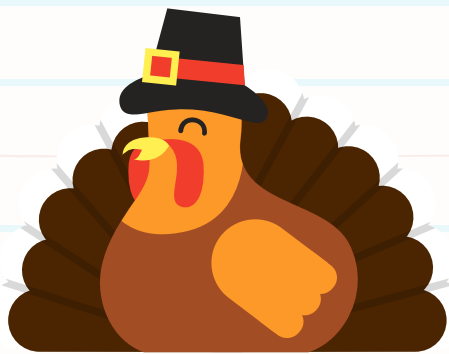
With Thanksgiving right around the corner, it is a good time to reflect on the many things that we may be thankful for. First and foremost, I continue to be impressed by and thankful for our amazing students who come to school every day with an energy and joy that is truly motivating to all of us who are fortunate enough to work with them. I am also thankful for our incredible staff who truly love what they do, and work hard to provide a rich and supportive learning environment for our students. I am also grateful for the generosity of our parents and community.



We wrapped up the **Kids Can Food Drive** this week with all donations going directly to a local food bank that will benefit needy families in the area. Also, the overwhelming success of things like the **Fall Festival, coordinated by parents Elaine Austin and Nancy Street** and supported by countless other volunteers, really underscore the willingness of our community to devote time, energy, and resources to provide our students with enriching and fun activities. The work that has gone into organizing and managing **our robust after-school options by Andrea Garvey** is another example of a significant and generous contribution of effort and time for our students. I am extremely grateful for the coordination of various fundraisers by parents **Kristi Morioka, Gina Lourenco, Leticia Bradford, Patty Nishikawa, and Taji Sperber**, along with their respective committee members, that will ultimately benefit our school. I am also so thankful for the time and work that **Jules Ratanasen** puts into our beautiful newsletter every single month to keep families informed and up-to-date. And while I know that there are so many more volunteers and individuals who have put forth time, energy, and financial contributions that I have not mentioned specifically here, **please accept my deepest gratitude on behalf of the entire Didion Family.**

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE, CONT.

As you all know, as part of our **social-emotional learning (SEL)** as a school site, each month we highlight a different positive character trait. At the end of October, I visited classes to recognize "Gotcha Ticket" drawing winners who demonstrated great collaboration skills throughout the month. And on Monday, November 5th, we will be acknowledging those students during morning announcements. For November, we have chosen to focus on **empathy and perspective-taking**. The introduction of these critical life skills could not be more timely considering some of the recent horrific events in the news. Teachers will work to embed lessons regarding empathy and perspective-taking into their daily lessons, as well as teach explicit lessons about these traits. Parents, I ask that you please talk with your students about these attributes at home in order to extend our students' learning and to help them contextualize the lessons they are learning in school. Another aspect of our SEL program that will support this month's traits, as well as lead to a broader discussion and understanding of the importance of tolerance, is our One Book, One School program, which will be coordinated by Mrs. Rechs. Our entire school will be powerfully aligned to reinforce the themes of empathy and tolerance as all of our grade levels will be participating in reading the chosen book with our students. More information is forthcoming, so stay tuned!



November is another very busy month with the end of the first quarter for the middle school, as well as the end of the first trimester for elementary. Also, parent-teacher conferences for K-6 will begin on November 9th. Don't forget that there will be no school on the 12th in observance of Veterans Day, as well as no school from the 19th-23rd for Thanksgiving Break.

We also will have our annual Thanksgiving Concert this month on the 16th at 9:00 a.m. in the gym. The middle school basketball season also tips-off on Wednesday the 7th. New for this year throughout the league are admission fees to games. Didion will be charging \$1 for adults, with students and kids being free. Lastly, our flag football team is still undefeated and gearing up for the end of the season. Let's go, Dragons!

One last note – I have it on good authority that we sold more cookies this year in our School Kine Cookies fundraiser than ever before! That is amazing! THANK YOU all for your incredible effort!



A LOOK BACK

STORYBOOK PUMPKIN DECORATING CONTEST: WINNERS ANNOUNCED!

It was another successful year for the Storybook Pumpkin Decorating Contest. We had 97 entries this year! Each one was incredibly creative and showed just how much Didion loves books. Every participant received a certificate of participation and treat, along with Mrs. Rechs' gratitude and admiration. A few lucky winners also received a \$10 gift certificate for the November book fair. The grade level winners are:

KINDERGARTEN: GREGORY CEDILLO



4TH GRADE: DANNY MCPHEE



5TH GRADE: CHLOE CHAN



1ST GRADE: GRAYSON PORTER



2ND GRADE: ALANI GARZA



6TH GRADE: SOPHIE NEVIS



3RD GRADE: NATHAN GAULTNEY



MIDDLE SCHOOL: EMILY MAIN



MS. MONTGOMERY'S 1ST, 2ND, & 3RD GRADE:
EDDIE & IVAN HIGAREDA



FALL FESTIVAL RECAP

Thank you to all the donations and volunteers for our Fall Festival on October 12th - this event could not happen without your help! We raised over \$5,800 for Didion!



IN THE KNOW

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

Nov. 13th-16th in the Library

The book fair is back! Did you know that 50% of our profits from book sales come back to the school? It's true! Don't miss your chance to get some great books and help our school at the same time!

Some new features this year will be:

- **Teacher wish lists** - a chance to help build your child's classroom library
- **Online fair** - don't want to send your child to school with a ziplock bag of money? Try shopping the book fair online! Details will be coming soon.
- **New location!** The book fair will be held in the library this year, come by and say Hi to Mrs. Rechs



To volunteer at the book fair, [sign up here](#). Duties include helping kids check out and restocking shelves. Thank you!

THANKSGIVING PROGRAM

Grades 4-6

Friday, Nov. 16th at 9:00 am in the Gymnasium

**Parents, please note the change in attire for 4th grade girls.*

Girls: white top, dark bottom. Boys: white shirt/tie, dark bottom.



Didion's undefeated flag football team at the first game of the season versus Matsuyama

ATHLETICS - GO DRAGONS!

Come out and support the amazing athletes of Didion's flag football and basketball teams! Click the links to view game schedules.

[Flag Football](#)

[Basketball](#)

DIDION GARDEN

What's the Scoop?

Hello Garden Friends,

The Didion garden supplied us with a bountiful summer crop. As usual, we have had some successes and some, "what did I do wrong?" situations.

For the first time, we grew watermelon. Amazingly, we got four large watermelon and lots of aphids! Luckily, the aphids did not harm the tasty melon, and we were able to feed lots of kids a slice of melon.

Another fun crop has been the popcorn. We have about 28 ears of corn. The problem we've been having is that it is difficult to figure out when it is ready to pop, but we're working on a solution.

Besides the watermelon and popcorn, we grew tomatoes, pumpkins, lemon cucumbers, Japanese cucumbers, peppers, sunflowers, zinnias, and a variety of herbs.

Another success has been our milkweed. We planted it along the perimeter of the east facing fence. We are hoping to attract monarch butterflies, and we actually found two monarch caterpillars!

The first graders have spent time in the garden exploring and observing the root systems of the plants, as well as inspecting the bugs, seeds, worms, etc. They will be planting carrots and radishes in the next few weeks.

Contact Nancy Keating at nancy-keating@scusd.edu with any questions!

FALL PLANTING

We have been busy getting the soil ready for fall planting. This included pulling out our summer plants and amending the soil. Thank you to the PTA for providing the funds to get our winter garden ready. Here are some of the plants that will be growing in our winter garden:

Kale
Spinach
Romanesco
Cabbage
Broccoli
Sugar Snap Peas
Garlic
Kolrobi
Cauliflower

PROJECT IDEAS

Native California Garden

How about a native California garden adjacent to our existing garden? We are still trying to get this project going. The goal would be for students to research native plants, design a landscape, and plant the natives. If you have any ideas, please let us know.

Donation Requests

Wheelbarrow (used is fine)
Kid-sized brooms
Kid-sized gloves
Wine barrel for planting citrus



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

PAMELA TATEISHI

Middle School
Language Arts teacher

Mrs. Tateishi is a graduate of UC Davis, having earned Bachelor of Arts degrees in English and Communications, a teaching credential, and Master of Arts in Education from the school. For the past 14 years, Mrs. Tateishi taught 10th, 11th, and 12th grade English in the Sacramento City Unified School District. She is excited about joining the Didion community.

YOU TAUGHT HIGH SCHOOL BEFORE COMING TO DIDION. HOW ARE MIDDLE SCHOOLERS DIFFERENT?

I keep forgetting that some middle schoolers aren't even teenagers yet! They also don't drive and may not have heard of the SAT. I've also discovered that the process of choosing a high school is almost as intense as choosing a college. Middle schoolers also stay active during lunch by playing sports instead of just walking around campus in circles.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT TEACHING MIDDLE SCHOOL?

I'm excited about helping students build the skills that they'll need in order to be successful readers and writers in high school. I also love finding new middle grade and young adult novels to add to our classroom library. Reading these books is a nice break from adult novels that may not be as fun.



WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE MIDDLE GRADE OR YOUNG ADULT NOVEL?

I can't really choose one favorite novel, but I recently read *Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds, which is written as a poem, similar to Kwame Alexander's books. I kept wanting to reread passages because they were so meaningful and intense. The book is about one boy's quest to avenge the death of his brother; before he actually carries out his plan, he meets with a variety of characters from his past, and this gets him to think about the path he is about to take.

WHAT'S THE LAST MOVIE YOU SAW?

I saw *Crazy Rich Asians* during the summer. Before watching the movie though, I made sure to do my homework and read all of the novels from the trilogy. I have to say that the movie did a great job of streamlining the events from the book and focusing on the important characters, and of course, I'll be watching any sequels that they make!

DO YOU PREFER COFFEE OR TEA?

Although I do enjoy a refreshing milk tea with boba during the summer, I can't live without my coffee, especially since I have two young children.

NOTES FROM THE PTA

The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) supports the Didion community through fundraising and volunteer efforts

IN SEARCH OF VOLUNTEER ORGANIZERS

The PTA is looking for volunteers to chair the following:

- **FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE**
Help plan and organize various fundraising events throughout the year
- **FATHER-DAUGHTER DANCE**
This fun and memorable winter event is a favorite among families. Head a committee with support from previous event organizers

Contact Jeff Fletcher at jefgel@hotmail.com or (530) 306-0037.

UPCOMING PTA MEETINGS

PTA Meetings are held every other month, on the first Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM in the library. Childcare is provided.

- **NOVEMBER 7TH**
- **JANURARY 9TH**
- **MARCH 6TH**
- **MAY 1ST**

DIDION FUNDRAISERS

Upcoming & Current Ways to Support our School

- **SEE'S CANDIES**

These classic chocolates make the perfect holiday gift! Sales run October 29th - November 9th.

- **NUGGET SCRIP CARDS**

Nugget scrip cards are now available in the Didion front office! Pick up yours today so you can donate to Didion when you shop at the Nugget.

- **DIDION GEAR**

Support our school AND sport your Didion gear every Friday! Available for purchase at the front office.

- **AMAZON SMILE**

A simple and automatic way for you to support our school every time you shop on Amazon. [Click here to start.](#)

- **SHOPPING TO EDUCATE**

Do you shop at Lakecrest Village? Help earn cash for Didion by turning in your receipts to the front office.

- **BOX TOPS**

From Cheerios to Kleenex, Ziplock to Fruit Roll-ups, save your Box Tops and turn them into your child's teacher.

HAGGIN OAKS JUNIOR GOLF PROGRAMS



Try the After School Golf Program

- Ages 7-17
- All Skill Levels
- Flexible Schedule
Participate 1, 2 or 3 days a week
- Core Value Curriculum
- Golf Skill Enhancement

Classes are held Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 4:00- 5:30 pm. The Northern California Institute of Golf at Haggin Oaks is committed to bringing excellence to the long-term development of its junior golfers. Whether your child wants to play competitively or for fun, we have a program to fit their needs.



Call for details and pricing.

916-808-2531



The Sacramento City Unified School District is not a sponsor, endorser or otherwise associated with the above.
Permit Number B-117

Haggin Oaks Golf Complex - 3645 Fulton Avenue - Sacramento, CA 95821