

Shu Ren International School
Weekly Announcements
November 18, 2009

Important Dates (Details below):

Thursday, Nov. 19 - Friday, Nov. 20 - Parent/Teacher Conferences, No Classes

Thursday, Nov. 26 - Friday, Nov. 27 - Thanksgiving Break

Wednesday, December 2 - PA meeting: Topic: How do we build our community?

From the School Administration:

1. Parent-Teacher Conferences: Please arrive 5-10 minutes early to obtain and review your child's report card. The report cards are located in the lobby's desk where the sign-in/sign-out sheets are. Conference locations:

Pre-K Panda Bears with Meng-Pei Chen: The Bamboo Garden

Pre-K Winnie Bears with Katherine Chi: Ping's Office

Kindergarten with Kai-Yao To: The Plum Garden

Grade 1 and 2 with Joyce Chang: The Pine Garden

English Teacher Lisa Jean Cohen: Jie's Office

2. School Flyers: There are some flyers on the table in our lobby. Please help us distribute them in your neighborhood libraries, playgrounds, cafes, or restaurants. Take as many as you can distribute. Your help is greatly appreciated!

3. Homework for K+ grades : Starting this week, we are putting the Chinese homework on the website. The assignments can be found at these links for [Kindergarten](#) and [First/Second Grade](#) (Please remember the password for these pages: shuren1333). Homework will be posted at these links each week from now on. I originally planned to add English instructions to the Chinese homework for non-Chinese reading parents. However, after having consulted both Kai and Joyce, I have decided not to add English instructions for the Chinese homework for the following reasons:

- Homework is for students to work on independently. Both teachers have assured me that our students have practiced the homework problems in class and that they have explained the homework to students in the class. Thus, the students should have a pretty good idea what the assignments are about.
- If they have difficulties with the homework (i.e., do not understand what the assignments are or forgot what the teacher told them), they can come to school the next day and ask the teacher for help. Similarly, they may stay for extra time at our after-school homework club to get their questions answered.

When our students go to higher grades when they may have more advanced homework problems in math, physics, or chemistry, many parents may no longer be able to help them with the homework even if it was in English. The question would be "How do you get your homework done if your parents cannot help you?" By not having parents help them with homework, we hope that our students would learn to organize their time better. For example, they cannot wait until the day before the homework due date to start working on the homework, which will not leave them time to ask for help. In addition, they will learn to figure out how to get help when they need it.

However, we understand that parents want to know what their children are learning and we are still looking for computer software to help us. In particular, we are researching computer software that is capable of recognizing Chinese characters in a scanned document so that a digital Chinese-English dictionary and speech software can be utilized. Or the Chinese characters can be easily copied and pasted into any online Chinese-English dictionary for parents to find out their meanings. I have not been able to get a program (Chinese Plus, Speech Plus, or Adobe Acrobat) to recognize Chinese characters in a scanned document without any error. If you know any program that may work, please let me know.

Finally, if there is a homework project for the family, English instructions will be provided.

- 4. Safety Reminders:** To parents who use the playground gate in drop-off and pick-up:
 - Please don't use it to enter past 8:30am or 3:15pm and/or if there is no Shu Ren staff by the gate.
 - If exit from the playground gate, please always check to ensure that the gate is securely locked behind you.

- 5. Alameda Food Banks:** Thank you for donating to the Alameda Food Banks. We have already filled the container in less than a week! I am very proud of our Shu Ren families for being so generous to our community.

From the Parents Association:

- 1. Next PA meeting:** Wednesday, December 2nd is our next Parents Association meeting, 6:30 - 8:00 pm. (No potluck this time.) Please email Ping <ping.xie@shureninternationalschool.com> to request childcare. Our agenda will be an informal, but important discussion about building our Shu Ren Community:
 - How do we respect and celebrate our diversity?
 - How do we most effectively communicate with each other?
 - How do we resolve our differences?
 - How can we retain what we most appreciate about our school as we grow and add more children and families?
 - What behaviors, as parents, do we want to model for our children?

Shu Ren t-shirts will be for sale at the meeting in a variety of colors and sizes. Please support Shu Ren and buy a shirt!

- 2. New Secretary:** We are pleased to announce that the new Secretary for the PA is Jun Liang (mom of Melanie in K). Thank you, Jun!

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