

VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Public Meeting

February 7, 2005
7:00 p.m.

Four Corners Room/Community Center

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police Officer Brian Parsley addressed us:

- As always, a reminder: **LOCK YOUR BIKES!** If you have an expensive bike, keep it inside. If you have an older Cryptonite lock, contact the company because some older locks can be easily opened. The company will replace your lock if you have one of the vulnerable kinds.
- Park in your parking spot and don't park your car in the guest spots.

UPCOMING EVENTS

	Activity	When	Where
1.	Art Exhibit	March 9 th at 6:30 pm	Community Center
2.	Transition Group for residents moving out of Section A	Every two weeks, starting March 1 st , 6:30 pm	Crossroads Room
3.	Dissertation Writing, Stress and Procrastination Workshop	February 7 th from 3 pm to 5 pm (Wednesday)	Crossroads Room
4.	Dissertation Writing support Workshop	February 20 th from 5:30 pm to 8 pm	Crossroads Room
5.	Single Parents Group	February 21 st from 7 pm to 9 pm	Four Corners Room
6.	Knowing your Rights on CalWORKS	February 17 th from 10 am to Noon	Kids Corner
7.	New Activity for Kids ages 2-5: Sing-Along and Storytelling.	Every Tuesday at 4:30 pm (Starting February 20 th)	FRC

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bears for UNICEF. Ladi Afifi and Sara Rosell, two members from the campus group, Bears for UNICEF, addressed us regarding an event they would like to sponsor in the Village. They want to have a culturally-themed activity day geared towards families and children. They thought that perhaps they would have dancing or some type of entertainment, and various fun, cultural things for children. Bears for UNICEF would see the event as an outreach opportunity, a way to introduce themselves to the Village. More information regarding this event will be forthcoming.

ENROLLING CHILDREN IN ALBANY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Linda Baker, the enrollment specialist for Albany Unified School District, spoke to us about enrolling children in school. Linda has been with the district for 16 years and is entirely in charge of managing the data for students in the district. She first described the process of enrollment, and then answered questions. Following is a summary of her presentation:

Open Enrollment

The most important thing to know about enrollment in schools in Albany is that it is not based on geography. This means that someone who lives close to one school can still have their children assigned to another school. Although every effort is made to make everyone happy, sometimes people still do not get their first choice school. Here is how the process works for enrolling children in school for the first time:

1. Between April 22 and May 13, parents of new kindergarteners or other students who will be beginning school in the fall, will go to the District Office (at 904 Talbot Ave. in Albany) to fill out the initial paperwork. It does not matter if you are first in line on April 22 – you still may or may not get your first choice school. All applications are given the same consideration, regardless of the order in which they were filed. When you first come to district office to register your child in school, you should bring:
 - A copy of your University Village lease (rental contract)
 - The child's *original* birth certificate. If you are from another country, the child's passport will suffice.
2. When you fill out the initial paperwork, you will be given an opportunity to specify your first choice school and time, your second choice school and time, etc. For some families the time is the most important aspect – they might choose Ocean View morning kindergarten first, and Cornell morning kindergarten second. Others might prefer a specific school, regardless of the time. Think carefully about your preferences and be sure to fill in all the options because you might not get your first choice school. There is also a place to write a note about why you want that school. Don't skip this section because it might make a difference in how your child is assigned.
3. After May 13, the district will mail out all the further paperwork that needs to be filled out. Among the requirements are immunization records, doctor and dentist exams, and so forth.
4. Before the end of June, all the principals in the district will sit down and decide which children will go to which school.
5. Parents will be notified by the beginning of July which school their child will be attending.

For more information about open enrollment, please attend an informational meeting at 7:00 pm, Thursday, February 15, at Cornell Elementary School (in the multipurpose room). There will be a lot of very useful information provided at that meeting.

Questions & Answers

Q: Are there any tests to get into kindergarten? If so, are exceptions ever made?

A: The only “test” is that the child must be 5 years old by December 2 of the year that he or she will be starting kindergarten. It is very, very rare that exceptions are made to this rule. If your child’s birthday is within a couple of days, it might be possible. In this instance, contact the district office.

Q: What is the likelihood that my child will be accepted to Ocean View Elementary School?

A: It really is impossible to say because it depends on so many factors. For instance, if there is a lot of demand for Ocean View and not as many openings as requests, more students won’t get their first choice. Children are always placed in the same school as their siblings if that is the parent’s first preference.

Q: My child is already enrolled in an Albany school. What do I need to do to continue enrollment?

A: Nothing. Children are automatically re-enrolled in the school that they have been previously attending. Unless you want to change schools, you don’t need to do anything.

Q: What if I have another question and I want to contact you?

A: Email me at linda@albany.k12.ca.us or call me at 510-558-3765.

CHILDCARE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Susan Stevenson, director of Albany Children’s Center, addressed us on the matter of childcare and after school programs for children in the Village:

- There are 346 children throughout all Albany in the school district’s after school and childcare programs. The Albany Children’s Center is a play-based center that focuses on social-emotional growth, not academic development.
- Albany Children’s Center itself is fully enrolled and has 200 people on the waiting list. If you want childcare for your children, get on the waiting list as soon as possible. 200 people sounds like a lot, but often people’s plans change and they take themselves off the list after finding other care. It is best to get on the list as early as you can. Get on the list by May for enrollment in September. In order to sign up for the waiting list, go to the Albany Children’s Center office at 800 Red Oak Ave. to fill out the paperwork. (Note that the office is closed from 12:30 – 3:00 pm every day.)
- Priority is given to siblings of children already enrolled. Priority is also given to low-income families.
- Fees are charged on a sliding scale according to need.
- Children must be fully potty trained before enrollment.

- If you don't get in, you can call an organization called Bananas that helps parents find good childcare for their children. Their phone number is 510-658-7353 and their website is: www.bananasinc.org.

Prepared by:
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