

# *ESCONDIDO HIGH SCHOOL*

Fall 2007

Dear Cougar Parents and Guardians,

The 2007-2008 school year is well underway at Escondido High School. Our focus for the 2007-08 school year is supporting high academic achievement, college readiness and assisting students in making connections to school. Escondido High School met all academic goals measured through the federal measure, AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress). The California measure or API (Academic Performance Index) scores improved, however we did not meet all of our goals. As a staff, we are focused on continual improvement. During staff meetings on the minimum day in September, our staff set new goals based upon the test results and developed action plans to meet those goals. We will continue professional development activities and dialogue throughout the year. Our next professional development day is October 24<sup>th</sup>. It will be a non-student day.

We are closely analyzing individual assessment data for all students to identify strengths and adjust strategies to close achievement gaps. Your student may be asked to attend tutorials or a CAHSEE preparation course. If your student is assigned one of these programs you will be notified. The first CAHSEE Academy for the school year will be offered for juniors who have not yet passed one or both sections of the CAHSEE. Sessions will be after school from 3:00-4:00 PM Mondays and 2:40-3:40 PM Tuesday through Thursday on 10/8-10/19 in room 730 for English Language Arts, and on 10/22-11/2 for mathematics in room 502. Attendance and full participation is strongly encouraged. Additionally, "drop in" after school tutorials are still available for all students Tuesday through Thursday.

As partners with the College Board, SAT preparation is available for all of our students on-line. Students will be receiving their personalized access code in their English classes. The on-line course features practice tests, immediate and personalized feedback, lessons covering mathematics concepts, reading and writing strategies, as well as explanations. For students planning to take the SAT in October, we are offering an SAT Seminar on Saturday September 29<sup>th</sup> from 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM in room 501. We are planning additional SAT preparation assistance throughout the year. Students will be notified as those opportunities become available. We are committed to partnering with you and your student(s) in meeting academic goals.

The PSAT will be administered for all sophomore students and junior students who choose, on Wednesday October 17<sup>th</sup>. The test will begin at 7:30 AM. All other students will have a delayed school start time of 10:30 AM. The PSAT is a great opportunity to practice the types of questions included on the SAT, analyze academic strengths and areas for growth, and to participate in opportunities for scholarship eligibility.

The Homecoming football game will be played on October 26, 2007 at 7:30 PM against Valley Center High School. The Homecoming Dance will be held on October 27<sup>th</sup> in the Cougar gymnasium. In an effort to encourage positive academic habits, students will be required to clear fines, detentions and Saturday Schools prior to buying a dance ticket. Additionally, we will be issuing bracelets for students to wear indicating that they are dancing appropriately. Students breaking dance rules will relinquish their bracelet as a warning and subsequently be asked to leave if they break rules a second time. As a parent, you will know if your student obeyed dance rules because they will come home with their bracelet on.

A safe and secure school environment is our first priority. Teachers have reviewed evacuation and emergency procedures with our students. We have already held two emergency drills, one in response to fire and the other a lockdown. Students, teachers, and staff take these drills seriously and as a result they went very smoothly. We will have additional drill(s) later in the school year. On another safety note, please drop students off so that they can access crosswalks if they need to cross Broadway to get to campus. We also suggest speaking with your student about the dangers of jaywalking.

I encourage you to become active members of the Escondido High School community. We have many parent groups who offer valuable insight as well as support for our student programs. We welcome you to join Parent Club, Music Boosters, Athletic Boosters, Ag Boosters, the English Language Advisory Council (ELAC), or volunteer with one of our many athletic teams. Your presence and spirit attending student events is important to our athletes, musicians, drama students and many other student groups around campus. I am confident that you will discover a multitude of opportunities and a sense of fulfillment in supporting our students. Parents often ask us what they can do to increase student success in school. Just a few suggestions include:

- Insist on daily attendance unless, of course, your student is ill
- Talk to your student daily about school and contact teachers immediately if there is an issue.
- Set aside a daily time and place for study.
- Encourage involvement in school activities.
- Talk to your student about appropriate behaviors such as respect and integrity.

We need you as partners with us in helping your child achieve.

Loyal, Strong and True,

Sue Emerson  
Principal, Escondido High School