

SKCE

The Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality



www.skcequality.org

Change is in the Air: a letter from Eduardo.
Page 2

Leyendo Avanzamos - Reading We Advance Family Literacy Program
Page 1

New Communication and Grade Level Standards Workshops are a Hit with Parents
Page 2



Summer Park Parties
Hundreds of families came to eat and play soccer and other games at Northgate Park every Friday evening in July and August.
Page 2

TOT
SKCE is helping train new parent facilitators throughout Oregon.
Page 3



The Oregon Community Foundation Challenge Grant
OCF challenged SKCE to raise \$18,500 from individual donors. Will you help?
Page 3



SKCE Summer Family Literacy Program Leads to a Year-Long Pilot

Parents and their children from **Swegle, Highland** and other NE Salem schools met twice a week in July as part of our **Summer Family Literacy Program**. In all, 45 families participated. Parents met separately from their children during the first half of each two-hour session, and learned how and why to encourage reading at home. Children participated in culturally and educationally appropriate activities with trained childcare providers. Parents then joined the children to practice what they learned.

We partnered with the **AC Gilbert Discovery Village** for one day of activities and had a great time exploring the Village with the families. We also took a tour of the **Salem Public Library**

and attended Spanish Story Time. Participants received take-home materials such as books, games, and school supplies to foster additional learning at home. The **Salem-Keizer School District** provided curriculum, training and resources.

After the summer program ended, many of the parents asked us to continue providing support and materials. In evaluations, they wrote about how much they appreciated learning together about what their children are doing in school and their role as parents. Many of the parents felt that since they themselves had not completed considerable formal education they could not help their children with schoolwork. When they learned simple strategies -- such as counting beans as you put them in a dish or talking about the pictures in books and asking their children questions about what the book is about -- they felt much more comfortable. They also commented

on how much their children enjoyed coming to our childcare, since they got to speak and sing songs in Spanish, play Mexican games, and make fun crafts like photo frames, masks and magnets.

Based on the mothers' request, we worked quickly to create a year long program "*Leyendo Avanzamos/Reading We Advance.*" Parents from the summer program are meeting as a group once a month on a Thursday night or Saturday. SKCE-trained facilitators are also visiting the families at home to model strategies and work one-on-one with them. Facilitators bring supplies and materials to share with the family and talk about the key points from the session. In addition, we are working with families at **Four Corners Elementary** to provide similar support and information.

We are tracking the participation and the student's progress in both programs. Preliminary results are very encouraging.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Oregonians' drive for public education reform has taken many years to arrive at its climax. Finally, we are in the middle of it and are being driven by **Governor Kitzhaber's** bold actions. He put it best when he said, **"I am intending to wear out my welcome to make sure we have equal education for all our children in Oregon."**



In the past four years, I have been in the middle of it all by being part of the three-year **Harvard-Wallace Foundation Education Reform Initiative** with the four largest school districts in Oregon and Massachusetts. I was also part of the **Oregon Race to the Top Design Team** to develop the state's federal school reform grant application. This past August, I was part of the **Governor's LearnWorks Team** to develop the new Outcome Based Budgeting and Proficiency Based Teaching and Learning Framework to guaranty that every student is successful – from birth until college graduation.

All our hard work culminated in November, when the Senate confirmed the members of the **Governor's Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB)**. These members have been working on the implementation of the Education Reform Mandate SB-909, which was passed by the Oregon Legislature in June, 2011.

The Governor's Office, in partnership with the **Oregon Department of Education** and dozens of educators, business and community leaders are working on the application to the **Federal Department of Education's Waiver** out of NCLB and the development of the framework for the **Oregon Next Generation of Accountability**.

This is an extremely exciting time for Black, Asian, Native American and Latino community leaders throughout Oregon! Historically our children and youth of color and English Language Learners have not been served well by our public education system as the achievement gap remains steady after ten years of the NCLB national law.

The commitment and leadership that the **Governor** and **Superintendent Susan Castillo** are showing are reassuring, but it's going to demand a more robust engagement of all of us as Oregonians to see these equal education efforts becoming a reality.

I encourage all our supporters and allies to be part of the solution by getting engaged by either following the OEIB's working developments or by attending scheduled meetings to testify or watching on-line. Follow their work at the Governor's official webpage where all the upcoming meetings and materials from past meetings are posted: <http://governor.oregon.gov/Gov/OEIB/>.

-Eduardo Angulo, SKCE Executive Director

Communication and Grade Level Standards Workshops are a Hit with Parents

Parent evaluations of our four new units -- a three-part communication series and stand alone grade level standards workshop -- are very positive. After taking the communication workshop on how to communicate with youth, one parent wrote that she is working harder to listen to her kids and not just lecture them. Another parent commented by phone that, after taking the workshop about couples communication, she and her husband are much more consistent with their children.

Participants also reported they feel more prepared for conferences and understand how to ask questions of teachers in a respectful manner. These four new units have been added to our curriculum. The team is currently working on developing units on preventing gang involvement and teen pregnancy. These units will be piloted in the winter and spring and will be added to the curriculum for next year.

Summer Friday Nights at Northgate Park - Soccer, Crafts and Hot Dogs

We wanted to do something during the summer to build a feeling of community in NE Salem while having fun. We decided to host a

neighborhood gathering every Friday evening in July and August -- complete with hot dogs, soccer matches, crafts, and games for kids. Each week over 100 people came; one Friday we served over 600 hot dogs! We plan on repeating the program next summer.

Thank you to the **Marion-Polk Food Share** for your support.

SKCE Youth Programs

We are very fortunate to have **Willamette University** interns working with SKCE this year. They are helping with a variety of projects, including our new **Lego Robotics Team** (in partnership with **4H**) and **Debate Team**.

Ruben Sainz, our Administrator Assistant, is leading the **Lego Robotics Team**. There are 10 middle schoolers participating at the weekly class on Friday evenings. Ruben attended the regional training and feels like he is learning alongside the kids, **"It's a lot of fun for the participants and**



leaders -- sometimes the kids come up with things we never thought of." Ruben explains, **"They decided to focus on kiwis for the research piece. I don't know where they got that."** The team is registered for the regional competition in December.

Another intern, **Devon Cardoza**, is helping create a debate program for SKCE. His mother was one of our first parent-leaders. Devon is an award-winning debater and Salem graduate. He is looking forward to helping more kids in NE Salem learn about and participate in debate.

HIGHLIGHTS

- * 18 parents are participating in a **Salem Training of Trainers (TOT)** to learn more about the SKCE Popular Education philosophy and potentially become facilitators. The TOT is facilitated by retired Master Teacher and SKCE staff member **Aurora Cedillo**.
- * Last school year SKCE offered 57 workshops for 1,121 parents. We provided quality, academically enriching childcare for 1,291 children.
- * Check-out the **SKCE Youth Film Group** website at: www.skcefilm.blogspot.com.
- * We are offering gang prevention support groups monthly at the Center. Master teacher **Sara Czaky** is offering monthly Parenting with Love and Logic classes.
- * We are supporting new parent facilitators in Portland, Albany, Corvallis, Cornelius, Jackson County, Beaverton, Forest Grove and Hillsboro. We are working on growing in Gresham and Central Oregon.
- * Community members are enjoying using our 27 free, on-line computers at our Center. In addition, classes in our computer lab are well attended.
- * We co-hosted a community conversation with **Stand for Children** on November 15th. 110 people attended and discussed how to work at closing the achievement gap in our schools.
- * Over 50 families participated in our Summer Learning Program, many are now part of our "**Leyendo Avanzamos - Reading We Advance**" Program.
- * SKCE and partner organizations brought families and students to the November 8th **Salem-Keizer School Board** meeting to express their support for naming the new NE Salem Elementary School after **Cesar Chavez** and making it a dual-language school.

The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) Challenges SKCE

After applying for funding from the **Oregon Community Foundation (OCF)**, a long time SKCE supporter, last spring we received an exciting reply. OCF challenged us to raise \$18,500 from individuals in order to receive a \$37,000 grant. That means every dollar received from individuals will bring in two additional dollars from Oregon's largest foundation!

Since receiving the challenge in May we have raised a little over half of what we need to meet the challenge. **Please consider making a donation to get us to \$18,500.** An investment in SKCE is an investment in community and programs that close the achievement gap and engage entire families. What could be better?

SKCE Facilitators from Throughout Oregon Participate in our First Convivio at the Center

In June, 42 parents and their children came to our **Oregon Parent Center** for a **Convivio** (big group gathering). SKCE trainer Aurora Cedillo led sessions on the importance of respectful communication in schools to advocate for children. She explained that parents often feel angry and frustrated. The group worked together to develop more effective strategies. Participants created posters on why it is important to be "metiche" or deeply involved with students and the community if you want your children to be successful and graduate.

The next **Convivio** is scheduled for January 2012.

SKCE Photo Gallery



Practicing reading strategies during our summer program in July.



Learning is fun when you sing and play!



"Padres Metiches" Working Together

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The SKCE Mission

Equity, Accountability, and Unity

To Promote Equity for Our Children in the Salem/Keizer Public School District and in the Community.

To Advocate for the Respect of Civil and Human Rights of All People in Our Community.

To Seek Accountability from All Salem/Keizer Community Administrators, Policy Makers, Staff and Employees.

To Unite the Salem/Keizer Community and Speak with ONE Voice to END Discrimination and Inequality.

We Support and Network with all Statewide Organizations and Educational Advocates who Support OUR Mission.

Your support makes a difference for families in our community. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to SKCE.