

## School of the Year Finalist

### Rancho Las Positas Elementary

County	Student Signups	Student Active Days	Other Signups	Bonus Active Days*	Total Student Comp.
Alameda	535	23308	37	595	533

Student Enrollment	% Student Completions	% Free/Reduced Lunch	Minority %
533	100.0%	15.4%	30.8%

2007 Finalist	2008 Finalist	2008 Regional Award Winner	2009 Finalist
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#### School's Commitment to Promoting Healthy Eating on Campus

In a past study at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory has determined that the number of fat cells in a human's body, whether lean or obese, is established during the teenage years. Changes in fat mass in adulthood can be attributed mainly to changes in fat cell volume, not an increase or decrease in the actual number of fat cells. Based on this, the most important years for our students are now!

Rancho Las Positas' Wellness mission and district policy is to educate and inspire our students to be physically fit now and, as a result, for life! RAW consists of two pillar programs, each with equal value. The first program is the Nutritional Awareness Program (NAP). NAP is equally if not more impressive than athletic achievements. Rancho has always been motivated to provide a nutritional education to our students; however, the Governor's Challenge has stimulated us to expand.

The following is an overview of our Nutritional Awareness efforts:

- **Rancho Healthy Student Nutrition Review** – Students challenged to record what they eat over a one-week period. The objective is to introduce awareness.
- **Rancho Garden** – Parents, staff and student's gardening activities are aligned with grade level standards. Students enjoy harvesting and eating the fruits of their labors.
- **Healthy Eating Tips** – Web site links, classroom lessons and Lunch Calendar
- **Modeling** healthy eating habits by staff. Principal is known for eating his salad daily with students out of a recyclable container.
- **District Guidance** - Influenced district to plan meals based on the food pyramid
  - District has implemented healthy snacks policy this school year.
    - Classrooms parties must meet district guidelines for health and nutrition.

Rancho believes that establishing healthy eating habits at a young age is pivotal to student health. Rancho is committed to continuing with our current programs as well as exploring new opportunities in expanding nutritional awareness for our students.

## School's Support of its Students Physical Activity & Fitness

The second pillar of RAncho Wellness (RAW) is the Friendship Athletic Society (FAST). FAST recognizes that fitness levels vary, so we created an atmosphere that supports growth and personal/team achievement. Students are rewarded for achievement and for supporting others.

FAST consists of the following programs:

- **Running Program Implemented District Wide** – Rancho led the implementation of the running program across the Livermore school district. All Livermore Elementary schools have or are implementing the program. As a result, the Raccoon running program is currently nominated for the California School Board Association Golden Bell Award.
- **Raccoon Running Club** – The Rancho running program started in November, 2006. Since its inception, 500+ students have run over **113,000 miles** (around the world 4 times). **Over the 2008-2009 school year students ran 42,311 measured miles or 80 miles per student.** This is over 169,000 laps around a quarter mile “dirt” track. Almost every child ran a marathon and the top student ran 440 miles!
- **Run-A-Thon** – We have sponsored an annual fundraiser with students running for an hour to raise money for school programs. The top students ran 7 miles in 1 hour.
- **Rancho Mile Challenge** – The entire school participated in the first annual Rancho Mile challenge. The competition was exhilarating with a winning time of 5:57.
- **Chart and Challenge** – Over 300 kids have participated in the challenge to test upper body strength doing pull-ups, pole climb and horizontal ladder. They were awarded gold, silver, and bronze medals.
- **Project Fit America** – During PE, students use the Project Fit America equipment to develop upper body and core strength.
- **Monthly Family Fitness Day** – On this day, children, parents and staff run/walk before school begins. Several parents were inspired this year to participate in 5k, 10k, Half Marathons, Marathons, Triathlons and/or other athletic events.

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- **Rancho Forever** – Staff collaborates with the middle and high schools to handoff our student athletes.
  - **Rancho Mentor Program** – Rancho is establishing a mentor program for high school student athletes to mentor our elementary students.
  - **Range of Activities** – Rancho students participate in running, dance, kickball, adaptive PE, Capture the Flag, pull-ups and a range of many other activities.

Rancho FAST is committed to developing students who are physically and mentally healthy. We believe that children who develop a love of athletics and fitness will sustain that love for life. Healthy children are more likely to have happy and productive lives.

## Need for a New Fitness Center

Rancho Elementary has achieved a great balance between academics and personal wellness; this is evident daily in and out of our classrooms. As Principal I have been inspired by students to walk and run the track with them, or do pull-ups at project fit. Students are as committed in the classroom as they are on the field, creating a culture of excellence like no other school in the state.

Rancho is not the most affluent school. We have recently accepted playground equipment from one of our closed schools. We are constantly battling budget issues like many schools in our state. Rancho could definitely use the fitness center to evolve our Wellness programs. However, we are not the most in need. As a result, Rancho would be willing to donate the fitness center to another inner city school in the Bay Area.

Our children are young and impressionable. They are committed to being nutritionally and physically fit. Producing well-rounded students is more than academics, nutrition and athletics, but teaching benevolence and other positive traits.

Rancho deserves to win the Governor's Challenge for our nutritional and athletic accomplishments. We are making an impact within our school, inspiring our district and hopefully our region and state! **We are the standard by which all other winners should be measured!**