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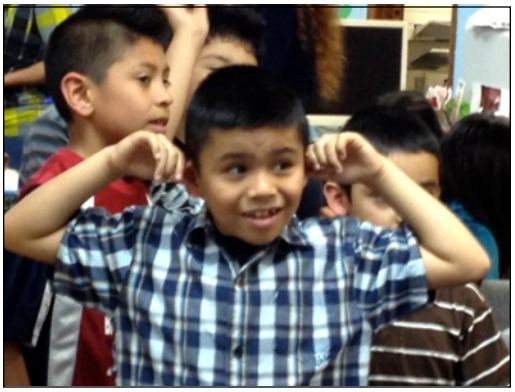
SKCE

The Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality



www.skcequality.org

What's New at SKCE: a Letter from Eduardo
Page 2

Cesar E. Chavez Elementary School Adopted by SKCE
Page 2

Sustainer Member Option Expands Donor Choices
Page 3

Highlights from 2011-12
Page 3

SKCE Debate Team is Up and Running
Page 3

Educate and Inspire Offerings Grow to 16 Units
Page 3

Reading Program Grows Leaders and Helps Readers Get Back on Track

SKCE piloted our **Reading We Advance** program in partnership with **Four Corners Elementary School** during the 2011-12 school year. Our team of master teachers and parent leaders offered three six-week sessions for students who teachers believed were at high risk of ending the school year below grade level. We started with second graders in the fall, worked with first graders in the winter, and ended with kindergarteners in the spring. Our group continued to grow as families from previous sessions kept coming back to learn more.

74 participating families finished the year with a festive graduation party in June at Four Corners.

Reading We Advance is aligned with the District curriculum. The goal is to help students improve their literacy skills and be close to, on, or above grade level by the end of the school year. Throughout the program parents learn about their role as teachers at home and what, specifically, they can do to help their children succeed academically.

SKCE parent leaders worked individually with students and their families at the sessions and home visits. The leaders developed games and activities to keep the students engaged and taught them to the parents. They regularly assessed each student and customized materials for each family. About half of the families received home visits. School teachers and staff co-coordinated the sessions and reinforced activities at school.

The evaluation results from the program were very positive. All of the students made progress and advanced through multiple reading levels. Parents were very satisfied with the program and requested continued assistance and programming.

This school year we are offering the program at **Four Corners, Cesar E. Chavez** and **Scott Elementary Schools**.

Reading We Advance June Graduation Party at Four Corners Elementary School for 74 Families

Letter from the Director

For the past 13 years Coalition leaders have invested over 5 million dollars to be part of the solution to the persistent achievement gap between students of color and English Language Learners (ELLs) and their white counterparts in Oregon.

We firmly believe that to turn the dismal graduation rate around (currently 50% for ELLs) we ALL must hold ourselves mutually accountable for the current achievement gap.

From the beginning, we created programs backed up by research on the importance of meaningful parental involvement to transform our schools for the better. Recent research from the **University of Chicago** demonstrated that schools with positive parent-community ties were 10 times more likely to improve in math and 4 times more likely to improve in reading than similar schools without those ties.

All the work we have been doing for the past 13 years educating parents and developing parent leaders is validated by **Dr. Rudy Crew**, Chief Oregon Education Officer, in his book ***Only Connect: The Way to Save Our Schools.***

In the September meeting of the **Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB)** there was a controversy around a vote to exclude parents from being voting members on the local **Achievement Compact Committees.**

Dr. Crew said: "we cannot be afraid of a new wrinkle - we must test the theory of '**what is equal is equal**.' Having the parents involved means that the process may take longer but I don't see the harm in it. When we signed up for the challenge this is what we meant to be up to the elbow. Parents are in their role and I want to hear from the person who deals with the endgame of what I do in schools."

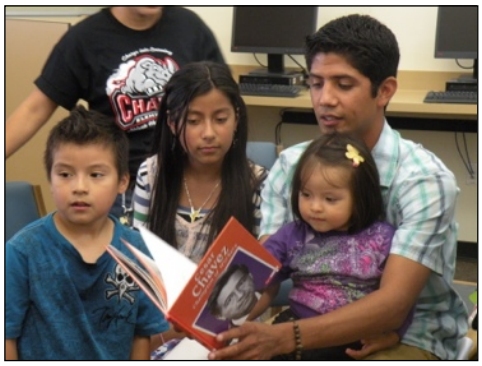
In the Coalition, we firmly believe that Parents and community leaders need to be part of the goal setting and oversight for the Achievement Compacts in our Oregon schools. We ALL need to help parents become the "demand parents" Dr. Crew writes about in his book if we are truly *serious* about holding ourselves mutually accountable for the historically dismal achievement gap in our schools. *- Eduardo Angulo*

Cesar E. Chavez Elementary Students are Off to a Great Start

This summer we started working with **27 families from Cesar E. Chavez** - one of two new elementary schools in Salem-Keizer - to help kindergarteners arrive at school ready to learn. We hosted families at our Community Center while their new school was under construction. Families participated in educational field trips to the **library**, **Bush Park**, and **AC Gilbert Discovery Village.**

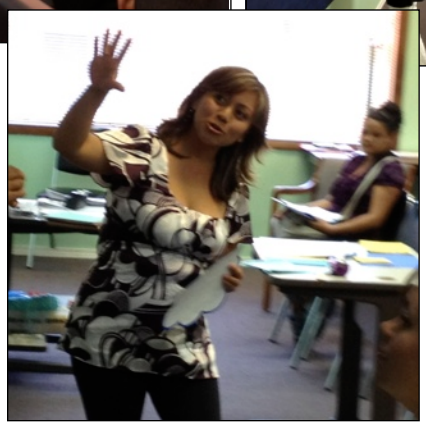
The new school is especially important to SKCE because hundreds of community members supported naming the school after the great unifier and organizer Cesar E. Chavez - he is a true hero who helped many of our Spanish-speaking farm-working families.

SKCE plans on offering parent workshops, our literacy program, and ongoing support for the new school. This investment is especially important because the school will not qualify for **Title I** support in the first year.



Anthony Chavez, grandson of Cesar E. Chavez, reads to new Chavez Chargers after speaking at the grand opening.

Our Summer Oral Language (SOL) Family Literacy Program helped 27 new Cesar E. Chavez kindergarteners arrive at school ready to learn at school & at home.



Mother Facilitator Maria de Jesus helps lead an activity where kindergarten moms write down dreams for their children on clouds and put them on our "dream wall" while students have fun with AC Gilbert Discovery Village activities.

Highlights from 2011-12

☑ During the 2011-12 school year SKCE parent leaders offered 67 workshops for 1,336 parents with hot meals and educational childcare for 1,868 children.

☑ The SKCE team helped coordinate and presented three workshops at the **10th Annual Parent Conference** on March 10th.

☑ Our parent leaders successfully mobilized the community in support of naming the new NE Salem elementary school after **Cesar E. Chavez.** Hundreds of people wrote letters, testified and attended hearings. **Si, Se Puede!**

☑ Parent leaders and master teachers provided literacy support during the summer and throughout the school year for 125 families. The programs resulted in marked improvement in reading scores for students participating in the program.

☑ SKCE purchased two vans and a mini-bus to help transport families to our events and programs.

☑ We put on eight family fun nights at **Northgate Park** this summer. We served dinner, played soccer, and offered crafts for an average of 300 people each Friday. We partnered with the **Marion-Polk Food Share** and received donations from the **Learning Palace, Kettle Chips**, & **Bi-Mart**.

☑ We contracted with **Sequoia Charter School** to help Latino families understand the **Montessori philosophy** so they can make an informed decision about whether or not they should send their children to the school. The school is in the planning stages and hopes to open in 2013-14.

☑ SKCE provided our **Oregon Training of Trainers (TOT)** program last year in two new communities: **Portland** and **Hillsboro**. We continue to support parent leaders in **Washington, Multnomah, Jackson, Linn, Lane** and **Marion Counties**. In January, 48 of our trained parent leaders gathered for a day-long retreat at our **Oregon Parent Education Center in Salem.**

"Nacho Cordova" Debate Team Expands Offerings

SKCE is working hard to expand our program offerings for every member of the family. We are especially interested in providing opportunities for teens to succeed and grow their confidence and leadership skills. This past year we began exploring a debate team for youth in the community.

We hired **Ranfis Villatoro** to coordinate our youth programs; Patricia Guzman, Shamir Cervantes and Blanca Gutierrez are coaches. **Chief Justice Ed Peterson and Chief Justice Paul DeMuniz** are sponsoring the program and coaching and mentoring youth. We currently have eight youth participating in the program and are recruiting additional youth. The goal is to transition the program to a 24- participant Mock-Trial team.

Sustainer Member Option Expands Donor Choices

Donors at the **SKCE Tamale Luncheon** last fall wanted to be able to regularly donate to SKCE as sustainers - which means they have a set amount automatically taken out of their account (debit or credit card) each month. We looked into a variety of options and chose ***Network for Good*** as our provider.

We are really excited to offer this service to supporters, along with the option of making a one-time donation with credit cards. We will, of course, still happily except checks and cash. To sign up or make a one-time donation with a credit or debit card please visit our website **www.skcequality.org** and click **donate**.

Your donations support our programs and help close the achievement gap, support families, and develop new parent and youth leaders. We count on individuals like you to keep our Community Center open and thriving.

Chief Justices Ed Peterson and Paul DeMuniz help prepare the SKCE Debate Team members.

We Added Three New Educate & Inspire Units

In 2011-12 we developed three new units, piloted them in the community, and revised them based on feedback. The first unit, Unit 14, focuses on understanding teen pregnancy and offers specific suggestions for families to keep youth engaged and communicating about what is happening at school and with their friends. The unit helps parents understand peer pressure.

Unit 15 focuses on gang prevention. The unit helps parents understand the gang culture and appeal for some youth. It also addresses peer pressure and the importance of communication at home. There is ample time for discussion and sharing ideas in the workshop.

Unit 16 addresses the challenges Latino youth face as they struggle to find a bridge between two cultures. The unit outlines specific ways parents can support their children to keep them in school and graduating.

The new units will be added to the offerings in Salem-Keizer this year and shared with our **Oregon TOT partners**. Our three units on family communication and our stand alone unit on grade level standards were added in 2011-12 and were very well received.

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SKCE
Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality

The Class of 2025 Working to Achieve the Statewide 40-40-20 Vision from the Start!

27 new Cesar E. Chavez Kindergarten families celebrate the completion of our Summer Oral Language Program at the AC Gilbert Discovery Village.

Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality
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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.

Members: Parent Organizing Project (POP), PCUN, Mano a Mano Family Center, CAUSA, Willamette University MEChA and LUS.