



# Tiger Newsletter

April, 2025



## A Message From Principal Evans

**Hello John Still Families,**

As we move into April, we're looking ahead to a busy and productive month. April is a time of transition as we move into the final stretch of the school year. It's a crucial time to wrap our curriculum and instructional goal, stay focused on positive behavior, and prepare for upcoming state testing. We encourage our students to stay engaged, use their time wisely, and finish the year strong.

This month, we have several important events on the calendar, including STEM Night next week, Spring Break, and our monthly Coffee Chat the last Friday of the month where we will discuss more highlights of the building of our new PTO. We appreciate the continued partnership of our students, families, and staff in making this a successful time of year.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to a great month ahead!

**Joanna Evans**  
**Principal**  
**John Still TK-8**

## April School Events

April 1

Chipotle Delta Shores Fundraiser, 4:00PM - 8:00PM

April 4

Chemistry Magic Show, Grades 3-5

April 7

Spring Picture Day

April 9

STEM Night, 5:30PM - 7:00PM

April 11

Sojourner Truth Museum Visit, Grades 3-6

April 12 - 20

Spring Break, No School

April 25

Principal's Coffee Chat, 8:15AM  
PTO Meeting Following Coffee Chat

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# In the Spotlight



**Apply by  
April 30, 2025**

## For Current TK-5th Grade Students

[Click Here to Apply for the Elementary Summer School Program](#) at John Still TK-8.

Applications are open for the Summer Matters Elementary Program at John Still TK-8. This program offers interactive academic and enrichment experiences to support students in continuing their learning and development throughout the summer.

### Summer Matters 2025 @ SCUSD - Elementary

- **Dates:** June 23 - July 25, 2025
- **Time:** Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
- **No Program on:** July 4, 2025
- **Location:** John Still Elementary Campus
- **Who Can Participate:** Current John Still students in grades TK-5.
- **Meals Provided:** Daily breakfast, lunch, and snack

### Application & Notification:

- **Application Due Date:** April 30, 2025
- **Parent Notification Period:** May 12, 2025 - June 6, 2025

### Program Highlights:

- Targeted math, language arts, and English language development academic intervention with certificated teachers to strengthen and equip students with skills for the next grade level.
- Enriching structured learning experiences and special events.
- Opportunities to learn and practice cooperative and collaborative learning skills.
- Engagement with various community learning partners.
- Development of social and emotional skills.
- Daily physical activity participation.

## For Current 6th-7th Grade Students

[Click Here to Apply for the Middle School Summer School Program](#) at John Still TK-8.

Apply now for the Summer Matters Middle School Program at John Still! This program is designed to provide engaging academic and enrichment activities with a ***focus on strengthening essential math skills.***

### Summer Matters 2025 @ SCUSD - Middle School

- **Dates:** June 23 - July 25, 2025
- **Time:** Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- **No Program on:** July 4, 2025
- **Location:** John Still Middle School Campus
- **Who Can Participate:** Current John Still students in grades 6 and 7.
- **Meals Provided:** Daily breakfast, lunch, and snack

### Application & Notification:

- **Application Due Date:** April 30, 2025
- **Parent Notification Period:** May 12, 2025 - June 6, 2025

### Program Highlights:

- Middle school participants will engage in sports camps and academic enrichment activities with certificated teachers to strengthen and equip students with skills for the next grade level.
  - Enriching structured learning experiences and special events.
  - Opportunities to learn and practice cooperative and collaborative learning skills.
  - Engagement with various community learning partners.
  - Development of social and emotional skills.
  - Daily physical activity participation.
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## **Welcome Shanice Butler to John Still TK-8!**

We are thrilled to welcome Shanice Butler to the John Still TK-8 campus! Shanice is part of the Rose Family Creative Empowerment Center and is now on campus every day, providing invaluable support to our students and teachers.

Her role includes assisting with assessments, small group instruction, and social-emotional learning, ensuring that students receive the extra support they need to thrive. By working closely with our teachers, Shanice helps create an additional layer of support to meet the diverse needs of our students.

Shanice brings a wealth of experience in education and a deep connection to our community, having attended Sacramento City Unified schools herself. We are excited to have her as part of the John Still family and look forward to the positive impact she will have on our students!

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## Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment (SBAC) Testing Begins April 21st

The Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments are part of California's CAASPP system, measuring student knowledge and skills in English language arts/literacy (ELA) and mathematics based on the Common Core State Standards. These assessments help track student progress and readiness for college and careers.

Students in grades three through eight and grade eleven take the assessments, with an alternative option available for students with an active individualized education program (IEP).

As computer-adaptive tests, the assessments adjust question difficulty based on student responses. This approach keeps students engaged, reduces testing time, and provides accurate results, especially for high- and low-performing students.

Accessibility resources are available to support students with diverse needs, ensuring equitable participation for all.

Source: [CA Department of Education](#)

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## Quick Parent Tips for Test Success

- **Attendance Matters:** Ensure your child is on time and present on test days.
- **Mark Your Calendar:** Keep track of testing dates to prepare in advance.
- **Communicate with Teachers:** Address concerns and confirm accommodations if needed.
- **Rest Well:** A good night's sleep helps with focus and performance.
- **Wake Up Fully:** Allow enough time for your child to be alert before school.
- **Healthy Breakfast:** Provide a nutritious, high-protein meal to fuel learning.
- **Debrief with Your Child:** Discuss the test experience and strategies for improvement.
- **Practice Online:** Access practice tests to become familiar with the format.
- **Attend School Meetings:** Gain insights and resources from informational sessions.
- **Dress Comfortably:** Choose appropriate clothing for extended test sessions.



## PTO Officer

**Elections: April 3rd  
- April 9th**

The John Still TK-8 Parent Teacher Organization will be collecting your votes for officers that will form the initial Board. Officers will serve in their roles for the remainder of this school year, through June, 2026.

Please take a minute to vote when the PTO ballot is posted on ParentSquare, Thursday April 3rd.

Do you have questions or want to get involved with our PTO? Contact Katie Burns at [katherine-burns@scusd.edu](mailto:katherine-burns@scusd.edu).

## John Still TK-8 March Highlights



## Read Across John Still Week: A Celebration of Literacy

March was an exciting month at John Still TK-8 as we celebrated Read Across John Still Week! Our campus was filled with the joy of reading through themed dress-up days, engaging activities, and plenty of books.

One of the highlights of the week was our Literacy Night, where teachers led hands-on, literacy-based activities for students and their families. A special thank you to our amazing librarian, Miss Rosie, who hosted a book giveaway during the event, ensuring that more students could take home new books to enjoy!

To close out the week, we welcomed guest readers from the community into our elementary classrooms. These special visitors shared their favorite read-alouds, inspiring our students and reinforcing the importance of literacy.

Following Read Across John Still Week, we hosted a week-long Scholastic Book Fair. This exciting event not only encouraged students to explore new books but also helped support our campus libraries.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers, teachers, and families who contributed their time and energy to making these events a success. Your dedication to fostering a love of reading in our students is truly appreciated!





## Middle School Students Compete in The Great History Challenge



On March 27th, our middle school students had the exciting opportunity to participate in The Great History Challenge, a nationwide, Jeopardy-style competition that puts students' historical knowledge to the test.



Phase one of the competition took place right here on our campus, with students in grades 6-8 going head-to-head in an engaging and competitive setting. To ensure the event ran smoothly, adult volunteers stepped up to host small groups of students who had qualified to compete against one another. Their support helped create a fun and academically enriching experience for all participants.

A huge thank you to Mr. DeJager for organizing this fantastic event, and to Mr. Kastanis and Mr. Zaragoza for volunteering their time to support our students. Congratulations to all of our students who participated in the competition—we are so proud of your hard work and enthusiasm for history!



## **Arbor Day Community Tree Planting at John Still**

On March 8, 2025, John Still TK-8 came together with community members and public officials to celebrate Arbor Day in a meaningful way—by planting more than 20 trees across both the middle school and elementary campuses! This effort was led by the Meadowview Urban Tree Project, whose mission is to enhance green spaces in our neighborhood.



Volunteers of all ages gathered to enjoy the sunshine, roll up their sleeves, and get their hands dirty for a great cause. Their hard work will leave a lasting impact, as these newly planted trees will beautify our campus, provide much-needed shade, and contribute to better air quality for years to come. We appreciate all who participated and supported this initiative!

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## **Looking Ahead: The Month of April**

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## **Celebrating Arab American Heritage Month**

April is Arab American Heritage Month, a time to celebrate the vibrant history, culture, and contributions of Arab Americans. While recognition efforts date back decades, the first federal acknowledgment came in April 2019. In 2023, President Joe Biden issued an official proclamation, affirming the importance of Arab American heritage.

Arab Americans have enriched our nation through achievements in science, medicine, business, politics, art, and education. Their resilience and innovation have shaped communities across the country. Arab American Heritage Month provides an opportunity to highlight these contributions and foster greater appreciation and understanding.

This month, schools, businesses, and organizations are encouraged to celebrate through educational programs, cultural events, and community discussions. By recognizing the achievements and heritage of Arab Americans, we create a more inclusive and respectful society.

*Source: AAIUSA.org*



### **California Poppy Day is April 6th**

California Poppy Day is celebrated annually on **April 6th**, honoring our state flower, the California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), and encouraging appreciation for native plants and pollinators. The California poppy became California's official state flower on March 2, 1903.

Some organizations, like the California Nature Art Museum, hold events with free admission to celebrate California Poppy Day and its connection to pollinators.

#### **California Poppy Fun Facts:**

- The California poppy is native to the Pacific slope of North America, from Western Oregon to Baja California.
- It typically blooms in the spring and summer, and its flowers range in color from rich yellow to bright orange.
- Poppies close each night and on cloudy days

*Source: CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife*



### **Earth Day is April 22nd**

Earth Day, observed annually on April 22, is a global call to action for environmental protection. Originating in 1970 as a nationwide "teach-in" led by Senator Gaylord Nelson, the movement raised public awareness about environmental issues and led to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency and key environmental laws.

Today, Earth Day continues to inspire individuals, communities, and governments to take action in protecting our planet. From addressing climate change to promoting clean energy, this day highlights the importance of sustainability and innovation in preserving natural resources.

Everyone can make a difference! Simple actions like reducing waste, conserving water, planting trees, and using eco-friendly products contribute to a healthier planet. Schools, businesses, and organizations also host events and initiatives to promote environmental stewardship.

*Source: EarthDay.org*