**VISION:** A community united in creating life- long learners to improve our future through education.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** To give a desire for lifelong learning; and to provide educational opportunities that will help them prepare for lifelong learning. We offer relevant education in a safe environment, with opportunities for academic, athletic and social success.

Happy New Year! It’s 2014 and we are half way through the school year. We continue to transition into the Common Core State Standards in each of our classrooms. If you were to walk into the classroom you would see more students carrying on conversations about the question of inquiry. You will also see lots of direct instruction with the teacher monitoring around the room to see that students understand the concept. All of our teachers continue in the professional development training by Pivot Learning. Each month the academic coaches from Pivot come to our school and meet with our teacher leaders and teachers to work through the new standards and view and/or review instructional strategies. The students are working harder too as they are asked to dig deeper into the reason for their answer. It takes more time and work to justify your answer and have others challenge your theory.

In addition to the challenge of a new set of teaching standards, we face the financial change of state and categorical funding to a block amount of money with local control. The District Advisory Committee (DAC) has the challenge of meeting monthly and recommending to the board how the increased funds will be spent. Thank you to those who have committed to the monthly meetings and we invite others to join us. Please call the district office if you are interested in joining us. The decisions will be memorialized in our Local Control Area Plan and submitted to the board this spring. The Board of Trustees chose 4 priorities: Common Core Implementation, Student Achievement, Positive School Climate and Parental Involvement. Within the 4 categories, the DAC has come up with solutions on how to help the district meet its goal.

We have added new staff to help us reach our goal: Todd Nobles and Ed Overholt in MOT, Breanne Bennett, Denine Tucker, and Amber Payne. The additional staff will continue to bring a high quality education to your children.

We’ve also added some new programs to our schools. One is a math specialist, Ms. Lambie. Ms. Lambie brings many years of experience from serving as a math specialist to all Kern County schools to raising her own children who attended South Fork schools. She meets with students on the middle school campus. We purchased a phone, email, text system that will contact you with school or classroom announcements. This is an effort to increase our communication between the school and our community. You will also see more technology on the campuses. The teachers will begin teaching with their tablet devices that are connected to the Smart Board for more engaging lessons. We will also open an elementary computer lab to facilitate the computer based Common Core tests. The tests will not be scored, but will offer a pilot period to see how the district and state are prepared for the online testing.

It is definitely a year of exciting changes. If you have questions or comments about any of these changes or other concerns, compliments you have, please give me a call or drop me an email. Here are my contact numbers: (760) 378-4000 ext. 3, roshive@southforkschool.org.

Our staff is a welcoming one and we encourage you to be an active part of your child’s education. We look forward to seeing you on campus. Thank you for the support that you give them and to your child.

Your partner in education,

Robin Shive

Superintendent