

Saklan Gets Ready for Winter Concert

By Andrea A. Firth



Caption: Saklan first-graders rehearse for the Winter Concert

Photo Andrea Firth

Circles are the theme of Saklan Valley School's upcoming Winter Concert entitled *Circles Around Saklan*. "The circle of life, circles in communities, circles as physical shapes, circles in a broad sense," explains Margot Casey, Music Specialist at Saklan and the concert coordinator, as she describes how the theme will tie in with the performance. About 140 students spanning preschool through 8th grade will perform in the concert that is a long time tradition at the school.

"The concert brings a lot of excitement and spirit to the school," notes Casey. "And it also serves as a way for kids to show-

case their talents." Casey who teaches music to all the grade schoolers and preschoolers at Saklan started working with her songbirds on the concert tunes back in October. The younger students will also play instruments such as xylophones, recorders and metalophones (like a xylophone but made with metal versus wood) during the concert while some of the older students will provide accompaniment with clarinets, and electric guitars and drums.

Casey composes or arranges the songs to be performed and often rewrites the lyrics to fit the theme. "The language teachers also play a big part in Saklan's concerts" notes Casey. Language

teachers Amy Sullivan, Carmen Ryken, and Diana Kong have worked long and hard with the students who will sing songs in French and Spanish in addition to English—there is even a Swahili chant.

Given the theme, the hour and a half concert will, of course, include a rendition of *The Circle of Life* from the musical *The Lion King*, along with a humorous number called *Nuts* by some of Casey's favorite composers John Jacobson and John Higgins, and an all-school number that is choreographed with a square dance. The concert will be held at 4:30 on March 12th at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek.