

EYE ON EDUCATION

A Publication of the Paramount Unified School District

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Maisie Visits Los Cerritos School!



On Tuesday, December 1, 2009, the students and staff of Los Cerritos School hosted a very special visitor, Maisie the dairy cow. Our school participated in an informative assembly sponsored by the Dairy Council of California. Kim Lopez, a Dairy Council representative, brought her Mobile Dairy classroom to Los Cerritos' South Playground. The Mobile Dairy classroom

housed Maisie the cow and Brutus the calf.

Ms. Lopez presented a wealth of information during the engaging assembly. Students learned about the basic anatomy of a cow, the cows' digestive system, and dairy cows' food pyramid and food supply. "I learned that baby boy cows are not called bulls, they're called bull calves," said Erika Ortega, 4th grade student.

At the end of the assembly, students participated in a hands-on encounter with Brutus the calf, as students each got a turn to pet him. Another Los Cerritos student, Chris Martins,

exclaimed, "It was awesome! I liked watching Maisie and petting the calf." Los Cerritos Elementary sends a big "Thank you!" to Maisie, Brutus, and the Dairy Council of California

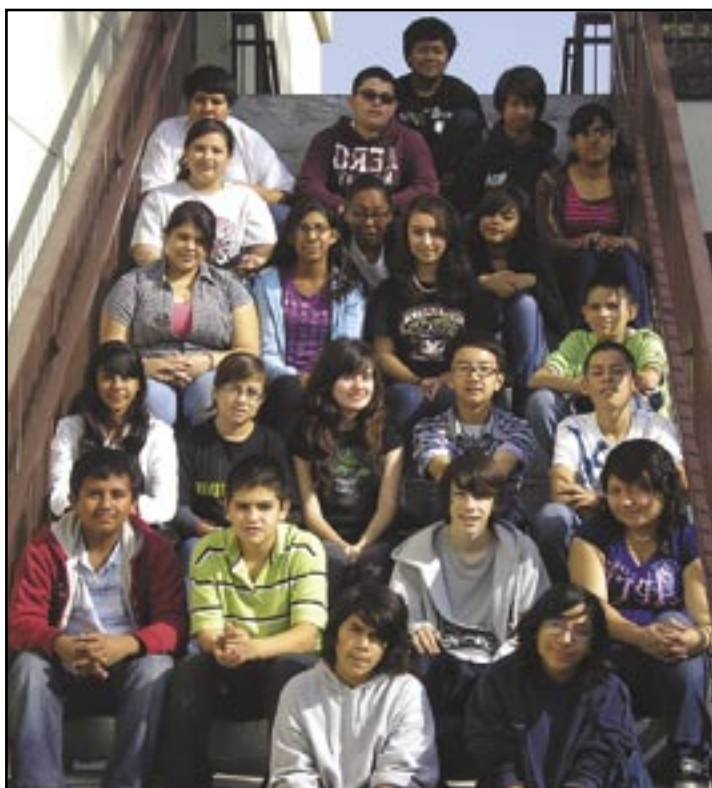
for such an exciting and educational experience!

Mrs. Brooks
Los Cerritos
4th Grade Teacher

ADDING MESA TO THE MIX = HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Students at Paramount High School-West Campus have the opportunity of adding a MESA class, Introduction to Engineering to their schedule as an elective this year. In past years, the MESA program was only available as an after-school club or during select Saturday's at Cal State University of Long Beach as an academy. This is the first time in Paramount Unified School District history that the MESA Academy will be offered as a class to ninth grade students at the West Campus.

The course Introduction to Engineering requires that students study college-preparatory math (Algebra 1 or higher) and English, as well as biology while they are a student at Paramount High School-West Campus. The MESA program offers students academic support to help ensure success in these classes. Students enrolled in Introduction to Engineering participate in a number of ac-



tivities and events throughout the year, including labs, competitions, and field trips. The course has been developed to expose students to career paths, college opportunities, public speaking, and technology. Furthermore, special emphasis will be placed

on laboratory investigation, hands-on projects, and data collection.

Mr. Rummell Paramount
High School West Campus
Introduction to
Engineering Teacher

PHS Ladies' Varsity Tennis Team Champions



Superintendent David Verdugo and the Board of Education recognized the Ladies Varsity Tennis Team and Coach Curtis Mu for their success as the San Gabriel Valley League Tennis Champions. This was very significant as it is the second year in a row that the Lady Pirates were League Champions.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

January 12, 2010 & January 26, 2010

Board of Education meetings are held at 6:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at the District Office, 15110 California Avenue, Paramount, and are open to the public

Buena Vista Free Eagles Club



The Buena Vista Free Eagles is a new club that focuses on having new, healthy experiences in the local area that are free or very low cost! Our hope is to show our students that there are great things happening that don't cost a lot of money! We also hope to show them that learning on your own

time can be fun! We have had a bonfire at Bolsa Chica, attended a UCLA game, and walked in support of a staff member's daughter in the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation walk. Future trips include visiting various museums on their "free days" and hiking in local nature reserves!

Academic Counseling at PHS West Campus

This is a busy time of year at Paramount West Campus as students are midway through the first semester preparing to earn their first high school credits. With that in mind, the Counseling Department is heavily focused on outreach and academics--specifically on academic counseling.

Academic counseling is a process that involves any student with a D or F in a class. The students are divided up into two main groups depending on the number of D's and F's per student. Those students with three or less D's and/or F's meet with their counselor in small groups to identify the problems, choose ways to improve their grades and set specific academic goals. This process is then revisited with the student at the end of the first semester to reflect on whether or not the goal was achieved. Those students with three or more F's are invited to the "Back on Track" presentation, which is a collaborative effort between Buena Vista High School and the West Campus. This presentation consists of current Buena Vista students sharing their personal

stories with under-supported students in the hope that the power of positive peer influence will help motivate them to make positive changes in their school and personal lives.

Strong Start is another form of outreach that is happening at the West Campus that involves staff and students. Teachers voluntarily participate by serving as a mentor for an incoming student who was identified as under-supported from his or her previous school. This is anonymous, as the student does not know that he or she is a strong start candidate and the teacher is paired up with a student who is already in their class. The West Campus staff continues to be very supportive and eager to maintain this program, as there are currently over fifty staff members and one hundred students participating.

These are just a few of the many exciting interventions happening at the West Campus. The staff is eager to help students conquer their quest for success!

Sheryl Ramirez, Counselor

School District Employees Honored



Paramount High School-West Campus Senior Custodian Tony Vega was honored and recognized for his brave action on November 18, 2009 when he aided in the apprehension of a residential robbery subject hiding near the campus. For more than 25 years Mr. Vega has served our community, staff and students well by helping to maintain a clean and safe facility.



Alondra School teacher Isela Griffith was recognized for extraordinary care and concern for the students of the Paramount Unified School District. Ms. Griffith aided two lost young students she encountered on a city sidewalk and remained with the children until the parents were notified and the children were safe.

K-5 Math Night at Mokler School

Mokler School's K-5 Math Night was a spectacular success! Forty-eight families attended the math night that was held on Wednesday, November 18th from 4:00-5:30. Parents and students worked together with teachers to participate in and create make-and-take activities that can help support students' mathematical learning at home.

The evening included two sessions for parents and students to participate in (at the grade levels of their choice). Mrs. Ebacher led the kinder group in ordering and identifying numbers 1-30. First grade students played Cornucopia Countdown, an addition and subtraction game, with Mrs. Williams. Mrs. Whittenbury and Mrs. Chacon led the second graders in Clock Charades. Third graders were taught several multi-

plication games by Mrs. Wayman. Mrs. Grover shared Tic-Tac-Toe, Three Products in a Row and Divide and Conquer with fourth graders and their families. The fifth grade group was led by Ms. Wozny who shared the game, Ingrid's Incredible Integers.

The evening concluded with an overview of student resources and the event calendar that can be found on the Mokler School website, as well as a raffle for many math games, books, and surprises. All in all, the evening was a great success! The efforts of the teachers made the evening a memorable experience for Mokler's students and their families.

**Theresa M. Diaz
Math Coach**

Gaining Work Experience

The students at the Paramount Adult Transition (PAT) program in Paramount Unified School District had several opportunities to work in the community last summer, and their experiences will continue in the 2009-2010 school year. These 18-21 year old students with disabilities are gaining valuable work experience with the support of their teachers and job coaches in order to be prepared to be self-sufficient in the adult world. We appreciate the support we received from Assemblymember Isadore Hall's office, CVS, the Dollar Bookstore, and other businesses and organizations who allowed our students to work at their sites this summer and develop job skills. These students were paid through a federal summer work grant.

This fall our students continued job training through the PAT program at the Paramount Adult School in order to start new jobs with new companies soon. They are working on skills including interviewing and completing applications, as well as car washing, stocking shelves, and customer service. Additionally they are learning to use public transportation and manage a personal bank account. These life skills will be important for them when they enter the workforce.

At PAT we are very proud of how hard our students work and the positive attitude they show toward every endeavor. We are always looking for willing organizations and businesses to allow our students to train and gain work experience. Please call our program at (562) 602-8084 if you would be interested in having one or more of our students work for your business or organization!

**Eye On Education is a monthly Publication of the
Paramount Unified School District**

Board of Education

Alicia Anderson, President
Tony Peña, VP/Clerk
Sonya Cuellar, Member
Linda Garcia, Member
Vivian Hansen, Member

District Superintendent
David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.



Good things are happening in Paramount Schools

Eye On Education

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Anderson, Cuellar and Peña Reelected

Newly reelected Paramount Unified School District Board of Education members Alicia Anderson, Sonya Cuellar and Tony Peña were given the Oath of Office by Superintendent David Verdugo at the December 8, 2009 meeting. The

Trustees were reelected for an additional four year term. All three Trustees have provided extraordinary service to the students, staff and community during their eight years of prior service as members of the Board of Education.

Outgoing President Sonya Cuellar Honored



The Board of Education and Superintendent David Verdugo congratulated outgoing President Sonya Cuellar on her successful year as President of the Board of Education.

Alicia Anderson Elected President



The Board of Education elected new officers for 2009-10 during their December statutory meeting. Trustee Alicia Anderson was elected President and Tony Peña will serve as Vice President/Clerk.

Superintendent's Message:

During our December 2009 Board meeting, the Board of Education and I had the honor to recognize the Paramount High School Ladies' Varsity Tennis Team and Coach Curtis Mu for their success as the "Back-to-Back" San Gabriel Valley League Tennis Champions. This is very significant and our congratulations goes out to each team member and Coach Mu.



In addition, we recognized two District employees for their extraordinary service and care for the students of the Paramount Unified School District. The first was Alondra School teacher Isela Griffith. Isela brought two children to safety after noticing that they were lost in the neighborhood and in need of assistance. The second was classified employee and Paramount High School-West Campus plant manager Tony Vega who was instrumental in the apprehension and arrest of a residential robbery suspect.

of our employees display for our students and families. They stand out as outstanding examples of Paramount's best.

I am often reminded of the dedicated employees in Paramount Unified School District who shape the lives of our students and accomplish great things on a daily basis.

Thank you for your continued support.

Both of these individuals represent the care and concern that all

David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Child Learning Lab: PHS Partners with Elementary Sites

While the rest of their classmates begin each school day at Paramount High School, Crystal Valdez and Jose Ramirez spend their 1st period at Wirtz Elementary, working with the alphabet, colors, and story telling. Both seniors, Crystal and Jose are enrolled in Ms. Tanimoto's Advanced Child Learning Lab, which is an elective course offered at PHS. As part of this class, students report to Wirtz and provide support in kindergarten through fifth-grade classrooms.

work after school. His experience working with students in this program was a big motivator towards enrolling in Ms. Tanimoto's class. One of Jose's favorite activities as part of the Child Learning Lab is small group storytelling. "The reactions I see from the kindergartners while reading them stories is really enjoyable," according to Jose. After graduating from Paramount High, Jose plans on attending Cerritos College and to join the STAR program as a full-time employee.

Crystal's participation in this class has given her a valuable opportunity to work with children on a daily basis. On a typical day, she assists a kindergarten teacher in the instruction of letters, numbers, word games, and other activities. Crystal commented that an especially memorable day was when a student showed her that she had mastered to write her first and last name. "The smile on the little girl's face really showed how proud she was of herself," said Crystal, who is planning on attending Cal State Long Beach to prepare for a career in education.

Teachers at Paramount's elementary schools also benefit from the students' enrollment in the program. A teacher at Wirtz Elementary recently informed Ms. Tanimoto that the student helpers are "able to give our kindergarten students the extra practice in learning high frequency words, numbers, and other areas that they would not ordinarily receive." Besides providing the opportunity to earn credits toward graduation in an area these students so clearly enjoy, the Child Learning Lab is proving to be a valuable asset to students and teachers at both Paramount High and Paramount's elementary schools.

Jose Ramirez has already been volunteering time to the STAR program at Mokler Elementary, helping children with their home-

Jeff Beahn, TOSA

PHS Winter Sports Have a Busy December

Paramount High's Winter sports schedule is underway and our teams are busy with tournament schedules until January 2010. Pirate teams will have traveled as far north as Paso Robles and as far south as south Orange County to compete. The scheduling requires much logistical juggling as tournament game times are frequently determined by whether a particular team wins or loses the previous day. It's a challenge for coaches, players, parents, and teachers to keep the communication lines flowing so that class work is maintained while the players and coaches deal with competition, varied practice times, nutrition, and rest.

Pirate boys' soccer is seeking to continue its league championship-winning ways this winter. Coach Juan Navarro has put together a formidable squad that should be in the top tier of the San Gabriel Valley League. Both the Varsity and JV teams are defending league champs, and the Varsity will be seeking to remove the bad taste of a first-round playoff exit last year. The Pirate Varsity made their annual trek to the Paso Robles Invitational in early December and came away with a championship game appearance. They will travel to Trabuco Hills during the winter break in addition to playing local powers Los Alamitos and Santa Margarita before beginning league play against Lynwood on January 12.

Lady Pirate soccer stayed local for its opening tournament - at Artesia - and complemented that with another appearance in the Bellflower Tournament in December. Coach Doug Tirado's program is now a perennial playoff participant, and the ladies are consistently looking to play well against league powers Downey and Warren.

Coach Don Wakefield's wrestlers travel to the most tournaments through December and January. From Lakewood to El Camino College, from Cal State Fullerton to Corona del Mar, the large Pirate wrestling squad is busy every weekend at one location or another. While the Varsity is at one weekend tournament, the JVs and/or Frosh-Soph wrestlers are at another. When January rolls around, the Pirates begin to mix in

the SGVL schedule, including the two huge matches at Downey and Warren. Needless to say, the athletes, coaches and parents in the wrestling program have to time-manage well.

Paramount's boys' basketball program also played a tournament-heavy schedule in December. The Varsity opened with a 3-1 record in a tournament at Valley Christian and also played in the Sonora and Century tournaments. Lower-level teams will play at La Mirada, California, and Westminster as our young players try to gain valuable experience in the multiple-game setting that tournaments provide. Coach Mark McGarry's Varsity squad will definitely be seasoned by the time the always-challenging SGVL schedule commences on January 13 at Lynwood.

New head coach Rosheka Polk is working hard to orient the Lady Pirate basketball program to her disciplined, demanding style. The Lady Pirates had a great experience on December 2 when they got to play on the Staples Center floor in Los Angeles against Compton Centennial. The Varsity reached the championship game in the St. Anthony tournament and will play in the Norwalk/Glenn tournament as well. Coach Polk is giving Lady Pirate basketball a new direction and we wish her and her players the best.

Finally, the PHS second-year girls' water polo program is also in the midst of a difficult non-league schedule. In addition to tournaments at El Rancho and Santa Ana Valley, the Lady Pirates play numerous single matches against the likes of Costa Mesa, Trabuco Hills, Lakewood, and Fullerton. Coach Eduardo Osorio has put together a non-league slate designed to toughen our ladies for league powers Cerritos, Downey, and Warren in January and February 2010. It's a process that is measured by improved play and understanding of a game that is as tough as any in its physical demands and need for top-notch conditioning.

Paramount High School wishes all the best to its Winter athletes and coaches as they plow through their respective tournament schedules in January.

High Five to Another Paramount Adult Student

Daniel Johnson stood in his cap and gown, gave the crowd one of his easy grins, and immediately won them over. That was June, 2009. Daniel had just turned 22 and was the speaker for his graduating Paramount Adult Transition (PAT) class. He always had been the one to volunteer for such tasks. Speaking in front of people came easy.

That was the day he was aging out of the program—shaking hands, getting and giving hugs, inspiring the audience with four years of success stories at PAT. Lots of goodbyes, lots of 'see you later's'.

But that wasn't nearly the last most of those people would see of Daniel.

Since the beginning of the fall semester, he's been a student at the Paramount Adult School, which shares its campus—and graduation ceremonies—with PAT. His smiles and stories and successes have become part of daily life here.

Daniel has come a long way through his years in the transition program. In fact, he excelled to such an extent at his workability job at the One Dollar Bookstore in the Lakewood Mall last year that he relied less and less on his job coach. One of his former PAT teachers, Renee Aguilar, recently smiled as she told of the praise he received from his boss and the independence he showed. "We were able to secure Federal funds through SASSFA [the local One Stop], and his job was extended through the summer," she said proudly.

For his part, Daniel enjoys studying at the adult school. "I'm meeting new people and learning new things," he said. Without missing a beat, he deadpanned a classic Daniel line, "It gets me out of the house and keeps me from turning into a couch potato."

He's attending the morning computer class. Once his keyboarding speed increases enough, he wants to advance to word processing so he can write letters and compose his resume.

Early each morning Daniel is up and about, getting ready to catch the



Easy Rider bus from his home near Jackson school to the adult school campus. He's onboard at 8:15 and on campus at 8:30. By the time classes start at 9:00, he's likely already chatted with several new friends and old acquaintances, including faculty, staff, and security personnel. All this on his own, all this by his own volition.

In fact, during one such recent chat, a former classmate happened by, and Daniel made him feel right at home. He also began an animated discussion about a recent win by his favorite NFL team...or was it about the Lakers, or the Bruins? Depending on the time of year, Daniel is more than willing to share his insights about these favorite teams—or others such as the Galaxy or Dodgers. He's such a sport enthusiast that he even was an assistant coach for a basketball team in Cerritos for 15 & 16 year olds a couple of years ago.

In the near future, Daniel will be undergoing open heart surgery to repair one of his valves. "But I'll be back," he grinned. "I'll be here studying—and I'll even be able to play basketball again!"

His enthusiasm and success are contagious. Come on over the PAS campus, sign up for classes, and you'll be enjoying yourself much like he is.

Jerry King
Teacher on Special Assignment

Supporting Parents as a Positive Force in Their Child's Lives

Ready By Five is offering Paramount families two free parent support services, Partners in Parenting Education (PIPE) and You Make the Difference (YMTD).

PIPE is a home visitation program that supports the emotional connection between parent and child necessary for children's success in life. We provide the information and tools to nurture parents so that their children will grow to their fullest potential. Dur-

ing bi-monthly visits, parents will learn a fun activity that they can do with their child to strengthen their relationship. Families will receive gifts and a certificate at the completion of the program. Parents also attend quarterly workshops featuring topics based on families' needs. The workshops are fun for both parent and child and include hands-on activities, raffle prizes and refreshments.

YMTD is a nine-week class that also supports parents' efforts

in making a lasting impression in their child's lives. YMTD helps parents discover how to use everyday routines and play activities to help children learn language, develop social skills, increase self-esteem, and get children's learning off to a good start. Participants will receive weekly gifts and, at the completion of the series, a certificate, a DVD featuring the parent and child playing together, and a Target gift card.

Our Parent Educators of-

fer support to parents and aid families in meeting the needs of their children by connecting them to community resources and social services. PIPE visits are free to Paramount families with children ages 0-2 years old, while YMTD classes are free to L.A. County families with children ages 0-5 years old. Both services are offered in English and Spanish. If you are interested in enrolling, please call the Ready By Five Office at (562) 602-6913.