

EYE ON EDUCATION

A Publication of the Paramount Unified School District

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JUNE 2010

PARAMOUNT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT TEACHER OF THE YEAR: 2010 CELEBRATION

District staff, members of the Board of Education, and community leaders joined in the celebration of each school site's Teacher of the Year at the District Office on May 11, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. during the Board of Education meeting. The program was moderated by Assistant Superintendent Stella Toibin and the Board of Education Trustees awarded the recipients a plaque. Teachers don't always realize the impact they have had or can have in the life of a student, but this recognition reinforces the positive effect teachers have on the lives of students each and every day.

Each year, teachers at each school site are asked to select one outstanding teacher who will represent that school in the District-wide Teacher of the Year selection process. In making that selection, teachers are asked to consider the following criteria: a teacher who is committed to continued professional development training, one who supports his/her colleagues to improve their skills, a teacher who is involved in educational activities beyond the school, a positive problem solver, one who delivers a high quality instructional program, and a teacher who communicates positively with students and parents.

Once the District-wide Teacher of the Year has been determined through a Selection Committee of teachers and administrators from across the District, the one District-level recipient has the opportunity to apply for the Los Angeles County Teachers of the Year competition. If the candidate is identified as a County winner, their name moves forward to the State level of competition.

This year's 2010-11 Teachers of the Year and their school sites are as follows:

Early Childhood Education	-	Danette Elaine Lane
Collins School	-	Larry V. Houston
Gaines School	-	Michael Luckey
Jefferson School	-	Bonnie Jean Slater
Keppel School	-	Janet L. Garcia
Lincoln School	-	Tiffany Short
Los Cerritos School	-	Monica Sanchez
Mokler School	-	Yessenia Orozco
Roosevelt School	-	Julie Quintero
Wirtz School	-	Deanne Teng
Hollydale School	-	Jason Simco
Alondra School	-	John Ezra Stephens
Jackson School	-	Rebecca Perez
Paramount Park School	-	David Balstad
Tanner School	-	Christina Escobar
Zamboni School	-	Lisa K. Kirk
Buena Vista High School	-	Pamela J. Gilreath
Paramount High School-West	-	Becky Bach-Cuc Vu
Paramount High School	-	Melissa Marchesini
Paramount Adult School	-	Kathleen Hoogendam

This year's District-wide Teacher of the Year is David Balstad, a middle school mathematics teacher, from Paramount Park who has been teaching for eleven years. He attended California State University, Fullerton and received his Teaching Credential from California State University, Dominguez Hills. He started his career in a small private school and then came to Paramount. He has taught mathematics, social studies, science and English/Language Arts in grades 6-8 but his favorite subject to teach is teaching mathematics. Mr. Balstad has served in various leadership roles including the Safe and Civil Schools Committee at his site and the Middle School District Task Force, Professional Learning Community Team Leader, Prentice Hall Lead Teacher and has been a Support Provider for the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program. He has been honored by Roosevelt PTA receiving the Honorary Service Award and was also chosen Roosevelt Teacher of the Year in 2006.

One of Mr. Balstad's favorite quotations comes from the ancient Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu who said "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." He shares that although a thousand miles may seem like a great distance, the rewards that the teaching profession brings continue to make it a very satisfying journey. He became a teacher because he wanted a job he could enjoy while having the opportunity to be a positive influence on people. Teaching is a career that provides both of these on a daily basis. He believes that working with today's youth is an honor. Mr. Balstad cannot imagine another job that allows him a high degree of challenge yet he is able to keep a smile on his face. Being in the classroom provides him with the possibility each day to influence the minds and lives of your people by stimulating both their intellectual and social growth. He believes that making a difference in someone's life is more important than anything else. Having a positive impact on his students is the thing that he enjoys the most about the teaching profession.



If you were to visit Mr. Balstad's classroom you would see numerous motivational posters. His classroom is a place where student successes are highlighted. He strives for his students to understand that mistakes are simply an opportunity to learn and bad choices will not be held against them in the futures. The students know that they have a teacher who genuinely cares about them and will do all he can to help them succeed academically, socially and emotionally. One of the best ways that he knows to motivate students is by focusing on the positive. By giving positive feedback, students are encouraged

and will put in more efforts. The belief that every child can achieve at high level is one that drives him to be the best teacher he can be.

Congratulations to David Balstad, Paramount Unified School District's Teacher of the Year! He inspires all of us to do our best for the students and families of the Paramount Unified School District!

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

June 8, 2010 & June 22, 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

PHS Spring Sports Bring High Level of Competitive Excellence

For the last several years, Paramount High School's spring athletic programs have realized much success at both the league and playoff levels. The 2010 campaign is yielding similar results. With several perennially strong teams leading the way, Pirate spring CIF playoffs promise to be exciting again, but it is a program not usually known for its success that has been the talk of the area.

In 2009, Coach Jimena Vargas led Paramount's boys' volleyball team to its first-ever CIF playoff appearance and first-ever playoff win. Her demanding work ethic has brought even greater results in 2010. On April 1, the Pirates defeated defending league and CIF champion Downey, 3 games to 1, at Downey for the first time in school history; on April 14, our team duplicated the feat at Warren, again winning by a 3-1 margin. As the 2nd round opened, the Pirates were brought back to earth by both of those teams, but as of this writing, Paramount still held the hope of a first-ever league title. Either way, Coach Vargas and her charges have brought boys' volleyball into an environment not previously occupied by Pirate teams in the past. The playoffs promise to be exciting.

In the meantime, Paramount's boys' tennis and track and field teams have swept to league titles in fine fashion. In tennis, Coach Curtis Mu's group went 12-0 in league and 19-1 overall, earning a #2 ranking in CIF Division IV rankings. And track and field, perennial league champs, were in a position to qualify nationally for a mythical championship meet to be held at the University of Oregon in July. As

of mid-April, the Pirates were ranked #6 in the nation. And, individually, senior middle-distance runner Tiffany Lamar signed a national letter-of-intent to attend and compete at UCLA while she pursues a degree in Physiological Sciences over the next four years.

Pirate swimming was also at the top of the heap in league dual meets and in qualifying numerous athletes for CIF individual competition. As of this writing, boys' varsity swimming was on the cusp of a third straight league title, with the SGVL finals looming at Downey the week of May 3-7.

For Pirate baseball and softball, league play extends a bit longer than other spring sports. As of this writing, our ladies were in 3rd place in league play but have a real chance to make some noise as they host Warren and Downey, in first and second place, respectively, at the West campus field on May 4 and 6. Paramount baseball is, as usual, in the hunt for a playoff spot, its level to be determined by two tough games against Gahr on May 11 and 13. Coach Cameron Chinn's group has hosted great ceremonies this season, including retiring Pirate great Brian Hunter's jersey on May 20 and hosting PUSD classified employees and PHS special-needs students at the home game against Warren on April 30. The last two weeks of league play promise to be exciting as softball and baseball battle for the best CIF playoff position.

All the best to our spring sport athletes and coaches as they complete their regular seasons and prepare for the playoffs!

STAR Fiesta at Jefferson School



Students, staff, and families at Jefferson School prepared for STAR Testing with a STAR Fiesta! Parents were invited to learn about test-taking strategies by playing the Jeopardy game with categories of Self Confidence, Language Arts, Math, and Testing Skills. Our coach, Ms. Gabi Delgado, created this game as an engaging way to inform our parents about testing.

After the game, students and families eagerly awaited to hear their numbers called for raffle prizes of huge stuffed animals donated by our friend, Mr. Chuck Mayeda, and a grand prize bicycle, donated by Wal Mart. 5th grade teacher, Mrs. Bonnie Slater, and 4th grade teacher, Ms. Sheri Soshnik, worked with our Student Council students to organize a variety of games. One highlight was seeing students trying to break a giant STAR piñata that was filled with school supplies. Our STAR prizes were donated by Wal Mart and Tip Top Towing, thanks

to Ms. Chris Rodiek, a 5th grade teacher. Our teachers also volunteered their time to join Student Council members in monitoring the game booths.

We had excellent Fiesta food that drew large crowds of families. Mrs. Teodora Espinoza, PTSA president, worked with a caterer who made delicious tacos, bacon-wrapped hot dogs, and funnel cakes, while other mothers also sold their famous tamales. The after-school STAR program joined us, and sold cotton candy and popcorn to long lines of students.

Working together as a school and community made this STAR Fiesta a success! Parents praised the excellent food and festivities, and embraced the opportunity to spend quality time with their children reviewing skills that will have an impact on their school success.

Yuki Mio, Principal

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



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Good things are happening in Paramount Schools

Eye On Education

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GRADUATION DATES

Paramount High School - June 17, 6 p.m.	PHS Stadium
Buena Vista High School - June 16, 5:30 p.m.	Progress Park
Adult Education Center - June 15, 7 p.m.	Paramount Park School

Pirates Spend Time in Our Nation's Capital



Spring Break was a blast for 20 Paramount High School students who spent a week in Washington, D.C. The planning of the educational tour began a year and a half ago when students from the Ambassador, College, Latino Club and the top 20 of each class were invited to attend an informational meeting with Smithsonian Student Travel, which focuses on providing exceptional educational tours for students and faculty. The "Washington DC Club" was created to help offset the cost of \$1440 each for the trip. It was humbling to see that even when parents were faced with financial hardships, they made many sacrifices and found a way to pay.



Every parent understood the significance of this trip, which was to expose our students to historical sites they have studied as well as visit the place where our nation's leaders make important decisions that affect our everyday lives.

The guided tour allowed our students to see monuments up close and visit historical locations that they have read about in books, seen in films and heard about from their social studies teachers. Our students were well prepared and it was evident during our site seeing tours when our tour guide, George Mastrovaselis from Smithsonian Student Travel, would ask our group historical questions, and they were able to quickly answer.

The tour was not for the faint of heart; it was a fast-paced tour filled with sightseeing, food, laughter and always a touch of historical knowledge. We visited our nation's historic buildings, Arlington Cemetery, Mt. Vernon, Lincoln Memorial, Newseum, Holocaust museum, Vietnam Memorial and many other sites.

Traveling to Washington, D.C. was the first trip of its type that Paramount High School has organized in years. After the trip, several students were asked what their favorite sites were. Tatiana Ramirez, class of 2010, states: "Lincoln Memorial, Declaration of Independence and Mt. Vernon--they gave me chills." Perla Alcalá, class of 2010, says, "My favorite place was the Daniel's Story exhibit in the Holocaust Museum." Ismael Navarro, class of 2011, explains, "Definitely had to be the Lincoln Memorial. The rain made it seem more like a true experience than just simply going to the memorial and taking pictures."

We asked if the trip to Washington, D.C. inspired the students. Jennifer Ramirez, class of 2011, says, "This trip inspired me and built a sense of patriotism that I never had before. Now I feel like a true American." According to Juan Espinosa, class of 2010: "Yes, it was very inspiring for me to continue my education and acquire more knowledge."

When asked if they recommend this trip to a friend, Perla Alcalá doesn't hesitate. "Of course I would recommend this trip to a friend because this is a great opportunity for them to learn the importance of our history." Jennifer Ramirez adds, "Yes, this trip was definitely worth the difficulty of fundraising. It was an amazing experience. A new family was created among the students."

The D.C. tour was designed with students in mind. The education of students can be applied in different ways and traveling to historical sites is one way of promoting student learning. My hope is that each student who traveled will be inspired to explore other states and countries.

Patty Jacobo, PHS Counselor

Superintendent's Message:

Congratulations Paramount High School Class of 2010



On behalf of our entire Board of Education, President Alicia Anderson, Vice President Tony Peña, members Sonya Cuellar, Linda Garcia, and Vivian Hansen, I would like to extend our sincere congratulations to the Paramount High School Graduating Class of 2010.

I have had the distinct pleasure of witnessing a senior class of over 650 students successfully complete their high school experience. Their individual and group accomplishments in academics, activities and athletics is an outstanding example of young people who have prepared to take the next step towards a bright and fulfilling future.

I have no doubt that the Class of 2010 will carry that special "Pi-

rate Pride" into their future careers and lives. They are also not likely to forget the work and dedication of the devoted staff, counselors, coaches, teachers and administrators who provided the support and skills they will require to reach their dreams. Congratulations to the Class of 2010.

**David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.
Superintendent**

SCHOOL STARTS AUGUST 25

Do you have a child who will be five years old on or before December 2? If so, have you registered him/her for kindergarten? All of our schools are now accepting registration packets for new students at any grade. We'll see you on the 25th of August!

Donations to Jefferson School



On Wednesday, May 19, the Kindergarten students were greeted with a wonderful surprise! A generous donation of eight Radio Flyer tricycles with bells and a little red wagon were donated by Tip Top Towing on Alondra Boulevard in Paramount. Mrs. Aparicio, Mrs. Law, Mrs. Lujan, and Mrs. Sandoval, and their students were elated to have more equipment on their playground. The students were given new rules as they each took turns riding on the tricycles around a path on their playground. They will have years of

cycling fun!

Additionally, Ms. Diane Bengali and Mr. Myron Gosey took the Kindergarten students for a demonstration of how their truck operated. Tip Top Towing has also provided monetary donations for prizes for Jefferson School's Harvest Carnival and for their recent STAR Test Fiesta. We are grateful for their kindness and generosity toward our students!

**Eileen Aparicio
Kindergarten Teacher**

School Readiness Fair "Passport to Success" a true success!



On April 17, 2010, 161 adults and 229 children attended the School Readiness Resource Fair held at Paramount's Progress Park.

Named "Passport to Success," the fair was held for families with children under the age of five to offer information and activities geared toward aiding children's readiness for school. Attendees received a passport that was stamped at each booth they visited throughout the fair, which could be redeemed for a free children's book when completed.

The fair featured many local agencies including Center for Community and Family Services, City of Paramount Community Services and Recreation, Gaines School, Kids Dental Kare, Mother's Nutritional Center, Our Lady of the Rosary, Paramount Fire, Paramount Library, Paramount Sheriff's Department, Paramount Unified's Early Childhood Educa-



tion, Ready By Five, South LA Health Projects/WIC, Southeast Area Social Services Funding Authority, and US Census. These agencies provided a wealth of information to families, as well as crafts, activities and treats for children. Guest speakers, Dr. David Verdugo, Superintendent of Paramount Unified School District, and Diane Martinez, City Council member of Paramount, welcomed families and spoke about the import role of parents in the process of early childhood development and education.

"Although Ready By Five took the lead in organizing the fair, it was a true community effort," said Nina Hauge, Coordinator for the District's Ready

By Five program. "So many local agencies and community businesses shared our vision and understood the value in providing an event that shared the importance of early childhood education and development."

The fair also featured fantastic dance routines from Kimberly's Dance Studio and an amazing demonstration from Paramount Karate. Families also won lots of raffle prizes, including donations from Paramount restaurants such as Alondra Hot Wings, Casa Adelita, and Casa Gamino. Families had lots of family fun, all while learning what they can do to support their children's growth and development toward school readiness.

Kindergarten and New Student Enrollment

It's here! Enrollment for incoming kindergartners, as well as any students that may be new to the Paramount Unified School District is ongoing. All students registering for kindergarten must turn five years old on or before December 2, 2010. To enroll a kindergartener, you will need verification of residency within the Paramount Unified School District boundaries, original documentation of proof of birth, and current immunizations. Students in grades one through twelve will need the documents mentioned above and are encouraged to bring their transfer slip, current report card or transcript from the previous school to enroll. Our classes fill up quickly so it is important to enroll your child(ren) as soon as possible. For questions, please call your school site.

K-5 Schools	Phone No.
Collins School	602-8008
Jefferson School	602-8024
Keppel School	602-8028
Lincoln School	602-8036
Los Cerritos School	602-8040
Mokler School	602-8044
Roosevelt School	602-8056
Tanner School	602-8060
Wirtz School	602-8068

Gaines School (K-3)	602-8012
Hollydale School (K-8)	602-8016
Jackson School (4-8)	602-8020

6-8 Grade Middle Schools	Phone No.
Alondra School	602-8004
Paramount Park School	602-8052
Zamboni School	602-8048

Hollydale Kindergarten Students Show Patriotism

The kindergarten students of Hollydale School had an opportunity to show their patriotism on April 15th when they participated in their "Red, White, and Blue" parade.

Parents were invited to attend this annual event which was held at 12:30 p.m. on the kindergarten playground. The students marched around the field, dressed in red, white, and blue costumes. Various patriotic songs were sung as the children stepped to the music and waved to the cheering crowd.

The parade is the culminating activity for the kindergarten Open Court Reading unit, "Red, White, and Blue". Students learn the meaning of patriotism and read stories which inspire feelings of national pride. The students examine ways they can show patrio-

tism, learn the history and importance of national symbols and holidays, and begin to gain an understanding of what it means to be a good citizen.

"The children look forward to this event every year," shares kindergarten teacher Susan Moor. "It is so exciting to watch them learn the songs and accompanying movements. The parade is a great way to close the unit, and it provides the students with an opportunity to perform as well."

After the parade, parents and guests joined the students and teachers for refreshments and conversation - a wonderful ending to a wonderful afternoon!

Susan Marilley
Principal, Hollydale School

WALKING SAFELY

These student safety guidelines were developed by Paramount Unified School District. Please review the following safety precautions with your children:

- Do not speak to strangers.
- Do not walk alone, particularly in isolated areas not intended for walking, especially along the railroad tracks.
- Use the appropriate dismissal gates, ones where there is supervision.
- Walk in areas where you can be seen by others.
- Travel in groups whenever possible.
- Report any suspicious behavior school authorities and the Paramount Sheriff Station at (562) 220-2002, Lakewood Sheriff Station at (562) 623-3500, Long Beach Police at (562) 570-9800 (Collins School) or South Gate Police at (323) 563-5400.

Please remind your children to be careful and constantly aware of their surroundings.