

# EYE ON EDUCATION

A Publication of the Paramount Unified School District

15110 CALIFORNIA AVE., PARAMOUNT, CA 90723 • TEL: 562-602-6000 • FAX: 562-634-6029

DECEMBER 2010

## CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Wirtz School recently awarded its students for attaining Proficiency and/or making progress on the standardized test taken last May. Students were awarded in the categories of: MATHEMATICS- Proficient or Advanced and LANGUAGE ARTS- Proficient or Advanced and the category of attaining Proficient or Advanced levels for both LANGUAGE ARTS and MATHEMATICS. Students were also recognized if they improved their score enough to push them in to the next band of achievement.

All students were able to attend the assemblies, which were by grade level, to see their peers celebrate their great successes. Those recognized received a medal and a certificate personally handed to them by the principal. It was clear, as the high number of students walked away with an award, why the school was able to increase their API score by 16 points!

One fourth grade student,

Jesus Gallardo, was among the many who improved from the prior year, enough to be considered proficient or higher. "My mom was so happy," he told me.

Proficiency on the test is considered to be a score of 350 or higher in each area, Language Arts and Math. The test requires that students not only use what they have learned all year but to demonstrate that knowledge in a very short period of time. The anticipation of the test starts weeks before the test is even administered. We have assemblies and the school is transformed into a complete testing zone. All this preparation sure did pay off.....there were great gains made by each grade level and individual students. We had two students, Kaitlyn Marie Vasquez and Vanessa McKoy, that scored a PERFECT SCORE OF 600 in MATH! Way to go Wizards!!!

**Stacy Hartel**  
Teacher  
Wirtz School



Pictured are Kaitlyn and Vanessa who were honored for receiving a perfect score on the State standardized test.

## The Dancing Dynamos



Collins and Tanner Schools students are being provided instruction in dance that connects the heritage of students at the same time they are learning problem-solving skills. The program provides third grade teachers the opportunity to work side

by side with an instructor that is an artist in the field of dance.

352 students and their teachers have worked with the Aman Dance educators to learn dances and make connections to history and language arts culminating in a Family Dance Night.

The Dancing Dynamos is a Partnership with the Knabe Arts Education Partnership Program and the Paramount Unified School District.

**Julianne Kosareff**  
Curriculum Specialist  
District



### SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

**December 8, 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

# Adult School Teacher Trains her Peers

On Saturday, October 30 while most people were busy getting ready to celebrate Halloween, Ashley Ruiz was busy training other adult education teachers how better to prepare their students for the 21st century. Ashley has been teaching Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes at the Paramount Adult School for the last year and a half. At the same time, she has been attending several “Trainer of Trainers” sessions sponsored by CALPRO, an Adult Education leadership organization based in Sacramento. In the sessions she has been learning how to contextualize and integrate workforce skills into ABE, GED, and adult high school classes.

When an email invitation arrived from CALPRO promoting the October training session at Downey Adult School, Ashley gladly accepted the opportunity to teach her newfound skills. In her 45-minute session, she shared methods and examples for teachers to increase learning and enthusiasm in their adult students by showing them the relevance of lessons to their professional as well as academic growth.

The first of two topics she spoke to was “soft skills.” These include interpersonal and communication skills like listening, giving feedback, cooperating, and problem solving. Studies show that these types of behavior top the list in what employers look for in new hires. “Students are already doing many of these things every day, but they just don’t realize it,” she said recently. “In my classes, I teach them to put names to these activities” so they can more effectively see the correlation to real life and put them to use. She also assigns classroom jobs to students. For example, as new students arrive, a student “Trainer” shows them the various processes of the class. Ashley can continue her lesson without being interrupted, the new student has a better chance to succeed in the class, and the Trainer’s self-esteem increases. The Trainer can also legitimately put on their resume, “good at training others” as a result. It’s a win-win-win situation. Other examples of how classroom activities are used daily in the workplace include time manage-

ment and prioritizing. At the training, Ashley showed her peers how these skills and others can be integrated into the learning environment.

Her trainees included adult ESL, ABE, and GED teachers. “They really liked the idea that these components can be folded into what they’re already teaching in class—as opposed to being just another additional task that they don’t have time for,” Ashley said.

The use of authentic materials with the adult learners was her second topic. For example, Ashley showed how something as basic as a “Clean Hands” sign can be used as a very effective teaching tool. Activities based on such a sign might include reading comprehension, math skills, and sequencing. “Lots of Baby Boomers are going to be retiring soon,” Ashley added, “and it’s our stu-

**“If you can’t sell your ideas, get along with others, or turn your work in on time, you’ll be going nowhere fast.”**

dents who are going to be taking their place.” As one of her favorite quotes puts it, “If you can’t sell your ideas, get along with others, or turn your work in on time, you’ll be going nowhere fast.”

For Ashley’s ABE students—as well as all other adult learners in our area, in our state, and in our country—these soft skills are exactly what’s going to be needed.

**Jerry King**  
Teacher On Special Assignment  
Adult Education Center

## Keppel School Welcomes Fall 2010



Student Jasmine Cardenas and her younger sister Melissa Cardenas.

On October 28, 2010 the Mark Keppel School community welcomed Fall 2010 with a joyous Harvest Festival, with fun and exciting games that were provided by the Keppel Student Council. All the teachers at Keppel School showed their support by helping run the games. Food was arranged for by the Keppel PTA. They sure did a wonderful job of making delicious food and drink that our families absolutely loved. Students came dressed in their Halloween costumes and had a great time playing games. The games were a blast and all students had a ball winning prizes and playing with their friends. This truly was an event in which the whole school community was involved. We were excited to have a karate demonstration by the Beltran Karate Center. We were also entertained with a Tae Kwon Do performance from the Olympian Tae Kwon Do Center. They did a fabulous job and helped to show our kids that with determination and practice you can achieve your goals. The importance of “respect” for each other was also emphasized.

Keppel School wants to give special thanks to Tip Top Towing for showing their support and helping make our festival memorable with their generous donations! Thank you to the community, teachers, student and parents for all of your help and support. Everyone left with a stronger sense of unity as a Keppel Family.

We are looking forward to more amazing events here at Keppel.

**Bonnie Slater – Counselor, Keppel School**

## Paramount Fall Sports Wind Down

Paramount High School’s fall athletic programs enjoyed moderate success in the season just completed. Perennial playoff teams returned to post-league action while Pirate football had its best season in several years, staying in playoff contention to the last week of the league schedule.

Lady Pirate volleyball and tennis squads both finished league play with playoff-qualifying records. The volleyball team made the playoffs by virtue of a five-game upset of Gahr on Nov. 4 and traveled to fourth-seeded Camarillo for a 1st round match. While the Lady Pirates fell in four games, they gave Camarillo all they could handle. Our tennis girls finished third in league play and hosted Newhall Hart in the first round on Nov. 9. Our girls played one of their most consistent matches of the season before falling to the highly-rated Lady Indians. We are proud of both of our fall ladies’ teams.

Pirate boys’ cross-country returned to the CIF prelims after a second place finish in league competition. Our boys got the opportunity to run at Mt. SAC and challenge some of the best CC

squads in southern California. Our boys’ water polo team played well in spurts while defeating league rivals Gahr and Whitney, but the Pirates will have to improve in the off-season to try to break into the top three of Cerritos, Downey, and Warren.

Paramount football came close to qualifying to the CIF playoffs; on Oct. 24 the Pirates were 5-2 overall and 2-0 in league after a thrilling home victory over Downey. But our boys dropped their next three games to finish 5-5, which held them out of the playoff mix. Still, Pirate football had its best season since 2005, and the players and coaches are to be commended for beginning a turn-around in the program.

Paramount High congratulates all of its fall athletes and coaches for their efforts this past season and looks forward to the beginning of the winter schedule, when boys’ and girls’ basketball, boys’ and girls’ soccer, wrestling, and girls’ water polo take center stage.

**Mark Kemp**  
Athletic Director, PHS

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



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*Great things are happening in Paramount Schools*

**Eye On Education**

Editor - Isela Preciado  
Paramount Unified School District  
15110 California Ave., Paramount, CA  
(562) 602-6000 • Fax (562) 634-6029

# Jefferson School's Learning Center



Jefferson School's Learning Center is off and running to support the academic achievement of ALL students! Students are chosen to be in the Learning Center based on teachers' recommendations and on diagnostic testing. Once students qualify to be in the Learning Center, they go there for 30 minutes during their Workshop time every day except for Thursdays. We salute our teachers with their collective commitments to make sure Workshop takes place consistently and that Learning Center students do not miss out on core instructional time.

While at the Learning Center, the students are working on specific skills with either Mrs. Calvert, RSP Teacher; Mrs. Vazquez, Intervention Teacher; or Ms. Teng, Instructional Coach/Intervention Teacher. There is a lot of time and intensive planning taking place

for targeted skills. For example, you would see 3rd grade students focusing on blending skills with Sound Spelling cards as well as on fluency skills and comprehension strategies. The goal of the Learning Center is to provide students with targeted small group instruction that addresses their skills so they will be successful in the regular classroom.

Every six weeks, students will be re-evaluated on whether they continue to need extra support or if they are ready to exit from the Learning Center. We look forward to ensuring that ALL students succeed!

**Deanne Teng**  
Instructional Coach/  
Intervention Teacher  
Jefferson School

# Interwrite Mobi System



Paramount Unified School District has used American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for special education to purchase the Interwrite Mobi system; a mobile technology system used in the classroom by teachers and students. The Interwrite Mobi System is an interactive white board system tablet designed to support student-centered, collaborative learning. Teachers received a two day training learning and exploring what the system offers. The Mobi system provides monitoring of real-time assessment results in the classroom, the teacher tablet is offered with a Know-What-I-Know (KWIK) LCD display that makes it easy for teachers to identify special attention and topics that need further

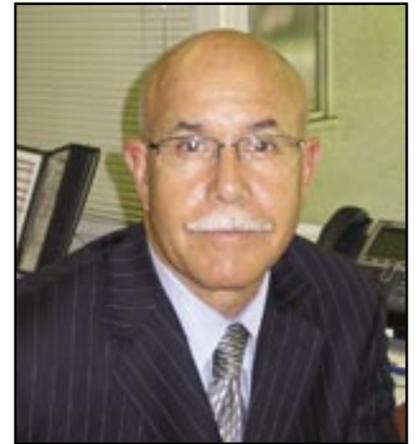
explanation.

The Interwrite Mobi System is the industry's first multi-user, multi-tablet system that supports student-centered, collaborative learning where both teacher and students can concurrently interact with and contribute to the same digital content. Teachers and students can control the computer, write notes, save/print notes, annotate over almost any application, from anywhere in the classroom up to 50 feet away. The system is a truly a mobile system that allows teaching and learning to take place from any place in the classroom.

**Kim Cole**  
Director, Special Education

## Superintendent's Message:

### Potential State Education Funding Reductions



Approximately three weeks ago, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger said he would call a special session of the State Legislature beginning December 6, 2010 to address the State's roughly \$25 billion budget problem.

As a result of this new "California Fiscal Outlook", we in education continue to be very concerned that our schools will once again be at risk as the upcoming State budget cycle is being developed. This budget shortage will cause Paramount Unified School District to be even more cautious as we near the end of the 2010-11 school year and attempt to project our District's budget over a three-year period of time into the future.

Although the precise implications of this new "Fiscal Outlook" from the State are unclear,

the Paramount Unified School District will be developing a "Multiyear Approach" to forecast our budget and prepare for any significant negative impacts which may necessitate changes in our operation and services to students.

We plan to keep our school sites, teachers, classified employees, parents, and our community stakeholders informed of any potential budget cuts that may occur with the formal introduction of the new Governor's proposed budget in early January 2011.

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

Paramount Unified School District



Workshops

LOCATION: Jefferson School  
8600 Jefferson Street  
Paramount, CA 90723

**6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

Dec. 2, 2010 Raising Responsible Children  
Dec. 16, 2010 Internet Dangers: Is Your Child Safe?

Spanish Translation will be available.  
Co-sponsored by Paramount Unified School District  
and Cerritos College

Babysitting available for children ages 3-12 (must be toilet trained)  
MUST pre-register for babysitting one week in advance;  
MAY pre-registration for individual workshops  
Call: Myra McGinnis at 562-602-6035

**Workshops Open to all PUSD Parents**

# A Night to Remember! Homecoming 2010



Homecoming was filled with unique and exciting adventures! The evening began as the PHS marching band showered the crowd with a special pre-game show. For the first time ever, the Paramount High School marching band included students from the music department of Frank J. Zamboni and Paramount Park Middle School.

The middle school students fit right in as they worked hard the week before attending on site practices and working independently with their music teachers to prepare for the evening. As a special treat for the middle school students, a new field design was created and new music written. It was obvious that this experience opened a whole new world for the middle school students. They were able to make the connection between the lessons they have been taught in class and

application in a live marching band. Once the stands were filled and the show began, they quickly learned that music soothes the mind and also fosters school pride.

During the game, members of the Paramount High School band mingled and mentored their young protégées who would one day be sitting in their seats wearing the illustrious maroon and black PHS uniform. All the musicians had a great time playing pep songs and watching the game.

The night was concluded with pictures on and off the field and playing the school alma mater for the team victory. This night that will be cherished by all. We'll see you soon Zamboni and Paramount Park, our future pirates.

**The Marching Band  
Paramount High School**

## California Association of Counselors' Administrator of the Year - Dr. Deborah Stark



The Board of Education and Superintendent recognized Educational Services Director, Dr. Deborah Stark, during a recent Board meeting for being selected as the Association of Counselors Administrator of the Year. Dr. Stark received this recognition for the outstanding work in coordinating a two-year professional development program for K-12 counselors.

## New Math Lab at Paramount High



Across the way from the brand new Delores Stephens Library at Paramount High School, the "old library" has simultaneously gone through some major renovations. It has been converted to a multi-purpose room that can serve many purposes, including being home to the ALEKS Math Lab. ALEKS, which stands for Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces, is a web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system. ALEKS uses adaptive questioning to quickly determine exactly what a student knows regarding math skills, and then instructs students on the specific topics they need to improve in. As students work through the course, ALEKS continually reassess the student to ensure that they are retaining the material they have learned. Basically, ALEKS is like a one-on-one Math tutor. Data shows that when a student displays a mastery of the ALEKS course, he or she will be successful in the Math course they are enrolled in.

The two courses currently using the ALEKS Lab at Paramount High are Algebra Support and CAHSEE Math Support classes. Twice a week, these classes visit the lab and students have the opportunity to work through lessons that will help prepare them in both the Math CAHSEE exam and in their regular Math class. Another benefit is that the lab has two college tutors assisting the students in their progress as needed. Even though it's early in the school year, students already recognize the value the ALEKS program provides. Diamond Caradine, an 11th grader, shares that "the Math Lab is very interesting to be in and it provides computers for everyone in the whole class, so there's no waiting. The lab also provides a helpful website that helps you with whatever you need help with." Teachers also see the benefits that the program offers their students. Ms. Quintana, a Geometry and Algebra Support instructor at Paramount High, adds that she "likes the fact the program provides individual instruction so each student works at his or her own pace on topics they personally struggle with."

Another advantage the Math Lab offers is its versatility. When the Lab is not being used by CAHSEE Math Support or Algebra Support classes, it can be reserved by teachers from other subjects. Over the last few weeks, classes such as AP Language and Composition and US History have visited the Lab, enabling students to complete individual research on the 36 computers provided for each class. The conversion of the "old library" to a new Lab with 72 computers will surely be a benefit to students all school year long, as well as in years to come.

**Jeff Beahn - Testing Coordinator, PHS**