

EYE ON EDUCATION

A Publication of the Paramount Unified School District

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MAY 2011

Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre Programs Visits Wirtz Elementary

On Monday, March 21st, 2011 music, puppets and live theater filled the cafeteria at Wirtz Elementary. Kindergarteners, first- and second-grade students were all invited to a unique assembly that promoted literacy.

The 40 minute show, "Jay and E and the Zig Zag Sea," was presented by Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre Programs. The show featured four actors, large puppets, music and lots of words for the students to read. The story focused on a boy named Jay who was afraid to read but overcomes his fear with



the help of the audience and his big friendly dog, Libro. Throughout the show students sang, chanted and read words aloud.

In addition to the show, the program offered a book share workshop on Tuesday and Wednesday. The book share reinforced the love for reading through fun activities and by simply getting students to use their imagination. At the end of the book share students were given two books to take home. "The show was funny! I love my new book," said first grader Nayzth Ablana.

The program filled the school

with laughter, enjoyment and excitement for reading. First grade teacher Ms. Caseres described the program in three simple words, "Educational, Fun and Inspirational!"

Wirtz was excited to host a parent meeting presented by Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre Programs on Wednesday, April 6, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. in the cafeteria. The meeting provided parents with information about the importance of early literacy and techniques on how to make reading fun and enjoyable.

Ninth Graders Dominate Preliminary MESA Day Competition



West Campus Pirates competed at the Preliminary MESA Day competition on March 12 at California State University Long

Beach. Mr. Brent Rummel and his ninth grade students descended on the university campus and plundered the competition taking

home a dozen awards.

Through the Preliminary MESA Day competitions, students engage in hands-on activities that expand their understanding of math, science, and engineering concepts. By offering a wide variety of competitions from web design to wind energy machines to bridge building, students explore pathways that can lead to future careers in science, engineering, and other technical fields. The following is a list of ninth graders winners:

EggXpress Category 9 -10 3rd Place: Bianca Baker and Leo Silva

Mouse Trap Car Accuracy 2nd Place: Linda Espinoza and Deysi Gomez

Mouse Trap Car Design 3rd Place: Jesse Gonzalez and Leo Silva

Speak Out 1st Place: Leo Silva, Jesse Gonzalez, and Francisco Nieves

Speak Out 3rd Place: Raul Avram, Bianca Baker, and Leah Barker

Sponge Activities - Stacking Cups 3rd Place: Sigifredo Gastelum

Sponge Activities - Rubrics Cube 3rd Place: Omar Gutierrez

Windmill Design and Weight 3rd Place: Raul Avram, Bianca Baker, Leah Barker, and Leo Silva

Windmill Electrical 3rd Place: Emmanuel Andrade, Jennifer Ortega, and Ricardo

Mejia Windmill Movement (car) 3rd Place: Raul Avram, Bianca Baker, Leah Barker, and Leo Silva

Windmill Over-all 3rd Place: Raul Avram, Bianca Baker, Leah Barker, and Leo Silva

Windmill Power 3rd Place: Raul Avram, Bianca Baker, Leah Barker, and Leo Silva

These students are all moving on to competing at the MESA Day finals. According to Mr. Rummel the students are very excited and look forward to participating in the final competition.

Partnership for a Healthy Tomorrow

Did you know that more than 30% of youth in Los Angeles County are overweight? Being overweight increases a child's risk of serious health problems. Poor nutrition may also affect a student's ability to learn. As part of a state and national effort to improve children's health and learning, Paramount Unified School District, in partnership with the Los Angeles County Office of Education, is working to provide nutrition education to parents and students of the community. The program is called Network for a Healthy California. The goals of the Network for a Healthy California program are to promote eating fruits and vegetables and to encourage students and their families to be physically active every day.

In addition to providing training to teachers, the Net-



work provides nutrition education opportunities for parents. During recent District English Learner Advisory Committee and District PTA meetings, Maryam Shayegh, LACOE Nutrition Specialist, taught parents how to calculate the exact sugar content (by teaspoons) in foods and

beverages. Parents were fascinated by many interesting nutritional facts. Maryam shared simple recipes and allowed parents to enjoy a dish which she prepared at the meetings. In collaboration with PUSD Food Services, the specialist also visited school sites sharing nutritional infor-

mation and conducting taste tests with students and parents using fruits and vegetables featured as the "Harvest of the Month."

Parents can find more helpful information relating to student health and wellness on the Paramount Unified School District website. Parents need only to type the address into their internet browser: www.paramount.k12.ca.us. From the home page, simply select school resources and click on to Health-e Living. More

information about healthy eating tips is also available at www.harvestofthemoth.com.

By helping students to make choices for healthier eating, parents join in the partnership to decrease obesity, and increase healthy living and awareness among students in both the school and in the home.

Debra Bolds
Curriculum Specialist
District Office

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

May 11, 2011 & May 25, 2011

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

Two Impressive Firsts for Paramount Adult Transition Program

The Paramount Adult Transition program (PAT) recently celebrated two successes unlike any other in its history. First, PAT hosted a social mixer for area transition programs, and shortly thereafter one of its students was hired by a nationally known chain.

PAT came to the campus of Paramount Adult School seven years ago as a result of legislation in 1997 that was designed to, among other things, address the 60+% unemployment rate in the special needs adult community. Other key focuses of transition programs include development of social skills, functional academics, independent living skills, and access to services. PAT is designed for special needs students ages 18-22.

On February 21, PAT hosted the social mixer for more than 50 students and a dozen aides. The purpose was to afford these students a real world context for building social skills, mixing with people they'd never met before, and getting to know peers from different cities. Studies show these to be key challenges for that population. Both Bellflower and Norwalk La Mirada Adult Transition joined the PAT students on the adult school campus.

PAT students had already set up the room and received their assignments: as greeters, food servers, table hosts, and guides for the campus tour. They handed out name badges to attendees. Each badge also had a number, and students from the three schools were encouraged to sit at a table with others whose



badge had the same number as theirs—thus fostering the “mix” part of the mixer. The event began at about 10:00 a.m. with a meet and greet exercise facilitated by the PAT students, who had prepared a list of ice breaker questions beforehand.

Then Jose Solorzano, Community/Systems Change Advocate from Southern California Rehabilitation Services (SCRS), gave a presentation. His topic: how transition students can advocate for themselves, especially

during these tough budgetary times when services are being cut. “Your voice needs to be heard,” he said. “One way to make them be heard is through your vote.” The event continued until about 1:00 and included a potluck that everyone shared.

SCRS is based in Downey and provides information, support, resources, and opportunities for independence and empowerment for anyone who has a disability. PAT teacher Renee Aguilar, who was instrumental in setting up the event, first met the staff at SCRS when she took her class on a community based instructional visit to that facility last year. Her conversation with Joel Centeno, Program Manager, about the PAT workability program led to student Vanessa Barrientos being placed in the SCRS office to work. “Joel and everyone at SCRS have been great assets for our program,” Aguilar said recently. She plans on holding a similar event next year—hopefully a dance in a nearby park so that participants can enjoy themselves for a longer period of time.

The second success for Paramount Adult Transition rests on the shoulders of fourth-year student Kimberly Perucho. She, like all PAT students, has been participating in the workability program since she arrived. Last year that training took the form of a supervised job in the shipping and receiving section of Paramount's TJ Maxx. She began with a job coach, who was gradually phased out as Kimberly's skill grew. “She did a great job,”

Aguilar said, “and everyone liked her.”

As part of her education this year, Kimberly compiled a picture portfolio/resume. When asked earlier this school year as to her dream job, she chose TJ Maxx. Kimberly filled out an application, then in February, while she was in the hospital for a surgical procedure, the call came: TJ Maxx wanted to interview her. Luckily, they waited until the very last day of the process to interview her—giving Kimberly time to be released from the hospital. She practiced in class, with fellow students and aides, with her family, and on the way to the interview with teacher Aguilar. “Kimberly has demonstrated that students with special needs can reach their fullest potential and be contributing members of society,” Aguilar proudly stated.

When all was said and done, it was Kimberly who was selected for the part-time job. That marked the first time a PAT student had been hired in what is called “competitive employment,” that is, with no aide, no work coach, no teacher.

Congratulations, Kimberly. We're all proud of you. And congratulations to all the PAT students and staff who made the mixer in February such a hit. We look forward to participating in another fine event next year!

Jerry King
Teacher On Special Assignment
Adult Education

Paramount Park Middle School MESA Students Shine



MESA students from Paramount Park Middle School shined in the recently held MESA Day Regional Prelims and Finals. MESA Day is a science and math competition that brings together hundreds of MESA students from school districts in the Los Angeles and Long Beach area.

Paramount Park students scored big in the Prelims at Cal State Long Beach on March 5th. Winning ribbons were Daniel Lopez (2 events), Alexis Salazar, Brizyeda Hernandez, Jazmin Mendoza, Andrew Valenzuela, Jesus Cervantes and Jesus Carvajal. Winning medals and advanc-

ing to the Finals were Gerardo Cedillo (1st - Speak Up), Ivan Madrigal (2nd - Speak Up), Daniel Lopez (2nd - Stick Bridge, 1st - Solo Math) and Dhamar Lopez (2nd - Model Science - Human Eye). On April 2nd, the four medalists traveled to Cal State Los Angeles to compete against the medal winners from the four regional MESA Centers. At this competition, which brought together the “best of the best”, Daniel earned the gold medal in Pre-Algebra Solo Math with a perfect score of 25, as well as the second-place ribbon for Stick Bridge Creativity. Ivan Madrigal earned a silver medal in the At-large Solo Math Division with a near-perfect 24 correct on the one-hour Pre-Algebra test.

Preparations for MESA Day begin in October, and all of Paramount Park's participants put in many after-school hours to prepare. MESA at PPMS is run by math/science teacher Jeff Kiesel and SDC teacher Michelle Soto, assisted by Mr. Kiesel's wife, Windy Foster, and mascot Rubi the Service Dog, and is supported with our thanks by Principal Topekia Jones and Assistant Principal Kim Chavez.

Jeff Kiesel, Teacher
Paramount Park Middle School

Parents Tour Roosevelt School



Parents at Theodore Roosevelt School spent several hours over a two-day period last month visiting classrooms in order to observe the Open Court Reading program. The opportunity provided the groups with a firsthand account of the instruction that takes place in whole group settings as well as the workshop portion of the program, which affords teachers the chance to differentiate instruction to small groups of students. The purpose of our observations was to bring attention to the activities that students are responsible for in the classroom and to provide parents with ideas to support learning outside the school setting. The experiences were positive and proved to be informative in many ways.

Parents were able to share their experiences from our observations at a recent ELAC meeting. Ms. Gomez commented that being able to see what was actually taking place in the classroom enabled her to make a connection with her son Miguel about the activities that she had seen him participating in during workshop.

Mrs. Avilez explained that her own son, Ryan, had told her that he was more motivated to learn because she had taken the time to visit his classroom to see what he was doing during his school day.

Observing a number of classrooms led Mrs. Reyes to make note of the many things that she, as a parent volunteer can do to help a teacher in order for the teacher to concentrate on the small groups during workshop. Mrs. Reyes assists students with materials and provides positive support as they work independently from their classroom teacher, Mrs. Zepeda.

Classroom visits will continue in May with observations of English Language Development (ELD) lessons with the intent of introducing parents to activities that take place within the classroom that can be extended into the home with a goal of increasing student achievement. Working together, school staff and parents make it possible for all or our students to succeed.

Michele Dutton, Principal
Roosevelt School

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

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Board of Education Recognitions



The Superintendent and Board of Education recognized the Paramount High School Varsity Wrestling team during a recent Board of Education meeting. The Wrestling team finished a very successful season as Runner-Ups of the Division 6 - 2011 CIF Southern Section Wrestling Championship.



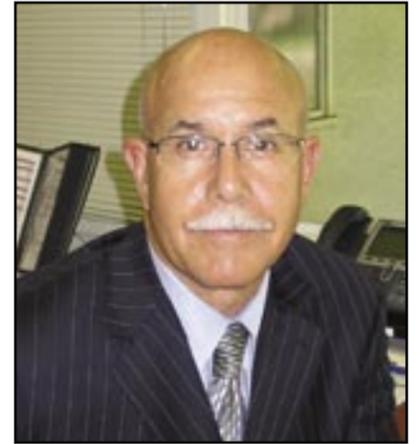
The Superintendent and Board of Education recognized the Paramount High School Varsity Men's Soccer team during a recent Board of Education meeting. The Soccer team coached by Juan Navarro and Rafa Villaseñor finished their season as the defending Division 3 - 2011 CIF Southern Section Back to Back Champions.



The Superintendent and Board of Education recognized Paramount High School Choir Music teacher Sandra Wilson-Espinoza for being selected as one of the Music Centers 29th Annual Bravo Award recipients. Mrs. Wilson-Espinoza received her BRAVO award in the category of Arts Specialists.

Superintendent's Message:

California Business for Education Excellence Announces Public Schools to the 2010 Honor Roll



I am very happy and proud to announce that the California Business for Education Excellence has named five Paramount Unified School District Schools to its 2010-11 Honor Roll.

The 2010 Honor Roll includes schools that have been recognized by California's business community for having demonstrated consistent high student academic achievement and making significant progress toward closing achievement gaps among all their students. The annual award is supported by numerous business and organizations including State Farm, Macy's, Edison International, Wells Fargo, Southern California Auto Club, the California Business Roundtable and the United Way.

After reviewing student achievement data for every public school in California, these schools stood above the rest in getting students to grade level proficiency and closing achievement gaps. It is for that reason that these PUSD school sites have been selected as the California Business for Education Excellence winners:

- Wesley Gaines School
- Abraham Lincoln School

- Los Cerritos School
- Mark Keppel School and
- Theodore Roosevelt School

The Honor Roll is the premier school recognition program in California that uses hard data, individual school and student subgroup performance data based on the California Standards Tests to evaluate school academic performance over time. Schools that reach the Honor Roll have met a rigorous standard of increasing and sustaining grade level proficiency over four years and closing achievement gaps when they exist.

We can all be very proud of these schools and all our school sites for the continuous improvement and steady gains they have displayed. Our goal is to continue our focus and common agenda for high performing public schools in the Paramount Unified School District. Thank you for your continued support.

David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Paramount Unified School District Awarded Technology Grant



PUSD was recently awarded a federal technology grant entitled, Enhancing Education Through Technology. Paramount was one of only a handful of districts in California to be granted \$250,000 in grant funds to enhance teaching using state of the art technology.

As the result of this funding, 30 teachers at Paramount High School will receive class sets of responders, which are hand held devices that students use to answer questions based on what they're learning. Using special software, students' responses are immediately visible in graph format on a screen, making it possible for the teacher to

know how many students answered each question correctly. Teachers can then modify instruction based on the number of students who answered a question correctly or incorrectly. The goal of the technology use is to increase students' engagement with the material they're learning and to provide teachers with immediate feedback about students' progress.

Teachers will be provided professional development on how to use this new technology to increase academic success.

Debbie Stark, Director
- Technology/Secondary Education

Paramount Unified School District

Parent Workshops

LOCATION: Jefferson School
8600 Jefferson Street
Paramount, CA 90723

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

May 5, 2011	Improving Family Communication
May 19, 2011	Parenting Strong-willed Children
June 9, 2011	Preparing for the Summer

Spanish Translation will be available.
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

Co-sponsored by Paramount Unified School District and Cerritos College

PHS' 4TH ANNUAL BLACK FAMILY FORUM

Paramount High School celebrated the success of another successful Black Family Forum on March 26, 2011. Parents, students and PHS staff members participated in the 4th annual event. It has truly become an event that our local community looks forward to each year. This year's forum carried the theme: Rites of Passage- the Past, Present, and Promise.

Presenters as well as the participants joined together to discuss current events while they enjoyed a home-style breakfast. The official event was kicked off with a Student Voices presentation in which our own PHS students Tyna Colen, Jaylynn Maxwell, and Ashley Mack shared poetry written by themselves or selected works from timeless authors. Their rendition of such masterpieces left the conference audience in admiration as they again recognized the priceless talent of PHS students. The ladies' stellar performance was followed by Keynote Lance Robert from 100 Black Men of Long Beach, challenging students and parents to "Make the Right Turn" which was the title of his presentation.

Financial strategist, Dirk Adams from "4 the Fruit" provided attendees with valuable financial solutions. He ignited the crowd with his all family call on addressing finances. He shared the importance of having basic knowledge at all levels to truly become a success in the present and future. Conference participants were then divided into three groups: the young ladies attended a dynamic workshop, "You Can't Fly With Heavy Wings" presented by Sicola Elliot a local inspirational author focusing on self-esteem; the young ladies were challenged to



look beyond what the mirror shows, a deeper inner beauty; thus setting high standards for themselves and those they surround themselves with. The parents were honored with Gayle Van Buren an Educational Consultant who also shared life experiences as a parent and professional and community advocate for student achievement.

Valanitta Richard, Assistant Principal at PHS then shared "Current State of Education in the African American Community and Its Societal Impact", yet again challenging parents and students to continue focusing on achievement, success, and personal and social consequences if the academic bar is not met. After the series of great workshops families were treated to a barbecued style lunch and an outstanding drill performance put on by PHS JROTC students.

Lourdes Talamantes
Counselor, PHS

Collins School Celebrates "Read Across America"



Back Row: Asia Delions, Mrs. Strawther, Leilani Scott, Anna Zheng. Front Row: Trinton Miles, Ariah Gonzalez

Collins School celebrated "Read Across America" and Dr. Seuss's Birthday. We kicked off our 3 day celebration with a teacher "switch and read." Teachers had the opportunity to read their favorite Dr. Seuss book to another class. Then, throughout the week the students participated in Silly Sock Day, Red, White, and Black - Cat in the Hat Day, and Crazy Hat Day. We celebrated Dr. Seuss's Birthday by having the students illustrate their favorite Dr. Seuss character and entered it into a contest. Each day the students were reminded of

just how great reading is by being rewarded with pencil sharpeners, pencils, pencil grips, and Dr. Seuss bookmarks.

Dr. Seuss and his wonderful stories continue to positively affect generation after generation. We will continue to motivate our students and try to instill a passion for reading here at Collins School.

Happy Reading!

Mrs. Ingle
Teacher
Collins School

New Rule... Tdap Shots Before School Student MUST have the Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Tdap Booster Shot!

There is a new California law that requires students in 7th through 12th grades provide proof of a Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Tdap Booster shot before starting the next 2011-12 school year. This new school entry law was enacted to protect California's youth against the recent pertussis epidemic. This requirement will begin July 1, 2011. If your student has received one dose

of Tdap vaccine on or after the 10th birthday, they have met the requirement. However, they will still need to show proof of the Tdap Booster. This requirement does not affect students enrolling in this year's summer school program.

The Paramount Unified School District is recommending parents contact your family physician today, to get a whooping cough shot (Tdap) before the 2011-2012 school year begins. Immunizations may be given by your family physician or are available at the health clinics.

If you have any questions regarding this new mandatory immunization law, please contact your student's school site today.

ACSA Recognizes Noe Hernandez

Noe Hernandez recently won Honorable Recognition at the Association of School Administrator's recognition banquet held February 16, 2011.

A December graduate from Paramount High School, Noe is currently attending his first year at Cerritos Community College. This is a right of passage for many high school graduates, but for Noe, it has taken the perseverance of overcoming many obstacles.

Noe is a quadriplegic and ventilator dependent due to a car accident at the age of seven. Since that time, he has attended school regularly with the help of a full time nurse and special education support team that assists him in using a computer with a Joy Stick and Morris Code assistive technology to access curriculum.

Noe has an interest in art and has attended drawing classes at Rancho Los Amigos Hospital where he has learned to draw using his Morris Code mouthpiece. He also uses a chin Joy Stick to operate his computer system.



Paramount Unified School District is proud of the accomplishments that Noe has made while attending school in the District, Kindergarten through 12th grade. We congratulate him on his accomplishments and look forward to hearing of his future endeavors.

Kim Cole, Director
-Special Education/
Early Childhood Education

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.