

EYE ON EDUCATION

A Publication of the Paramount Unified School District

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OCTOBER 2010

Panthers...On the Road to Success

Last year marked a new adventure for Paramount Unified School District. Our students and staff took pride in becoming Paramount Park Middle School. Our school pride was accompanied by the realization that we had the power to create a safe and civil learning environment in which students can develop their creativity and flourish into responsible young adults. This realization fueled our dedication to making our vision a reality. The staff and members of the student Safe and Civil committee recognized the importance of establishing simple guidelines for students to achieve success in middle school.

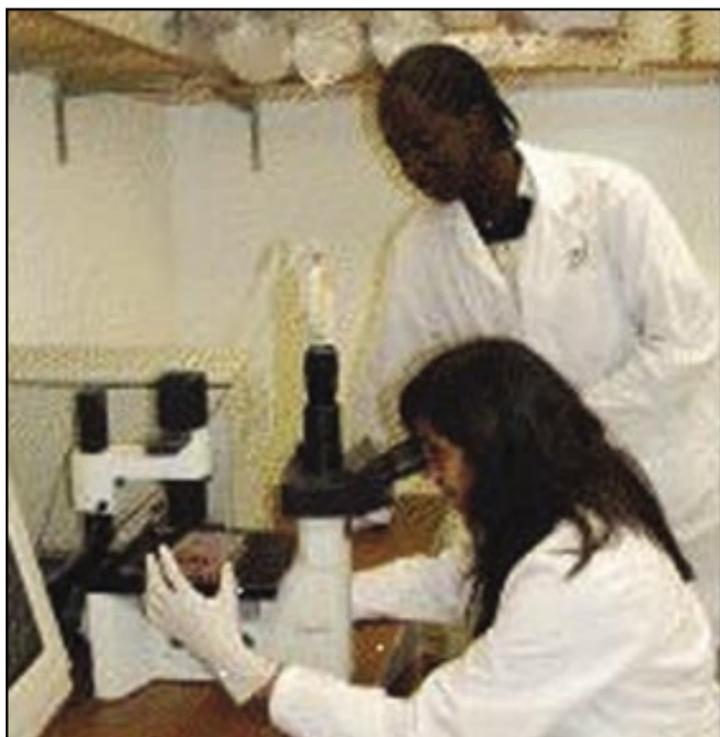
Under the direction of the administration, the students surveyed the student population and asked the question: What traits, skills, and attitudes are important for students to have in order to be successful in school, as well as in life? An over-

whelming percent of students identified the following as needed for success: Respect, Responsibility, Education, Dedication, Time-Management, and a Positive Attitude. Based on the input of the students, the Panther Guidelines for Success were created. The first day of school was a continuation of our journey. Each student was greeted warmly at the front gate as they glanced at the visual reminder of the road to success at Paramount Park Middle School. Each grade level participated in an expectations assembly where the guidelines were reviewed. The students were excited to see that the poster was created based on their recommendations. It has become a powerful tool in guiding students down the road to success!

Topekia Jones
Principal
Paramount Park Middle School



PHS Student Spends Summer at UCLA



During summer break before this current school year, Xavier Brooks got a taste of college life by living in a dorm room at UCLA for six weeks. Xavier was one of 10 students in the region chosen to attend the Howard Hughes

Medical Institute program at UCLA. Mr. Francois, assistant principal at Paramount High School, and Mr. Kirkwood of the College Bound program, recommended him for the program. In order to be considered for acceptance,

Xavier was asked to submit two essays related to the field of medicine.

As part of his preparation for the institute, Xavier made the trip to UCLA several times a month after his day at Paramount High. There, he received instruction and training in laboratory procedures, as well as attending lectures given by various researchers in the medical field. At the end of last school year, Xavier and nine other students attended a ceremony where they received certificates and their own lab coats showing that their preparation for the summer institute was complete.

The first week of summer break, Xavier and the other nine students in the Howard Hughes Medical Institute moved into their dorm rooms. There were also students representing similar programs from across the country, as well as second year UCLA students doing research on their own projects. Once set-

led in, Xavier and his small group began work on their chosen topic, cytokines and inflammation.

A typical day began with a buffet breakfast, followed by either lab work in their small groups, or the opportunity to follow and observe doctors doing their own research. Xavier shared that the resident doctors were "very open and willing to answer their questions." Lunch was followed by afternoons in the lab working on group projects. After dinner, most nights consisted of group meetings and time to study. But not all nights were spent working. Thursday

nights were free nights, and some of the group activities included going to the movies, a trip to Venice beach, and a B-B-Q at a resident researcher's home.

Looking back at the six weeks spent on campus, Xavier says "being at UCLA has exposed us to some of the responsibilities of life. You can see a drastic change in our maturity since we first unpacked our bags." And looking ahead, Xavier will again make the trek to UCLA several days a month during this school year, as well as

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SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

October 13, 2010 – October 27, 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

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some weekends. He and the other members of the Howard Hughes Institute will refine their research and finish polishing a presentation to be delivered in San Diego this upcoming summer. Their presentation will be part of a competition with similar

groups from across the country. The Howard Hughes Medical Institute finished second at the previous year's competition, but Xavier shares that he's confident in his group's ability to represent UCLA well come June.

Jeff Beahn
Testing Coordinator
PHS

District CPR Instructors



Paramount Unified School District is proud to offer CPR training to District staff. The District employs nurses who are certified instructors of CPR and First Aide. The District intends to provide teachers, aides, coaches and school personnel the necessary training to meet the site needs. The District is already underway in our training efforts and has provided CPR and First Aide to preschool staff with the District's Early Childhood Educa-

tion program.

This fall the District will be providing CPR training to employees to better serve the health needs of the students and staff. We look forward to these trainings to enhance the District's readiness to respond to health emergencies within our school community.

Kim Cole
Director, Special Education/
Early Childhood Education

Off to a Great Start !

On August 25, 2010, escorted by their parents, hundreds of excited students walked on to the Keppel School grounds. To welcome them was a group of dedicated staff led by the newly assigned Principal, Linda Go. The changes that students and adults were oriented to due to the upcoming major construction of a two story building were graciously accepted by everyone.

The Keppel staff was thrilled and encouraged to know that the school met its API and all AYP goals for 2010. Kudos to everyone who worked so hard for it last school year! Ahead of us is another lofty challenge. As a Professional

Learning Community, our "core mission is not simply to ensure that students are taught, but to ensure that they learn." Hence, 3 days after the school year started, classroom teachers and the Learning Center staff began working hand in hand to meet every student's academic needs. Eager learners thronged into the Center as teachers worked with small groups in their classrooms during workshop time. We are all looking forward to another year of success.

Linda Go
Principal
Keppel School

Artful Academics



Ahh! An almost-audible sigh of relief has been breathed from Wirtz parents as students (finally) started back to school on August 25th. Wet swimsuits have been swapped for school uniforms, "I'm bored!" has been swapped for "I have homework!", Sticks of sun block have been swapped for glue sticks and, for some students, classroom struggles have been swapped for a newfound success in art!

The 2010 fifth grade class recently had the opportunity to create projects based on the works of several prominent artists and figures in the community. The after-school program is the brainchild of Mr. Erik Caruso, a nine year veteran at the school who is quite the artist himself. He has been painting for a decade, and has always aimed to bring his creativity into the classroom. The whole fifth grade was involved, and the art was based on the works of several artists: Shepherd Fairey, Mike Kersher, Albert Reyes, Taka Hayashi, and Thomas Campbell.

The projects were instrumental in bringing many students to a higher level of interest and academic achievement in their core classes. Luis, a fifth grader in the home class of Mrs. Mabini, astounded teachers with the motivation and talent demonstrated as a result of his participation. They recognized in him what teachers call "that spark", a light bulb of sorts that signals that they have found a way to reach the child's true potential.

To showcase the masterpieces, a simple award ceremony or bulletin board would not suffice and Mr. Caruso knew it. He arranged for each artist to submit a video message personally addressed to the participants selected as top entries. The art was showcased in the school cafeteria during a school wide celebration.

When children can learn in conjunction with their interest, their passion, and their teachers' dedication, learning truly becomes an "art". Hopefully more events like this will become a tradition in the Paramount Unified School District.

Stacey Hartel, Teacher
Wirtz School

Career Technical Education and Paramount Unified School District

Career Technical Education classes combine the best of both worlds. Research supports the fact that students learn better when they are active and engaged in the learning process. Career Technical Education classes combine rigorous learning standards with hands-on active engagement activities. Students who take Career Technical Education classes can choose from a variety of three pathways, Media Support and Services, Therapeutic Services and Engineering Design. Students can learn high level technical and design skills on the computer, health career skills, and

engineering/ architectural skills. These pathways help motivate students to learn important math, reading, computer, and science standards. Students can also be placed in actual work settings where they learn important job skills. Career Technical Education begins as early as the ninth grade and continues all through high school. If you are interested in learning more about Career Technical Education courses, contact your high school counselors or administrators.

Manuel San Miguel
Director, Alternative Education

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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Paramount Fall Sports Eye League Competition

Following a September that will see competitive non-league schedules, Paramount High's fall sports programs will enter San Gabriel Valley League play. How teams perform in league will determine CIF playoff berths in November, so games, matches, and races are vital steps requiring competitive excellence and mental energy if a team is going to keep competing when the weather turns cool and the holiday season approaches.

Paramount football welcomes both a new coaching staff and outlook. Veteran PHS teacher Matt Howard took over the program last spring and has been working hard to build a cohesive staff and a physical attitude in the players. A gifted high school (Lakewood) and college (LBCC) lineman himself, Howard has grown to love Paramount and has gathered several Pirate football alumni to join him in the effort. Michael Fletcher, Rafa Villaseñor, Jorge Villaseñor, Albert Perez, David Osuna, and Jarred Halk - all decorated veterans of successful Pirate teams in the 1990s - have signed on to work with our kids, along with returnees Anthony Morelli, John Guggiana, and newcomer (and long-time PHS teacher) Brian Rodriguez. Beginning with a scrimmage at Santa Fe on September 3, the Pirates will move through a non-league schedule of Anaheim Western, Bellflower, Long Beach Wilson, Whittier (Homecoming), and Monrovia before opening league play on October 15 at home against Lynwood.

Our defending league champion girls' tennis team will seek to repeat as league champions in 2010. Veteran coach Curtis Mu returns with his solid JV coach Ivan Rodriguez to try to keep the Lady Pirates at the top of the league slate. Coach Mu's organized practices have yielded both girls' and boys' league titles over the past couple of years, and his non-league scheduling is also designed to get our ladies ready for league rivals who would like nothing better than to knock off the Pirates. Also opening with Anaheim Western, our ladies will play La Palma Kennedy, Bellflower, Santa Fe, Long Beach Millikan, El Rancho, Norwalk Glenn, and Mayfair before opening league on September 24 at home against Lynwood. PHS looks for another competitive season for Lady Pirate tennis.

Lady Pirate volleyball has enjoyed a renaissance the past 3 seasons under Coach Anna Yasuhara. Coach has instilled her enthusiastic and demanding style into our girls, and the program now possesses the expectation of competing in the CIF playoffs each fall. Joined this season by Pirate alum Genesis Lewis (volleyball, basketball, and track) as the JV coach, Coach Yasuhara has worked her charges hard,

with a summer league schedule at Long Beach City College to go with daily practices in the Pirate gym. In non-league play, the Lady Pirates will tangle with Long Beach Jordan, Cerritos Whitney, Bellflower, Anaheim Savanna, Gardena Serra, Whittier La Serna, Norwalk Glenn, El Rancho, and Whittier before commencing league play at home against Lynwood on October 5. We wish the best to the Lady Pirate volleyball team as they get ready for a tough league schedule.

Pirate boys' water polo, now in its third season of existence under Coach Eduardo Osorio, is poised once again to play a tough non-league slate to get ready for an equally (if not more so) challenging league schedule. Coach worked the kids hard over the summer, placing them in several summer leagues to go along with the early-morning workouts at the Paramount Park pool. JV coach Garrett Young joins Coach Osorio this season, and he brings a solid background in Orange County water polo with him. The Pirates will compete against Cypress, Costa Mesa, Ocean View, Anaheim Savanna, and Lakewood before opening league against Cerritos Whitney on October 5. Coach Osorio is looking for disciplined play and conditioning as the marks that the program is improving against the likes of perennial league powers like Cerritos, Downey, and Warren.

Paramount cross-country, especially on the boys' side, has been synonymous with CIF competition over the years under long-time coach Joe Peterson. While winning league titles 10 of 11 seasons up to 2008, our Pirate boys lost out to Warren in 2009. Coach has worked his runners, both boys and girls, very hard over the summer to get them ready to get back into the league title hunt in 2010. New assistant Robert Hernandez has been a welcome addition, and, as usual, Coach Peterson has put his runners in challenging invitationals to get ready for the league cluster meets on September 23 and October 14. Our runners will be at Mt. San Antonio College in Walnut, the Bosco Invitational in Irwindale, the Woodbridge Invitational, and the Dana Hills Invitational. To name a few, to test their conditioning and run strategy as they prepare for the league clusters. We know Coach Peterson and Pirate cross-country will put their best foot forward in 2010.

Congratulations, in advance, to our Paramount fall teams, as they bring "Pirate Pride" to various locations in southern California during both non-league and league competition. Go Pirates!

Mark Kemp
Athletic Director, PHS

Superintendent's Message:

October 2010 is National Principal's Month

I want to take this opportunity to recognize the essential role that our principals play in preparing today's students for the challenges of tomorrow. The National Association of Elementary and Secondary Principals have declared October 2010 as National Principal's Month.

Principals are among the hardest working, yet often least recognized individuals in education. Principals set the academic tone for their schools, and it is their vision, dedication, and determination that provide the mobilization force behind any school reform effort.

School leaders and principals are expected to be educational visionaries, instructional leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations experts, budget analysts, facility



managers, special programs administrators, as well as managing many new state and federal mandates.

Paramount Unified School District appreciates and honors our elementary, middle level, high school, and adult school principals for their importance of school leadership in ensuring that every child has access to a high-quality education.

Please join me in saying "thank you" to your site principal for working with our most valuable resource, our students.

David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.
Superintendent

PARENTS ATTEND PRESCHOOL ORIENTATION

Parents, of first time preschool students, attended parent orientation meetings in August. They were anxiously waiting their child's first day of school. For most of the children, this is their first school experience. The parents were able to meet with their child's teacher and were able to catch a glimpse of what their child's day would look like. Parents were encouraged to participate in the classroom along with their children. Preparing a child for school can be stressful and confusing for parents. The preschool program is designed to help parents prepare children to be successful in regular school.

The preschool programs teach pre-kindergarten readiness skills using the Open Court Pre-K curriculum. This curriculum aligns closely with the Districts Kindergarten curriculum. The preschool

programs help children make a successful transition from home to preschool and then on to kindergarten.

The full day child care preschool program is located at Gaines school. This program offers full-day childcare for children ages 3 to 5 years of age from 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM. To qualify for this program parents must either be employed or enrolled in school or a job training program.

The part-day preschools are located on the Alondra, Collins, Hollydale, Gaines, Mokler, Keppel, Wirtz, Zamboni and Los Cerritos campuses. For more information, please contact the Early Childhood Education Office at (562) 602-6900 or visit the office at 7340 E. Jackson Street.

Nancy Kelley-Kuhn
Director
Early Childhood Education

PHS JROTC Cadets Meet the Challenge



The Paramount High School JROTC program recently attended the annual JROTC Cadet Leadership Challenge (JLC) summer camp for the second consecutive year. On August 15, 2010, nineteen Paramount High School cadets, two PHS instructors, and one PHS school counselor attended the summer camp in Cedar Glenn, California; which is near Lake Arrowhead. This event consisted of an entire week of training, team building, and fun for the cadets.

Paramount High School's own Colonel Guild served as the Camp Commander and facilitated this year's camp for Paramount High School as well as for several other local high schools. The objectives of JROTC annual camp were to provide cadets with an opportunity to practice leadership skills in an unfamiliar environment, to allow cadets a chance to participate in citizenship building exercises, to give cadets the opportunity to experience living and interacting with their peers from other schools, and to provide an opportunity to participate in adventure training not normally available to cadets.

All of the cadets were actively engaged in many different activities during each day of the week. Each day started off with a 4:45 a.m. wake-up call that was followed by a 5:00 am physical training session, which included a mile run and various calisthenics.

The daily events consisted of various formats of challenging outdoor personal experiences (C.O.P.E.). Each activity required full participation and teamwork amongst all nineteen cadets and also an extreme amount of trust. Some of the fun and adventurous activities included horse back riding, kayaking in the lake, wall climbing/repelling, swimming, sliding through the trees with zip lines, air rifle shooting, archery, and various team building exercises.

Special Projects First Sergeant Alejandro Jimenez mentions that not all of the events were simple, and many required a large amount of effort and skills which the PHS cadets have learned throughout the course of the school year in their JROTC classes. These included problem solving, effective communication skills, and teamwork. He further describes that "I learned that I can't do everything by myself. This experience at summer camp really helped to improve my communication."

Second year PHS JROTC member Cristian Sanchez mentioned that "I learned that I can be a great leader and a great motivator. I can have discipline and dedication." I also learned that "I can't" is unacceptable. He further explains from the gifts of waking up at 4:45 a.m. for morning runs to the exciting tug of war victory matches, that it was truly exciting and fun for them all. Cadet First Sergeant Brandon Desiqueira shares that "It's a fun thing to get to know yourself, and know your peers."

PHS School Counselor, Ms. Talamantes or also known as Lieutenant Tinkerbelle by the squadron, actively participated in the activities as well. She shares that she was impressed with the leadership that the students displayed. She further explains that the cadets did a great job in supporting one another while at the same time holding each other accountable for their participation, behavior, timeliness, and appearance.

While celebrating her birthday during the week of the summer camp, Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Jackie Chavez goes on to share that "I feel I am with family. I feel I have learned to overcome my fears, and to lead by example."

Greg Francois,
Assistant Principal
Paramount High School

Board of Education Honors PUSD Students



Paramount High School students Bonnie Casillas and Jose Ramirez were recognized for their participation in the Annual Future Homemakers of America (FHA) National competition. Bonnie and Jose were national champions and recipients of the only gold medals in the State of California.



Pictured left to right are Tieranie Hawkins, Sasha Mangram, and Tijera Easley. Tieranie, Sasha and Tijera recently competed in the Young Black Scholars History competition at the National level and were awarded with the title of National Champions.

Summer Enrichment at Mokler School



Mokler School hosted a unique enrichment program for its students this summer thanks to a special state grant. Close to four hundred students and over thirty teachers participated in the four week program that was held from the end of June to the end of July. Teachers and students used performing arts techniques to enhance language arts instruction, while also including organized physical education and mathematics into everyday activities.

Before beginning the program, Mokler teachers and support staff attended a week long training in performing arts that was lead by resident artists from the Music Center Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County. The training consisted of "We Tell Stories" workshops that taught teachers how to help students retell stories in their own words using theater and improvisation techniques. In support of teachers and students, the Music Center

artists came to classrooms each week to help guide lessons and demonstrate various skills.

As a result, students of the program used a variety of dramatic games and skills to enrich their reading comprehension and create their own classroom plays based on the stories they read. When asked what part of the summer enrichment experience student Sharon Lopez, 5th grade, liked best, she responded, "We used teamwork to create characters for our stories. It was fun." Thanks to the hard work of our teachers and students, as well as the support of the Music Center artists, Mokler's summer enrichment program was a great success. We can happily say that the program will be extending into the 2010-11 school year.

Theresa M. Diaz
K-5 Instructional Coach
Mokler School