

# 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

OCTOBER 2011

## Zamboni Opens the 2011 - 2012 Year With a New Gym



As the 2011-2012 school year begins, students and staff at Zamboni Middle School were excited to see the opening of the new gymnasium. For the past year and a half, staff and students have watched the construction of this new facility. The new gym will support

our physical education classes with indoor activities, as well as school wide assemblies, music concerts, pep rallies, and after school intramural sports.

The gymnasium includes boys and girls locker rooms, indoor restroom facilities, as well as physical education

offices. It also features a state-of-the art sound system, a digital scoreboard, electronic bleachers, and full basketball and volleyball courts. The beautiful hardwood floors display our Wildcat logo at center court. Physical Education teacher, Daiva Hasty

raves, "It's great and we are looking forward to the after school sports. I love my new office too."

As the year progresses, we look forward to all of the exciting events and activities that will take place this year in Zamboni's new gymnasium.

As 8th grader Marco Hernandez says, "The new gym is awesome because it has bigger lockers, nice restrooms and a tight sound system!"

**Hilda Verdugo**  
Assistant Principal  
Zamboni Middle School

## Great Things Happen at PHS



the Caribbean," joined Dr. David Verdugo, Superintendent, and the PHS Pirates in the lunch-time activities. Before students were allowed to board the newly renovated cafeteria's pirate ship, they had to join Captain Jack Sparrow in a pirate pledge dedicating the new ship. After the ribbon cutting ceremony, students eagerly entered the cafeteria. Captain Jack Sparrow joined students on board the ship, taking pictures with students throughout the lunch period.

The idea of enjoying lunch while on board a pirate ship was developed in design meetings led by PHS leadership students Marlen Villasenor, Jesus Milan,

Brianna Gallardo, Crystal Estrada, Eduardo Ayala, Anita Bacerra, and Director of Student Nutrition Services, Chris Stamm. Their ideas were transformed into reality this summer with the redesign of their cafeteria.

PHS Cafeteria Manager Teresa Martinez is pleased to report that students and staff at PHS are "wowed"

when they enter the ship for breakfast and lunch. Records have already been broken in the first few weeks of school. Staff reports that they are serving over 1,000 breakfasts before school starts and over 2,600 school lunches daily.

**Chris Stamm, Director**  
Nutrition Services



**G**reat things are continuing to happen at Paramount High School, home of the Pirates! Pirate students, staff and administrators kicked off the new school year on Wednesday, August 24, 2011, dedicating their newly renovated cafeteria with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. The cafeteria has been renovated to resemble a pirate ship.

Captain Jack Sparrow, from the famed movie "Pirates of

### SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

October 12, 2011 - October 26, 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

# K-5 Visual and Performing Arts Continue to Grow in 2011-2012



The mission of the Paramount Unified School District is to ensure learning and success for each student by providing a quality education. A quality education consists of instruction in visual and performing arts. Through several partnerships and grant opportunities, the district is committed to providing visual and performing arts instruction in four discipline areas: theatre arts, dance,

visual and music.

## Theatre Arts

The K-5 Music Center Partnership has grown to include three more school sites. Over the summer, the staff at Gaines, Jefferson and Tanner completed staff development on the We Tell Stories process, which integrates theatre arts skills into the Language Arts. Teachers and students

will receive ten lessons with artists from the Music Center of Los Angeles County this year. All K-5 classrooms at Los Cerritos and Mokler will continue to receive theatre arts lessons.

## Dance

The third grade Dancing Dynamos program has been expanded to include all third grade students throughout PUSD. Students will participate in a five week multicultural dance program between the months of October to April.

## Visual Arts

All kindergarten students will receive classroom art instruction in the Art Masters Program. This program provides qualified docents who will present four sessions on famous artists including Monet, Picasso, Van Gogh and O'Keefe. The students will have the opportunity to learn about the artist and create a piece of art using the techniques of the artist.

All grade 4 students will participate in Literacy Through the Visual Arts with artist in residence, Robin Kiss. The My Dreams residency provides

students the opportunity to apply what they have learned across subject areas by developing competencies and creative skills required to communicate ideas in verbal and non-verbal ways.

For the second year, PUSD and the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in Los Angeles continued to expand Contemporary Art Start training for 3rd -5th grade teachers. The professional development focused on the inquiry-based learning approach which integrates the visual arts into the content areas. Teachers who attended the training will have the opportunity to take their students on two field trips to MOCA where they participate in a study of contemporary art with art educators from the museum.

## Music

Fifth grade students will be provided with weekly lessons from Mrs. Lorie Higgins, district choral teacher, focusing on introduction to vocal music and the symbols of music.

**Lihn Roberts**  
Instructional Improvement  
Facilitator/Supervisor

## Pirate Athletics Moves Into New Field House Facility

Paramount High's Athletic department made an historic move in August as the long-awaited Field House was opened for business just as fall practice was beginning. Offices and locker rooms were opened, keys were distributed, technical issues were addressed, and furniture was moved in. As the fall sports teams were getting into practice schedules in late August, they were the first Pirate student-athletes to "break in" the new locker rooms and get a feel for the new reality of the new training room, storage area, and weight room. Coaches were established in new offices in the Field House; for some coaches it was the first separate office they had enjoyed since beginning at PHS. By the time school started on August 24, routines were being established while the various programs worked around finishing touches being made on the building by the good people of McCarthy Construction and its subcontractors.

Parts of the new world in PHS Athletics were bittersweet as the old boys' PE building, built with the original campus in 1953, came down to make room for a new gym and home conces-

sions area for Pirate Stadium. Many great memories and PE teachers had made the old boys' office a memorable place for nearly sixty years. In addition, the old Varsity football locker room and office, the JV locker room, and the old athletics "cage," where generations of Pirate football players received and returned their gear, are being cleared out and remodeled to make space for new boys' PE offices and lockers, a process that will take up a good portion of 2011-12. By Sept. 2012, the central face of PHS will have a new look that is hard to conjure from the memories of what it replaced.

What is constant is that PHS fall sports - cross-country, football, girls' tennis, girls' volleyball, and boys' water polo - have begun their pre-league schedules and are pointing towards beginning San Gabriel Valley League play in late September and early October. Results from those early contests will be the subject of next month's article - Go Pirates!

**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**

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Paramount Unified School District



Workshops

LOCATION: Jefferson School  
8600 Jefferson Street  
Paramount, CA 90723

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Oct. 6, 2011  | Preventing Bullying and Harassment  |
| Oct. 20, 2011 | Homework Help/Academic Skills   |
| Nov. 3, 2011  | Grounds for Suspension and Mandated Attendance (SART)                         |
| Nov. 17, 2011 | Preparing for the Holidays  |
| Dec. 1, 2011  | Parent Project  |
| Dec. 15, 2011 | Handling Difficult Behaviors  |
| Jan. 12, 2012 | Creating Life Memories<br>(Children 7+ older may attend with parent/guardian) |
| Jan. 26, 2012 | Understanding ADHD  |

Spanish Translation will be available.

Co-sponsored by Paramount Unified School District  
and Cerritos College (FKCE Program-Certificates for renewal hours)

Babysitting available for children ages 3-12 (must be toilet trained)

MUST pre-register for babysitting one week in advance;

MAY pre-register for individual workshops

Call: Myra McGinnis at 562-602-6035

**Workshops Open to all PUSD Parents**

# PHS Inspires Future Architects



Paramount High School is proud to kick-off the 2011-2012 school year with the addition of its new Architectural Design Course. This course is supported by our Regional Occupational Program (ROP) and allows students in grades 10-12 to learn about the principles of construction by building scale models of various structures. The class instructor, Mr. Thrasher is excited and proud with the launch of this new course. He mentions that the enthusiasm on behalf of the kids is second to none. He is very proud of the willingness and desire to learn that each of his student's show on a daily basis.

Senior student Rick Rodriguez was excited to hear that this class was being offered. He shares that he has always had a passion for building things ever since he was a little kid. He further mentions that he looks forward to using the knowledge he is receiving in this class to design and build his own dream home someday. Senior Asad Arshad shares that "this class is fun, it gives you a



chance to apply math to real-life." His class partner chimes in to add that he is very appreciative of the daily hands-on learning experience and the fact that he has the opportunity to work with other students on various projects.

"It's fun! It's always interesting!" adds eleventh grade student Larissa Diggins. She describes that as a result of being in this class she has been inspired to change her future major in college to Architecture.

**Gregoire Francois,  
Assistant Principal  
Paramount High School**

## Remembering and Honoring Our Past

Lynn Mokler was born in Parowan, Utah on October 12, 1919 but his family soon moved to what we now know as Paramount when he was a toddler. Lynn excelled in school and was recognized as an honors student in elementary, middle, and high school. At the age of 19, Lynn was selected to represent our community in Washington, D.C. based on his involvement and community service in scouting.

More than likely, because of his commitment to service, it came as no surprise when Lynn enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps. in July 1941. By February 1942, Lynn graduated from the Air Corps Advanced Flying School as 2nd Lt. L.H. Mokler. In August of 1942 Major Mokler was stationed in England where he and his crew were a part of the 85th Army Air Force.

Major Mokler flew a B-17 bomber through all of his operations over enemy territory and by March 1943 he had completed his allotted missions. Major Mokler flew as co-pilot on two additional operations in order to provide moral support as his own

former co-pilot took over the pilot's seat. When he was entitled to furlough days Major Mokler chose to continue on active duty because he knew that he was needed and he assisted in plotting raids over Germany.

After 27 successful bombing missions over Germany and other occupied areas, Major Mokler lost his life at the age of 24 in a plane crash over England on October 17, 1943.

Major Lynn Mokler School was built as a lasting memorial to a local hero who spent his life leading by example. The way in which Major Mokler lived his life serves as an example for all of us at Mokler School. He excelled in school, he supported his community, and he made the ultimate sacrifice for his country. As we look forward to what would have been Major Mokler's 92nd birthday, we will honor him by following in the footsteps of his youth as we strive to do our best to honor ours and our community.

**Michele Dutton, Principal  
Mokler School**

## Superintendent's Message:

### PTA Every Child. One Voice.

The new year has started and we should be asking ourselves how can you make sure that your school site's PTA thrives?

Being an involved parent is not only a rewarding experience, but also an essential one. Research has shown that when parents or guardians are active in their children's education, their students are more successful.

The first thing parents need to realize is that they can make a difference at their children's schools. Everyone has something to offer, whether it is helping with a classroom art project or reading to students in the library. PTA helps create an opportunity for parents to truly become involved and encourages parents to contribute.

I would like to encourage all of our parents to not only join PTA this



year but also become active members. Your school site PTA helps create a more welcoming environment and ultimately it will increase student success.

By joining PTA, you help to ensure that every child can reach his or her full potential.

Thank you.

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

## Buena Vista High School Receives WASC Accreditation Term of 6 Years!

In April 2011, Buena Vista High School experienced a Focus on Learning site visit where a three-member committee spent two-and-a-half days evaluating the instructional program. This was the first full accreditation visit for Buena Vista High School and we are proud to announce that the maximum six-year term has been granted.

WASC is the Accrediting Commission for Schools and affiliated schools must show proof of the ability to provide for successful student learning. Accreditation certifies to the public that an institution is trustworthy – the mission and expected school-wide learning results foster an educational environment where student learning is the priority.

As part of the visit, teachers and staff began preparations in the 2009-10 school year. A written report was drafted and various components of the school were examined. When the

visiting committee came to campus, they certainly appreciated the beautiful campus and classrooms. More importantly, through interviews with students, parents, and staff they commended the school for its dedication to providing a positive environment for learning where students are also socially and emotionally supported.

Buena Vista High School is dedicated to providing a nurturing, safe school climate in which varied teaching and counseling styles help students experience academic growth and become responsible citizens as well as life-long learners. Our goal is to make high school relevant and rigorous for all students so that they will graduate prepared to confront life's challenges.

Congratulations to the Eagles of Buena Vista High School!

**Jean Law, Principal  
Buena Vista High 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.

## Another Exciting School Year Begins at Los Cerritos

After weeks of anticipation and countless hours shopping for school supplies, students began a new school year at Los Cerritos with the ringing of the bell at 8:15 a.m. on August 24th. Students were greeted on the yard by their teachers, eager to begin the day. Once in their classrooms, students jumped back into their lessons and school day routines with great enthusiasm.

Three weeks later, it was the parents turn to officially start the school year with an invitation to our Back-to-School Night on September 15th. Parents, students and family members were greeted by Ms. Toscano, the Los Cerritos School Principal, during a brief assembly prior to classroom visits. Ms. Toscano introduced the Los Cerritos teachers and reviewed expectations for the new school year. Parents were also excited to receive information regarding our upcoming Spooky Read Night and Carnival in

October and our Family Movie Night in November.

As parents visited classrooms, they were able to see a variety of student work at each grade level. The Paramount Unified School District's Food Services Division was also on hand to provide parents with information on the breakfast and lunch programs offered at our school, as well as providing them with refreshments and snacks.

After all the classroom visitations were over, the evening ended as the school day had begun earlier, with the ringing of the bells- and so marked another well-attended and successful Back-to-School Night at Los Cerritos School.

Thank you to all who shared this evening with us!

**Connie Toscano**  
Principal  
Los Cerritos School

## Off to a Mathematical Start

Wirtz teachers are on the road to success as they instruct students in math across the grade levels.

In Kindergarten, teachers are beginning instruction with the numbers 1-10. The students are learning to count, write, and read these numbers. Students sing songs, use the calendar, and a variety of activities that require TPR.

First grade teachers are preparing their students by reviewing skills that they learned in Kindergarten. As well, they are finding, creating, and extending both patterns with concrete objects and number patterns. By week three, 1st graders will begin to memorize their basic math facts for addition.

The second and third grade teachers are exploring place value, using base 10 blocks, as their students deepen their knowledge of numbers. Additionally, 2nd grade students will continue to memorize the basic math facts for both addition and subtraction. As well, the 3rd grade students will begin to memorize their multiplication facts for 2s, 5s, and 10s.

In fourth and fifth grades, teachers are reinforcing number sense as they build on their students' knowledge of place value for whole numbers and decimals. These same students will continue to review their knowledge of basic math facts for multiplication and division, as well as apply this knowledge to work with whole numbers.

Throughout the school we see an overwhelming effort to prepare the students for their math studies through the continual review, practice, and instruction on the basic math facts. This focus continues to be supported through a schoolwide incentive program titled Principal's Club.

Principal's Club is new and improved this year. We will continue to have five levels (green, red, blue, silver, and gold), however we will now connect the district-wide basic math facts assessments to each of these levels. Each student's proficiency on the quarterly basic math facts tests will determine whether they are able to achieve the different levels. Except for Kindergarten and First grades, all levels will be based on basic math facts achievement. The details, by grade level, will be provided by the school and teacher.

In conclusion, Wirtz School is committed to developing and expanding our mathematical knowledge through the memorization of the basic math facts. Let's make it happen in 2011-2012!

**Jennifer Kelly, Instructional/Intervention Coach**  
Wirtz School

## Once a Pirate, Always a Pirate



Undoubtedly, anyone who has entered the profession of teaching has at some point reflected on what it would be like to teach at the high school he or she attended. Currently at Paramount High School, there are fourteen teachers and one school counselor who are former students at PHS. On August 31st, 2011, these special staff members were invited to a luncheon in honor of being former students who are giving back to their community as teachers. Included in this group are Angela Allen-Hess, Mike Fletcher, Luis Garcia, Patricia Gonzalez, George Gutierrez, Patricia Jacobo, Maria Juarez, Shirley Lamphear, Shirleen Larson, Rosheka Liwanag-Polk, Bethsaida Lopez, Rocio Lopez, Elsa Reynoso, John Teeple, and Rafael Villaseñor. We asked these staff members about any particular teachers who were influential in their decision to become educators, as well as their thoughts on returning to their high school as teachers.

Mrs. Angela Allen-Hess shares that her tennis coach, Glenna Castillo, was her inspiration to become a teacher and helped shape her own dream to "be able to touch as many lives as she did." Gina Luiz, a current student, shares that Mrs. Allen-Hess "comes to work every day with a smile on her face and always eager to see her students," adding that "she is loving, caring, determined, thoughtful, energetic, and full of life." Anyone familiar with Mrs. Hess's Cal-Safe program and parenting classes can attest that she is giving back to her community in a unique and special way.

Luis Garcia now teaches Geometry and Math Support at PHS. Mr. Garcia's inspiration to become a teacher came from Mr. Randy Cantrell, his AP Calculus teacher. According to Mr. Garcia, Mr. Cantrell's "tough love approach to teaching helped me accomplish things that I would never have thought myself capable of." Mr. Garcia was also part of the 2003 AP Calculus class, in which all students enrolled scored a five on the AP Calculus exam, the highest score possible. Mr. Garcia further expresses that his "greatest hope is that I will help inspire and motivate my students in the same way my teachers inspired and motivated me."

Ms. Maria Juarez states that every teacher at PHS contributed to her development in education. As a Language Arts teacher, she adds that an especially influential teacher was Mr. Auria, in whose class "I not only learned how to compose a strong essay read great literature," but also appreciated the way "he treated us with respect as the adults we were growing to be."

One of Ms. Juarez's favorite things about teaching at PHS is that it "allows me to give back to my community."

Mrs. Patricia Gonzalez currently teaches World History Honors and AP

European History at PHS. She conveys that her love of history stems from Mr. Fairbanks, whose "love for history and sense of humor really attracted me to this profession." Mrs. Gonzalez also shares that after college "Mr. Fairbanks accepted me as a student teacher and taught me to be confident in my abilities."

Ms. Shirley Lamphear explains that her Spanish teacher at PHS, Mrs. Virginia Nelson, "encouraged me to go to Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico as an exchange student for our Sister City Club." Ms. Lamphear shares that she has been learning the language ever since, and returned to PHS as a Spanish teacher in 2008. Regarding being a teacher at PHS, she adds "I have a sense of belonging and ownership because I live, work, and worship in this community."

Mrs. Rosheka Liwanag-Polk is a Language Arts teacher and JV Girl's Basketball coach at PHS. She cites Mr. Healy, Ms. David, and Mr. Smith as inspirations in regards to becoming a teacher. Mrs. Liwanag-Polk explains that she knew she wanted to teach after her first year of coaching at PHS, adding that "the following semester I changed my major and haven't looked back since!"

Mike Fletcher is a familiar face at PHS. While currently completing a teaching credential and Masters in Education, he often substitute teaches and is an assistant varsity football coach. He attributes his experience at Paramount High School as "the launching pad to my success as a student-athlete at the University of Oregon and a nine year professional football career in the Canadian Football League." Mr. Fletcher cites Ms. Chamberlain as influential in his decision to become a Language Arts teacher, and says she is still a source of inspiration to this day. Lastly, Mr. Fletcher shares that "it's an honor to dedicate my time, effort, and energy to current Pirates in their pursuit of finding greatness."

Mr. John Teeple is Paramount High's Chemistry Honors and AP Chemistry teacher. He cites Mr. Hudson as inspirational to become a teacher because of "his passion for exploring science" plus the fact that "his ability to lead others to question the physical world was contagious." Mr. Teeple further shares that his decision to come back to Paramount High was "the best decision I could have made" because "I am able to connect with my students in a way that would be impossible had I not attended PHS."

The fact that these teachers have chosen to return to their alma mater and give back to their community in such a significant way truly epitomizes Paramount High's motto: "Once a Pirate, always a Pirate!"

**Jeff Beahn**  
TOSA, Paramount High School