

# PUSD EDUCATION NEWS

A Publication of the Paramount Unified School District

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

PSUD 2012

## Los Angeles Airport Police Department K9 Handling Team Visits Frank J. Zamboni Middle School

On Thursday, February 2nd, a K9 Handling Team from the Los Angeles Airport Police Department visited Zamboni Middle School. Officer Alonso Lagos and his K9 partner, Belgian Malinois Brandy, were guests of the Zamboni Middle School Animal Club on this day.

Officer Lagos shared that Brandy is an explosives detection dog. Brandy originally trained years ago at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. Before joining the airport police three years ago, Brandy was an explosive detection K9 with two other police departments. During her visit to the school, Officer Lagos hid a demonstration container in a cabinet. Brandy was able to detect the location of the container within moments. This scenario mirrors what would have occurred in the real world.

Officer Lagos then shared how rewarding and



challenging a career in law enforcement has been for him. At 11 years old, his K9 partner Brandy is nearing the completion of her career as an explosive detection dog. As a reward for her love and dedication to her

K9 career, Brandy will retire to the Lagos home as the family pet.

To close the presentation, the Animal Club members were given the opportunity to come pet and take pictures with Brandy. Every

student was given a baseball card with Officer Lagos' and Brandy's picture. Zamboni Middle School and its Animal Club would like to thank the Los Angeles Airport Police Department for bringing this K9 team

to our school and providing our students this incredible learning experience.

**Rose Mary Mendez**  
Teacher  
**Frank J. Zamboni**  
Middle School

## PUSD Student Ruby Solache Receives ACSA Award



When Ruby Solache enrolled at Buena Vista High School in her Junior year, her academic record showed that she was not on-track to graduate. She wasn't sure if she would be able to complete her diploma requirements and she was juggling the responsibilities of being a teen mother. In Ruby's own words, "I used to have a bad temper." Ruby became a mother to a baby

girl named Sara in the middle of her sophomore year. Ruby often missed school and continued to struggle making positive decisions. While her family was supportive when they could be, Ruby had to work independently to get her priorities straightened out. A life-changing opportunity arose when Ruby was transferred to the Buena Vista continuation program.

In her first semester at Buena Vista High School, Ruby earned an impressive 3.38 GPA, taking advantage of a grueling 8-period schedule. She also signed up for an El Camino College class, earning additional credits toward graduation. While attending Buena Vista, she reflected the characteristics of a resilient and focused young woman who put the needs of her daughter above her own. She prioritized her academics and she has learned to put past conflicts aside and approaches situations with maturity. She was selected as a Student-of-the-Month three times while at Buena Vista High School and feels inspired by her experiences at this school. Teachers reported that Ruby is a pleasure to have in class, who is polite and models exemplary behavior. She intelligently tackled assignments and would set

the tone for others with her self-directed approach to her education.

For the Spring semester, Ruby has returned to Paramount High School to graduate in June with the Class of 2012. She has worked extremely hard to put her life back on track and her daughter is always on her mind. On February 27, 2012, Ruby was awarded an "Every Student Succeeding" certificate and scholarship by Region 14 of the Association of California School Administrators. She was

the one of only nine students in the region to be recognized for this great honor. Ruby thanks those who supported her along her journey: Ms. Allen-Hess from the Cal-Safe program; Mr. Ashabraner, Ms. Lopez, and Mr. McCullough (Buena Vista teachers); and her school counselor, Mr. Mendez.

Ruby would like to pursue a career in law enforcement or social work so that she can provide services to others who may have life circumstances like hers.

### SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

April 25, 2012

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

# Parent Center Opens at Howard Tanner School!



Howard Tanner School is proud to make an addition to its campus, our new Parent Center! It has been in the creative planning stages until recently. On January 31 at 8:30 in the morning the mystery was unveiled. Howard Tanner was delighted to open its Parent Center. Dr. Verdugo, Dr. Morales, the principal Mrs. Patricia Brent-Sanco, many parents and teachers were present during the reception and ribbon cutting ceremony. Four Howard Tanner students; William Nunez, Chrystal Lozano, Fatima Carlos, and Gina Hull all spoke about what the Parent Center meant to the students at Howard's Tanner and how parents could use the center to help all classrooms. The honor was given to Mrs. Sanco our school Principal and Mr. Hawke (a fifth grade parent) to cut the ribbon to commemorate the opening of the new Parent Center.

The excitement overflowed once in the new center. Parents, teachers, and all invited guest were given a tour of the facilities.

Special thanks were given to Mrs. Viviana Venegas, Mr. Victor Mendoza, Ms. Jessica Pacheco, Mrs. Araceli Astredo and Mr. Jose Perez for their hard work in getting the center ready for the grand opening.

The center is equipped with a media viewing center that includes a television which has a DVD and VHS player. There are videos (in English and Spanish) to inform parents of teaching strategies, and helpful hints they can use at home. There are three computers available to the parents to search for any educational information or resources they may use to help their children. Tables and chairs are placed in the center of the room for parental use. The center has a full resource library for parents on a variety of topics. Teachers are donating books, magazines, educational resources, videos, and any other materials they think will benefit the students and their parents. Parents also have the luxury of relaxing on the comfy black couch



placed in the corner of the center. There are supplies available for parents to use, such as, scissors, glue, paper, paper clips, tape, construction paper, sticky notes, and an array of other supplies that might aid them while they use the center. Teachers are very excited because they have boxes in the center with their name on it, where they can place work to be completed. Such things as papers or patterns that can be cut out, patterns that may need to be glued, or posters or flash cards that need to be written on. It seems to be a win-win situation for both parents, teachers, and students. We are grateful to Mr. Victor Duarte and all of the parents who have already volunteered

to work in our center.

We at Howard Tanner hope to bridge the gap between parents and their involvement at their child's school. We believe by involving them, we are welcoming them to share in their child's education, and we are equipping them with many techniques and ideas to assist them. Together we can make a difference in their child's education. It takes a village to raise a child, and we here at Tanner believe we have that created that village.

Melody L Rogers  
Teacher  
Tanner School

# Read Across America at Gaines School

From February 27th through March 2nd, Wesley Gaines Elementary became Seuss-ified. The school enjoyed a week filled with many exciting reading activities. Every student participated in special activities to celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday. Monday was our kick off day, marked with great anticipation, expectation, and enthusiasm. Our four kindergarten classes received the visit from a pair of familiar readers. Volunteers Mr. Mel Neff from Carson and Mrs. Lena McCully from Huntington Beach have read to our school every year during Dr. Seuss' celebration week for the past four years. To add to the excitement, students and staff were encouraged to dress up in red, white, and black like The Cat in The Hat; classroom doors were decorated with reading slogans, artwork or a picture of Dr. Seuss' characters. This set the stage for what became a fun and exciting week of Seuss-ical reading.

On Tuesday, the color of the day was gray like Horton from "Horton Hears a Who!" Wednesday, the dressing color was red or blue like Thing One or Thing Two. Thursday, we all wore yellow or orange like the Lorax. In addition, that day, Gaines school also hosted the locally famous Pajama Night. This event called for students and their parents to come to school in the evening in their favorite pa-

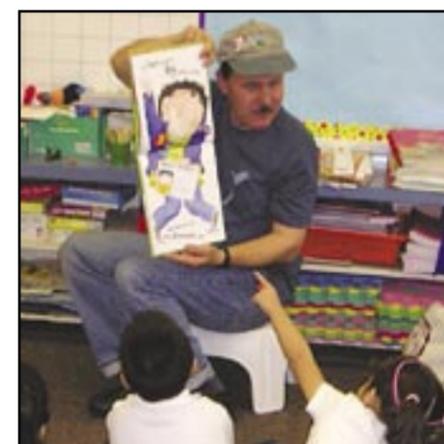


jas to enjoy our staff read aloud their favorite bedtime stories. All students that attended received a free book as well. Then, on Friday, we all wore the color green to show how much we like green eggs and ham. On this special Seuss-ified day, students enjoyed delicious green eggs and ham for breakfast, especially prepared by our cafeteria staff.

To wrap up the week, every student from all grade levels participated in the Dr. Seuss reading contest, where they had to select a favorite book, draw an image of the cover, and write a brief summary of the story. Each teacher selected a winning piece from their class. Winners received a Dr. Seuss book as a prize, and their artwork went on display in the library for

all students to see and admire.

At Wesley Gaines School, we truly believe in the importance of a strong literacy program in children's lives. Reading Across America is a wonderful way to provide children the opportunity



to find enjoyment in reading. Research has shown that motivation toward reading creates lifelong successful readers, which will add to students spending more time reading, and as a result do better in school.

# Special Visitors at Mokler School

Last month students at Major Lynn Mokler School were given a unique opportunity, compliments of the Dairy Council of California. On a Friday morning, students gathered on the blacktop for a special educational assembly.

Laura LaFayette had arrived by truck with a large trailer and was ready with a headset and speakers to address the students about the importance of dairy products in a healthy diet. As she began her presentation she opened the side of the trailer to expose a beautiful brown dairy cow named Daisy.

Ms. LaFayette provided students with new vocabulary as well as information ranging from the anatomy of a cow (including the fact that a cow has four chambers in its stomach) to the real technique used to milk a cow.

Students were fascinated with the wealth of information that Ms. LaFayette shared and were mesmerized with Ms. LaFayette's star pupil, Daisy. At the end of her presentation an added surprise was revealed. There, in the back of the trailer, was an extra special



guest...Milk Dud. Milk Dud was a male calf who was available for students to pet as they exited the assembly area.

By the end of the 45-minute presentation students were well informed about a healthy lifestyle and the importance of dairy products in our diets as well as some intriguing facts about our guest Daisy and her fellow dairy cows.

Michele Dutton, Principal  
Mokler School

**PUSD Education News is a monthly Publication of the  
Paramount Unified School District**



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

*Great things are happening in Paramount Schools*

**PUSD Education News**

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# We Are One



On February 23, 2012, Howard Tanner School presented an African American Cultural Experience "We Are One", which featured a performance by the world renowned Ms. Bobbie Lee Anderson, who has performed on Broadway and sang at Carnegie Hall. She gave a fabulous performance to the theme of "I Can Do It." Her inspirational message and her encouraging song about hope informed students that they can succeed in life with an "I can do it" attitude.

"We Are One" involved staff, parents, students, and our Honorable Superintendent,

Dr. Verdugo in a standing room only celebration. The principal, Mrs. Sanco sang a powerful duet with Ms. Anderson, "Lift Every Voice and Sing".

The spectacular evening continued with two selections from Howard Tanner's Choir followed by special grade level tributes to African Americans who have made a difference in the world. Mrs. Sanco closed the evening by inviting everyone to enjoy the delicious "Taste of Soul Buffet".

**Patricia Brent-Sanco**  
Principal, Tanner School

## Pirate Boys' Soccer Makes PHS History; Spring Sports Get Underway

Paramount High's 2011-12 boys' soccer team culminated a magical season on March 10 by winning the California State Soccer Southern Regional Division 1 Championship for the second time in three years with a 2-1 thriller over previously-undefeated Crescenta Valley. The Pirates' march to the #1 ranking in California was as tough as it could be - the team was the visitor in all three regional matches, traveling to LA Fremont and San Diego Torrey Pines before defeating the Falcons at Warren High School in the final. Amazingly, Paramount was the 6th seed (of 8 teams), but the coaches and players did not let that ranking distract them from their ultimate goal.

On March 3, Paramount's High's boys' soccer program won an unprecedented third consecutive CIF Division 3 title with a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Channel Islands at Warren High. The victory moved the 2010-12 run by boys' soccer past Paramount football's storied run to three straight CIF championship games from 1988-90; the Pirates won back-to-back titles before falling in the '90 Finals. Several senior soccer players have been part of all three championship teams, and co-head coaches Juan Navarro and Rafa Villaseñor now take their places with the greats of Paramount High's long history.

The process of getting to March 3's title match was not easy for the 2011-12 Pirates. Injuries and a hungry Warren Bear squad denied the Pirates a sixth straight league title. But the coaching staff took the week between the last league game and the opening playoff match to get players healthy and run a mini-"boot camp" to get the Pirates mentally and physically prepared. A key 2-1 victory under hostile conditions at West Ranch in the second round served as a springboard for easy wins at Oxnard and at home over Santa Ana Valley in the quarters and semifinals, respectively. Then, surprisingly, CIF announced that the Finals would be at Warren, making the match a virtual "home game" for

the Pirates and their fans. The 2010 and 2011 titles had been won at Mission Viejo HS. The fans did not disappoint as nearly 2,000 strong showed up to cheer for the defending champions. While strong play by Channel Islands' goalie held the Pirates to two first-half scores, the ball was consistently in the Raiders' zone and the Pirates kept the pressure on. The final horn signaled an emotional celebration as both the players and coaching staff absorbed what they had accomplished.

As boys' soccer made its playoff run, PHS spring sports got underway. Pirate baseball, coming off another league title in 2011 under coach Cameron Chinn, is again expected to be a local power with a deep pitching staff and much experience. As of this writing, the program was off to a strong start in both its own and the El Segundo tournaments. Lady Pirate softball was also enjoying a good start, with experience and talent, as coach John Guggiana fields perhaps his best team (on paper) in hopes of challenging for what would be the program's first league title since 2004.

Pirate boys' tennis is also back to defend a league crown, and coach Curtis Mu's squad shows no signs of slowing down in the pre-league schedule. Boys' volleyball, under coach Jimena Vargas, has talent and will build experience in the non-league schedule in March. In Track and Field, coach Chris Barboza will field her usual strong overall team to go for yet another pair of league varsity team titles, while Pirate Swimming has the numbers and experience to have a very successful season under coach Roberto Guerrero. The Pirate varsity boys have won 3 straight league championships and are looking to build on last year's fifth place finish in the CIF team Division 4 Finals.

All the best to Pirate spring sports as their 2012 season gets going.

**Mark Kemp**  
Athletic Director, PHS

## Superintendent's Message:

### April as Public Schools Month

In the year 1920, the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of California founded Public Schools Month to celebrate the contribution of public schools, the American way of life, and have designated April 2012 as Public Schools Month.

Our public schools have traditionally provided and continue to provide, the indispensable educational tools and institutional support to millions of young Americans to achieve both rewarding careers and fulfilling life endeavors.

In addition, American public schools have had the responsibility for instilling a love of learning in our children and teaching them the skills to pursue satisfying, productive lives.

Please join me in celebrating Public Schools Month by recognizing our schools throughout Paramount Unified



School District. "Public schools are truly the foundation upon which we can build our nation's future."

Thank you for your continued support.

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

## Essay Contest Winner



Several of our Los Cerritos students participated in the Annual Paramount Elks Essay Contest. Approximately 80 entries were submitted district-wide on one of two topics: Americanism or Drug Awareness. Congratulations to our 5th grade student, Genesis Galarza, who was awarded 2nd place for her essay on Drug Awareness. She was recognized at an awards ceremony on Monday, March 19th at the Paramount Elks Lodge. We are all very proud of her! Below is a copy of her award-winning essay.

### Make the Right Choice

*Do you want to go to jail? Do you want to destroy the rest of your life? Do you want to end up dead? If my best friend started to use drugs, I would explain to her what could happen and I would show her better things that she could do or learn about instead of doing drugs. I would also show her how nice life is without drugs. You can make your positive dreams come true if you are drug free.*

*Including, getting a good job, being a good citizen and helping the community*

*What would happen if my best friend started using drugs? Some things that could happen are that she could get killed, shot or go to jail. In jail they give you nasty food and the beds are smelly and dirty.*

*You might even have to stay in jail for the rest of your life and end up being captive to drugs. Also, some gangs may tell you to use drugs, smoke and drink alcohol. If you do, you may end up with different diseases or you may end up dead..*

*In conclusion, you should not use drugs because they will ruin your life and make you very sick. Drugs destroy and kill!*

## Jackson Knights Love to Read!

On Valentine's Day, Leona Jackson School launched its "We Love Reading" program with an exciting rally to promote independent reading. After some book-infused games, songs, and cheers, students got the message: read 1,000,000 minutes before the end of the school year and earn a school carnival!

Last year, the Jackson Knights participated in the Clippers' Read to Achieve challenge and as a school read over 1,000,000 minutes. This year, the Jackson leadership team crafted its own, more challenging reading incentive program to continue to promote independent reading. Now students have a more demanding reading log where they need to analyze text in addition to the standard minute tally and parent signature. To give students a jump start on their reading, Jackson School started D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read) once a week for ten minutes. All students are expected to carry a book in their backpacks and be prepared for the unexpected D.E.A.R. announcement. In addition, students are preparing for a school wide Battle of the Books, where all grades have to read five pre-selected books and then answer trivia questions in a game-show style competition that makes reading exciting.

These reading incentive programs are helping to create a positive, academic culture that will result in higher student learning and build a culture for the love of reading.

**Rebecca Perez – Language Arts Coach, Leona Jackson School**

## Paramount Students Visit Museum of Contemporary Art



Students from Paramount Unified School District (PUSD) visited The Geffen Contemporary at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) as part of a partnership program. This is PUSD's second year with the Contemporary Art Start (CAS) program at MOCA. Teachers received professional development based on integrating art into instruction. In addition, students viewed and discussed contemporary art exhibits with their classroom teacher and an art educator from MOCA. This approach integrates the visual arts into the content areas by promoting the use of questions to build student's understanding. An Education Program Manager from MOCA states, "Students of teachers who participate in CAS for more than one year make large gains in creative thinking skills."

In the spring of 2012, students will visit The MOCA Grand Avenue building where they will view 34 different works of art by Mike Kelley (1954-2012).

**Linh Roberts, Facilitator of Instructional Improvement**  
**Rita Cruz, VAPA Curriculum Specialist**

## Paramount Unified School District Kindergarten Registration Begins!

It is time to register your child for Kindergarten! Children who are five (5) years old on or before November 1, 2012 are eligible to attend Kindergarten. Registration for the school year 2012-2013 begins May 1, 2012. To register your child the following documents are required:

- o Proof of birth, such as birth certificate
- o Current immunization records
- o Proof of residency in the Paramount Unified School District

Further information about registration is available at your school or on the Paramount Unified website, [www.paramount.k12.ca.us](http://www.paramount.k12.ca.us). The school site contact numbers are the following:

Collins	562/ 602-8008	Los Cerritos	562/ 602-8040
Gaines	562/ 602-8012	Mokler	562/ 602-8044
Hollydale	562/ 602-8016	Roosevelt	562/ 602-8056
Jefferson	562/ 602-8024	Tanner	562/ 602-8060
Keppel	562/ 602-8028	Wirtz	562/ 602-8068
Lincoln	562/ 602-8036		

### Paramount Unified School District



### Workshops

LOCATION: Jefferson School  
8600 Jefferson Street  
Paramount, CA 90723

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Apr. 19, 2012 Test Anxiety vs. "I can do Attitude"  
May 3, 2012 Drugs and Alcohol  
May 17, 2012 Internet Safety  
May 31, 2012 Preparing for the Summer

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**

## Paramount High School's Advanced Choir Receives Superior Rating



On Friday, March 23, 2012, Paramount High School Advanced Choir received "Superior" rating at the Southern California Vocal Association (SCVA) Festival in Irvine, Ca. A total of eight schools attended the event and were required to perform in front of two judges while at the festival. Participants either received ratings of Good, Excellent, or Superior at this formal event. PHS's thirty-five member advanced choir amazed the judges in the singing of three songs: Battle of Jericho, Maximina, and Sicut Cervus.

At the conclusion of the event, PHS choir members were delighted to open the envelope to discover that they had received the superior rating. "It was amazing, all that hard work of staying after-school truly paid off" commented third year advanced choir member Eduardo Cruz. While under the direction of Sandra Wilson-Espinoza here at PHS, this is the first Superior rating that one of her choirs has received. "Being

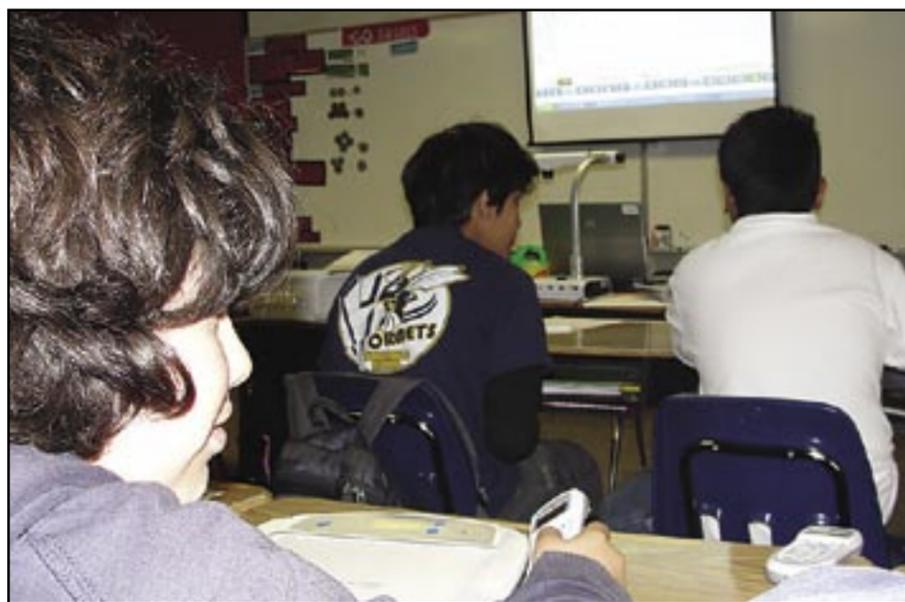
just two few points away from receiving a Superior rating last year, our goal was clear for this school year" shared Ms. Wilson Espinoza.

12th grader Brandon Dillard commented that receiving the Superior rating was an unforgettable feeling. He further adds "we knew that our hard work would pay off, we truly gave it our all." Second year advanced choir member Davontae Randolph recalls first entering choir class not knowing how to really sing. He attributes his development to his choir teacher, Mrs. Sandra Wilson-Espinoza. He shared that "it is she who inspired me to work hard to improve each and every day.

Given the fact that Mrs. Wilson-Espinoza put so much pride in her job of preparing us, I am excited for my teacher to receive this recognition for us."

**Greg Francois,**  
Assistant Principal, PHS

## Preparing Students for the Future through Technology



Students from Hollydale School interacting with the Mobi and responders.

Paramount Unified School District (PUSD) is committed to providing technology to enhance instruction and increase student achievement. Throughout the 2011-2012 school year, teachers and students have been using various technology devices and programs to support and enrich their learning.

Mobis are mobile handheld interactive whiteboards that allow the teacher to provide instruction at any location in the classroom. Teachers use the Mobis to highlight key vocabulary, interact with the textbooks and provide examples of note taking. In addition to the Mobis, each student is given a responder. Responders are remote clickers that allow students to choose

an answer with a click of the button. The answers are immediately sent to the teacher's Mobi allowing the teacher to check all students' answers and quickly adjust the lesson.

Students in grades 6-12 across PUSD have participated in a math support program called Assessment and LEarning in Knowledge Spaces (ALEKS). ALEKS is a web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning program. It is designed to provide students with interactive opportunities to reinforce previously taught math concepts. Students solve mathematical equations based on standards identified by their teacher. ALEKS provides students with more time to practice and solve equations.