

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

JANUARY 2012

PHS GREEN CLUB- AN ACTIVE GROUP

One could say Green Club is quite the “dynamic” club: actively involved in Paramount High’s recycling program, while providing members with opportunities to explore our natural world. The club’s most recent outings (all sponsored by Sierra Club) were a 3-day Big Bear camping trip on (September 16-28), a Bolsa Chica beach cleanup (October 22), and a hike in Griffith Park (November 19).



BIG BEAR- The mountain view as we drove up to Big Bear was breathtaking, with picturesque blue skies above. Huge trees surrounded us, and the misty air refreshed us as our Sierra Club sponsors assisted us as we built up our tents in a cool meadow area in Big Pine Flats. At night, the National Forest Service (NFS) connected us with an expert and a professional telescope for a stargazing

session; the stars and constellations looked lovely without the obscuring haze of harsh city lights. The campfire back at the site was the cherry on top of our awesome day. Within the next two days, we surely maintained our active pace! We cooked breakfast, worked on an erosion management project with a group of volunteers and the NFS, played campfire

games, ate s’mores, and enjoyed a great time by Big Bear Lake eating our hand-churned strawberry ice-cream! Leaving this place proved harder than we thought.

BOLSA CHICA- Our beach cleanup at Bolsa Chica was a memorable trip as well. Once we stepped off the bus we noticed an ample group of there to help with the cleanup. The Bol-

sa Chica Stewards explained the restoration project, planting native plants that will help the wildlife in the area. Everyone picked up a pot as we made our way towards the designated area, and the cool, unsullied fresh air carried a therapeutic aroma of the eucalyptus trees. In an area where non-native plants were removed last March (partly by Green Club), everyone picked up shovels and dug holes to place the plants. Others filled jugs and came to water the native plants. As everyone was busy digging, planting, watering, and helping, we finished quickly. We couldn’t help but cheer about our achievement as we walked away from the preserved land and enjoyed our rest of the day at the beach.

GRIFFITH PARK- Students enjoyed a moderately strenuous hike to the top of Mt. Lee in Griffith Park, America’s largest

municipal park with terrain and wilderness. Students started slowly and took pictures well below the famous Hollywood sign. However, we soon crossed over to see the other side of the mountain, with a new view of the San Fernando Valley. We watched two hawks and a raven swoop and dive, and soon we were on the top of the mountain, twenty feet from the actual Hollywood sign letters! They are huge—45 feet tall! Our downhill hike was nice and easy, and we were able to eat lunch near the Batcave from the original Batman TV show. Returning to school on Monday, we proudly commented on how sore we were from the exercise as we shared pictures of the hike.

Mariana Castro and Diana Machado
PHS Students

Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle All the Way!!!



Mrs. Cheryl Figueira’s Kindergarten class from Lincoln School treated District Office staff with holiday cheer the morning of December 16. Students arrived with big smiles and ready to sing a variety of Holiday

songs that included We Wish You a Merry Christmas, Santa Claus is Coming to Town, and Jingle Bells, and they sure Jingled all the way throughout the various departments at the District Office.

Linda Garcia and Vivian Hansen Reelected



Newly reelected Paramount Unified School District Board of Education members Linda Garcia and Vivian Hansen were given the Oath of Office by Superintendent David Verdugo at the December 7, 2011 meeting. The Trustees were reelected for an additional four year term and ran uncontested. Both Trustees have provided extraordinary service to the students, staff and community during their prior service as members of the Board of Education.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

January 11, 2012 - January 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

Zamboni Student Leaders Spark Others to Give Back



The holidays give us an opportunity to take time out of our routines and recognize those who are in need. This year, more than ever, there are families with bare pantries. Zamboni Middle School's Student Council recognized the needs of their community. During a recent Student Council Board meeting, students came together and suggested a Food Drive for the Thanksgiving Holiday. The students wanted to make sure the families in the community were able to celebrate the holidays with food on their tables.

The Food Drive was held November 7th through the 18th. Student Council collected over 650 cans and non-perishable items. A class competition was held and Mrs. Williams' 8th grade homeroom was at the top of the donation list bringing in over 100 items. Three individual students went above and beyond and donated over 20 items each.

All of the items were donated to Project Hope, an affiliate of the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. Student Council members, Karen Marin, Jesse Herrera, and Kaylee Alvarez were selected to deliver the food donations to the food bank. Proj-

ect Hope's Director, Mike McKown, was overwhelmed with the donation. He stated, "I was so impressed with the students' generosity. My hope is that this project will spark other schools to follow the lead of Zamboni students."

The generosity of the students and the Zamboni community was overwhelming. Most impressive was the students' sense of civic duty to their community. Today's news reports focus on the self-centered ideals of our youth. This food drive shows us as an exception and is an example of the greatness that lies within our youth. Maggie Barrera, Zamboni Student Council Advisor, was impressed because the project was a student generated idea from the onset. Mrs. Barrera noted, "The students took ownership of this project from the start. I was so proud of them and watched them flourish as leaders on their school campus." The students have set an example for years to come and we can't wait to see how they make a positive impact on the Zamboni campus and community.

Jen Pierson
Zamboni Middle School

Artists Begin to Bud at Gaines



For the 2011/12 school year, Kindergarten students at Wesley Gaines Elementary have the opportunity to participate in the Art Masters Program. The Art Masters Program brings the Visual and Performing Arts Standards into our classrooms. Students get to learn about four famous artists this year. Students will actually make their own art work based on the studied artist. The students are having fun expressing themselves through their art.

On October 5, Kindergartners were introduced to Claude Monet. They had the chance to mix primary colors in order to make secondary colors. They then got to create their own piece of artwork, which was a group of flowers in a vase. Our budding artists made some wonderful works of art. As the year progresses, the students will learn about

Pablo Picasso, Vincent Van Gogh, and Georgia O'Keeffe. With each new artist the students learn about, new vocabulary will be learned and different mediums and materials used.

The students were excited to learn from the Art Masters docent and listened carefully to step by step directions in order to complete their artwork to the best of their ability. The students were attentive, excited, and sometimes meticulous about their art - it was an absolute joy to be a part of. The Kindergarten students as well as the Kindergarten teachers can't wait to create more beautiful art while learning about three more important and influential artists.

Marci Maldonado,
Kindergarten Teacher
Gaines School

Student Life at PHS West



Each year Paramount High School West Campus, is rejuvenated by the energy of a new freshmen class. Without fail, this energy allows the Associated Study Body to hit the ground running, charging forth into what will inevitably be a great year. The Class of 2015 has followed this tradition, and then some, making the school year so far one filled with vitality, enthusiasm, and most importantly, school spirit.

For the first time, West Campus hosted an In N Out on campus event. Presale tickets were sold to staff and students alike, and on September 6, the famed In N Out truck rolled onto campus, serving over 300 hungry Pirates. Not only did this event raise money for the students through the ASB fund, but it also provided a large donation to the In N Out foundation, a charity focused on helping abused and neglected children.

West Campus school spirit escalated with October's Homecoming celebrations, with the most notable moment of this fun-filled week being the freshmen class' participation in Paramount High School's annual Wacky Olympics. The Class of 2015 charged onto the field with an exuberant roar. Highlighting the entrance was JROTC, who spelled out "WC" in perfect form on the Pirate Stadium field. Inspired by this wave of energy, the freshmen team soared to victory in the first two games. By the end of Wacky Olympics, the Class of 2015 took second place, narrowly beat out of first by the junior team. This second place triumph

by the freshmen was the first in Paramount High School's history, making it a historic win for West Campus.

Enthusiasm built as the semester continued, with the biweekly campus activities hosted by the freshmen ASB class including Trivia Tuesdays, lunch activities, and the monthly Pirate Breakfasts. Another notable event on campus was Club Rush, which introduced the Class of 2015 to the numerous clubs available at Paramount. This year, West Campus hosts more clubs than ever before, all of which are active both on campus and in the community.

Increased community involvement has been a great addition this year. With the new graduation requirement of community service hours, the freshmen are more involved and interested in their community than ever before. Numerous students have already set the goal of a completion of one hundred community service hours by graduation. The eagerness of the Class of 2015 to help out the Paramount community has been seen, as well, by their generosity with both the Thanksgiving canned food drive, and the holiday toy drive, benefiting families through Su Casa.

With the close of the first half of the year, West Campus is full of anticipation for all that the spring season will bring. Second semester looks to be even more incredible than the first, as the freshmen have come to embody all it means to be an active, spirited, Paramount Pirate.

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



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Vivian Hansen – VP/Clerk
Alicia Anderson – Member
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Tony Peña - Member

District Superintendent
David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.

Great things are happening in Paramount Schools

PUSD Education News

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Bully Free Zone Paramount Park Middle School



On November 22, 2011 the counselors at Paramount Park Middle School held a Stand Up Against Bullying assembly to make students aware of harm that results from students being bullied. Prior to the assembly date, the counselors presented lessons in all PE classes and equipped students with strategies to use if they are bullied. More importantly, they showed them how to stand up against bullying when they see it happening to someone else. Students learned how to be UPSTANDERS, not bystanders who just laugh and stand by and do nothing.

Ms. Melgaard created a video using the students as role models to demonstrate how to stand up to bullying. On assembly day, students gathered in the MPR and watched the video, too much applause. Students acted out scenarios on video depicting the right way to respond and the wrong way to respond to harassing situations. Other video clips discussed strategies that they could use to prevent bullying from happening and to learn to problem solve in a peaceful way. At the assembly, students and staff cited the following "Anti-Bullying Pledge":

ANTI- BULLYING PLEDGE
I agree to stand up against bullying and all forms of violence.

I believe that everyone should be able to enjoy our school equally, feel safe, secure, and respected regardless of race, gender, popularity, and athletic ability no matter what!

- By saying this pledge I agree to:
- To tell, if I see someone being hurt or in danger
- Be an Upstander and not a bystander
- Not join in by spreading rumors and gossiping
- And solve problems in a peaceful way.

At the end of the assembly, every student and received a STAND UP to bullying bracelet as a daily reminder of their commitment. As students go through their day, they are heard using the language that they were taught. As a result, Paramount Park Middle School is becoming a Bully Free Zone for all students.

**Maureen Melgaard, Counselor
Paramount Park Middle School**

Mokler Pilots are Keeping the Peace!!

Mokler Pilots are doing their part to ensure that Mokler is a peaceful place to learn and enjoy their friends. The Counselor, Ms. Holland, went to classrooms to present a lesson on Bullying for 4th grade and Conflict Resolution for 3rd grade. Students shared heart filled stories of being bullied, observing bullying or being a bully at some point in their lives. After discussing the impact, Mokler Pilots pledged to put a stop to it and spread Peace instead. At our noon time rally student representatives rocked the 4th and 5th grade campus with their expressive raps, poems and speeches encouraging their peers to put a stop to bullying.

Kaiser Permanente's Educational Theater had our students rocking to the beat at the Drummin' Up Peace conflict management performance. Students in 3rd-5th

grades were completely engaged as they watched the play about a group of students who learned to resolve their conflicts peacefully during detention with the school principal Mrs. Whistle. Mokler Pilots played drums as they learned five simple steps to solving conflicts peacefully.

Stop, feel, think, choose and act are the ways to peace for the Pilots. Students even learned to express the steps using sign language! Ms. Holland is looking forward to hosting a Pilot Parent Meeting on the topic of Bullying and Keeping the Peace in the future. We want the entire Mokler Pilot family to be on board as we soar toward Peace!

**Ayanna Holland
Counselor
Mokler School**

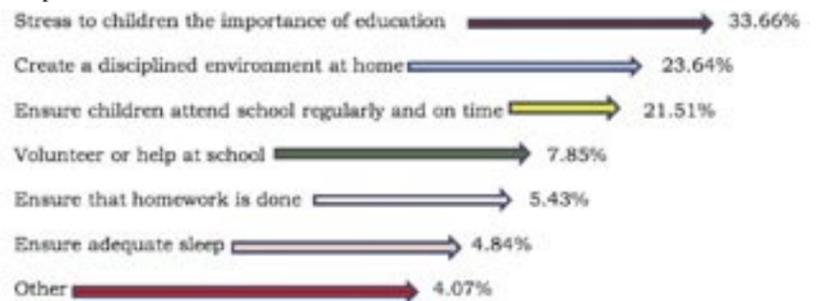
Superintendent's Message:

Dear Parents,

On behalf of our Board of Education, I would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous 2012 New Year. As we begin the New Year, we often ask ourselves how can we resolve to have a positive impact on our children.

As I speak to parents and educators in our schools, I am often asked what is the best way for families to have a positive impact on their student's education.

According to a recent national education new web-site, the following results were suggested and published as ways to help our students succeed in school:



It takes everyone's focus and attention on details to improve our student's success at school. This means that we must all continue to work collaboratively with our schools and teachers for the sake of our student's future.

Thank you parents for the encouragement you give to your child daily.
Thank you and once again, Happy New Year!

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



Linda Garcia Elected President

The Board of Education elected new officers for the 2011-12 during their December Statutory meeting. Trustee Linda Garcia was elected President and Vivian Hansen will serve a Vice President/Clerk.



The Board of Education and Superintendent David Verdugo congratulated outgoing President Tony Peña on his successful year as President of the Board of Education.



Pictured above is the PHS-West Choir, Board of Education members, Superintendent Verdugo and Choir Director Mr. Frank Navarette. The Choir recently performed Holiday songs during a Board of Education meeting.

Moon Rocks: From Houston to Hollydale!



In November, the fifth grade students at Hollydale School saw moon rocks, moon soil samples, and meteorites in Mrs. Vaughn's room as part of their Astronomy unit in Open Court Reading.

The lunar sample disks arrived on October 31st from the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston. It took about 40 minutes to open the two boxes because they were so securely packed and taped. Once the boxes were opened, we could see metal cases inside that looked like something from a spy movie. Inside the cases were Lucite disks of meteor samples and lunar samples. In addition there were two meteorites we could hold in our hands. We were all curious to see them.

The meteorite samples in the disks were small and thin because the curators and technicians in Houston had cut them into small pieces to place them in the Lucite disks. One of the samples had shiny metal because they had polished it. We learned they are named stony meteorites and stony-iron meteorites. We got to hold two small meteorites in our hands. They were hard, like rocks. One was heavier than the other, and one looked burnt. We learned that it got that way entering our atmosphere. We also watched a PowerPoint slide presentation from NASA. We saw a moon rock that looked like lava. We learned that meteorites fall from the asteroid belt, and that the iron melts as it falls. We also read about two

boys from Indiana who heard a meteorite land near them. They took it to scientists at the university, and gave them pieces of it, but they got to keep most of it!

The disk of lunar samples had orange soil, mare soil, and some rock samples. One of the samples, Breccias, was sparkly with crystals. The samples were small because of how the technicians had prepared them. They also looked like normal Earth rocks. In the PowerPoint presentation we learned a lot more about how they were brought here by the Apollo astronauts.

Finally, we saw a vial of lunar soil simulant that was made from volcanic dust. We could see that moon soil is very fine.

This new scientific experience was awesome! The samples were cool and fun to look at. We became very interested and excited about moon rocks and meteorites as a result of this experience.

You may be wondering what all this cost. It is part of the NASA education program and free to teachers who have taken the certification class. Mrs. Vaughn took the class at the Challenger Memorial Space Center in Downey last summer, and then checked them out from the curator at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. We hope other teachers and students in Paramount will get to have the same experience we did.

Mrs. Vaughn's Fifth Grade Class

Pirate Winter Sports Get Rolling

Paramount High's Winter sports programs are in full swing with early tournaments, carrying the maroon and white flag to a variety of venues in California. These tournaments give our athletes and coaches an opportunity to compete in several contests as they get ready for league play after the new year begins.

Pirate boys' soccer opened its campaign for a third straight CIF title with a good 3-1 showing at the Paso Robles tournament. Co-head coaches Juan Navarro and Rafa Villasenor are in rarefied air as the Pirates have grown into one of the dominant programs in California high school soccer. Solid opponents, such as Mater Dei and LB Wilson, will come to Pirate Stadium in December as the Pirates test themselves before the always challenging league schedule in January. A trip to the Golden State Invitational in the Bay Area will cap a pre-season slate which the Pirates hope will prepare them well.

Pirate wrestling only had one 2010-11 opponent preventing it from winning both league and CIF titles - defending champion Downey. While CIF Individual champion Antonio Lopez graduated with a wrestling scholarship, coach Don Wakefield has a deep returning squad that looks to keep improving overall as league and playoff wrestling await in 2012. Tournaments such as the Mann Classic at CS-Fullerton and the

Millikan Gold Tournament will provide our athletes with much experience in the early schedule.

Both Pirate basketball programs have enjoyed solid starts to their seasons. The Lady Pirates finished second in the season-opening Pioneer Tournament, and coach Rosheka Polk has a blend of both experience and youthful athleticism that she is seeking to blend by the time league play starts in 2012. Our ladies will also play in tournaments at El Segundo and Cantwell/Sacred Heart to get as much game experience as possible. The Pirate boys opened 2-2 in the El Modena Tournament, and coach Mark McGarry's group of "super-sophs" plan to make a splash in the Valley Christian and Century tournaments as they get ready for league play.

Lady Pirate soccer and water polo teams are looking to challenge the SGVL playoff tier in 2012, and multiple games in December tournaments will get them a lot of experience to try to reach those goals. Our soccer girls opened the season in the Artesia tournament and will play in another at Bellflower, while Lady Pirate water polo will play at Los Altos and Santa Ana Valley.

Good luck to all of our Winter programs as they move through their December tournament schedules.

Mark Kemp
Athletic Director, PHS

Paramount Unified School District Schools Receive High Praise from California Department of Education Team

During the week of December 4-9, 2011 a team from the California Department of Education conducted a Federal Program Monitoring Review in the Paramount Unified School District. Five team members from Sacramento reviewed PUSD's curriculum, use of fiscal resources and other programs that serve students and families.

In addition to reviewing numerous documents, reviewers visited classrooms and interviewed administrators, teachers and parents at Mokler, Jackson, PHS West, PHS, Paramount Adult School and in Pre School Programs. On the day of each school visit principals presented a power point that gave an overview of their school's instructional focus and showed data that reflected their students' academic progress in recent years.

The team visited classes to observe the level of engagement and learning at each of the four campuses. At Paramount High School and PHS West, the team spent time in Career Technical Education classes, which provide students with skills that prepare them for specific careers. These classes include offerings in Technology/Media

Design, Health/Medical Services and Engineering.

After spending four days in the district the review team found all programs to be in full compliance. They stated that it is "very rare to end up with no findings in a district". One reviewer, who has extensive experience conducting FPM reviews, commented that he had "never been part of a team with a review like this."

The State team had high praise for the work being done in PUSD. Some of their comments included:

- We commend the district's approach to implementing academic interventions for students who need additional support at each of the schools visited.

- It is clear that everyone in Paramount works together as a team.

- We commend your willingness to work together and extend yourself to the community.

- We would like to recommend that districts in the surrounding areas visit you as a model. This is an exceptional, extraordinary place.

Great things are happening in Paramount schools !

Paramount Unified School District



Workshops

LOCATION: Jefferson School
8600 Jefferson Street
Paramount, CA 90723

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Jan. 12, 2012 Creating Life Memories
(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