

# 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

FEBRUARY 2014

## Transition Student Turns into Marquee Star



Enrique has been a student in the Paramount Adult Transition (PAT) program since 2010. All his efforts and all his hard work have paid off in many ways, culminating with being hired over the Christmas break by Elisa Castañeda, the manager of Chuck E. Cheese's in Lynwood.

PAT is designed for non-diploma track students ages 18-22 years. Located on the Paramount

Adult School campus, the program focuses on teaching life skills. A major component of the curriculum is for students to obtain work training through the WorkAbility program. Over the past four years, Enrique has gained valuable work experiences with various businesses that have partnered with the school district. Smart & Final, TJ Maxx, CVS, Walgreens, Casa Gamino, Café

Corleone, PETCO, and Habitat Restore are just some of the many companies that have given our students opportunities to get real hands on experience. We thank them for this valuable contribution to our community.

In the last two years, four other PAT students have undergone open interview processes and been hired at Smart & Final and TJ Maxx.

Enrique is just weeks away from turning 22 years old and exiting the PAT program. All the more reason to congratulate him as he takes this next step in his journey to independent living. What a great example for his fellow students and the ones who will enter the transition program some day. Now his name will be one that fills in the blank when teachers and aides say to their

students, "keep working hard and you can get a job like I did!"

As for now, Enrique is looking forward to taking part in another tradition: getting his first non-WorkAbility paycheck so he can invite his job coach and teacher out for lunch...and pick up the tab!

Jerry King – Assistant Principal  
Renee Aguilar - Teacher

## Mr. Mu Receives "Best Coach Award" from Former Players



Mr. Curtis Mu is in his first year of retirement from coaching varsity tennis as well as completing his last year of teaching Math at Paramount High School. He has been an educator and coach for 30 years. Earlier this school year, a group of his former players from his 2011 and 2012 League Championship teams invited Mr. Mu to come watch them compete in the USTA Southern California Sectional Championship. The USTA is the United States Tennis Association, which governs all levels of tennis ranging from youth tennis to the U.S. Open. The

former players were competing in a USTA Fall Doubles League. Mr. Mu shared that "it was nice for me to see that they continued in the sport after graduating and are still competing."

But what made attending the match even more memorable was that these players surprised Mr. Mu with a plaque afterwards, celebrating their appreciation of the dedication he has displayed towards students and players during his career at PHS. Mr. Mu adds that their presentation of this plaque "was touching, and it let me know

that I did make a positive impact on their lives." The five former players presenting Mr. Mu with this plaque are Ivan Rodriguez, Edgar Munoz, Joshua Echevarria, Eddie Rosas, and Eduardo Rodriguez, pictured from left to right. Perhaps the only thing better than seeing these former PHS players still competing in tennis is noting the quality of character these young men displayed with such a thoughtful gesture towards their former coach and teacher.

Jeff Beahn

## Safe & Civil Schools

The District is currently providing on-going training with practical programs and inspiring staff development services through Safe & Civil Schools Positive Behavior Intervention Services for K-12 educators. The purpose of the training is to provide educators with skills to:

- Develop better behavior management strategies in schools.
- Learn effective classroom management procedures.
- Implement school wide Positive Behavior Support and Response-to-Intervention for Behavior.
- Design and implement a better school improvement plan.

The program is designed to help foster respect and responsibility in students and improve school climate and school culture. Staff in grades K-5 are making data-driven decisions on a school wide level in classrooms and with individual students. Sites are developing proactive, positive behavior support strategies tailored to the classroom, school, and district.

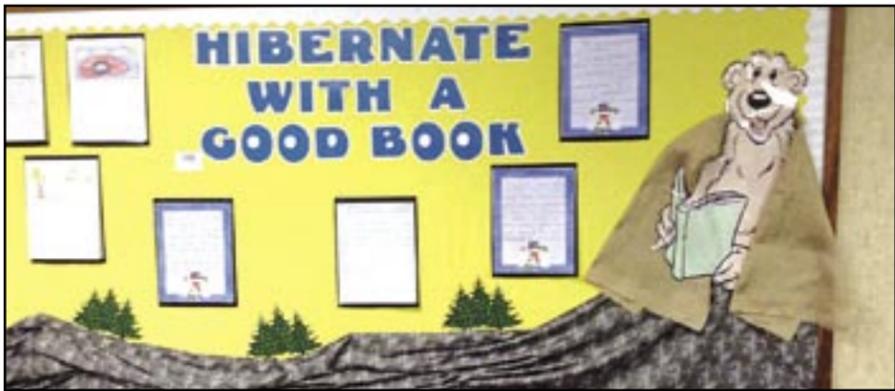
Kimberly Cole  
Director Special Education/Early Childhood Education

## SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATE

February 12, 2014 \* February 26, 2014

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

# All Aboard the Tanner Express!



Tanner School's dedication to broaden students' critical thinking skills has been met with great success this year. Teachers are effectively promoting student learning and enhancing their students' understanding of content through the use of thinking maps. Thinking Maps help students organize their thoughts into graphic organizers to help students turn their ideas into composed writing pieces. Research indicates that when students construct Thinking Maps to organize their reading and thoughts, they are able to achieve greater understanding than those who used traditional note taking strategies.

Let's hop aboard the Tanner Express on this picturesque, wintry day to take a look at some examples of how Tanner School is creating an environment of success and achievement through the use of student-created thinking maps and writing into their daily curriculum.

With the winter season upon us, kindergarten teachers created a Winter Wonderland by incorporating a variety of thinking maps in their ELD weather unit. Student-created brace maps were used to break down the parts of a snowman, bubble maps were created to describe snowy weather, and tree maps were used to classify winter and summer clothing. First grade students used a tree map to classify the duties of a community worker in Social Studies to make their Frosty Workers. Second grade students were Sliding into Winter with a flow map in Science to sequence the life cycle of a penguin. Third grade students' showed us how to Hibernate With a Good Book by using a flow map to order the events in a story they had read. Fourth grade students Let It Snow in Math by applying a flow map to sequence the steps of how they created their own mul-



tiplication and division stories. Fifth grade students showed us how Math is Snow Much Fun by generating a snowflake-shaped circle map with equivalent fractions.

During the December board meeting Mrs. Brent-Sanco our principal and three terrific Tanner tigers presented the boards for their grade level. Ms. Nakayah Stubberfield represented 3rd grade, Mr. William Nunez represented 4th grade, and Mr. Esteban Torres represented 5th grade. All of the students did an outstanding job and presented the board members and executive cabinet with a special gift. The Tanner District Board Committee was led by Mrs. Araceli Astredo, and Mrs. Kimberly Triche-Harris. Our committee also included dedicated members of our teaching staff; Mrs. Margie Domino, Mrs. Cindy Tsang, Mrs. Delia Kiely, Mrs. Erin Peck, Mrs. Lisa Matayas, and Mrs. Irma Guzman. All student work samples, from kindergarten through fifth grade, included a writing component, which was generated by using their thinking maps. We are excited about our students progress and the implementation of thinking maps as we prepare for the new Common Core Standards.

Cindy Tsang, Teacher

## Roosevelt Students Attend Before School "Breakfast Club"



Last year, Roosevelt School initiated a before school intervention program called "Breakfast Club" which was designed to support students with the memorization of their basic math facts. The program was a resounding success! Student data showed that the majority of students who participated in the program demonstrated growth and, in most cases, reached or exceeded the district benchmark expectations.

The "Breakfast Club" is back for the 2013-2014 school year! The first session ran from October 21st through December 13th. Identified students met each morning from 7:55 – 8:15 a.m. in the school library and Learning Center. Students from grades 1-5 who needed extra support were invited to participate and were required to commit to regular attendance. The students engaged in math facts games, weekly "Basic Math Facts" timed assessments, and the "Math Facts in a Flash" computer program.

Support for the "Breakfast Club" participants was provided by fourth and

fifth grade school leaders who demonstrated outstanding math skills and who were recommended by their teachers. The Instructional Coach, Mrs. Jennings, ELD Coach, Mrs. Andalón, principal, and librarian, Mrs. McConnell, were also present during "Breakfast Club" to monitor the program and to provide support as needed.

At the conclusion of the program, the participants were awarded with a certificate of achievement. The "Breakfast Club" tutors enjoyed a special lunch and movie for all of their hard work and dedication.

The "Breakfast Club" supports student achievement and also provides an opportunity for older students to foster leadership skills.

"Breakfast Club" is just one example of the great things happening at Roosevelt School!

Susan Marilley, Principal  
Roosevelt School

### Paramount Unified School District



#### Workshops

LOCATION: Jefferson School  
8600 Jefferson Street  
Paramount, CA 90723

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Feb. 13, 2014 | Asthma & Allergies: How you can help!                                   |
| Feb. 27, 2014 | Show Me the Money for College   |
| Mar. 13, 2014 | Road to College 101   |
| Mar. 27, 2014 | Test Anxiety vs. I Can Do Attitude                                      |
| May 1, 2014   | ADHD and Autism: How it can affect a child's learning                   |
| May 25, 2014  | Preparing for Summer Activities: Keeping your child academically active |
| May 29, 2014  | Understanding Bi-Polar Disorder   |

Spanish Translation will be available.

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

Childcare available for children ages 3-12 (must be toilet trained)  
MUST pre-register for childcare one week in advance;  
MAY pre-register for individual workshops  
Call: Myra McGinnis at 562-602-6035

**Workshops Open to all PUSD Parents**

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

#### Board of Education

Sonya Cuellar – President  
Alicia Anderson – VP/Clerk  
Linda Garcia – Member  
Vivian Hansen – Member  
Tony Peña – Member

District Superintendent  
Herman M. Mendez



Great things are happening in Paramount Schools

### PUSD Education News

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# Board of Education Recognizes Students



During a recent Board of Education Meeting, Board of Education members and Superintendent Mendez recognized students from Tanner School and Paramount High School for their participation in the Annual Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) and F3 Education Awards Foundation Celebrate Success Art Contest. This years theme was iLearn, iGrow, iSucceed!

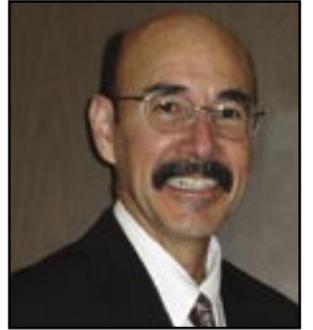
From over 500 entries, Tanner School students Davesia Johnson (Kindergarten), Alexander Rodriguez (2nd grade), Steven

Gomez (4th grade) and PHS student D Ana Perez (12th Grade) were selected as winners. Each student was awarded with a certificate and a \$250 check from Mr. Howard Friedman, attorney with the Office of Fagen, Friedman & Fulfroost.

The students award-winning artwork will be included in a collection of notecards that will feature the top ten winners in the statewide art contest. Notecards were provided to our four students and will also be provided to ACSA members and education leaders throughout California.

## Superintendent's Message:

Paramount Unified is proud to share that this year Alondra and Leona Jackson Middle schools join Zamboni Middle School in being recognized as additions to the Schools to Watch program roster of exemplary schools. We congratulate Principals Lynn Butler and Lisa Nunley-Macon and their school community for their exemplary work in developing successful best practices to benefit their students.



The National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform is an alliance of over 60 educators, researchers, national associations, and officers of professional organizations and foundations committed to promoting the academic performance and healthy development of young adolescents.

To accomplish its goal of improved academic and developmental outcomes for all students in the middle grades, the Forum identifies and disseminates best practices, articulates and promotes effective policies, recognizes and develops enlightened leadership, and informs and engages the public.

Through its Schools to Watch® (STW) program, the Forum has developed criteria for identifying high-performing middle-grades schools, created tools to help schools use the criteria, expanded the program to 18 states, and selected and honored 325 successful schools across the country during the Annual STW Conference.

More information on the STW program can be found at: <http://www.middlegradesforum.org/>

## It's California Healthy Kids Survey Time!

Across California, the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) has led school districts to a better understanding of the relationship between students' health behaviors and academic performance. As part of an ongoing effort to provide safe and drug-free learning environments, Paramount Unified School District will administer the survey during the month of February, 2014 to students in grades 7, 9, and 11. This is a very important survey that will help the district to promote better health and safety among our youth.

The California Healthy Kids Survey asks students questions about to health-related behaviors, experiences, and attitudes. It also asks questions regarding the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; bullying and school safety; and environmental and individual strengths. Additionally, the CHKS data reveals important information such as the percentage of students who

feel they have opportunities for meaningful participation at their school. Student participation is voluntary, confidential, and anonymous. Parents are asked to encourage students to participate and answer questions thoughtfully and truthfully.

With the information obtained from the survey, schools will be able to address specific needs and develop targeted strategies for meeting those needs. This data, shared with parents, teachers, students, and the community, assists in identifying at-risk behaviors and aids in collaborative efforts aimed at making communities safe and healthy places for students to learn and grow.

If you would like to preview the California Healthy Kids Survey, you may contact your child's school office.

**Debra Boldts**  
Curriculum Specialist

## Attendance Counts

Students usually begin each new school year with excitement and enthusiasm, even if they don't show it to adults. The anticipation of new classes, new friendships and renewing old friendships provides real motivation for daily attendance at school during those first few weeks.

Unfortunately, after a brief time, some students become careless about regular attendance. According to a recent California Department of Education report, California is facing an attendance crisis. Estimates from a sample of California school points to an alarming picture reporting that one million elementary school children in California were truant in 2012-13. Approximately 83,000 California elementary children missed 10% or more of the school year. Missing a few classes does not seem to be a big "deal" to some students. Sometimes it might seem insignificant to parents as well. However, regular attendance at school is important for every student. It is difficult for young students to learn if they are not in class. The teaching/learning process builds upon itself-each lesson presented to students is based upon or related to the lessons that

were taught earlier. Just as we can never regain a moment of time wasted, the child who misses a day of school also misses a day of education that cannot be retrieved. Indeed, all research shows that those children who attend school regularly are more likely to be successful during their school years. First grade students with 9 or more absences are 2x more likely to drop out of high school than their peers who attend school regularly.

From experience, most educators know that students' success in their school years is directly related to the importance that parents attach to education. When parents believe that consistent attendance is important and communicate that belief to their children, unnecessary absences from school will be drastically reduced.

Students should attend school every day, unless illness or emergency prevents them from doing so. Please encourage your children to attend school and actively participate in the learning opportunities provided in their classroom.

**Manuel San Miguel**  
Director Student Services/  
Alternative Education

**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.**

## PHS Green Club Received Kennedy-Kolpin Conservation Award



New Year's Day began early for several Paramount High students this year. Seven Green Club leadership students were accompanied by Mr. Hasheminejad for a sunrise ceremony commemorating the club's reception of the Kennedy-Kolpin Conservation Award. The Green Club received this award for their time and dedication in assisting the Bolsa Chica Land Trust's efforts to restore and preserve the Bolsa Chica wetlands to its natural environment. Mr. Hasheminejad has been the club advisor for six years. He and students in the Green Club have donated their time at the wetlands three to four times a year over the last five years. The club removes non-native plants, plants native shrubs and grasses, and strives to restore the land to its original condition.

Besides receiving the Kennedy-Kolpin award, the Green Club was also presented with a Toyon tree, which they planted on the wetland's mesa as a symbol of the club's ongoing commitment to the environment. PHS Green Club members attending the

ceremony included Diana Martinez, Mando-Fauzey, Leslie Lopez, Alexis Cobian, Anna Joy Floresca, Daisy Sanchez, and Chris Zarceno.

Diana Martinez, a senior at PHS, has been a club member for three years. She shared that being in the Green Club has not only contributed to her awareness of the environment, but also has provided many enjoyable trips and activities. Over the last few years, the Green Club has visited Big Bear Lake and Leo Carrillo State Beach, where students have participated in beach clean-ups, hikes, and camping. The club has also attended the week long Yosemite Project.

Mr. Hasheminejad and the Green Club meet every Thursday at lunch in the choir room at PHS. The club is also in charge of the 100 recycling bins on campus and takes care of recycling every Thursday after school. Students interested in the environment, as well as gratifying activities and field trips, should check out a club meeting on Thursdays.

## Eagles Lend a Helping Hand



For the holiday season, Buena Vista High School embarked on a campaign to collect canned and boxed food items. In partnership with Project Shepherd, all students and staff were encouraged to pitch in and help make the season a bit brighter for the needy. Project Shepherd focuses efforts on assisting struggling families and senior citizens.

From November through December, special boxes were placed in each classroom and the Buena Vista office. Little by little, the items came in and

just before Winter Break began the collection was picked up by Project Shepherd. On hand to assist with the delivery were: Dr. Aguilar-Nuno, Assistant Principal; Hector Ramos, math teacher; and Emmanuel Bates, student.

Participating in community events is just one of the many ways that the students of Buena Vista experience academic and personal growth.

**Jean Law, Principal**

## GO Pirates!!

2013 has come to an end and the Paramount High School Athletics Program is proud of all of the accomplishments of its component teams. From the football team's San Gabriel Valley League Championship to our girls' volleyball and girls' tennis teams making the CIF playoffs, the Pirates were successful and represented the entire school.

Winter sports have now become the focus of Pirate athletics. Our girls' water polo, boys' and girls' basketball, boys' and girls' soccer and our wrestling teams have all competed at a high level in the months of November and December. Our boys' basketball team ended 2013 with a 7 and 6 record. They competed in three pre-season tournaments finishing in the top four of each one. Their latest tournament was their best showing. Playing in the Santa Ana Century tournament they had wins over Saddleback High School, Marquez High School, and Crean Lutheran High School. The Pirates finished the tournament with a 3-1 record good for third place. As they enter 2014 the team will now begin preparations for a tough San Gabriel Valley League. Our nationally ranked boys' soccer team ended the year with a record of 6-5. At the end of December they played in the prestigious Southern California High School Classic in the city of Oceanside. The team finished 3-1 with their only loss coming in the semi-finals to a tough Long Beach Millikan team. They will open league play on January 14th against Dominguez. Our wrestling

team continues to prepare for league play by wrestling in a number of individual tournaments. With a young and inexperienced squad the Pirates are looking to gain valuable mat time against strong opponents. San Gabriel Valley league play begins in early January and the team is looking to repeat as league champions.

Our girls' basketball team finished 2013 with hope and optimism for a strong 2014. Competing in two competitive pre-season tournaments the girls look to improve and get better. Their best showing was at the South El Monte tournament where they won two games and lost two hard fought battles. With a number of girls returning from last year's team the lady Pirates have set a goal of making the CIF playoffs. With hard work the team can achieve their goal. The girls' soccer team finished 2013 strong. With a good showing in the Bellflower tournament the team is primed for a great 2014. Last year's team reached the CIF playoffs. The goal for this year's team is to win a championship in the tough San Gabriel Valley League. This team is experienced and capable of achieving that goal. Girls' water polo continues to show great improvement, tremendous heart, and strong work ethic.

On behalf of the entire Paramount High School Athletic Program, the Administration, Faculty, and staff we wish all of our supporters a Prosperous New Year. We invite the entire community to come out and support Paramount Athletics. GO PIRATES!!

## Alondra Middle School Presents Music By Moonlight Winter Concert

Alondra Middle School hosted its yearly winter concert, which was centered around the theme Music By Moonlight, on Tuesday, December 11, 2013. Parents and community members attended this evening to watch our Alondra Dolphins perform.

The concert began with a welcome from Principal Lynn Butler, and a few words from music director Jenna Krakower. The beginning band kicked off the performance by showing off their skills with a strong, clear sound and their knowledge of music reading. The choir impressed the audience with a soft but angelic sound and ended with an energetic arrangement of "It's Time" by Imagine Dragons. The advanced band, composed of 8th graders, played an impressive set, including the holiday hit and audience favorite, Dr. Seuss' "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch". Each instrumental sound

echoed throughout the amphitheater, displaying to all a sense of cheer and holiday merriment.

The palpable excitement of our sixth grade singers quickly spread to the audience as they sang "Frosty the Snowman", a jazz version of "Humpty Dumpty", and The Sound of Music's "Do Re Mi". To conclude this wonderful evening, all students and audience members joined in to sing "Jingle Bells".

Music at Alondra embodies the principles that both Alondra Middle School and Paramount Unified School District stand by: dedication and commitment, responsibility, hard work towards excellence, safe and civil collaboration between students, and performing like the Champions they are.

**Jenna Krakower, School Teacher**