

# PUSD EDUCATION NEWS

A Publication of the Paramount Unified School District

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JUNE 2013

## PUSD Celebrates Teachers with Teacher of the Year Awards!



On May 8, 2013, school and district staff and members of the Board of Education joined in celebrating each school's Teacher of the Year. The Teacher of the Year recognition honors the positive effect teachers have on the lives of students each day. The Board of Education Trustees awarded each of the 20 recipients a plaque to honor their contribution to Paramount's students and community.

Teachers are asked to select one outstanding teacher to represent their school for this honor. In making this selection, teachers give careful consideration to the person who best meets all of the following criteria:

- Shows commitment to professional growth.
- Supports his/her colleagues to develop their skills.
- Pursues educational activities beyond the school day.
- Delivers high quality instruction.
- Communicates positively with students and parents.

After a selection committee chooses the District-wide Teacher of the Year, he or she has the opportunity to apply for the Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year competition. This year, Second Grade teacher from Lincoln, Joyce S. Taylor was selected to represent PUSD as the district wide Teacher of the Year. We congratulate Ms. Taylor, her students and her school for this outstanding honor!

### Paramount Unified School District's 2013-14 Teachers of the Year

Early Childhood Education	-	Theresa Ybarra
Alondra Middle School	-	Nadya Nieto
Collins School	-	Genevieve Wilson
Gaines School	-	Rene Juarez
Hollydale School	-	Mary E. Contreras
Jefferson School	-	David Macy
Jefferson School	-	Malis Pech
Keppel School	-	Sandra Castaneda
Lincoln School	-	Joyce S. Taylor
Los Cerritos School	-	Cecile Kim
Mokler School	-	Elaine Hoffmann
Paramount Park Middle School	-	Amalia Mireles
Roosevelt School	-	Maria T. Baltierrez
Tanner School	-	Delia M. Kiely
Wirtz School	-	Maria Conant-Leon
Zamboni Middle School	-	Margaret Barrera
Paramount High School-West	-	Moses M. Prado
Paramount High School	-	Rachel M. Gorman
Buena Vista High School	-	Jerome McCullough
Paramount Adult School	-	Angie Holdeman

## Gates Millennium Scholars



During a recent Board of Education meeting, the Board of Education and Superintendent Verdugo recognized five Paramount High School Class of 2013 students who are recipients of the Gates Millennium Scholarship.

This year's Gates Millennium Scholars are Xavier Aldana, Crystal Estrada, Thalia Hernandez (not pictured), Lucio Lopez and Faviola Zuniga.

Congratulations Xavier, Crystal, Thalia, Lucio and Faviola!!

## Common Core Learning at Jefferson School



Susana Perez and Kymberlee Cabebe are partner-sharing the causes that led to the Revolutionary War, using evidence from the text.

There are impassioned responses as students state, "According to the text..." and provide evidence from the text to support why they would be a Patriot or Loyalist during the American Revolution. In Ms. Coleman and Mrs. Pech's 5th grade classes at Jefferson School, students have been engaged in the Close Read process to reread a text several times with different purposes to develop a deeper understanding of the content. It is exciting to see our students build their higher level skills and habits to speak and write with rigor as they prepare for college and career readiness.

The teachers at Jefferson have had four staff development trainings on the Common Core standards by Lead Teacher Malis Pech and Coach Deanne Teng. In August, teachers were provided an introduction and another day to explore the instructional shifts that would take place in the classroom. Teachers selected one instructional shift to try out in their classroom, such as Text Complexity, to focus on specific text-based words and details to ensure careful comprehension. You can often hear our students stating, "I am paraphrasing this statement to mean..." In November, teachers worked in groups to discuss the different types of Smarter Balanced Assessments. Teachers reflected that the new assessments are complex and involve a lot of steps, and they began thinking about how to match their instruction to the new types of tests. In January, teachers learned about the important Close Read process. What stands out is the explicit third read where students are reading for a specific purpose, such as analyzing a vocabulary word in context, paraphrasing, or to answer a text-dependent question. The 4th and 5th grade teachers also did a Learning Walk where they observed Mrs. Pech use a student's first draft to model and guide how she could paraphrase and extend for more robust writing by referring to the text for additional details.

Mrs. Pech and Ms. Teng co-taught for a week to implement the lesson on the American Revolution that was developed by a District grade level planning group. Principal Mrs. Mio observed the five days of lessons and was inspired by the students' ability to take notes; lead high-level, text-based discussions; agree or disagree with a partner in detail; and take great pride in their responses!

Our 5th graders have risen to the challenges of the instructional shifts for the Common Core standards. They are eager to share their responses and have immersed themselves in the productive struggle to strengthen their learning. Ms. Coleman and Mrs. Pech state, "Their in-depth analysis of text increases their comprehension and refines their ability to analyze literature. There is vocabulary expansion. Students take ownership and pride in their work." The coach and teachers have collaborated on new lessons and reflected on students' learning. There is rich discourse abounding with Partner Talk, Response Boards, and Mix-Freeze-Match. Students' Ticket Out the Door after a lesson is to reflect, summarize on a sticky note of what they learned, and share with each other and the class. It has been an exciting year to see our 5th graders expand their critical thinking skills and be engaged in preparing for the Common Core standards, as they pave the way for other grade levels to follow their model!

Yuki Mio, Principal

## SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

June 12, 2013 \* June 24, 2013 (Monday)

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



# RELAY For LIFE of Paramount

## *a DO Living Experience*

**S**aturday, May 18 through Sunday May 19, 2013 was bound to be an experience of a life time, and yes indeed it was. At 6:00 a.m. Saturday morning, 13 teams came together at Paramount Park to set up and prepare for a weekend that would bring a community together for an event known as “Relay For Life” of Paramount.

The American Cancer Society, Relay For Life is a life changing event that involves communities across the globe come together to honor cancer survivors, remember loved one lost, and fight back against a disease that has already taken too much.

This year, our very own District Office formed a team – DO Living that was comprised of 14 team members, Ann Hernandez, Ana Galvan, Randy Gray, Manuel San Miguel, Gloria Corrales, Elena Mejia, Kay Cotter, Linh Roberts, Judy Guinn, Vanessa Lopez, Sergio, Esmeralda Lopez, Dr. Verdugo and myself and four cancer survivors. As soon as DO Living was formed, we kicked it into gear and started to seek pledges from family and friends and various schools and District departments joined in as well. We had several meetings to plan for the big day and prepare. Our team members had so many great ideas and it was rewarding to see all of them displayed on May 18 at the DO Living booth.

Relay teams prepared their booths and their tents for overnight camping as Relay events are up to 24 hours in length and because cancer never sleeps, each team was asked to have at least one participant on the track at all times, and DO Living did just that with each of our team members committing to two hours each on the track.

As the opening ceremony began with the pledge of allegiance and national anthem, opening remarks offered by event coordinators Marcie Bridges, Lisa Garcia and Laura Peralta were followed by a Survivor’s Celebration, our very own teacher from Zamboni Middle School and team captain for the Zamboni’s Mighty Wlakers, Britain Bombard and with that, the Relay began with all survivors present taking the first relay lap and setting the path for all participants.

There were lots of fun game booths available, teams had lots of goodies to sell with all proceeds going back to the American Cancer Society and also live band entertainment. There was also a time designated for Board member Alicia Anderson to cut hair of volunteers that would be donated to Locks of Love. As the day went on, the night approached and Luminarias began to outline the path which participants walked. What happened next, was definitely one of the touching moments of the event, Luminarias were lighted up and the Luminaria ceremony was ready to begin. This ceremony is a time to remember people we have lost to cancer, and to honor people who have fought cancer.

As the ceremony concluded, participants continued on the track into the wee hours of the night into Sunday morning.

It was now time to participate in the closing ceremony and Relay For Life of Paramount coordinators Marcie, Lisa and Maylene, thanked their committee and teams and asked that we all join them in the closing lap of the Relay For Life of Paramount.

This was the first year the District Office participated with a team, and I can say without a doubt, that it won’t be our last. With all of the support of our team, DO Living raised over \$3,600 towards this great cause and we wished to thank Collins, Jackson, Los Cerritos, Keppel, Roosevelt, Mokler, Paramount Adult Schools, Buena Vista and Paramount Park School staff and students and several District departments for their support.

When I asked various team members about their experience, Esmeralda Lopez said “I thought I was joining a team that was going to change the life of others, little did I know it was also going to change my life too”. Elena said, “Relay For

Life” is unity, it brings people together, it was an unforgettable experience, I’d do it again in a heart beat.” Randy shared, “The survivors and their message inspired me, The entire experience caused me to reflect and appreciate life and those around me even more. More birthdays, less cancer.” Judy added, Being able to work together with other District employees for such a great cause was an awesome experience.”

For me, it was definitely an experience that will forever leave a lasting impression in my life.

**Isela Preciado, Team Captain  
DO Living**



# Buena Vista Educators Earn Top Honors



At the Spring 2013 state conference for the California Continuation Education Association, two of our very own Eagles earned top awards in prestigious categories. We are extremely proud of their continued dedication to fulfilling the mission of Buena Vista High School.

Ms. Lisa Ferrer, a Biology and Art teacher, won "Teacher of the Year" for District VII. Ms. Ferrer has been involved in alternative education for a number of years and has also taught at Paramount High School. As part of the application process, Ms. Ferrer submitted a detailed application about her philosophy of education and how she strives to meet her students' individual needs. Also included in the application were letters of recommendation from fellow staff members and students. Ms. Ferrer was instrumental in forming the Freagles Club, which provides educational field studies for our students. When she found out about her selection as the District VII "Teacher of the Year" Ms. Ferrer immediately jumped for joy and shed tears of happiness. Everything she does is for the benefit of her students and this recognition

is certainly a well-deserved honor.

The second honoree is Mrs. Jean Law, Principal of Buena Vista High School, who won "Administrator of the Year" for District VII. To earn this award, Mrs. Law was selected by fellow administrators in continuation high schools who recognized the great strides that Buena Vista has made in the past years under her leadership. Buena Vista is WASC accredited and recently earned the "School of Excellence" award. Additionally, the school has experienced academic growth as evidenced by the growing number of graduates and increase in state test scores. Mrs. Law previously served as an Assistant Principal at both Buena Vista and Paramount High School. She is very honored and humbled by receiving this award. In her words, "It is a privilege to work with such a wonderful team at Buena Vista. The students and staff are the reason I love my job!"

Congratulations to Ms. Ferrer and Mrs. Law for their awards, and thank you to them for their unwavering commitment to the students and families of Buena Vista High School.

# STAR Assembly Teaches Focus



Hollydale Hornets are inspired to set big goals to do their best, not only in school, but on big tests, and in their lives to come. This inspiration comes, of course, from the daily instruction they receive at home and at school, but this month they had some extra inspiration from the thrilling and amazing Big BMX Assembly. While professional athletes performed high-flying stunts, they also took the opportunity to share their personal stories of success. These stories included overcoming peer pressure to play around instead of studying. Hearing these stories from these impressive role models helped our students to understand that daily decisions about how to spend their

time, and how to focus their attention, can help them reach those big goals in life.

The amazing stunts were entertaining enough to assure every student listened with rapt attention. Mrs. Gerber noted the performers emphasized how much practice it takes to do what they do. "You can't do it in one try," is what Michael Juarez learned from the assembly. Eric Osorio adds, "If you're nervous, you'll go too fast, so calm down and slow down." Our Hornets are now bound for success as they follow through on the messages they heard.

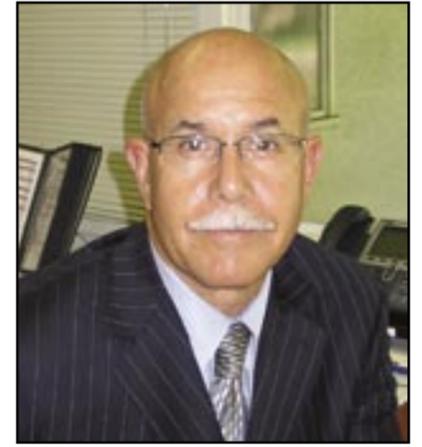
Kathy Vaughn, 5th Grade Teacher

## Graduation Dates

- Buena Vista High School \* June 11, 6:00p.m.**
- Paramount High School \* June 13, 6:00 p.m.**
- Paramount Adult School \* June 25, 6:00 p.m.**

# Superintendent's Message:

## Congratulations Paramount High School Class of 2013



On behalf of our entire Board of Education, President Vivian Hansen, Vice President Sonya Cuellar, members Alicia Anderson, Linda Garcia, and Tony Peña, I would like to extend our sincere congratulations to the Paramount High School Graduating Class of 2013.

I have had the distinct pleasure of witnessing a senior class of over 900 students successfully complete their high school experience. Their individual and group accomplishments in academics, activities and athletics is an outstanding example of young people who have prepared to take the next step towards a bright and fulfilling future.

I have no doubt that the Class of 2013 will carry that special "Pirate Pride" into their future careers and lives. They are also not likely to forget the work and dedication of the devoted staff, counselors, coaches, teachers and administrators

who provided the support and skills they will require to reach their dreams.

Also a special appreciation to the parents, guardians, and families of our graduates who supported them with their love and guidance.

Congratulations to the Class of 2013.

Always remember, "Once A Pirate, Always A Pirate".

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

# Early Childhood Education

It is often said that "it takes a village to raise a child," and the saying is very evident in our preschool classrooms. We rely on the support of our parents to help our preschool students prepare for Kindergarten. At home, preschool families are encouraged to help their children with homework, reading, and family projects. In our classrooms, we are very fortunate to have parent volunteers that assist the teachers with special class events, meal times, small groups, outdoor play, working individually with children, and preparing materials for lessons. It makes the teacher's job easier with the extra hands.

Parent volunteers are not only beneficial to the staff but also the experience itself benefits the families. Haydee Hernandez tries to volunteer weekly at Gaines Preschool, and says that she has learned from the preschool staff and children as well. Mrs. Hernandez has learned how to communicate better with her son, Sebastian, from watching how the preschool staff converse with the children. She says, "Volunteering energizes you in a positive way. I'm tired physically at the end of the day but still have energy. I enjoy being in the moment, I can't think or worry about other things when I'm working with the children."

We are appreciative of all of the family support especially the following parents and caregivers who have volunteered on a regular basis throughout this school year in our preschool classrooms.

**Alondra Preschool:** Maricela Barajas, Esther Buenrostro, Dora Campos, Margarita Carrasco, Adriana Diaz, Aida Garcia, Yesenia Garcia, Ana Guadiana, Magdalena Jimenez, Eduardo Martinez, Veronica Martinez, Ana Maria Ortiz, Elisa Sanchez, and Rosario Uriarte

**Collins Preschool:** Rebeca Curiel, Dalilia Jimenez, and Sarah Zaragoza

**Gaines Preschool:** Maria Cerda, Haydee Hernandez, and Laura Solis

**Keppel Preschool:** Lorena Angel and Abelina Carrillo

**Mokler Preschool:** Stephanie Godinez, Berelina Lopez, Sonia Lozano, Jasmine Martinez, Juana Ochoa, Elizabeth Ortiz, Maria Pissi, and Ivonne Rangel.

**Wirtz Preschool:** Isolda Castillo, Lorraine Castro, Rosa Garcia, and Regina Muraida

**Zamboni Preschool:** Brisna Arriola, Evelyn Bernabel, Maria Ceballos, Esmeralda Flores, Paola Guerrero, Imelda Huerta, Micaela Jimenez, Nicole Orozco, Berta Quintanilla, and Norma Sanchez

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



- Board of Education*
- Vivian Hansen - President**
  - Sonya Cuellar - VP/Clerk**
  - Alicia Anderson - Member**
  - Linda Garcia - Member**
  - Tony Peña - Member**

*Great things are happening in Paramount Schools*

## PUSD Education News

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

# Lincoln Lions Love Field Trips!



The fourth graders at Lincoln Elementary have had a tremendous opportunity this year to explore the world through field trips. We learned so much in hands-on activities, interactive presentations, films, and displays. We were guided by docents who explained it all along the way. Teachers Mrs. Naruko and Mrs. Taylor applied for grants and scholarships that funded the adventures. We are thankful.

On Wednesday, January 23, 2013, we went on a wonderful field trip to the Discovery Science Center. It was creative, interesting, and amazing.

First, it was creative when we saw the play food market. It looked like a real market at first, but when we tried to pick up something, it would not budge. It was a kind of game where you are supposed to choose the more environmentally friendly product. There were carts and you had to find the items from the cart screen in the play store.

Next, it was interesting when we saw the Dino Quest game. It was interesting because of all of the shapes of the dinosaurs and fossils. How their bones are formed together was also interesting. In the game, you had to look on a piece of paper with pictures of bones that you had to find. In addition, you have a wand, so when you do find the bones, you point the wand to the bones. If you got it right, a green or blue light appears. If you got it wrong, a red or an orange light appears.

There were many things to see and do. We saw a pig's heart and a scientist was talking about the heart. Then we went to the magnet table. That was cool because if you rub a magnet on a nail or a paperclip then the nail or paperclip will be a magnet. We also went to the rocket lab where you get on the rocket and press the red button. Then the rocket will countdown. We saw a show about the food chain and went outside to do experiments.

Finally, it was amazing when we saw the bed of nails. The bed of nails did not hurt when you lay on it. The person that helps you get on tells you to stay still and lay your head on the pillow that is there. When you are ready and still, the nails go up, and you go up with it! Because your weight is spread out across many nails it supports you without poking you.

You should really go visit the Discovery Science Center. I know you'll have a blast!

On Tuesday, March 26, 2013, we went on an awesome field trip to the California Science Center. We saw the Endeavor, a 3D movie, and people having fun.

First, we saw a 3D movie. I liked the 3D movie, but it was long for me. It was about astronauts going into space to fix the Hubble telescope. It showed how the astronauts train, how they get their spacesuit on, and how they get ready. It showed the astronauts living in space. Everything floats! Their hair stuck out and they could sit on the ceiling. The pictures of space were really pretty.

We also saw the Endeavor. That is the space shuttle that flew over our school earlier this year. Up close we could see the tiles that protect it from heat, the big engines, and the tiny windows. It was packed with people there.

On the walls around the shuttle we saw famous astronauts on a picture. The pictures made a timeline.

In addition, we saw lots of people having fun. I had fun too. We got to see everything! There were many different sections in the Science Center. We saw chicks, baby ducks hatching, and how a baby grows. We saw real termites. We learned about the body and blood pressure. There was a giant fish tank with sharks in it. We walked through a glass tunnel in the tank. There were different ecosystems to explore like the desert, the arctic, the tide pools, and the forest.

The California Science Center was super fun! I had the best time there and I want to visit again.

On Wednesday, April 17, 2013, we went on an awesome field trip to the Huntington Library. It is a museum with gardens from many ecosystems. It was interesting, amazing, and adventurous. We saw plants, paintings, and sculptures.

First, it was adventurous because we did experiments in the desert ecosystem garden. We used cards that describe the plants and a lot of them were wooly, spiky, smooth, and bumpy. We used other cards to see what color the plants were. We also used a spray bottle to see if the water goes away from the plant or towards it. We mostly saw the water going towards the plants. We learned that if you give desert plants too much water they can die. It was like exercising in the desert ecosystem because we had to go back where we started, uphill!

Next, we went to the art museum where they hang up famous art. Not all of the art was paintings. There was also someone who sewed a very big carpet called a tapestry. We felt peaceful because it was quiet there. Lots of kids were excited to see the Blue Boy painting. Each piece of art had its own story written next to it. There was also fancy furniture.

Some sculptures were kept in special cases. We also felt peaceful there because not a lot of people were talking. Some sculptures needed something heavy on the bottom to keep them from falling into pieces when there's an earthquake. Some sculptures were of the full body and some were just heads. We learned that these sculptures are not colorful.

We also went to the Children's Garden. It was fun and refreshing. Some kids got wet. There was a rainbow tunnel and in the middle was a small room with rainbow lights. The lights looked like a disco. There was even a house made from bushes.

There were so many things to see and do at the Huntington Library. We learned about art, nature, and science in just one place!

Learning on a field trip is different than learning from a book. Books are great, but on a field trip the information is alive. We love learning about science and the world!

*Written by Ms. Hazlewood's 4th Grade Students: Kyilese Finnels, Samantha Beltran, Daisy Rodriguez, Harvey Martinez, Miracle Ogbonnaya, Fernanda Nunez, and Jafet Cardona.*

## MESA Regional Competition Student Winners



During a recent Board of Education meeting, the Board of Education and Superintendent Verdugo recognized MESA students from Paramount High School, Paramount High School West, Hollydale, Paramount Park and Zamboni Schools for their successful performance at the regional competition this year. MESA (Math, Engineer-

ing, Science Achievement) is an organization whose mission is to provide middle and high school students with hands on science, math and engineering experience with the goal of inspiring them to pursue college studies in these subjects. During this event, they competed against students from Districts' throughout Los Angeles County.

## PHS Receives Silver Medal Recognition

Paramount High School has been named as one of the "Best High Schools in America" in US News and World Report. This marks the sixth year in a row that PHS has been recognized by the magazine, but this year PHS moved from being recognized as a Bronze Medal School to being recognized as a Silver Medal School. The recognition of PHS as a Silver Medal School is a reflection of students' success on state proficiency standards on the California Standards Test (CST), on Advanced Placement (AP) tests, as well as how well students are prepared for college.

Since 1997, the Best High Schools project sought to identify the country's top-performing public high schools. Their goal was to provide a clear, unbiased picture of how well public schools serve all of their students in preparing



them to demonstrate proficiency in basic skills as well as readiness for college-level work. This year a total of 21,035 public high schools were examined across 49 states and the District of Columbia. Of that total, only 7% of high schools received Silver Medal Recognition. Way to go Pirates!

**Greg Francois,**  
Asst. Principal

## PHS Sports

The 2012-2013 school year is coming to an end. Paramount High School Athletics has achieved a number of great accomplishments throughout the course of the year. As our spring sports season comes to an end many teams have exceeded expectations. Our girls softball team is fighting for a league championship. They are currently in first place with a few games to go. Our baseball team is in second place with a big series coming up with league leading Warren High School. Boys tennis finished in third place and has once again qualified for the CIF playoffs. Boys volleyball finished in fourth place and missed the playoffs by only one game. League finals for both track and field and swimming are currently being held. Results of Pirate finishers will be printed at a later date.

More awards keep coming in for our league championship boys soccer and wrestling teams. Three soccer players were recently named to the Long Beach Press Telegrams All Area Team.

Seniors Juan Ortega and Brian Velez were named to the first team and senior Danny Romero was named to the second team. In wrestling three Pirates were also named to the Press Telegrams All Area Team. Senior Chris Borrayo and Sophomore Noe Sandoval were named first team. Sophomore Alfonso Robles was named second team. Head wrestling Coach, Don Wakefield was named the 2013 Press Telegram Wrestling Coach of the Year. A great accomplishment for Coach Wakefield and the entire Paramount wrestling program.

The student body, faculty, staff, and the administration are extremely proud of all of the athletes who competed for the Pirates this year. All in all, eight of our teams have made it to the CIF playoffs with baseball, softball, boys tennis, swimming, and track & field still waiting to compete in the playoffs. Paramount High School wishes all these teams good luck and a long and successful run in the playoffs. Go Pirates!!