

PUSD EDUCATION NEWS

A Publication of the Paramount Unified School District

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OCTOBER 2014

Creating Healthy Habits at Mokler



Most people think of spring as the season that represents new growth. However, in education that is better reflected in the fall as the children return to school for another year of opportunities to expand their horizons and grow as healthy members of the community.

In that spirit, the 2014-2015 school year is shaping up to be exciting as Mokler students and staff embark on an journey to living a healthy lifestyle. As a way of promoting a healthy lifestyle, the Mokler elementary staff is dedicated to a daily structured physical education program. Every afternoon, students participate in skills based lessons to improve activity levels in a variety of sports. With skills such as loco-motor movement and cardiovascular exercise, students develop coordination and strategies to participate in

sports such as basketball, soccer and relay races.

Healthy living is not limited to physical activity. It also includes healthy eating. With the support Paramount Unified School District's Student Nutrition Services, students will be taught to make healthy food choices during breakfast and lunch and throughout the school day. Each day, students are offered a selection of whole grains, lean meats, fruits and vegetables, and low-fat milk.

Students' home lives play a critical role in helping to support these initiatives. Parents can support these initiatives by sending students to school with healthy snacks, encouraging students to exercise daily outside of school and helping their children get a good night's rest.

Linh Roberts
Principal

Earthwatch Research Expeditions



Student Guadalupe Quirarte studying intertidal organisms

Summer is often a time to travel, relax and spend time participating in enjoyable activities. For 3 worthy Paramount High School students, an Earthwatch Fellowship Expedition became an unforgettable journey that afforded each the opportunity to work alongside a diverse group of students and professional re-

search scientists from across the country. Guadalupe Quirarte, Diana Hernandez and Erika Zamora all endured a lengthy application process and were selected to participate in a fully funded scientific research adventure through the Earthwatch Institute. The Institute focuses on four types of expeditions

across the globe: Archaeology & Culture, Climate Change, Ocean Health, and Wildlife & Ecosystems.

Senior, Diana Hernandez, spent 2 weeks studying climate change and caterpillars in Nevada. With her expedition group, she learned how to collect and care for caterpillars and

butterflies in order to study their relationships within the environment that they rely on shelter and food. Upon collecting specimens, Diana's group discussed the effects of phenological asynchrony, which describes the lack of synchrony between the life cycle of a pest, in this case a caterpillar, with the stage of its host plant. Diana said, "It was a life changing experience! ...sometimes we would find microlepidoptera, which I loved finding because they were the ones that whenever you touched their heads would move backwards."

Erika Zamora, a senior at Paramount High School, spent 2 weeks in the Gulf of Mexico studying species of birds. Her expedition team studied how species, such as the common loon, have become vulnerable in their environment after enduring over 250 million gallons of spilled oil in 2010. Zamora carefully studied the loon by analyzing their migrating patterns as they travel astonishing distances to spend their winters in

warmer environments. Their research included night boat rides to capture and tag loons and brown pelicans. They recorded each bird's measurements and took blood and feather samples to assess the long term effects that the oil spill had on their winter environments.

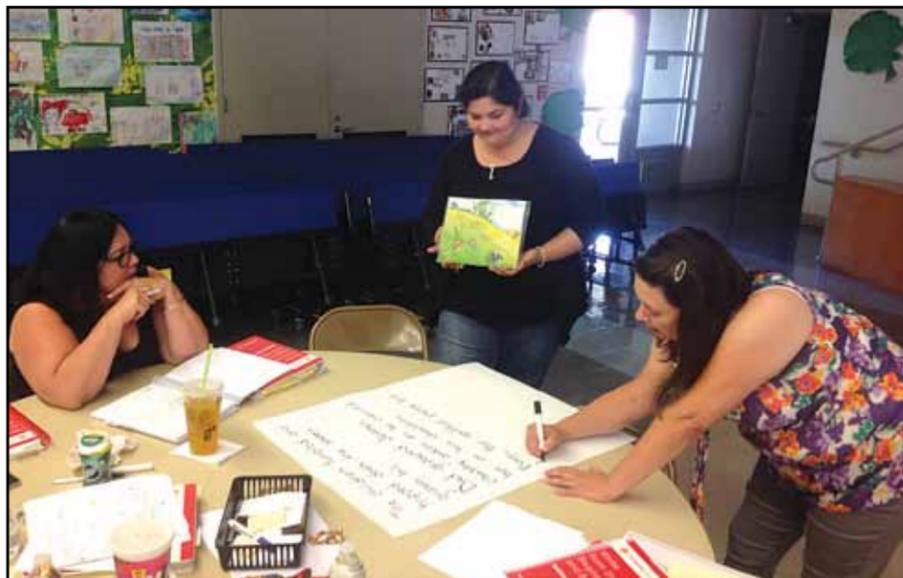
Senior, Guadalupe Quirarte, spent 2 weeks in the Schoodic Education and Research Center located in the Acadia National Park of Maine. This remarkable program allowed her to work in the field each day studying intertidal organisms. Her group encountered porcupines, bald eagles and several porpoises during research. Regarding her expedition, Guadalupe states, "...I was able to research the impact ocean acidification has on rocky intertidal organisms and communities, especially organisms that have calcium carbonate shells. I truly have to say that this adventure in my life enriched and enhanced my understanding of environmental issues and stimulated my curiosity in science."

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATE

October 8, 2014 * October 22, 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

Write From the Beginning... and Beyond: Paramount's Next Steps



Last year, K-8 teachers across Paramount Unified School District attended a professional development on Thinking Maps, a program designed around eight visual patterns, each representing a fundamental thought process. The results of their training and classroom implementation were astounding. In less than 3 months, over 10,000 Paramount students began using Thinking Maps to mentally organize or “map out” the necessary thought processes needed to solve complex problems. A visit to any one of Paramount’s elementary or middle school classrooms would showcase students using Thinking Maps as their tool for learning.

In the Fall of 2014, phase two of this district initiative will commence with high school teachers receiving training in Thinking Maps, thus allowing their students to apply higher-level thinking skills within specific content areas. At the K-8 levels, all teachers will attend a two-day professional development on Write from the Beginning... and Beyond, a comprehensive writ-

ing program based on the foundations of Thinking Maps. Once fully implemented, Write from the Beginning... and Beyond will provide students with the skills and strategies necessary to plan, organize, and produce high quality writing pieces required by the Common Core Standards. The program will also meet the needs of individual students by providing teachers with mini lessons designed to improve specific areas of writing. Deanne Katayama, a K-5 instructional coach states, “After just one week of using the program, I can already see improvement in student writing.”

Thinking Maps and Write from the Beginning ... and Beyond are quickly becoming the tools that ALL Paramount students are using to meet the demands of 21st century learning. These programs truly exemplify Paramount’s mission “to ensure learning and success for each student by providing a quality education.”

Michael Naruko
Curriculum Specialist

Back to School Night with Thinking Maps at Mark Keppel School



There was plenty of excitement evident in the eyes of children as they attended Back to School Night on September 11th, 2014. It was that time of year again, as parents and students alike filed in through the front gates of Mark Keppel School, eagerly awaiting the introduction of their child’s teacher. The annual ritual is more than just a meet and greet with teachers and a recruiting opportunity for the PTA, though. It’s a chance to find out what is really going on in your child’s classroom—beyond the daily schedule and homework procedures.

This year, with the implementation of the new Common Core State Standards, teachers have been focusing on increasing the rigor across content areas. Back to School Night was the perfect opportunity to showcase what teachers are doing in the classroom to increase rigor.

The staff at Mark Keppel School planned a Back to School Night visit with a Thinking Maps theme. Thinking Maps, developed by Dr. David Hyerle, are visual brain-friendly tools that foster and encourage life-long learning. These visual maps provide students with pat-

terns for using the eight fundamental thinking processes. 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.

Over the course of eight days, students reviewed all eight Thinking Maps. Each day, the school family focused on the same Map. Every class used these Maps across content areas as teachers and students worked to expand their thinking skills.

Parents and visitors saw evidence of teachers were setting the tone for greater student achievement and students using thinking maps to process and apply new concepts. They were thoroughly impressed with the hard work of both our students and teachers and saw how this organizational tool could help our students plan for their future!

Patricia Brent-Sanco
Principal

PHS Green Club Preserves Mariposa Grove



Yosemite is a vast land untouched by industrial hands. It is our getaway place from society, a place where we can enjoy good days without the hassles of technology and modern accommodations. It’s a place where you can get to know your classmates and create memories with them. This summer from July 7-11, 2014, Yosemite was just this place to the Paramount High School Green Club.

Through a sponsorship with Sierra Club and an on-campus recycling program, PHS Green Club was able to send 21 students and 10 adults to participate in a project to remove invasive species that threaten the area’s ecosystem. Alongside Sequoia trees in Mariposa Grove, we removed bull thistle and mullein. The hard work was immediately justified by the serenity and grandeur

of the park. We were rewarded with the beauty and freshness provided by a dip in the Merced River.

We are so thankful for our trip to Yosemite to experience nature at its finest! Yosemite opened our eyes to the earth’s beauty that we must preserve. During our visit, we were never bored; instead, we found it difficult to leave the park. We love Yosemite!

Our trip taught us so much about our environment as well as ourselves. We extend a big thank you to our 9 chaperones and Green club advisor Mr. Hashiminejad.

Amy Flores, PHS Student
Class of 2015

**PUSD Education News is a monthly Publication of the
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Great things are happening in Paramount Schools

PUSD Education News

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A New School Year Begins at Wirtz Elementary

After weeks of anticipation and countless hours shopping for school supplies, students began a new school year at Wirtz Elementary School with the ringing of the bell at 8:15 a.m. on August 20th. Students were greeted on the yard by their teachers, eager to begin the day. Once in their classrooms, students jumped back into their lessons and school day routines with great enthusiasm.

Three weeks later, it was the parents turn to officially start the school year with an invitation to our Back-to-School Night on September 11th. Parents, students and family members were greeted by the Principal, Ms. Toscano, during a brief assembly in the cafeteria prior to classroom visits.

Ms. Toscano also introduced the Wirtz teachers and support staff, as well as setting expectations for the new school year. As parents visited classrooms, they were able to see a variety of student work which is reflective of the

new Common Core Standards.

The Paramount Unified School District's Food Services Division was also on hand to provide parents with information on the breakfast and lunch programs offered at our school, as well as providing them with refreshments and snacks. The Wirtz PTA was also on hand to provide membership information and much needed refreshments on such a hot day! A special thank you goes to Dr. Randy Gray who also attended our Back-to-School Night.

After all the classroom visitations were over, the evening ended as the school day had begun earlier, with the ringing of the bells- and so marked another well-attended and successful Back-to-School Night at Wirtz Elementary School. Thank you to all who shared this evening with us!

Connie Toscano
Principal

Tanner School Welcomes the New School Year



The new school year went off to a great start with all stakeholders on board. Teachers embarked on the Common Core Journey with a 2 day collaboration before school year began. We were reminded of the district's mission – to ensure learning and success for each student by providing a quality education.

Each grade level worked together to prepare a rigorous Math and Language Arts unit. In addition, staff facilitated for the successful opening of the school year by getting the campus ready for students and parents. Moreover, to ensure a safe and civil campus, parents got on board by volunteering at the before

school student valet service program. Seeing that the program worked well, the after school student curbside pick-up service was implemented due to popular request. Dedicated parents reported to the Parent Center diligently to offer their support to classroom teachers. Most important of all, students got on board by coming in to school ready to learn. Their eager faces and excitement remind all of us that everything is well worth it.

With everyone on board, we are confident that we will be able to make it through this school year's Common Core Journey with success.

Linda Go - Principal

Superintendent's Message:



Pictured are Superintendent Herman Mendez, PHS Graduate Lorena Moreno and Board Member Linda Garcia

Paramount Service Clubs

We are very lucky and thankful to have the support of a number of community service clubs who regularly provide our students with resources to assist them in their educational and social needs.

Recently, Paramount Unified School District Board Member Linda Garcia and I were in attendance at the September meeting of the Paramount Woman's Club, at which time the Club provided recognition for 2014 Paramount High School graduate Lorena Moreno with a scholarship that she will use in support of her studies at California State University Long Beach.

Other examples of the wonderful support by our service clubs include the Lion's Club, who provide eye exams by Lion's Club member, Dr. Andy Lim, as well as providing eyeglasses. The club generously pays for 100% of the cost. Additionally, the Lion's Club provides scholarship support – this past year they provided \$8,000 in scholarships.

The Elks Club is an important member of the service club community and they

support our third grade students through their promotion of literacy by way of their dictionary project, which entails providing students with their own personal dictionary. As with the other service clubs, scholarships and incentives are also made available on a monthly and annual basis.

The Paramount Rotary Club is another organization whose generous spirit is seen through their sponsorship of the annual Rotary Student Forum, which provides our high school students, with an opportunity to be recognized for the communication skills. Scholarships are also a mainstay of the Club's support for students and have been known to award as much as \$20,000. The Club also provides sponsorship of students who attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) leadership camp, competitions in the arts, as well as other opportunities for students.

The students of the Paramount Unified School District are fortunate indeed to have the support of a great and nurturing community!

Fall Sports Kick-Off!

Paramount High School opened its 2014-2015 athletic season with an exciting 35-34 football victory over Long Beach Wilson in the first game of the season. The game saw 3 lead changes and the pirates stopped a two point conversion with less than a minute to play to seal the victory. The Paramount football program will play 4 more pre-season games against Los Alamitos, Long Beach Jordan, Carson, and Culver City before starting the always-tough San Gabriel Valley League.

Girls Volleyball also kicked off their season in the prestigious Molten Volleyball Classic. They opened with national ranked Redondo Union and also played Yorba Linda. Despite two defeats, the girls battled to the end and showed promise for the upcoming season. With non-league games against Whittier, El Rancho, Norwalk, California, Whitney, and St. Joseph's, girls volleyball should enter San Gabriel Valley league play with a lot of confidence as they try to qualify for the CIF playoffs for the fifth year in a row.

The Girls Tennis program opened their season with matches against Norwalk and also scheduled non-league competition with Cal High, El Rancho,

Whittier, Lakewood, Pioneer, and Bellflower. With a number of CIF qualifying players returning, high hopes are expected for the upcoming season.

Boys Water Polo also plays a tough non-league schedule with matches against, Artesia, La Puente, Lakewood, Whittier, Savanna, and Magnolia. This should get them ready for the tough San Gabriel Valley league. The Boys and Girls Cross Country team get their season under way with a number of weekend invitationals. First up is the Mt. Sac invitational, followed by an event at Woodbridge High School and their annual trip up north to the Clovis Invitational for a tough meet. Cross Country is looking to get back to play-offs after missing out last year. As one can see, the Pirate athletic department is very busy with many teams and sports competing across Southern California. It is an exciting time at Paramount High School and we look forward to having the community come out to support the teams. For schedules and days of events, please call the athletic department or visit the schools web site for times and locations of sporting events.

GO PIRATES!!

'Tis the Season to Get Active!



Nicole Reyes serves the ball while her teammates prepare to rally



Ms. Ty leads students in cheer practice.



Gaddiel Gil keeps his eye on the ball during Panther football practice.

Paramount Park Panthers are very excited for the upcoming sports year! The Paramount Unified School District has put its full support behind recreating a new middle school sports program beginning this year in all PUSD Middle Schools. The program is in its beginning stages, but is off to a great start! Each middle school will compete in five sports, including Girls Volleyball, Flag Football, Boys and Girls Basketball, Girls and Boys Soccer and Wrestling. Cheerleading will also showcase students' talents and support the home teams during inter school match-ups.

The fall sports' season is currently under way for Girls Volleyball and Flag Football. Over 100 Paramount Park Panthers showed up for volleyball and football tryouts recently, and the coaches had their work cut out for them as they had to select just 14 girls for volleyball and 18 boys for football.

"The new sports program will be an

exceptional way for students to grow as student athletes, gain self confidence, learn team work, and demonstrate proper sportsmanship," said Mr. Springston PE teacher and football coach.

Concurrently, about 80 girls are trying out for the Paramount Park Cheerleading Squad. During their practices, the cheer candidates will do a cheer that they were all taught and one that they have created. The cheer coordinators at Paramount Park, Mrs. Ferrell and Ms. Ty, teach the students basic cheer stances and the specifics of how to perform cheers safely.

According to the coordinators, "The students' enthusiasm is overwhelming! We are looking forward to a great year and working with the squad to support our teams and whole school! Go Panthers!!!"

Paramount Park PE Teachers and Cheer Coordinators

College and Career Centers

Paramount Unified School District is committed to assuring that every student has access to information about how to apply to college. To support this goal, PUSD has hired full-time college advisors to provide students and their families with college and career planning including:

- College admission process workshops
- Financial aid information and application assistance
- College information nights for students and parents
- College admissions test preparation and registration
- Campus visits from college admissions and financial aid professionals
- Career planning

College advisors will staff new College and Career Centers at Paramount High School and PHS West Campus and collaborate with academic counselors to refine a comprehensive college-going culture.

The College and Career Center at Paramount High School Senior Campus is in the process of relocating from its current location in the main administration building to a larger room closer to the center of campus. Additionally, Paramount High School West Campus is preparing to open a new College and Career Center at the beginning of the next school year. These important resources will help every student in Paramount make a successful transition from high school to post secondary education.

Jose Iniguez, Ed.D. – Director-Secondary Education/CTE & Instructional Technology

Wildcats are Living Wise



This past June, sixth grade students at Frank J. Zamboni Middle School participated in the Living Wise Program which educates students on how to conserve energy and water in order to "live wise". The program, designed by Resource Action Programs, is intended to teach students how to conserve and why it is important to do so. Mrs. Mc Praytor, a science teacher, was contacted by the Living Wise Program to receive materials for each Earth science student on campus.

Through the Living Wise Program, each student was given a guide book, workbook, and a Get Wise product kit to test the functionality and efficiency of various household facilities and appliances in order to learn how to conserve resources. In the workbook, students were able to put their Common Core skills to work as they surveyed their homes; made usage calculations working in the workbook and using the product kit; and given tips on how to conserve resources based on the calculations. The program was thorough and gave products

to conserve resources in and outside of the home. Tools and materials like faucet aerators, air filter, LED nightlight, digital thermometer, and high efficiency showerhead are just a few of the items in the free product kit.

The Living Wise Program proved to be beneficial in the classroom and in the neighborhood. Mrs. Mc Praytor received letters and emails from parents who enjoyed surveying their homes with their children, and were grateful for the high-efficiency products they could install immediately to save resources and money. At the end of the program students were given a certificate to confirm their new conservationist knowledge and skills. The Living Wise Program has embodied the Zamboni Wildcats letter S, strengthening our community, through conserving resources we all need, and engaging families in our learning objectives.

If your site would like to participate in the Living Wise program, contact Libby Bumb at LBumb@getwise.org. Or visit www.getwise.org; call 800.GET.WISE.

Los Cerritos Expectations

It is my honor and privilege, to welcome our students and families to the 2014-2015 school year. As the principal of Los Cerritos Elementary, my mission is to ensure that all students receive the high quality, rigorous education they so richly deserve by their teachers. Our promise to all of our families is to work tirelessly to ensure that rich and valuable learning experiences are provided to every child, every day, in every classroom.

We have set, clear, specific goals for achievement in the upcoming 2014-2015 school year and, as a team, we pledge to take purposeful steps to achieve these goals!! Los Cerritos goals are as follows: Academic Achievement, College Readiness, Safety and Security, Family and Community Communication and Activities. This academic year, we will focus on improving academic literacy and rigorous math learning using the Common Core standards; we will continue

to provide robust opportunities to practice reading, writing, speaking, and analytical thinking in every subject.

We are also providing College Readiness lessons and activities through our school counselor providing weekly College Spirit Day! Los Cerritos parents will continue helping with our morning drop off to ensure safety for all of students being dropped off in cars or walking to school. Los Cerritos is also happy to announce the opening of our Parent Center at the end of September. In the Parent Center, parents will be able to attend weekly parenting classes, learn how to use the computer and provide a service to the teachers with Los Cerritos Copy Center.

Good things are happening here! Together, we will achieve excellence in Los Cerritos!

**Ms. Rose Vitetta - Principal
Los Cerritos School**

**We are...
Respectful
Positive
Productive
Proud Scholars
We are Los Cerritos!!!**

