

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

SEPTEMBER 2015

President's Middle College Scholar Academy Teacher TRAC / STEM Pathway at Cerritos College



Four Paramount High School juniors have been accepted into the Middle College Scholars Academy and will complete 24.5 college units over the course of 2 years of concurrent enrollment at Cerritos College and Paramount High School. The program appeals to students who aspire to become

teachers and who have a sincere interest in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subject areas.

George Oceguera, Beatiz Salazar, Jasmine Solorzano and Orion Valencia completed Cerritos College applications along with Middle College Scholar academy applica-

tions which include teacher recommendations. Similar to a college enrollee, each candidate is required to take the Cerritos College assessment tests in both Language Arts and Mathematics. This test assesses each student's readiness to enroll and excel in a college level course.

The PHS Middle Col-

lege Scholars cohort consists of 32 high school students from local school districts. One program requirement includes tutoring local elementary school students for at least 2 hours per week. Students will also participate in field trips and a summer program to prepare them for the fall semester.

On June 15th, Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Deborah Stark, Curriculum Specialist,

Nancy Manning, Assistant Principal, Anna Yasuhara, and College and Career Center Counselor, Krystal Fierro, celebrated with the four families as each student was welcomed into the program. Current Middle College Scholars shared their experiences in the program and expressed their gratitude for the collaborative efforts of their school district, professors, and the Cerritos College faculty support.

Connecting Learning to Life: A New State Assessment

In May 2015, students in the Paramount Unified School District participated in the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) which included the Smarter Balanced Summative Test, the new computer-based tests for English language arts/literacy and mathematics that replaced the former paper-based tests for these subjects. With this new test, schools have information to improve learning and increase each student's opportunity to succeed. The tests are engaging, interactive, and uniquely accessible with questions that require higher level thinking, model real life problems, and are similar to classroom work.

The sample problems below highlight how test questions differ from previous state tests.

Sample Mathematics Test Item: Old vs. New

Solve for x .

$$6\frac{2}{8} + 3\frac{5}{8} = x$$

A $7\frac{2}{8}$
 B $9\frac{7}{8}$
 C $9\frac{2}{8}$
 D $18\frac{7}{8}$

VS

Served to testing how much weight a bag can hold. He plans to put juice bottles into three bags. He needs each bag to have a total weight within the given range.

- Drag juice bottles into each bag so that the weight is within the given range.
- Leave the bag empty if the given range is not possible using juice bottles.

Between 6 lb and 7 lb Between 10 lb and 11 lb Between 14 lb and 15 lb

Sample English Language Arts Test Item: Old vs. New

Which two words are synonyms for heap?

A pile
 B row
 C corner
 D mound
 E pattern

VS

Read the sentences from the passage.

As he neared the hollow tree he heard a growing hum. He made a sizzlar noise and he saw one or two bees land on his bear suit.

What does the use of the word *sizzlar* suggest? Pick two choices.

Coyote was surprised and made an unusual sound.
 The sound Coyote made was meant to calm the bees.
 Coyote made a sound like a bear growling to tease the bees.
 The sound Coyote made blended in with the sound of the bees.
 The sound Coyote made was very loud to scare away the bees.

Remember..

It's a beginning: The previous STAR test measured different skills, so the scores can't be compared. Think of this year's score as a baseline for assessing progress next year.

It's a transition: This isn't just a new test, it's a system of new teaching, new curriculum, and new materials. As students spend more time with the new approach, they will demonstrate greater understanding. *In these early years, results may show that many students will need to make significant progress.* But that's ok; the important thing is that schools are on a path of continual improvement.

Early Childhood Education

Where could a young child build a skyscraper, make a new friend, and create letters out of wooden sticks all in one day? Well, children do all these things every day in preschool at Paramount Unified School District. On a daily basis, preschoolers get opportunities to create, solve problems, and socialize. The preschool classrooms offer an engaging curriculum that helps children expand their language, reasoning, social, and physical skills.

PUSD offers preschool services to four year olds in half-day sessions at seven school sites—Collins, Gaines, Hollydale, Keppel, Mokler, Wirtz, and Zamboni Schools. We also offer full-day preschool at Gaines and Alondra Schools for three-and-four year olds of working families. Families must be at a certain income level to qualify for preschool services. Please contact the Early Childhood Education Office to find out how to enroll your child in preschool, call (562) 602-6900.

Dr. Elida Garcia, Program Director
Early Childhood Education

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATE

September 9, 2015 * September 23, 2015

Board of Education meetings are held at 6:00 p.m. and are open to the public

Buena Vista H.S./AEC Welcome New Principal & Assistant Principal

I am honored to be selected as the new principal at Buena Vista High School and the Alternative Education Center! This year, I begin my 22nd year working with students in this great District. As the principal, I look forward to leading students towards focusing on graduation requirements and getting prepared for college and career readiness. I am dedicated to supporting teachers, as well as, supporting students with their educational journey. As a Paramount High School Class of 1990 graduate, I am proud to serve in the community I grew up in!



Dr. Andrea Aguilar-Nuno
Principal
Buena Vista High School & Alternative Education Center

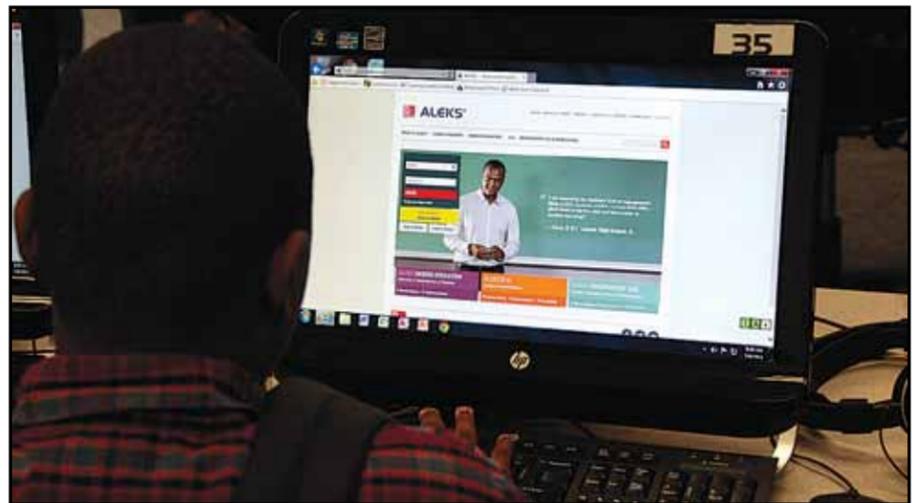
My name is Roxanne Shelby and I am thrilled to be the new Assistant Principal at Buena Vista High School and a member of the Paramount Unified family! I am a graduate of California State University, Fullerton in Spanish Literature with a minor in Portuguese. I am a National Board Certified Teacher and hold a Master's Degree in Instructional Leadership from National University.



I have over 20 years of experience in education and have taught everything from preschool to fifth grades and Adult School. I am very much looking forward to the new and exciting experience of working with high school students!

Roxanne Shelby
Assistant Principal
Buena Vista High School & Alternative Education Center

Summer School is a Success at Alondra Middle School



To ensure success in the classroom for the 2015-2016 school year, Paramount Unified School District held its second summer school session at Alondra Middle School. The term was made accessible to a selection of incoming eighth grade students that were from throughout the district. Although the focus was on mathematics, science was also taught. The purpose of the program was to support students in the area of Algebra I, Grade 8 Math, and Science through the reinforcement of 21st century skills.

The students who were enrolled in Grade 8 Math/Algebra I were engaged in higher order thinking through rigorous assignments based on the Common Core Standards. Students were required to solve real-world problems through inquiry lessons.

Using Common Core Standards, those enrolled in Grade 8 Math and Science were provided a rigorous review of foundational concepts and skills required to be successful for the upcoming school year. This was to reinforce conceptual knowledge that students will need for continued academic success. Moreover, their science course featured

hands-on projects that included the use of technology.

During the summer school session, all students participated in the online math program ALEKS. The objective of the course was to strengthen the students' mathematical abilities that were being applied in the classroom. All activities occur on the internet and over a dozen students regularly accessed their ALEKS account at home to resume what they were learning at school. The program customized individual activities based on students understanding and performance and ultimately provided students with continuous feedback on their progress. According to one student, "The ALEKS program challenged me and helped me figure things out on my own."

Overall, the summer school session at Alondra Middle School was a complete success. It definitely provided the students that attended with the tools they will need to advance their academic achievement in the 2015-2016 school year.

Lynn Bulter,
Principal, Alondra Middle School



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

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District Co-Interim Superintendents

Delores Stephens
David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.



Great things are happening in Paramount Schools

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Editor - Isela Preciado
Paramount Unified School District
15110 California Ave., Paramount, CA
(562) 602-6000 • Fax (562) 634-6029

Jefferson's Essential Piece!



Jefferson's PTA and community volunteers continue to be an essential piece of our Team! Jefferson parents have been working all summer to prepare for what promises to be another exciting and productive school year. PTA has been busy planning this year's activities to help make Jefferson School a great place to be. They have been stocking our student store with fun items that students can buy using their Jefferson dollars. They are also planning the fundraisers that will take place to support field trips, student incentives, and assemblies.

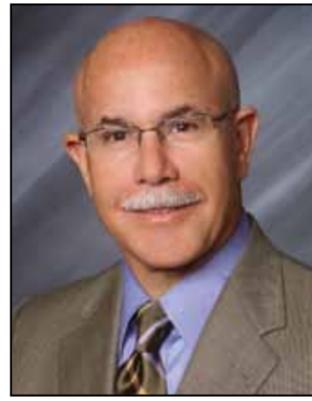
Our parents are here at Jefferson on a daily basis. We are fortunate to have these extra hands available! These essential hands have been putting together writing folders that each student will receive on the first day of school. They have also been putting together the decodable books that are used by all our kinder through third grade students. We could not do it without their time, dedication, and support.

Jefferson School believes that "it takes a village to raise a child!" We are thankful for our "village" of support. Our parents are truly an essential piece to our school and we look forward to making 2015-2016 our best year yet!

Jefferson School PTA Board 2015/2016

- President – Natalie Ruiz**
- Vice President – Lucy Munoz**
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Superintendent's Message:



Dear Parents and Community Members, Welcome Back!

On behalf of our Board of Education, we would like to welcome all of our students and families back from what we sincerely hope was a relaxing and fulfilling summer holiday with family and friends.

We wanted to share with our community that our first day of school with students on August 19, 2015, was a huge success. Our division Assistant Superintendents and District Office Directors including the Co-Interim Superintendents shared the responsibility of branching out and supporting each school site in the District. The reports back were all positive and encouraging. The first day back with students and parents always remains as a very special day filled with excitement.

Paramount Unified School District has existed since 1953 with the mission to prepare our students for a bright and successful future. The opening of a new school year reminds us all that our most valuable asset is not the capital investment in our schools and buildings. A school district is not great because of bricks and mortar, or libraries and laboratories or school rankings. A school district is great because of its people, its faculty, students, staff, community, and alumni and in the way in which those people work together for a "common cause", the District's Mission and Vision.

We are very proud of the many accomplishments and success that we have witnessed in PUSD. We are confident that we will continue our conditions for renewal. We are looking forward to a great 2015-2016 school year.

**Dr. David Verdugo and Delores Stephens
Co-Interim Superintendents**

Superintendent Search - Community Input

The Board of Education of Paramount Unified School District will be selecting a new district superintendent. Community input about the desired characteristics to be used in recruiting and selecting this person is desired. The trustees are soliciting input to respond to the prompt: What personal and professional qualities for an incoming superintendent will be a match for the Paramount Unified School District.

Dr. Michael Escalante and Mr. Rich Thome of Leadership Associates were selected to advise the Board in this process.

Individual input from members of the community (parents, employees and others interested in our district) is desired. Input may be offered through email to lhunt@leadershipassociates.org. Direct telephone conversation may also be arranged to speak by phone to either Dr. Escalante or Mr. Thome by calling (760) 771-4277.

Additionally, an online survey is available on the District's website at www.paramount.k12.ca.us through October 12, 2015.

Paramount Athletics

The 2015-2016 school year has started at Paramount High School. The Pirate athletic department is excited about the start of the fall seasons. With football, boys water polo, girls tennis, girls volleyball, and boys and girls cross country hard at work, the entire school is ready to get the ball rolling. Our football team is looking forward to building on a very successful 2015 season where the Pirates advanced to the CIF division 3 quarterfinals. With excellent skill position players on the roster, 2015 promises to be a season to remember. Included is the 2015 football schedule. All games start at 7:00 PM.

Girls volleyball is looking forward to another excellent season with the hopes of repeating its 2014 season by earning a spot in the CIF playoffs. The girls have been working hard all summer and are looking forward to accomplishing big things in 2015. Girls tennis also hopes to repeat 2014 by also advancing in the CIF playoffs. With a number of girls returning the lady Pirates are working

September 3 @ Los Alamitos @ (Veterans Stadium)

September 11 vs. LB Jordan @ Paramount

September 18 @ Carson

September 25 vs. Narbonne @ Paramount

October 9 @ Warren

October 16 vs. Dominguez @ Paramount

October 23 vs. Gahr @ Paramount

October 30 @ Lynwood

November 6 @ Downey

towards a league championship. Boys water polo starts this season under a new head coach and a new beginning. Rachel Dominguez takes over the water polo program with the hopes of showing steady improvement throughout the season. Boys and girls Cross Country begin their season with over 100 runners looking to earn another berth in the CIF playoffs.

The athletic department

would like to invite all members of the community to come out and watch these excellent teams compete at the highest level. Our student athletes work hard both in the classroom and on the field and look forward to the fans cheering and supporting our teams. On behalf of the entire school, we look forward to another great year of many championships and CIF playoff participants. GO PIRATES!!!

Good Attendance Counts!

Students usually begin each new school year with excitement and enthusiasm. 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, attendance rates can drop over the course of the school year. According to a recent California Department of Education report, California is facing an attendance crisis. In the 2013-14 school year, approximately 83,000 California elementary children missed ten percent or more of the school year. Missing a few classes does not seem to be a big deal to some students. However, regular attendance at school is important for every student. It is difficult for young students to learn if they are not in class. Just as we can never regain a mo-

ment of time wasted, the child who misses a day of school misses a day of education that cannot be retrieved. Research shows that children who attend school regularly are more

“Students should attend school every day, unless illness or emergency prevents them from doing so.”

likely to be successful during their school years. First grade students with nine or more absences are two times more likely to drop out of high school

than their peers who attend school regularly.

Schools in the Paramount Unified School District work hard to ensure students and parents understand the importance of good attendance. Attendance in the District is regularly monitored and monthly incentive rewards are provided to students who maintain perfect attendance. Interventions and support are provided to those students who are chronically absent or truant from school.

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.

Dr. Manuel San Miguel
Director
Student Services

2015 Summer Bridge

Paramount High School West Campus played host to over 640 incoming ninth grade students during their six week Summer Bridge program. Students attended classes Monday through Thursday for three hours a day.

According to Principal Mr. Kosareff, all incoming students were invited to attend Summer Bridge and placed in classes based on their academic needs revealed from their eighth grade assessment and grade data. Attending students had a class in mathematics to prepare them for Geometry or Algebra 1 and an English class to build a foundation for Language Arts 1 Honors or Language Arts 1 in the fall. At the end of the Summer Bridge program, students were able to earn five elective credits toward their high school graduation requirements.

Additionally, students completed their fall registration process as part of Summer Bridge and received their first Pirate identification card. Furthermore, students were able to sign up for a variety of athletic classes and marching band offered in the summer. Students in summer sports and marching band crossed over from the West Campus to the Senior Campus following their Summer Bridge classes and earned five physical education credits.

Yvonne Rodriguez
Assistant Principal
PHS-West

32nd Annual California Association of Directors of Activities (CADA) Leadership Camp

The Paramount High School Associated Student Body (ASB) leadership group traveled to the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB) for a 4 day and 3 night adventure to the CADA Aloha Leadership Camp. Upon arrival, the 35 student leaders settled into the dormitories and participated in icebreakers as they integrated into councils consisting of over 400 students from high schools in the state of California. Each team council consisted of approximately 20-25 students and one adult advisor; their task was to establish goals and create an action plan to reach their goals. Some examples include being responsible for creating a culture of community service, establishing a school newsletter, coordinating a talent show and exploring new ways to advertise school events. One group modeled the spirit of community service and dedicated their time to creating leadership binders for the next leadership camp as each participant receives a 250 page Leadership Activities Handbook, a CADA t-shirt and a Leadership Certificate.

The camp offered workshops with the goal to create dynamic student leaders, well-rounded team players, creative problem solvers, effective communicators, successful presenters, visionary planners and college/career ready students. Carlos Loera, ASB treasurer, states, “I loved every part of the camp and appreciated the guest speaker messages about leadership and teamwork. They reminded us that each day is a gift and that we are the leaders of today, not tomorrow. Taking action has to happen now.”