



school bulletin

ISSUED BI-WEEKLY SEPTEMBER THROUGH JUNE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

October 8, 2004

Higher Fire Danger Closes Hi Hill School

As a precaution, Hi Hill Outdoor Science School closed last week because of high fire risk in the Angeles National Forest. It is expected to reopen later this year when the fire danger subsides. Although no fire was reported in the area, the U.S. Forest Service closed 90 percent of the forest because dry conditions have created an extreme risk of wildfires.

The 13-acre camp near Mt. Wilson will remain closed until there is sufficient rain or snowfall to lower the fire danger.

Each year, thousands of local fifth graders enjoy Hi Hill for five days. They learn about geology, biology and other sciences. About 140 students each week have attended the camp since Labor Day. Since 1948, more than 300,000 students have gone to Hi Hill.

The camp closed for two weeks last year during a major outbreak of wildfires in Southern California. In 2002, the camp also closed for about six weeks because of dry conditions. Once the camp reopens, students' usual five-day stays may be shortened to allow more students to attend.

More Teachers Earn National Certification

The Long Beach Unified School District has made a commitment to support teachers who are interested in applying for National Board Certification.

Teachers who are accepted and successfully complete the pre-candidacy program will be eligible for payment of National Board application fees, a \$2,300 value. Teachers who obtain National Board Certification are eligible for up to a 10 percent salary increase for the 10-year life of the certificate in addition to any compensation provided through the state. So far, 56 teachers in the Long Beach Unified School District have earned national certification.

Information meetings will be held to discuss the National Board Certification process and the district's pre-candidacy program Thursday, October 21, and Wednesday, October 27, at 4 p.m. at the Teacher Resource Center in Room 3. For information, contact Lisa Isbell Hager, ext. 2900.

It's Worth Her Wait

Alix Anderson, a kindergartner in Lorrie Davis's class, stays at Carver Care in the afternoon. Her mother recently arrived early to pick her up, thinking she would be pleased. But Larry Connors, Carver Care teacher, overheard Alix ask her mom, "Why do I have to go home early? I've been waiting my whole life to be in kindergarten!"

CELEBRATING--New Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year Sylvia Padilla, center, teacher at Henry Elementary School, celebrates her selection as one of the area's finest educators with Darline Robles, L.A. County superintendent, and Angie Papadakis, president of the county Board of Education.



Class Sizes Reduced in Fourth, Fifth Grades

The Long Beach Unified School District this fall has reduced class sizes in fourth and fifth grades, supporting its efforts to boost student achievement. The smaller class sizes allow teachers to give more individualized assistance to students.

"Reducing class size is a major accomplishment during lean times," said Karen DeVries, deputy superintendent, elementary schools. "It shows our commitment to programs that increase teacher efficacy, which ensures the steady achievement gains we're seeing in the elementary schools."

Almost all schools in the district are offering smaller classes in fourth and fifth grades. Most schools are reducing class size for the entire day, others during portions of the day. Individual site plans are based on available classroom space and input from the school's teachers and principal. The maximum class size for these grades is 35. The reduction varies from school to school, with class sizes being reduced to anywhere between 25 and 30 students depending on enrollment and classroom space availability.

The new class size reductions are made possible by this fall's drop in elementary

school enrollment. The school district is using \$2.5 million in federal Title I funds under the No Child Left Behind Act to pay for the additional teacher salaries and benefits for fourth and fifth grade class size reduction. Some schools also are using the Title I funds to hire additional reading specialists and other personnel to lower class size in grades four and five.

Enrollment Drops Below 97,000, Rises In High Schools

The official enrollment report for the end of the first month of school won't be in until next week. But a preliminary count shows a significant drop in elementary school enrollment here.

In September 2003, the Long Beach Unified School District had enrolled a record total of 97,616 students. This September's enrollment fell to 96,263, an overall loss of 1,353 students.

But by far, the largest drop in enrollment has been reported for elementary schools, down 1,745 students. Middle school enrollment shrank by 134 students.

High school enrollment was the only level that continued to climb, with 520 more students in grades 9 through 12 showing up this fall.

Record high housing costs, declining birthrates and an uncertain job market have contributed to lower enrollment in Southern California schools this fall, with many districts reporting enrollment losses.

When the official October enrollment is compiled after the first full month of school, the total is expected to drop below 97,000 for the first time since 2001. Enrollment here peaked at 97,550 in October 2002, dropped slightly to 97,454 last October, and is expected to decline further this month.

Latest long-range projections still predict overall population growth for California, but at a slower rate. The state's 36 million residents are expected to increase nearly 50 percent, to 51 million residents by 2040.

Coffee With Chris

The next Long Beach Unified Family Committee meeting will be held Thursday, October 14, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Administration Building Community Room. The informal meetings encourage open dialogue between employees and Superintendent Chris Steinhauser. All interested employees are invited to attend.

Future meetings are scheduled from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on the following dates:

- Tuesday, November 9--same location;
- Monday, December 6--Jordan Library;
- Monday, January 10--Lakewood Library;
- Monday, February 7--Millikan Library;
- Monday, April 11--Cabrillo Library;
- Monday, May 16--Administration Building, Community Room.

Grad Check Informs Parents of Progress

Parents have a much better idea of how their high school students are doing and the courses they are taking and need to take. Twice a year, each high school sends home a graduation check printout to parents to help students surmount all the hurdles required to earn a diploma.

The report notifies parents of exactly which graduation requirements have been met and which ones must still be completed in order to earn a diploma. These requirements include passing both the language arts and math portions of the California High School Exit Exam, completing the algebra requirement, the writing requirement, subject requirements and total credit requirements.

In future years, students must also meet the new community service requirement and new computer literacy requirement. The graduation check also lists which UC entrance requirements and NCAA eligibility requirements students have met or still need to meet.

"The bar has been raised and students are rising to the challenge," said Maggie Webster, assistant superintendent, high schools. "We are so pleased that students' test scores and grad checks are beginning to reflect the outstanding job that they and their teachers and schools are doing to inspire achievement."

The Long Beach Unified School District hopes to have the highest pass rate of any large district on the California High School Exit Exam.

College, Career Help

Thousands of students and parents are expected to make the annual migration to Long Beach Unified School District's 33rd Annual Career/College Exploration Night. It will be held at the Pyramid at California State University Long Beach Wednesday, November 3 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Representatives from more than 175 colleges, universities, businesses and public agencies from throughout the nation will be in attendance to discuss possible career and college opportunities with students and parents.

The program is open to students in grades 9 through 12 and their families. Free bus transportation will be available at Cabrillo, Jordan and Renaissance high schools. Contact high school career centers for more information.

Parking and admission are free. For details and a list of presenters, contact Christopher Clifton, career education support services manager, at 989-7872, ext. 292.

Professional Growth

A meeting about the Professional Growth Requirement will be held Wednesday, October 27, at 4:15 p.m. at Longfellow Elementary School Auditorium. Employees with the California single subject or multiple subject professional clear credentials may attend for the latest information about professional growth hours, district procedures and professional growth advisers.

This optional meeting is sponsored by Human Resource Services and the Teachers Association of Long Beach. For information, call HRS at ext. 2901 or TALB at 426-6433.

Earn Salary Credit

Teachers wanting to receive salary credit for college coursework must submit official sealed transcripts to Human Resource Services by Monday, November 1.

All college or university credit must be from an accredited institution. An employee must have completed all course requirements by September 15 to qualify for placement on a higher salary scale for that fiscal year.

Transcripts received after the November 1 deadline will apply to the next contract year.

There is an annual 16 semester unit (24 quarter unit) maximum allowed toward salary credit. All coursework beyond the bachelor's degree must be upper division, of graduate standing at an accredited institution. Courses described as "professional" will not count without written approval by Human Resource Services. For information, call ext. 8008.

Watch for the Logo

A once-a-year opportunity is now here to purchase Long Beach Unified School District logo watches at low cost. Deadline for orders is Friday, October 15. Order blanks are available from each school secretary or call Patti Cheshire, ext. 8251, or Leticia Rodriguez, ext. 8464. The cost is only \$20.91 for men's or women's watches from America's best urban schools. Orders will be filled by Friday, December 10 by the Confidential and Supervising Secretaries Association.

Early Sub Requests

The Long Beach Unified School District usually receives its greatest number of requests for substitute teachers in October when thousands of teachers participate in professional development. Schools and teachers are encouraged to submit their substitute requests early. Requests may be made up to 30 days before the scheduled absence. For information, call the Human Resource Services substitute system at 997-8495.

Retirement Event

| Honoree | Date | Contact |
|------------------|--------|--------------------------|
| Jackie Hightower | Nov. 1 | Mattie Shaw ext. 1579 |
| Nancy Ross | Nov. 4 | Ann Driskill 439-6873 |

SCHOOL BULLETIN

Official publication of the Long Beach Unified School District issued bi-weekly during the school year from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 1515 Hughes Way, Long Beach, California 90810. (562) 997-8000. www.lbusd.k12.ca.us

CHRISTOPHER J. STEINHAUSER
Superintendent of Schools

BOARD OF EDUCATION

MARY STANTON, President
SUJA LOWENTHAL, Vice President
JAMES CHOURA, Member
JON MEYER, Member
FELTON WILLIAMS, Member
CHARISSA GOGGIN, Student Member

Recent Promotions

The following classified employees recently received promotions:

Nicholas Altenhofen, carpenter, Maintenance;

Lori Betschel, administrative secretary, Employee Relations;

Delisa Brister, administrative secretary, Food Service;

Michelle Burciaga, school community worker-bilingual Spanish, International;

Felicia Burton, elementary school office supervisor/year round, Edison;

Mary Castro, food service supervisor I, Chavez;

Sheri Crew, nutrition services supervisor I, Burcham;

Michael De-Four, plant supervisor II, Washington;

Georgina Duenas, Healthy Start assistant-bilingual Spanish, Poly;

Rebeca Escobar, Head Start instructional aide, Head Start;

Betty Lancot, administrative secretary, Transportation;

Guadalupe Magana, food service supervisor I, Naples;

Jonathan Maldonado, heavy truck driver, Food Service;

Venus Oliva, instructional aide-special, Sutter;

Chandra Reed, elementary school office supervisor, Barton;

Tanya Robertson, school data technician, Wilson;

John Smearman, plumber, Maintenance;

Maribel Torres, school community worker-bilingual Spanish, Hudson.

H.O.U.S.E. Opens

Teachers interested in learning and spreading new efficient ways to teach American history in third, fourth and fifth grades may apply to take part in "Standards in the H.O.U.S.E."

H.O.U.S.E. (History of the United States for Elementary Educators) will offer district teachers training in incorporating content and techniques that bring together the California History Standards with themes and ideas from the Open Court Reading Series.

Applications have been sent to elementary principals. For information, call ext. 2956.

Job Opportunity

Applications are now being accepted at the Personnel Commission, 999 Atlantic Ave., third floor, for school safety supervisor.

In Memoriam

William Marr
substitute teacher
July 31, 2004

Joe Nauyokas
former transportation director
September 20, 2004

Dr. Hugh David Burcham
former Board of Education member
September 25, 2004