



school bulletin

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

December 3, 2010



SPECTACULAR — Cabrillo High School trombonist Myles Tosca performs during a field show at his school, where he was joined by more than 300 students from LBUSD high schools and Long Beach City College for the 26th annual Band Spectacular. Despite the state’s massive budget cuts, LBUSD has preserved music and arts instruction. See more photos from this event at lbschools.net.

Hamilton, CAMS Excel in Robotics

Robotics students from Hamilton Middle School were part of the winning and runner-up teams at a recent Southern California competition, while the California Academy of Mathematics and Science earned an Excellence Award in a separate contest and will move onto a world championship event in April at Disneyworld.

The Hamilton students competed in the Northrop Grumman Middle School Robotics competition hosted by CAMS last month. CAMS students planned and organized the event with guidance from the school’s physics and digital electronics teacher, Ted Harder. Also competing were Long Beach’s Powell and Lindsey schools, whose students defeated several teams to progress to the playoffs. But Hamilton’s students, led by teacher Ethan George, walked away with the title.

Participating students started with VEX Robotics kits (vexrobotics.com) and customized the devices to accomplish assigned

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LBUSD Among World’s 20 Leading Systems

The Long Beach Unified School District is one of the world’s top 20 school systems — and one of the top three in the U.S. — in terms of sustained and significant improvements, according to a report this week described as the most comprehensive analysis of global school system reform ever assembled.

The report by McKinsey & Company, a trusted advisor and counselor to many of the most influential businesses and institutions in the world, was released during an interactive webinar in which international participants listened to expert panelists and engaged in a question and answer session. McKinsey serves more than 70 percent of Fortune magazine’s most admired companies.

“We’re delighted and honored to be part of this landmark study,” LBUSD Superintendent Christopher J. Steinhauser said. “This report is the clearest sign yet that Long Beach schools are making extraordinary progress and that our efforts deserve to be supported and replicated.”

Long Beach and Boston were the only two school districts worldwide to appear in the report. The other school systems were categorized as nations, provinces or networks, including one other non-district system in the U.S.

State Supt. Praises Latest Achievement

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell congratulated the Long Beach Unified School District for being named one of the world’s 20 most improved school systems by the prestigious management consulting firm McKinsey & Company.

“Long Beach Unified School District has long been on the cutting edge of education reform by using data to improve student achievement, and by supporting great educators and teacher professional development programs. They have also made progress in closing the achievement gap,” O’Connell said in a news release. “I am not surprised that McKinsey & Company has singled out LBUSD as one of the most improved school systems in the world. Congratulations to the school district, its staff, students, parents, school board, and Superintendent Christopher Steinhauser.”

O’Connell noted that LBUSD is also among seven leading school districts that are collaborating to improve public education through the establishment of a new nonprofit organization called the California Office to Reform Education.

The state superintendent added that McKinsey, a global management consulting firm, collaborated with the California Department of Education’s P-16 Council in 2008, producing the report Framework for a Comprehensive Education Data System in California.

(Aspire, a charter system). Long Beach also was one of 13 “sustained improvers.”

“Over the past 20 years Long Beach Unified School District has become a model for urban public school system transformation in the United States,” says the 140-page report titled “How the world’s most improved school systems keep getting better.”

Panelists during the webinar included moderator Sir Michael Barber (of the McKinsey firm), along with education officials from Canada, Hong Kong and South Africa. As the panelists fielded questions from Spain, India, Colombia, Germany and other countries, an encouraging pattern emerged for Long Beach educators. Many of the successful methods used in Long Beach also are used by the world’s leading school systems.

In both Canada and Hong Kong, educators emphasize the sophisticated use of student performance data, in a non-punitive fashion, to help teachers improve instruction. Long Beach has long taken such an approach, using data to fuel greater collaboration among teachers, principals and the central office.

As with Long Beach, these other successful school systems have gone far beyond standardized tests to create customized assessments that more fully measure student achievement.

The best school systems also partner with higher education on teacher preparation, much like Long Beach has done with its well established and nationally recognized Seamless Education Partnership with Cal State Long

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Systems	Sustained Improvers	Promising Starts
1. Singapore	✓	
2. Hong Kong	✓	
3. South Korea	✓	
4. Ontario, Canada	✓	
5. Saxony, Germany	✓	
6. England	✓	
7. Latvia	✓	
8. Lithuania	✓	
9. Slovenia	✓	
10. Poland	✓	
11. Aspire Public Schools, USA	✓	
12. Long Beach, CA, USA	✓	
13. Boston/Mass., USA	✓	
14. Armenia		✓
15. Western Cape, South Africa		✓
16. Chile		✓
17. Minas Gerais, Brazil		✓
18. Madhya Pradesh, India		✓
19. Ghana		✓
20. Jordan		✓

• World's Leading School Reformers

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Beach, local businesses and others.

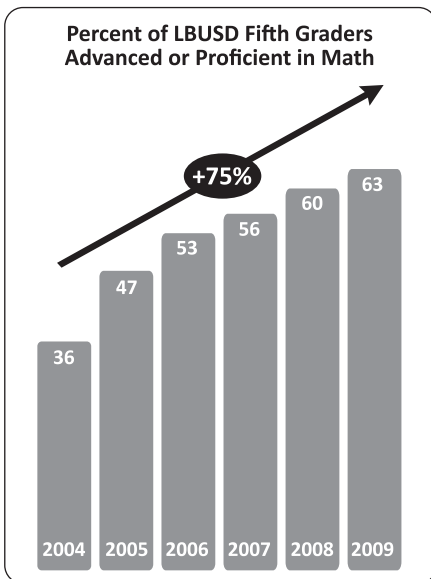
Also common to the most improved school systems was a commitment to supporting every student.

"It's about raising the bar and closing the achievement gap for all students," said panelist Michael Fullan, special adviser on education to the Premier in Ontario, Canada. Accomplishing this aim requires personalizing, or differentiating instruction to meet the individual student's needs, Fullan said. Such an approach has been key to Long Beach's success. The same goes for Hong Kong:

"We've gradually moved from being a selective school system to a school system for all students to succeed," said panelist K.K. Chan, deputy secretary of the Hong Kong Education Bureau. "So we have diversified our curricula to cater to the interests and aptitudes of students."

During the live webinar, Long Beach also was praised by study author Mona Mourshed for "tremendous gains in math."

The math gains in Long Beach began when a highly effective math teacher, inspired by an aunt who taught in Singapore, began sharing his approach with other teachers. With full support from Long Beach's central office, that teacher's successful methods have now been replicated in elementary schools districtwide. The result is that math scores have improved between 20 percent and 75 percent in second through fifth grades from 2004 to 2009,



Names in the News

Tincher Preparatory School teachers **Annemarie Lander** and **Amber Yokoyama** are among ten finalists for the California League of Middle Schools' Region 11 Educator of the Year award. The ten finalists from Orange and Los Angeles counties will be honored at a Dec. 8 dinner, where one of the nominees will be selected to represent Region 11 at the league's annual conference in February. The finalists are honored for making exemplary contributions to middle grades education. Tincher, a K-8 school, is the only school with two finalists.

according to the study.

"When teachers register impressive student gains, LBUSD is proactive in noting and understanding their practices," the study states. "It identifies the best delivery methods from pilot data and then rolls out the program."

The report praises Long Beach's teacher and principal training, or professional development, including teacher coaching and mentoring.

"Great care is taken to ensure that the teacher remains empowered throughout the coaching process," the report states.

The report also notes the importance of LBUSD's stable leadership over the past two decades of marked improvement here. During most of that time, LBUSD has been led by two superintendents – first Carl Cohn, and then Steinhauser. While most urban school superintendents survive only 2.8 years on the job, Cohn served for 10 years, and Steinhauser has served for more than nine years.

"As a result, there has been remarkable consistency in the architecting of practices and mindsets," the study states. "Though there have been changes in the system's priorities and approach, these have been the result of evolution, not revolution. Long Beach's culture of consultation, the collective ownership of its schools, data-driven decision making, and the focus on what students learn rather than what teachers teach are all deeply embedded in the system."

Expert panelists also described community and parental support as key to successful school systems. Effective school systems are those that communicate well, creating public awareness and a critical mass of support that allows for a "united alignment."

"The quality of communication is sometimes something that school systems underestimate," agreed Barber, the panel moderator.

The full report, available at <http://sso.mckinsey.com/schools>, is a follow-up to McKinsey's 2007 study, "How the world's best performing school systems come out on top."

• Robotics Contests

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tasks, such as placing donut-like rings on a goal post.

A week after the Hamilton win, CAMS robotics students earned an Excellence Award at the Small Manufacturer's Institute Robotics Competition in Granada Hills, qualifying for the April championships in Orlando, Fla.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

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\$1M Federal Grant Funds Data System

The Long Beach Unified School District will receive a \$1 million Enhancing Education Through Technology grant, the California Department of Education announced this week.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell announced that 151 agencies will share in more than \$36 million in the competitive grants.

"These grants will help schools use data effectively to improve student achievement and close the achievement gap," O'Connell said. "With the state budget crisis continuing, our cash-strapped schools desperately need these funds as soon as possible so they can use education data and technology to better prepare students for college or careers."

Funding for the grants was provided through the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed into law by President Barack Obama in February 2009.

The funds will be used by schools to acquire and maintain the use of data to improve high school graduation rates and to boost college and career readiness.

Healthcare Costs Up 8.4% in State

California employers have seen their health care costs rise 8.4 percent this year, and costs could climb 11.4 percent next year, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Employers are offsetting their healthcare expenses by shifting costs to employees in the form of higher deductibles and larger out-of-pocket fees, the Times reported.

In the Long Beach Unified School District, classified employees, along with managers and other non-represented employees, will contribute 5 percent toward health insurance costs starting January 2012.

L.A. Lays Off 1,000

More than a thousand Los Angeles Unified School District employees, including those who staff school offices, run libraries and maintain campuses, lost their jobs as of this week. Nearly 5,000 others will be shifted to new work places, with about 1,600 taking positions with lower pay or fewer hours, according to the Los Angeles Times.

Since June, about 6,100 LAUSD employees have either lost their jobs or been shifted into new ones, according to the school district.

Job Share Deadlines

Permanent or non-permanent elementary or secondary teachers may apply for job sharing partnerships for the 2011-12 school year. Deadlines are:

- Jan. 10 – submission of written request to have your name and telephone number included on a list of interested job sharing partners.
- March 1 – submission of applications for new job sharing partnerships, or for renewal of existing partnerships.

Submit the above items to Human Resource Services. Call ext. 8106 for information.