



school bulletin

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59 LBUSD Teachers Now Nationally Certified

Earning National Certification is paying off for more teachers here. A total of 22 Long Beach Unified School District teachers have recently excelled at a difficult task: achieving National Board Certification.

The district's newest Certified Teachers join 37 LBUSD Certified Teachers who earned the honor in 2000, 2001 and 2002. Their rigorous certification required an extensive professional portfolio completed over eight months and a day of written exercises.

New National Board Certified teachers include Tracy Braidon, Newcomb; Helen Cox, Lindbergh; Kelly Dale, Marshall; Fesseha Davis, Reid; Julia Gault, Lafayette; Jeff Harper, Franklin; Deborah Jaramillo, Tucker; Emily Lacina, Music Office; Lorraine La Croix, OCIPD; Christine Lange, Lafayette; Laura Leaney, Poly; Kathleen McCormick, Cubberley; Brookes Marindin, Cabrillo; Carol Miller, Poly; Mary Miranda, Holmes; Roberta Patterson, Millikan; Julie Schultz-Bartlett, Bancroft; Jeanne Spicer, Tucker; Sandra Thomas, Lakewood; Megumi Usui, Robinson; Tim Vanderpool, Jordan; and Pam Zerby, Poly.

The 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 are eligible for district payment of National Board application fees, a \$2,300 savings. Teachers who obtain National Board Certification receive 5 percent salary increases and, should they choose to serve as mentor teachers, would receive additional 5 percent salary increases. Should funds become available, certified teachers may also receive up to \$10,000 from the state at a future date.

An information meeting will be held to discuss the National Board Certification process and the district's pre-candidacy program. This meeting will be held Wednesday, December 10, 4-6 p.m. in Room 4 at the Teacher Resource Center. For information, call Lisa Isbell at ext. 2900.

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental agency created to establish high, rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. It is a national voluntary system to assess and certify teachers who meet high standards, and it advances education reforms to improve student learning.

Classified Employees Approve Health Care

Classified employees announced at this week's Board of Education meeting that they have completed negotiations and reached a tentative bargaining agreement with the district. CSEA members supported the agreement with a 91 percent yes vote in Unit A and an 86 percent yes vote in Unit B.

Board ratification of the amended agreement -- including important revisions to health care plans that will control runaway costs while preserving high quality district-paid health care for employees -- is expected at the Board's regular meeting on December 16. In addition to 3,400 classified employees, approximately 350 managers, 230 counselors and psychologists and 525 non-represented employees are expected to receive the same health benefits at that meeting, bringing the total number of district employees receiving these benefits to more than 4,500.

"Placing student achievement first makes you change the way that you think," said Val Pharr, CSEA Long Beach Chapter 2 President. "I've never been in a negotiation session that went so smoothly... We got through the tough issues keeping people in mind... with dignity and respect. I'm extremely touched by the things that happened to keep our benefits as excellent as they are. We have some of the best benefits in the State of California. I'm looking forward to another stellar year in the nation's best urban school district."

Joe Schessler, CSEA's Unit B Vice President, described his bargaining team's change of strategy once they realized the district's tough budget challenges this year.

"I told my negotiating team that we needed to work as a family, just like we've been treated," Schessler said, thanking Board President Bobbie Smith.

"Bobbie, you spoke to me at the Classified Employees Barbecue and told me, 'we were very generous with you in good years, and in bad times please remember that we need your help.' We did remember, and we're doing what we have to do to make our sacrifices, and when things get good again, we know you'll take care of us."

"Normally when a CSEA labor relations rep is here, it's not a good thing," said Vern Gates, CSEA labor relations representative and chief negotiator. "I'm here tonight for a good thing. I've been through a lot of negotiations, a lot of tough ones. This was the best I've ever been in."

Coffee With Chris

The next Long Beach Unified Family Committee meeting will be held Monday, December 8, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Poly High School Library. The informal meetings encourage open dialogue between employees and Superintendent Chris Steinhauser.

Students 'Beat the Computer' to Learn Math

Using a new electronic version of math flash cards, thousands of parents and students in the Long Beach Unified School District are going online to match wits with a competitive computer. The innovative "Beat the Computer" drills, developed by the district's math specialists, use Microsoft PowerPoint to help students memorize important math facts.

The free and fun drills are available to students and parents on the school district's website, www.lbusd.k12.ca.us, in the alphabetical

index under Math Computer Drills.

"Kids like it because it's like a challenging video game," said Dixie Dawson, the district's math curriculum leader.

Behind the fun and games is serious business. Total mastery of basic math facts is key to success on timed tests, including state-mandated exams. In the motivating drills, students are challenged to say the answers aloud before the computer reveals the correct response. Students who keep pace with the computer are considered "advanced proficient," the district's goal for all students in basic math facts.

"We're trying to help students take ownership of their own learning," Dawson said. "With the drills, they can go online anytime to test their progress without relying on others."

Students also use the drills as warm-ups in computer labs, and parents use them with their children at home to stay involved in their learning. During the holidays, the drills provide a constructive way for children to spend time on the computer.

Lessons increase in difficulty from basic facts to more advanced high school quizzes including trigonometry. New lessons are added frequently.

The drills require Microsoft PowerPoint or a PowerPoint viewer. Users who do not have PowerPoint installed on their computers can download the free viewer from Microsoft by clicking on one of the links provided on the "Beat the Computer" web page.

For information, contact Dixie Dawson at the Math Office, 997-8000, ext 2962.

Schools Give Books To Wildfire Victims

Stanford Middle and Muir Elementary schools have donated hundreds of books to victims of the recent Southern California wildfires.

Students at Stanford collected more than 2,200 new and used books, with some generous students donating 100 books each. Staff at Muir donated 82 books.

The donated books were given to the San Bernardino City Unified School District to distribute to children whose homes and belongings were damaged or destroyed by the fires.

"Our purpose was to give the children in fire-damaged areas something quiet to do," said Jennifer Bolling, reading teacher and student council adviser at Stanford. "A lot of people wouldn't think to take their books with them during a fire, but books are important."

NCLB Schools Win Achievement Awards

Seven Long Beach Unified School District schools were recently presented national monetary awards totalling \$857,935 for high achievement through Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act.

LBUSD schools receiving the national awards are Addams, \$83,935; Emerson, \$129,000; Gompers, \$129,000; MacArthur, \$129,000; Mann, \$129,000; Signal Hill, \$129,000; and Robinson, \$129,000. They were among only 115 schools in California receiving these funds.

The schools may use the money to help maintain excellence and to serve as models for other schools, particularly those designated as Title I Program Improvement Schools.

The 2003 criteria for eligibility for the national award include:

- a 2002 school year Academic Performance Index (API) score of 675 or higher;
- a poverty indicator of at least 50 percent;
- achievement of the school's API growth targets in the 2000-02 school years; and
- a doubled API growth target for the school and its socio-economically disadvantaged subgroup for two of the previous three years.

PACE Grad Risks All

Fourth grade students in Buffum Elementary School's Applied Technology Magnet were honored recently with the appearance of Corporal Ryan Antes, U.S. Army Ranger, speaking on the theme of "Risks and Consequences" as the culminating activity in their first unit in the Open Court reading series.

Corporal Antes, son of Buffum P.E. teacher Cindy Antes and a 1999 graduate of the Poly PACE program, has just completed his four-year enlistment, which included missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

He spoke to the classes about the risks and consequences he faced in his decision to become an Army Ranger and to put himself in harm's way in two war zones. He spoke of how the risks he took have given him opportunities for his future.

Fourth grader Darjione wrote to Antes, "We all appreciate you risking your life. You took a big risk. Thank you."

With his AP classes at Poly, Antes will enter CSULB in January as a sophomore studying marine biology.

Names in the News

Former Superintendent **Carl Cohn** was named by U.S. Secretary of Education **Rod Paige** to serve a four-year term on the National Assessment Governing Board. NAGB is the governing board for the National Assessment of Education Progress. Cohn is currently professor of education at the University of Southern California.

Winners of the Outstanding Volunteers In Public Schools Award for December are **Kevin Coy**, Carver; **Maria Diaz**, Webster; **Alma Estrada**, Burnett; **Charlotte Garza**, Longfellow; **Jennifer LeBrun**, Kettering; **Bertha Montano**, Burbank; **Minerva Monte**, Mann; **Cathy Moran**, Cubberley; **Rose Riddle**, MacArthur; and **Monica Rodgers**, Starr-King.

The Job Board

Long Beach School for Adults is seeking highly motivated elementary and middle school teachers to design coursework and teach two three-week sessions in a summer enrichment program for grades 1 through 8 (Monday-Thursday). The first session runs June 21 through July 8. Second session is July 12-29.

Two teachers may collaborate and each teach one of the three-week sessions. Successful past classes that explored subject matter in depth were offered in art, music, Spanish, computer skills, chess, drama, science, math, calligraphy, sewing and dance.

For more information or to request an application, call Rosi Pedersen at 595-8893, ext. 226, or fax a request to 595-0593. Requests for applications will be honored until January 16. Applications are due January 28.

850 Jordan Students Take College Tour

In a whirlwind one-day blitz of college touring, 850 Jordan High School tenth graders visited several Southern California colleges and universities recently.

Students toured 15 colleges and universities in Los Angeles and Orange counties. The trip was sponsored by the GEAR UP grant, which serves tenth graders at Jordan, Millikan and Wilson high schools. The college readiness grant from the U.S. Department of Education helps students and their parents prepare for the rigors and costs of higher education. Jordan GEAR UP Coordinator Stephanie Bilvado and staff contacted the 15 colleges to arrange for small groups of students to tour each campus. Tenth grade teachers and parents chaperoned.

For many students, the visits were their first to a college campus other than Cal State Long Beach or Long Beach City College. For a few, it was their first visit to any college campus. Groups toured UCLA, USC, UCI, CSU Dominguez Hills and several other campuses.

Driving for Dollars

The Student Council at Buffum Elementary School raised \$580 from students, parents, teachers and staff during its "Dollar Donation Drive." The funds were donated to The American Red Cross, Long Beach Chapter to help those affected by the recent fires in Southern California.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

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Superintendent of Schools

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Dedicated Parent

Hudson School will name its auditorium in memory of Rudy Acosta, a Hudson parent who died this past summer in a work-related accident, at a special presentation on Friday, December 19, at 9:15 a.m.

Acosta was an involved parent of five daughters who attended Hudson and graduated with honors. He was a frequent attendee of school concerts and sports contests and would bring his band to play at school events. He and his family have been associated with Hudson for more than 20 years.

Fitness Raises Funds

Despite, or perhaps because of current lean times for schools, Stanford Middle School's recent Fitathon fundraiser raised a record \$66,000 for the school. The popular event is like a jogathon but with many more activities. Students gather pledges that are honored if they complete several minutes of running, walking, rope jumping, hula hooping and obstacle course navigating.

Each year the event has raised more money since Stanford began running its own fundraiser instead of paying an outside company to organize it. Last year's event raised \$57,000. This year, the funds will go toward new computers, benches, athletic equipment and Associated Student Body and PTA activities.

Tour Helps Teachers

The Long Beach Junior Chamber of Commerce Charitable Foundation has announced their newest charity, the Adopt-A-Teacher Grant Program.

Since re-establishing its non-profit status just a few years ago, the foundation has been seeking underserved areas in the City of Long Beach that might benefit from the Foundation's fundraising activity.

Seeking to support teachers who often pay hundreds of dollars out of their own pockets to buy supplies for their classrooms, the foundation is planning a home tour next spring in order to raise money for the Adopt-a-Teacher program. The foundation is seeking homeowners who have interesting homes and who want to help local teachers.

To refer a potential home for the tour, contact Bart DeLio at 260-5371. Information is also available on the web at lbjaycees.org and click on "Foundation."

Did You Know?

The Long Beach Unified School District now ranks as the nation's 29th largest school system. According to the U.S. Department of Education, other California districts among the nation's largest include Los Angeles, which ranks as number two, San Diego, which ranks 15th, and Fresno, which ranks 33rd.

Job Opportunities

Applications are now being accepted at the Personnel Commission, 999 Atlantic Ave., third floor, for braille transcriber and supervisor--autism services.