



school bulletin

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

October 3, 2003

Richards Named County Teacher of the Year

Cassandra Richards, a fourth and fifth grade literacy teacher at Addams Elementary School, was recently named one of 12 Los Angeles County Teachers of the Year.

She now advances to statewide competition for California Teacher of the Year. She was named one of three Long Beach Unified School District Teachers of the Year this summer. Other LBUSD Teachers of the Year are Shehzad Bhojani, 6th-7th grade science teacher at Monroe; and Teri Lockerman, eight grade science teacher at Tincher.



Richards

As a literacy teacher in the Long Beach Unified School District, Richards is a turn-around artist. She teaches struggling students who are two to three years behind in reading skills. She gets remarkable results, improving reading skills in students as much as three years in a single school year.

Sometimes finding ways for her students to excel is as simple--and as demanding--as carefully assessing their academic skills to see if a student has not grasped a specific concept. Once she finds the key, learning takes off.

In one case, for example, she discovered that a fifth grader was still struggling to recognize a few letters in the alphabet. "Once I

knew that and could address it, his progress was extremely good," she said.

Making the extra effort to get rapid, dramatic results is second nature to her. She connects with students and families--making frequent home visits or even delivering a back-to-school night welcoming speech in Spanish. She's willing to do whatever it takes to help students succeed.

"She really knows how to motivate kids," said Addams principal Jill Rojas. "In her class, there's no such thing as a student who isn't motivated. Students really want to learn for her--that's her gift. They cheer for each other and encourage each other in her class. They never ridicule one another. They show respect. When they achieve a new reading benchmark, they run up to me on the playground and show me their papers. They're so proud of their improvement and just take off as learners in Cassandra's class.

"She's a no-nonsense teacher," said Rojas. "She tells students you need to make up this much work to be at grade level. There's no time to play around.

"She saves kids' lives. She may never know how much of their success in life began in her classroom. She is diligent in getting results for her students."

Richards is surprised when students, parents and co-workers notice that she does a great job inspiring students to do their best.

"I'm just a teacher," she said. "That's what I do."

"It's not really an extra effort if it's what
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Measure Adds Room

Measure A school bonds so far have built new schools and classrooms for more than 10,350 students. New schools for another 4,350 students are scheduled to be built in the years immediately ahead. Most of this construction allows thousands of students to attend school closer to home, no longer having to ride the bus.

Completed	Increased Capacity
Cabrillo	3,750
Edison	250
Franklin	400
International	800
Jordan Annex	1,200
Lee	250
Lincoln	200
Monroe	350
Powell	1,500
Sutter	450
Tincher	450
Wilson	750
TOTAL	10,350
Planned	
Broadway & Golden	850
Browning	1,450
Dooley's Site	1,200
GTE Site	850
TOTAL	4,350

More New School Construction Moves Ahead

The Long Beach Unified School District is making good on its promise to expand student capacity at existing schools and building new facilities so more students can attend neighborhood schools.

With the passage of Measure A in 1999, the district secured \$295 million in bonds for school construction and modernization. These local funds are matched 50-50 by the state for new construction. Modernization projects were matched 80% by the state.

In the four years since passage, Measure A has contributed to increased capacity of 10,350 seats in local schools, with plans in the works and construction under way for another 4,350 places soon.

New construction is proceeding at several sites in the district:

- Construction at the Broadway & Golden site is currently under way, with structural steel going up. The new K-5 school will have a capacity of 850 and is scheduled for September 2004 occupancy.

- The Browning School site at Hill & Redondo is finishing design stage. Construction on the K-8 school, with a planned capacity of 1,450, should begin in early 2004.

- The new K-5 school at the Dooley's site is in the final design stage. Construction of the 1,200-student school should begin in early 2004. Completion of the project will allow for the conversion of nearby Sutter Elementary to a middle school.

- The GTE site in Signal Hill, which formerly housed the Preparatory Academy, is in the final planning stages. Construction of the 850-student middle school should begin in spring 2004.

- Powell Academy is finishing construction of a new Gym/Music Room; occupancy is expected fall 2004. In spring 2004, construction is expected to proceed on the Administration/Library Building, with completion scheduled for summer 2005. This new construction will free up eight existing classrooms for instructional use.

Portable classroom placement at Powell and Sutter increased student capacity by 850.

Major modernization of Lindbergh and Rogers middle schools is expected to be completed by early 2004. Major modernization projects at Poly and Lakewood high schools begin this fall, with completion expected in early 2006.



GOING UP--The structural steel skeleton of the district's newest school is being assembled at Broadway and Golden in downtown Long Beach. The new K-5 school will allow community use of school facilities and daytime school use of park facilities.

District Wins History Grant for Teachers

Long Beach Unified School District was recently awarded \$936,000 as part of the Teaching American History Grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

The grant supports a three-year project to improve teachers' knowledge, understanding and appreciation of American history.

The grant will be used to train 75 fifth, eighth and 11th grade teachers. They also will take field trips to historically significant sites.

Retirement Seminar

A presentation on CalSTRS service retirement allowance, retirement options, updates on legislation and disability and survivor benefits will be held Monday, October 27, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. at 1515 Hughes Way, Room 143. This free presentation is important for members eligible for retirement.

Seating is limited. Call ext. 8214 to reserve a seat.

Job Opportunities

Applications are now being accepted at the Personnel Commission, 999 Atlantic Ave., third floor, for instructional assistant computer resources-bilingual Spanish, Kids Club assistant and Kids Club lead assistant.

The Job Board

Hughes Middle School is looking for a teacher to lead its mobile technology program. The teacher would be responsible for taking a mobile laptop lab to classrooms, adapting lessons to teach technology concepts and skills to students. For information, call Monica Daley, principal, at 595-0831.

PT Offers Art in Print

The Press-Telegram and Long Beach Museum of Art are offering Art in Print for LBUSD teachers.

Art in Print keys curriculum to the visual arts framework, uses the newspaper to teach printmaking techniques and offers a teacher workshop at the Long Beach Museum of Art. Teachers will receive a teacher's guide, a classroom set of student supplements and weekly delivery of the Press-Telegram throughout the eight-week program.

Their students will submit their original prints for exhibit in the Toyota Children's Art Gallery at the Museum and attend a reception honoring participants and their families.

To enroll, call 499-1448 before October 8.

In Memoriam

Christine Langemo
teacher, Whittier
September 17, 2003

Donald A. Keller
former teacher
September 27, 2003

The grant prepares educationally at-risk students for the AP U.S. history test using strategic reading and writing. Preservice training for 30 college students preparing for a history credential will be offered in Long Beach classrooms. They will receive priority status for hiring.

Straight Talk Oct. 7

An episode of "Straight Talk" featuring Superintendent Chris Steinhauser discussing achievements and challenges of the Long Beach Unified School District will be aired Tuesday, October 7 on ed.tv Channel 12. Air times are 8, 10 and 11 a.m., noon and 1, 2, 3 and 4 p.m.

Family Concert

The Long Beach Symphony will perform a free hour-long family concert in the Terrace Theater on Sunday, October 12 at 3 p.m. The concert is part of a celebration of Hispanic/American history, specifically the heroics of General Bernardo de Gálvez, who led a diverse army of free African Americans, Whites, Native Americans and Hispanic soldiers and sailors to fight for the colonies in the Revolutionary War. For information, visit www.lbso.org, or call 436-3203.

Wild About Lunch

"Wild About School Lunch" is the theme of National School Lunch Week, October 13-17.

Children who eat school lunches consume less fat and twice the servings of fruits and vegetables and greater amounts of grains and dairy than children who eat lunch brought from home or leave school to eat lunch. Age-appropriate serving sizes mean no super-sizing here. For information, call dietitian Cheryl Yoder-Edney at 427-7923, ext. 247.

Plant Ahead for Spring

Does your school have a garden or want to start one? If so, the Long Beach School Garden and Nutrition Coalition will meet on Tuesday, October 14 at 4 p.m. at Los Cerritos. For more information, contact Dianne Swanson, Los Cerritos, at ext. 2635.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

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• Teachers of the Year

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you need to do to help a student learn," she said. "I think you have to be flexible or sometimes you miss your chance to reach someone."

At Monroe, highly organized Bhojani builds his instruction around the slogan "Structure fosters creativity" as a means of balancing the many aspects of managing an effective classroom.

"Each day there is a level of consistency, in regard to procedures," Bhojani said. "The students know the objective and what the agenda is for each day. They know where to look and what to do for the 'warm up' and 'cool down' every day. An element of surprise comes during the lesson, either with the anticipatory set or an activity that is incorporated into the guided practice or check for understanding."

At Tincher, Lockerman came to the classroom after 10 years in the fashion industry. Her newfound love of teaching helps her identify with at-risk students struggling to find out what they can do. She never gives up on students who are expecting adults to give up on them, and her tenacity turns them around.

"It has been an eye-opening experience to witness students seemingly 'bloom' right before my eyes when provided with a quiet, supportive, resourceful environment to study for a test, do homework, type a research paper or whatever else rests on their plate," she said. "These pivotal turns in students' lives are lessons in courage and perseverance, and they teach me the importance of keeping a focused mind and an open heart to achieving the unexpected."

The annual Teacher of the Year selection is designed to focus attention on excellence in teaching. Candidates for Teacher of the Year are required to submit a detailed application assessing their community involvement and philosophy of teaching. Finalists also take part in an interview presentation of their qualifications.

Richards, Bhojani, Lockerman and other top local public school teachers who serve some of the 1.7 million students in Los Angeles County will be honored in the spring. Richards was chosen from a field of 54 finalists for L.A. County Teacher of the Year.

Coffee With Chris

The next Long Beach Unified Family Committee meeting will be held Monday, October 13, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Administration Building Community Room. The informal meetings encourage open dialogue between any interested employees and Superintendent Chris Steinhauser.



Bhojani



Lockerman