



school bulletin

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

March 19, 2004

Middle, K-8 Schools Beat Odds, Earn Honors

Middle and K-8 schools were recognized for unprecedented gains in student achievement at this week's Board of Education meeting. Lindbergh Middle School took top honors in the Long Beach Unified School District's first annual Student Achievement Growth (SAGA) Awards.

For the first time, all of the district's 23 middle and K-8 schools met or exceeded the state's academic growth targets. All middle schools here now rank at least 7 out of 10 compared to schools statewide that have similar demographics. Seven local middle schools now rank a perfect 10 out of 10 on these statewide similar schools rankings.

"The middle and K-8 schools have all made tremendous gains in student achievement," said Deputy Superintendent Dorothy Harper at a packed board meeting. "This could only be accomplished through strong support and cooperation from staff, teachers, parents and students. Together, they have made our middle and K-8 schools the best urban schools in the nation."

Harper, who is retiring this year, received two standing ovations after Board of Education President Bobbie Smith read a resolution honoring her for 35 years of service, and for being "totally committed to the belief that every student can learn." Her duties have included overseeing the school district's nationally recognized middle school reforms.

Top SAGA honors for making significant strides with the lowest performing students went to Franklin, Stanford, Hill, DeMille, Bancroft and Lindbergh middle schools.

Lindbergh Middle School was honored for achieving the most academic growth of any

middle school in the district. Eight out of 10 Lindbergh students receive free and reduced price lunches. Yet Lindbergh showed the greatest growth among local middle schools on the state's most recent overall Academic Performance Index (API) by scoring 621 points, up 73 points over the previous year.

This overall gain represents more than a five-fold increase beyond the state's 13-point growth target for the same period. Lindbergh also posted even more remarkable gains for one subgroup. The API for African American students at the school jumped by 89 points.

Lindbergh Principal Avery Hall attributed the school's success to "high expectations, hard work, a positive school climate, a focus on literacy and math, department common conference period planning, walkthroughs, teamwork, excellent teachers and department chairs, analyzing student work, professional staff development, period 8 and intersession math and reading support, and parent-teacher intervention conferences.

"Our teachers got the job done, and they deserve to be recognized," said Hall. Lindbergh's API score has increased from the 400s to the 600s in just four years.

"We're aiming for the 700 club next," she said. The ultimate target for schools is 800.

Lindbergh veteran math teacher Peggy Gutierrez credits much of the school's success to the time teachers spend working together to examine and discuss student work and lesson plans. Teachers from each grade level meet together every month to fine tune instruction in reading, writing and math. Gutierrez, the math department head and math coach, has been

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Dedicated Custodians Receive High Praise

Employees have nominated more than 130 co-workers for the Classified Employee of the Year Award over the past two years. Among these nominations were glowing reviews of custodians' performance.

A 2002 nominee and finalist, Rodney Jones, was then a custodian at Jefferson. (He is now a new fifth grade teacher at Addams.)

"In addition to his custodial duties, which he does well and with pride, Rodney is a technology expert who helps with computer problems on his own time. He mentors students, is an active member of our School Site Council, and is a positive role model for everyone.

"Rodney talks with students about his college studies and his goal of becoming a teacher. He follows his own self-imposed dress code, wearing a uniform polo shirt daily. He is always pleasant and willing to do whatever is asked of him and always with a smile. Rodney is an exemplary custodian and classified employee, but more importantly, he is an exemplary human being."

2003 nominee Joe Velasquez was then a custodian and is now custodian supervisor at Hudson.

"Mr. Velasquez is extremely supportive of our educational environment at Hudson by always being available to help staff members who need assistance. When you call for him, he's always there willing to help and always with a smile.

"Joe goes out of his way to mentor our students, giving them advice about proper conduct at school. Joe is the kind of employee who enjoys his job. He enjoys working with others, and he makes sure his job is done well. In fact, you only have to ask Joe once, and you know it's done. He helps to make Hudson a good place for students to learn and for the staff to work."

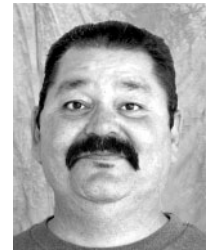
2003 nominee Gene Wendell is custodian supervisor at Gompers.

"Gene Wendell's determination and commitment

(Continued on back page)



Jones



Velasquez



Wendell

Nominate a Superb Classified Employee Now

Employees are invited to submit nominations for the Long Beach Unified School District's Classified Employee of the Year Award until April 21. The award recognizes exemplary classified employees who support the district's educational mission, demonstrate a commitment to being a team player and positive role model, strive for excellence in personal performance, and contribute significantly to classroom support and operation of the district.

Any full-time or part-time permanent classified employee at a district department, school or office is eligible for this honor. The selection committee will not consider self-nominations, but any district employee may nominate a classified employee.

Nomination forms are available at each school or office and at the Personnel Commission web site, www.lbusd.k12.ca.us (click Employment or Jobs, then Personnel Commission and Classified Employee of the Year Nomination Form). Completed nomination forms may be faxed to 435-8932 or sent through district mail to the Personnel

Commission, Attention: Employee Recognition Committee, or they may be dropped off in person at 999 Atlantic Avenue, Third Floor.

Finalists will be announced at the annual Classified Employee Barbecue at the Teacher Resource Center on Friday, May 21. The winner will be announced at the Board of Education's regular meeting on June 1.

Transfer Requests

Teachers interested in a transfer for the 2004-05 school year must submit a transfer form on or before the Wednesday, March 31 deadline.

Requests for transfer are valid for openings listed with the Certificated Personnel Office through the first seven student days of the following traditional school year.

Employees will be notified about the status of their transfer requests before the end of the current school year. For information, call ext. 8400.

District Tied for First In State Nominees

The Long Beach Unified School District is tied for first place in California for being the district with the largest number of nominees for California Distinguished School.

This is the first time the third largest school system in California has had the most nominees for the top state school award.

The district had 29 schools eligible for consideration this year, and is now tied for first place with 11 nominees. The only other district with as many schools is eight times as large--Los Angeles.

"We should be very proud that 11 more of our schools are among the finest in the state," said Superintendent Chris Steinhauser.

The 11 outstanding schools that will soon receive visits by state evaluators include Alvarado, Cubberley, Kettering, Keller, Longfellow, Lowell, Naples, Roosevelt, Signal Hill, Stevenson and Tucker. Burroughs, Harte and Newcomb all received honorable mention.

• SAGA Honors

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freed from teaching daily classes so that she can assist other teachers throughout the day. She gets results.

"I give everybody every secret I know," she said. "I'm really into getting teachers to perform, and showing them that this is our future. This is our Social Security."

Gutierrez taught at the district's nationally acclaimed California Academy of Mathematics and Science for four years before joining Lindbergh's staff, where she has made a difference for a decade.

Lindbergh has achieved incredible success helping students from less advantaged families. Among statewide schools with similar socioeconomic challenges, Lindbergh is rated a top 10 on a scale of 10.

"We do whatever it takes," Gutierrez said. "If a student doesn't have a binder, we'll find him one." She and other staff members have learned to spot the telltale signs of a student who has gone without breakfast.

"If a student arrives late and he looks like he can't concentrate, we approach him and say, 'Are you hungry? Let's go get some food.' Everyone swings into action. The cafeteria helps out. We get the student a quick snack, and then he's able to learn."

Gutierrez each day drives 47 miles one-way to work from Sherman Oaks. She could teach anywhere but chooses to stay at Lindbergh.

"I love it here," Gutierrez said. "I wouldn't miss a day. I truly love the kids here. We're touching their lives daily."

Parent Institute

The Ninth Annual Parent Institute will be held Saturday, April 3, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Wilson High School. Workshops for parents and teachers include student achievement, college/career preparation, social skills and character education. For details, call ext. 8322.

Retirement Event

Honoree	Date	Contact
Ruth Geppert	March 26	Kathy Whitman ext. 1580

Dreaded Deadline Passes With No Layoffs

The Ides of March--the dreaded deadline for issuing layoffs in California school districts--has passed without layoffs for the 9,064 employees of the Long Beach Unified School District.

To make ends meet, more school districts are resorting to March 15 layoff notices and class size increases, but not here.

Here's a recap of March headlines from other school districts:

- Los Angeles Unified School District eliminated 480 jobs in central administration. Faced with a \$500 million deficit, LAUSD still needs to slice \$61.3 million from its budget.

- Teachers in Santa Ana Unified School District accepted a voluntary 4 percent pay cut. Up to 400 teachers would have lost their jobs had teachers not agreed to the decrease.

- Fresno Unified School District passed out pink slips for 167 full-time employees in the face of a \$19 million deficit. Among those cut were elementary music teachers and library media teachers.

- San Diego Unified School District approved \$32 million in cuts with a shortened work year for some secretaries, principals and central office employees, layoffs for special education, library and counseling personnel, custodians, nurses and vice principals.

- Grossmont Union High School District sent layoff notices to 16 temporary and probationary teachers. Officials there are working to meet a \$7.5 million deficit.

- Hayward Unified School District authorized pink slips to 270 teachers and 10 administrators and will release 30 probationary

teachers, moves which will reduce teaching staff by 10 percent.

- The Bakersfield City School district approved the layoffs of 50 teachers.

- Benicia Unified School District is distributing layoff notices to 30 teachers.

- La Cañada Unified School District is sending preliminary layoff notices to 21 teachers. The district faces a \$1.5 million deficit.

- Siskiyou Union High School District will lay off 10 teachers to help meet its budget.

- San Mateo-Foster City School District is sending out 17 layoff notices to middle school counselors and instructional aides.

- West Contra Costa Unified School District trustees voted to eliminate high school athletics, close libraries and lay off 10 percent of its employees. They face a \$16.5 million deficit.

- The Antioch Unified School District is sending layoff notices to 13 vice principals, 13 computer teachers, nine music teachers and 14 physical education instructors.

- All Palo Alto Unified School District employees except teachers will take two unpaid furlough days next year, saving nearly \$100,000. The deficit there is \$4.2 million.

• Custodians

(Continued from front page)

ment to the safety of all students and staff is apparent. He is quick to respond to every call that comes to him on the radio. His flexibility and willingness to help others make him a well-revered employee. He is always hustling to do his work and is proactive in getting to future assignments.

"Mr. Wendell is a man of few words but the product of this work speaks volumes. I believe Mr. Wendell's knees and hips can't bend because I've NEVER seen him sitting down. I can honestly say that Gompers School is one of the cleanest and best-maintained campuses, not only in the Long Beach Unified School District, but in the country. This is due in large part to Mr. Wendell's work ethic, professionalism and attention to detail."

Names in the News

Three CAMS students were winners of the Long Beach Reads One Book Essay Contest: **Andrea Ochoa**, first; **Ricardo Leyva**, second; and **Janette Marie Howell**, third. They were among 24 CAMS students who submitted winning essays.

The Job Board

- Hill Classical Middle School is looking for teachers to teach dance/PE, GATE/Excel English and/or English/ELD, and math/science core. Contact Kristi Kahl, principal, at kkahl@lbusd.k12.ca.us or send a letter of interest or resume to Hill.

- Millikan High School is now accepting applications for boys varsity basketball coach. For information and applications, contact Chris Kinder, athletic director, at ext. 4148. The deadline to apply is Friday, April 2.

- Jackie Robinson Academy is seeking a standards coach to work with middle school teachers. Contact Frank Gutierrez, principal, at ext. 5680 by Friday, April 2.

- Applications are now being accepted at the Personnel Commission, 999 Atlantic Ave., third floor, for glazier, Healthy Start assistant-bilingual Spanish and student evaluation technician.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

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Superintendent of Schools

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In Memoriam

Nancy Turrey
former bus driver
February 28, 2004

Liwayway "Lonnie" Mines
former human resources assistant
February 29, 2004

Shelly Harris
instructional aide-special, Hoover
March 4, 2004

La Verne Lahrs
former teacher
March 11, 2004