



school bulletin

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

January 7, 2005

Board Honors First Employees of Month

Two employees were recognized as the first Long Beach Unified School District Employees of the Month at this week's Board of Education meeting.

The monthly award provides each winner \$100 from a private donation to recognize extraordinary service in a particular month.

Those earning the award were Rebecca Dennis, teacher and special education department head at Hill; Jay Holthe, cafeteria supervisor at Emerson; and Joe Rasch, recently retired director of Maintenance. Rasch will be honored at a future meeting.

Dennis coordinated the recent Abilities Awareness Week at Hill where faculty, staff and sixth graders experience what it would be like to be visually impaired, to be in a wheelchair, to be unable to communicate verbally or to have any of six other disabilities.

Holthe helped a special needs student make the transition to middle school this year in a simple and effective way. She contacted the cafeteria supervisor at the new school to ensure that the student would continue to earn a cookie for a good week, a reward that created a sense of continuity for the student.

Rasch organized donations for Thanksgiving dinner baskets for six needy families of students at Washington Middle School. He has organized numerous holiday donation drives like this in the past.

Applications are available from each district site secretary. Applications should describe actions of employees that occurred within the calendar month of the application. Those actions should both directly affect LBUSD students or staff and be above and beyond what is expected of an employee in good standing. Applications must be received by the Employee Relations Office by the last day of the calendar month.

For information, call ext. 8220.

State Budget Update

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger will propose cutting spending on K-12 education and community colleges by \$2.2 billion when he presents his new budget next week, according to news reports.

The governor had promised to protect schools from such cuts in return for their acceptance of billions of dollars in cuts last year, but state officials said this week they would not be able to honor that deal in light of the state's projected \$8 billion shortfall.

Meanwhile a report released this week by the RAND Corporation showed that the state's per-pupil spending declined from about \$400 above the national average in 1969 to more than \$600 below the average 30 years later. California's education spending has lagged behind the national average for the past decade, the study found.

A Challenging Year Produces Many Successes

By Chris Steinhauer
Superintendent of Schools

The budget news out of Sacramento has not improved. Lean times continue for California schools. Despite our limited resources, however, the Long Beach Unified School District has added to its impressive list of honors and accomplishments this school year. Your efforts continue to earn state, national and even international recognition.

You should all be proud of these recent achievements. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to these and many other successful efforts this school year.

- The California Academy of Mathematics and Science was named a 2004 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. CAMS was one of only 32 public high schools in the U.S. to receive this top national honor.

- Hundreds of students, parents, school staff and community leaders celebrated the opening of Long Beach's first new downtown school in five years, Cesar Chavez Elementary School.

- Seventeen more teachers in the Long Beach Unified School District earned the top

professional distinction in teaching, National Board Certification. These teachers were honored by our Board of Education this week. The newest certifications bring the total number of nationally certified teachers in the school district to 76.



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- Joan Kennedy and Patty Nagano, specialist teachers at Roosevelt Elementary School, were selected to receive the Hilda Maehling Award from the National Education Association. Joan and Patty wrote a Learning and Leadership Grant for video cameras

and release time so that new teachers and their coaches can watch each other's classroom lessons. This should help new teachers to learn effective teaching skills more quickly.

- Each of the school district's large, comprehensive high schools – Cabrillo, Jordan, Lakewood, Millikan, Polytechnic and Wilson – recently met and exceeded their overall state Academic Performance Index targets and their national No Child Left Behind targets for yearly progress.

- Enrollment in high school advanced placement and honors classes in LBUSD is increasing rapidly. This year, local high schools are offering more AP classes than ever before. More than 14,000 of the 26,000 students now attending high school here have completed or are taking one or more AP or honors courses. AP enrollment increased by 1,700 students this year.

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Poly Musicians Take International Stage

The Poly High School Jazz Ensemble this week performed before jazz legends at the most prestigious professional jazz conference in the world.

The Poly jazz instrumental group was one of only a handful of groups selected from hundreds of applicants worldwide to perform at the event.

The International Association of Jazz Educators Conference continues today and Saturday at the Long Beach Convention Center. More than 7,000 jazz musicians, educators, industry executives and students from 45 nations have gathered for the 32nd annual conference.

The talented Poly ensemble is directed by instructor Chris Stevens.

"The thing I'm most excited about is that we're performing in the main concert venue at the conference," Stevens said. "There are many different venues at the Convention Center, but they put us center stage at noon, and we're performing with three of the top studio musicians in the world."

The 24 members of the Poly ensemble are Vanessa Acosta, Martin Blagaich, Alex Bodnar, Bryce Brown, Sean Ducar, Marcelo Duran, Clara Dykstra, Eric Fiero, Daniel Fremgen, Danita Gould, Ming-iun Hsei, Isaac Kaplan, Kate Levinstein, Andy Mak, Sean Massich, Dustin Moore, Jairus Mozee, Darwin Padolina, Drew Pedersen, Nathan Ross, Peter Rothenberg, Theo Scott, Jessica Smith and Jasmine Stewart.

Filipino Delegation Learns from LBUSD

Six educators from Naga City School District in the Philippines recently visited the Long Beach Unified School District to study effective education initiatives.

The educators visited Signal Hill Elementary School and Hill Classical Middle School. They also met with district leaders to learn about LBUSD's successes in these key areas:

- Designing, implementing and monitoring educational projects aimed at increasing academic achievement;

- Mobilizing financial and non-fiscal (including community-based) resources to support schools;

- Creating alternative models for effective school board management;

- Engaging parents and other stakeholders more actively;

- Providing preschool, special education and alternative learning systems for out-of-school youngsters and adults.

New Computer Lab

Bryant Elementary School recently celebrated the opening of a new computer lab and music keyboard area.

The two facilities are being used by students in grades K-5 taking part in the M.I.N.D. (Music Intelligence Neural Development) Institute's curriculum for math and music. Students use specialized piano keyboard instruction and non-language based math computer games to develop problem solving skills and meet math standards.

The equipment and curriculum at Bryant was funded by several key benefactors including the Dr. Matthew and Roberta Jenkins Family Foundation, Educate the Children (Mr. and Mrs. Frank and Faye Clarke), British Petroleum A+ Energy Grant and Verizon.

Burnett Elementary School also uses the M.I.N.D. curriculum in grades 2-5. The curriculum is used at 55 schools nationwide serving 10,000 students.

Job Sharing Deadline

Permanent elementary or secondary teachers are invited to apply for job sharing partnerships for the 2005-06 school year. In addition to permanent employees, non-permanent special education and bilingual teachers may apply.

Job sharing deadlines are:

- January 18--Submission of written request to have your name and telephone number included on a list of interested job sharing partners.

- February 28--Submission of applications for new job sharing partnerships or for renewal of existing partnerships.

Submit the above items to Human Resource Services. For additional information, contact Debra Burianek at ext. 8691.

Health Plan Contacts

Effective January 1, Superior Administrators is no longer the school district's health benefits administrator. Employees enrolled in CCN plans should instead contact Delta Health Systems with any questions about their health plan, including questions about eligibility or claims.

Employees enrolled in all other plans may contact Risk Management at 997-8234.

The general phone number for Delta Health Systems is (800) 422-6099. LBUSD employees enrolled in CCN plans as of January 1 will receive new ID cards soon with a dedicated 800 number for district employees. CCN claims correspondence may be sent to Delta Health Systems at PO Box 692710, Stockton, CA 95269-2710.

In Memoriam

Scot Mattox
teacher, Millikan
December 2, 2004

Kathleen Hines
teacher, Marshall
December 27, 2004

Summer School Administrators Apply

Letters of interest are now being accepted for elementary and middle school summer school administrators. The 2005 summer session for elementary school is June 22 - July 22. The middle school session is scheduled for June 27 - July 28.

Letters of interest and resumes should be received no later than Friday, January 28.

For elementary schools, send the materials to Karen DeVries, deputy superintendent/elementary schools. For middle schools, send materials to Gwen Mathews, assistant superintendent, middle and K-8 schools.

Workers' Comp

Effective January 1, Fleming and Associates is no longer the school district's workers' compensation administrator. Employees with questions regarding workers' compensation should contact the district's new administrator, Southern California Risk Management Associates, Inc. (SCRMA), at (661) 775-9550. School site bulletin boards should display the notice of change.

125 Plan Meetings

The Board of Education recently approved a Section 125 Flexible Fringe Benefits Plan. Employees enrolled in such plans may direct a part of their pay, on a pre-tax basis, into special accounts that can be used throughout the year for reimbursement of certain out-of-pocket medical and dependent day care expenses and voluntary health insurance premiums.

Enrollment will take place during the entire months of January and February. The effective date of the plan is March 1, 2005. Informational meetings are being scheduled at schools and central offices.

For information, call Jesse Caballero at American Fidelity at (800) 365-9180, ext. 387.

The Job Board

Wilson High School is accepting applications for a head football coach (no teaching position). Application deadline is Friday, January 21. Contact Alex Flores at Wilson, ext. 6300.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

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CHRISTOPHER J. STEINHAUSER
Superintendent of Schools

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• Many Successes

(Continued from front page)

Enrollment in honors classes increased by 700 students. In some local schools, nearly 40 percent of the students are now taking AP classes, a record high.

- Lakewood High School became one of 50 schools nationwide--the only high school in California--selected to be a NASA Explorer School. The three-year partnership will bring to Lakewood scientific and engineering adventures that engage students using unique NASA resources and capabilities. The program is designed to give students the foundation and inspiration to pursue careers in science, math and technology.

- The Broad Foundation recently awarded \$1.14 million to the Long Beach Unified School District to expand the district's award-winning use of Baldrige strategies for continuous improvement at schools and central offices. The grant exceeds the combined \$1 million amount previously awarded by the foundation to LBUSD for winning the Broad Prize for Urban Education as the best urban school district in the nation, for qualifying as a finalist the previous year, and for past Baldrige implementation.

- Many elementary schools reduced class sizes in fourth and fifth grade. The smaller class sizes allow teachers to give more individualized assistance to students. Reducing class size is a major accomplishment during lean times.

- Sylvia Padilla, a teacher at Henry Elementary School, earned the Los Angeles County Teacher of the Year Award.

- More than 200 guest principals from business and industry were impressed by the high quality instruction, dedicated leadership and focused students they saw during a day of shadowing principals. The fifth annual Principal for a Day event was sponsored by the Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce and the Long Beach Education Foundation.

- Our schools continue to attract the attention of visitors from far and wide. Recent visitors have included California State Board of Education President Ruth Green and fellow board member Johnathan Williams, teams of teachers and administrators from Reno's Washoe County School District, Fresno Unified School District and Naga City School District in the Philippines.

Coffee With Chris

The next Long Beach Unified Family Committee meeting will be held Monday, January 10, from 4:30 to 5:45 p.m. in the Lakewood High School Library.

The informal meetings encourage open dialogue between employees and Superintendent Chris Steinhauser. All interested employees are invited to attend.

Gompers to Go K-8

The Board of Education has approved plans to convert Gompers Elementary School into a K-8 school. Gompers requested the change after many parents at the K-5 school expressed interest in the idea.

The K-8 conversion will take place over the next three years. Next school year, Gompers will add sixth grade, followed by seventh grade in 2006-07 and eighth grade in 2007-08.