



school bulletin

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

July 15, 2005

Cabrillo, Jordan, Poly Win National Grant

The Long Beach Unified School District has won a \$3.4 million Smaller Learning Communities U.S. Department of Education grant to support small, safe and successful learning environments at three high schools during the next five years.

Cabrillo, Jordan and Poly high schools will use the funds to create small learning communities on their campuses, where students will become known better by a core group of teachers. Administrators and teachers will explore a variety of structures to accomplish that goal, including academies, schools within schools and magnet schools.

A similar grant is being implemented at Lakewood and Millikan high schools.

Research supports the benefits of smaller learning groups, especially at schools that have larger enrollments.

The personalized attention, support and instruction students receive in smaller groups can help them achieve more and develop skills needed to excel in college and in life.

GEAR UP Awards \$110,000 to Scholars

The Board of Education of the Long Beach Unified School District recently honored 55 middle school students who received a total of \$110,000 in scholarships from a state GEAR UP grant. The students each won \$2,000 that will earn interest until they enroll in college.

Including the interest earned, about \$2,500 in scholarship assistance will go to each student based on their outstanding effort, grades and other academic factors.

The GEAR UP grant pays for teacher training, student mentoring, parent outreach and scholarships to help under-represented populations gain admission to college.

The winning students are: from Hudson, Takhaja Cotton, Rachel Drenthe, Lester Fulay, April Parenteau and Deveney Pula; from Lindbergh, Jesus Araujo, Jennifer Barbosa, Alejandra Cervantes, Tyaries Francis, Daisy Gonzalez, Shalamaur Jones, Cindy Nguyen,
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Summer Enrollment

Thousands of local students are learning at schools this summer in the Long Beach Unified School District. Total school enrollment is 42,384.

• Year-round schools reported June enrollment of 24,843.

Summer school enrolled 17,541, with 4,889 in elementary schools, 2,108 in middle schools and 10,544 in high schools.

STAR TEACHER— Janet Lipson, a Poly High School social studies teacher, talks with C-SPAN CEO Brian Lamb on the national TV show, "Q&A." The show aired recently and featured clips of Lipson working with her students at Poly. She is helping C-SPAN to develop classroom resources for middle and high school teachers nationwide.



Poly Teacher Earns C-SPAN Fellowship in D.C.

Poly teacher Janet Lipson is spending four weeks this summer in Washington, D.C. as a C-SPAN Middle and High School Teacher Fellow.

The honor goes to teachers who demonstrate creative and effective use of the C-SPAN TV network in their teaching. During the fellowship, Lipson, who teaches government, economics and law, is working to create resources for C-SPAN in the Classroom, the network's free membership service for educators.

Over the Fourth of July weekend, she was featured on the channel's hour-long "Q&A" program. Her interview featured video clips of Lipson interacting with her students at Poly.

In her first few weeks in Washington, Lipson has seen first-hand the role of the media in political life. She sat in on a Senate

committee hearing, enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the Capitol and watched the filming of C-SPAN's "Washington Journal." She will attend a White House press conference before returning home.

"This experience is invaluable and will help strengthen my teaching of U.S. Government," Lipson said. "I'm looking forward to sharing my new-found knowledge with other social studies teachers."

C-SPAN is a television network that provides public access to the political process, supported by fees from cable and satellite systems that carry C-SPAN programming.

Lipson, who became the first Long Beach Unified teacher to earn National Board Certification in 2001, is one of four fellows named this year, following a competitive and

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State Budget Lacks Key Prop. 98 Repayment

California school districts as a whole used more funding than they took in for the first time in 12 years, according to a state report released this month. The report showed that California schools continue to face lean times.

The number of school districts relying on multi-year deficit spending rose nearly 37 percent in the fiscal year 2003-04, the study by the State Controller's office reported.

The report came just as state legislators approved a \$117 billion budget that failed to restore significant funding owed to schools under Proposition 98 guarantees.

The Long Beach Unified School District Board of Education earlier this month unanimously approved a resolution calling upon Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Legislature to honor an agreement to restore \$1.4 billion this year owed to school districts throughout the state as guaranteed by Prop. 98.

Withholding guaranteed funds has serious implications, not only for this year but for

many years to come, as each year's education budget is calculated based on the funds appropriated in the previous year.

The LBUSD Board resolution stated that a \$9.8 billion reduction in funding to schools since 2001 already has resulted in the elimination of nurses, counselors, reading specialists, instructional aides, librarians, social workers and maintenance workers—as well as the elimination of athletic, music and art programs—at many schools across the state.

In the State Controller's study, 29 out of 1,040 districts reported in 2004-05 that they may not or will not be able to meet their financial obligations to employees and vendors.

Although LBUSD reported that it would meet its financial obligations, the district has relied upon reserves for years to make ends meet. Rising costs of health care and workers' compensation, combined with declining enrollment, have caused expenditures to exceed revenues.

• Lipson

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extensive application process. Fellows were chosen by C-SPAN representatives and evaluated based on their innovative use of C-SPAN programming, dedication to learning new technologies and commitment to professional development. She was nominated by Charter Communications Cable of Long Beach.

Lipson began working at C-SPAN's Washington offices in late June. She is collaborating with C-SPAN in the Classroom staff to develop video, online and print resources for middle and high school social studies teachers nationwide. Materials developed by Lipson and the other fellows will be available online to teachers at www.c-span.org/classroom.

"C-SPAN underscores the idea that primary documents don't have to be 200 years old," Lipson said. "My students look forward to engaging in debates on controversial issues using materials from the website."

Lipson's award, valued at \$6,500, includes travel and housing expenses, and access to resources from the extensive C-SPAN Archives.

"C-SPAN is proud to recognize Janet's commitment to sharing with her students a look at the political process," said Joanne Wheeler, C-SPAN's vice president of education relations. "We're excited to have her expertise."

C-SPAN in the Classroom supports educators' use of C-SPAN programming in their classes or for research. Launched in 1987, the service has a membership of more than 17,000 educators who receive teaching guides and access to a toll-free hotline for viewing tips and classroom strategies. In the 2004-05 school year, the program reached more than one million students.

Lipson followed an unusual path to her career in the classroom. Prior to earning her teaching credential, she was an economist in Northern California and also worked as a plumber. She owned a plumbing company in Fairbanks, Alaska for several years.

The Job Board

• Jefferson Leadership Academies is offering a math coach position. The school seeks a dynamic, energetic individual to support new and veteran teachers as they help students achieve math proficiency.

Duties include: building capacity within the math department; analyzing data; using analysis to teach and develop engaging lessons; training and supporting teachers with curriculum and classroom management; providing demonstration lessons; and instructing students in small group, whole group and individual settings.

For information, contact Helen Compton-Harris, principal, at 438-9904, or by email at HCHarris@lbusd.k12.ca.us

• Applications are now being accepted at the Personnel Commission, 999 Atlantic Ave., third floor, for speech-language pathology assistant.

In Memoriam

Kathy Harveston
senior office assistant, Research
July 1, 2005

DOG TALES—
Avalon student Andres Gutierrez reads to new friend Josh and dog owner, Kathy Dixon. Volunteers bring canines to Catalina to coax students into reading aloud. The effort is supported by the Orange County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and its Pet Assisted Therapy Program. The visits, funded by local service clubs, have helped to improve students' reading skills.



Dogs Help Children Read at Avalon School

Each Thursday during the school year, six dogs decked out in blue neckerchiefs trot toward Avalon Schools to a reading session with elementary students. The dogs are on a mission to help the students practice their reading skills.

After successful pilot visits with a single dog last year, the Library Media Center expanded the effort so that 18 students recently benefitted from reading aloud to a friendly dog once a week for six weeks. Volunteers from the Orange County SPCA Pet Assisted Therapy Program journey to Catalina Island with their trained dogs and spend half-hour sessions with individual students.

Students are selected by teachers from a pool of third through fifth grade readers who need a little extra encouragement.

"The students reap multiple benefits—the encouragement of a non-judgmental canine lis-

tener, one-on-one reading practice and a self-esteem boost from having been selected for this novel activity," said library media teacher Donna Sharpe.

Sharpe's collaborator, reading specialist Lindsey Mattingly, said students respond well to the relaxed environment.

"Shy students suddenly find that they are able to read aloud and their skills improve with each session," Mattingly said. The sessions also provide Mattingly a chance to assess students' abilities in an unobtrusive manner.

Teachers have noticed unforeseen benefits. Some of the students have never had a chance to make friends with a dog, and some have a bit of fear to overcome. They learn how to behave around dogs and are cautioned about approaching strange dogs on the street. The dog and owner teams also visit classrooms to discuss proper treatment of dogs and the valuable work that dogs do for people.

The dog owners volunteer their time. Catalina Express has supported the visits with reduced fares, while local service groups including the Avalon Boosters Club, the Avalon Lions Club and the Avalon Rotary Club have provided funding.

• GEAR UP

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Wendy Olvera, Laura Razo, Vivian Sboeuy, Linda Thet, Claudia Trigo, Daisy Varela, Henry Vazquez and Johnisha Warren; from Powell, Jasmine Thomas, Brenda Jaramillo, Luis Mora, Grace Anguiano, Cindy Iniguez and Brevon Stewart; from Robinson, Victoria Alvarado, Sofia Panuelos, Emlyn Pouli and Vuthy Toun; from Stephens, Noel Barnum, Mirsa Bracho, Keechar Broadnax, Rikeisha Brown, Stephanie Dignadice, Ashley Emery, Josue Fabian, Jalyne Figueroa, Elvira Guerrero, Pedro Hernandez, Katrina McCloud, Dean Macawili, Candice Menefee, Victor Morales, Shirley Romero, Shirley Sim and Iuta Tapa; and from Washington, Josue Castillo, Nestor Gutierrez, Janet Melena, Erika Ochoa, Ana Orozco, Eduardo Pena, Cindi Perez and Aaron Taylor.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

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