



school bulletin

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

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HANDS-ON LEARNING — Los Cerritos Elementary School teacher Dianne Swanson examines earthworms with students in the school's urban garden. Swanson started the garden to augment instruction throughout the curriculum while introducing students to the importance of agriculture, California's biggest industry. For her efforts, Swanson was named 2007 Outstanding Teacher of the Year by the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom.

15 Schools Earn State Title I Awards

The state recently named 15 schools in the Long Beach Unified School District that will receive 2006-07 Title I Academic Achievement Awards. The winners are among 416 statewide eligible to receive the awards this year from state Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell.

Title I schools are those that use federal Title I funds to combat the effects of poverty.

The purpose of the awards is to recognize schools that exceed national Adequate Yearly Progress goals for two or more consecutive years or significantly close achievement gaps among lower- and higher-achieving students. California's rigorous criteria require Title I schools to have doubled their state Academic Performance Index (API) growth target for two consecutive years and to have met other performance requirements in English and math.

Local schools meeting all of those requirements this year are Bancroft, Birney, Bixby, Buffum, Edison, Emerson, Gompers, Hill, Hudson, Keller, Madison, Mann, Muir, Signal Hill and Tincher.

Among the state's largest 10 school districts, the Long Beach Unified School District posted one of the highest percentages of Title I schools earning this prestigious honor.

Winners will be honored Tuesday, April 17 during the state Title I Conference in Costa Mesa.

Record Numbers Enroll in AP Classes

Record numbers of students in the Long Beach Unified School District have enrolled in Advanced Placement courses this year, helping them to earn college credit while still in high school, giving them a competitive edge and potentially saving their parents thousands of dollars on college tuition.

A total of 4,094 students have enrolled in AP courses for the 2006-07 school year, up from 2,309 in 2000-01.

The number of students in these college preparatory courses has increased steadily since the school district began a concerted effort to prepare more students for success in college and beyond.

Long Beach Unified was one of the first school districts to pay for and require students to take the PSAT exam in tenth grade, helping to identify more students who have the potential to attend college.

The school district in recent years also has provided AP Summer Bridge workshops for hundreds of students new to Advanced Placement courses.

The overall increase in AP enrollment here has included significant increases for each of the district's major ethnic and racial groups.

Teacher Cultivates Minds in Urban Garden

In the spring of 2000, Dianne Swanson turned over a shovelful of topsoil at Los Cerritos Elementary School and started an agricultural revolution.

Today, the garden she began is a key feature of the school and a source of powerful learning. Los Cerritos teachers at all grade levels make use of the plot, bringing students by to find compelling writing topics, to learn how to use rulers and other measuring devices, to experience the difficulty of feeding a family on the American frontier or to witness the life cycle in action.

In recognition of her skillful introduction of stimulating agricultural topics into the curricu-

lum at Los Cerritos, Swanson was recently named 2007 Outstanding Teacher of the Year by the California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom.

"Agriculture is a huge part of the California economy. It's the No. 1 industry in the state," Swanson said. "And we are the most powerful agriculture state in the nation, by far. That alone should make it an important part of what we teach here."

Her original garden has now grown to include a small barn and coops for chickens, ducks, rabbits and a guinea fowl. A group of dedicated parent volunteers, pleased with the results she is getting with her students, helps maintain the urban farmyard.

Students in her second grade classes learn that any lesson in any subject may take them back to the garden. Her classroom also serves as a resource for other teachers, with material for lesson ideas or discussion with Swanson that connects the garden with the state framework. Students in primary grades throughout the school visit the garden approximately every week.

"Our garden and the larger picture of agriculture is important in my classroom, school and in the community," Swanson said. "I use it as a springboard to teach others that agriculture is truly the basis for our society."

Swanson's work led to Los Cerritos' selection as the site for last year's AgDay LA, a county-level exhibition of presentations and demonstrations for students on agricultural topics. All Los Cerritos students participated in the event, impressing organizers and participants with their agricultural savvy.

Exposure to the food grown in the garden may also help students to establish better eating habits that prevent childhood obesity.

"They eat turnips, kale, green beans. They eat peas right out of the pod, like candy," Swanson said. "They want to know when they can cut and eat the broccoli. The garden contributes to their lives in so many ways."

Emerson Academy Wins Baldrige Honor

What do the Boeing Company's Space and Intelligence Division, Cedars-Sinai Hospital and Emerson Parkside Academy Charter School all have in common? They're all winners of this year's California Awards for Performance Excellence. Only 22 of the awards were announced this year by the California Council for Excellence, honoring leading businesses and organizations for using effective continuous improvement strategies.

Emerson won the prestigious award for the third year in a row. This time, Emerson was the only individual school to win statewide. One school district, the Orinda Union School District, also won.

The awards, modeled after the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program, recognize continuous improvement and superior performance in seven key business areas including leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, measurement/knowledge management, human resources, process

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• Emerson Award

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management and business results.

"The criteria are rigorous, and organizations that apply are putting themselves through the most respected and demanding filter in the country. To win this award on any level is worthy of tremendous respect," said Denise Shields, Chair of the CAPE Award.

The CAPE Award recipients will be honored at the 13th Annual Conference & Awards Ceremony on Friday, April 6 in downtown San Diego. The recipients will be recognized at the Gold, Silver, Bronze and California Prospector levels. Emerson earned the Silver honor this year after earning Silver and Prospector honors in prior years.

The Baldrige effort is named for Malcolm Baldrige, U.S. Secretary of Commerce from 1981 to 1987. He developed quality improvement strategies and criteria used by the nation's leading corporations.

Six years ago, Emerson was a traditional elementary school in the Long Beach Unified School District. It converted to a charter campus under Principal Cindy Young's guidance and has seen steady improvements in student achievement. Charter schools are publicly funded, independent schools that are free from some of the state's education regulations. This year, Young became the school district's program administrator for Baldrige Excellence.

Emerson's current principal, Mark Andreatta, arrived this school year. He praised Young's leadership, which contributed to the CAPE Award. He appreciates the learning environment he inherited at Emerson.

"The award reflects the work that was done prior to my arrival here," Andreatta said. "I am proud to work with a staff and community that comes together every day to embrace excellence and help students achieve superior results."

Dates to Remember

February	Black History Month
1	National Children's Dental Health Month 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"School Bus Safety," Grades 3-5, ed.tv 8
2	School to Career Groundhog Job Shadow Day 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"The Klan—A Legacy of Hate in America" (Brotherhood Week), Grades 9-12, ed.tv 8
5-9	National School Counseling Week
6	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"George Washington," Grades 3-5, ed.tv 8
7	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00—"Abraham Lincoln," Grades 2-8, ed.tv 8
8	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"Abraham Lincoln," Grades 3-5, ed.tv 8
9	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"Boyhood of Abraham Lincoln," Grades 4-6, ed.tv 8
12	Lincoln Day
13	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"Valentine's Day," Grades K-4, ed.tv 8
14	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00—"George Washington," Grades 2-8, ed.tv 8
15	Susan B. Anthony's Birthday
15	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"Presidents Day" (America's Special Days), Grades K-5, ed.tv 8
16	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"Riding Your School Bus Safely," Grades 6-12, ed.tv 8
17	National PTA Founders Day
18	Chinese New Year
19	Washington Day
20	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"You Can Refuse," Grades 5-8, ed.tv 8
21	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00—"Alexander Graham Bell," Grades 3-8, ed.tv 8
22-April 7	Lent
22	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"New Zebra in Town," Grades K-5, ed.tv 8
23	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"Jackie Robinson Story," Grades 6-12, ed.tv 8
27	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30—"Why We Need Each Other: The Animals' Picnic Day" (Brotherhood Week), Grades 1-4, ed.tv 8
28	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00—"Women's History Month," Grades K-3, ed.tv 8

LBUSD Stands Out in Teacher Salary Survey

A new website that gives users instant access to teacher-contract data in the nation's 50 largest school districts reveals that the Long Beach Unified School District ranks No. 1 when it comes to offering the highest starting salary for a first-year teacher with a bachelor's degree — \$47,653.

The database is described in a recent edition of the national publication, *Education Week*. The National Center for Teacher Quality offers the database on its website, billing the publicly

available portal as "groundbreaking" and "the first of its kind, empowering anyone to analyze and compare the day-to-day operations of teachers and schools in a single district or all 50."

The database brings together in a single, searchable site collective bargaining agreements, school board policies, laws pertaining to teachers, and other information for the 50 districts. Long Beach schools also perform competitively in other salary categories, including salaries for teachers who possess a master's degree. Searches may be conducted with just a few quick keystrokes.

The National Council on Teacher Quality advocates for reforms on a broad range of teacher policies at the federal, state, and local levels to increase the number of highly effective teachers.

For more information, or to try your own search on the database, visit www.nctq.org, and click on "NCTQ's new database: Teacher Rules, Roles and Rights."

Summer School

Letters of interest are now being accepted for elementary and middle summer school administrative positions. The 2007 summer school session for elementary schools is June 25 to July 27. Most middle school sessions will be June 25 to July 26, while others may have varied schedules.

To express an interest in an elementary summer school position, a hard copy of a letter of interest and resume may be sent to Jill Baker, assistant superintendent-elementary schools. To express an interest in a middle school position, a hard copy of a letter of interest and resume may be sent to Gwendolyn Mathews, assistant superintendent-middle/K-8 schools. Candidates interested in sharing an assignment should indicate this in the letter. The deadline is February 16.

Edison, Signal Hill Compete Nationally

Edison and Signal Hill elementary schools are finalists for the 2007 National Center for Urban School Transformation's Excellence in Education Awards. Only five schools were selected as winners nationwide last year.

NCUST, based at San Diego State University, considers schools eligible to compete if they have met a long list of student performance criteria, including attainment of national Adequate Yearly Progress goals, high attendance, low suspension rates and high percentages of students completing rigorous courses of study, or awards for school-wide excellence in academic disciplines.

Finalists will receive a site visit from an NCUST team to help determine top award winners. The winners will receive a check for \$1,000 and a banner bearing their name. Each school also will receive travel costs for one representative to attend the NCUST Symposium in San Diego in May.

The Job Board

- The WRAP After-School Office is seeking an energetic teacher with at least three years of experience, including knowledge of after-school programming, to assist in after-school program development, implementation and monitoring. This is a 10-month flex teacher-on-special-assignment position that begins July 1. The deadline to apply is Monday, February 19. Contact Sandra Velasco, WRAP academic director, at svelasco@lbusd.k12.ca.us for more information.

- The LBUSD Head Start Program is accepting applications for the position of Head Start disabilities/mental health manager. This management-level position is responsible for planning, organizing, monitoring and implementing the disabilities service area. For information and application, view the LBUSD Human Resource Services website or contact Karen Ensch at ext. 8106.

Teach on Saturday

The PALMS Office is creating a list of teachers interested in conducting Saturday intervention classes for middle school students. Saturday classes are held from 8 a.m. to noon each week, except for Saturdays in three-day weekends and the Saturdays before and after spring break.

New classes are scheduled to begin February 24. A list of teachers interested in substituting on Saturdays also will be created.

Teachers will be paid their additional hourly rate. Science, social studies, math and English Language Development (ELD) teachers are needed.

Eligible teachers should hold the appropriate subject area credential or a multiple subject credential and must be certified to teach English Language Learners.

The intervention program will include a complete curriculum with a course outline and pacing chart. Interested teachers should contact Kathy Reich at kreich@lbusd.k12.ca.us or at ext. 8638.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

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Superintendent of Schools

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