



# school bulletin

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

May 14, 2010

## Congress Asking for Long Beach's Advice

Long Beach Unified School District Superintendent Christopher J. Steinhauer testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor last week in Washington, D.C.

The committee is seeking Long Beach's input because of LBUSD's nationally recognized reforms, which have led to significant gains in student achievement.

Congress will use the testimony as it debates the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind, or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

In his testimony, Steinhauer outlined LBUSD's effective practices and suggested changes to NCLB that would help educators improve student achievement while making better use of taxpayer dollars.

Video and text of the superintendent's testimony in Washington, D.C. are available at [www.lbschools.net](http://www.lbschools.net).

## Legislative Analyst Likes Funding Flexibility

A new report by the State Legislative Analyst's Office says California should give its school districts more flexibility to use their funding as they see fit – the same kind of flexibility that the Long Beach Unified School District seeks with its proposed new state legislation, Senate Bill 1396.

The LBUSD bill continues to progress through the state Legislature, having cleared the Senate Education Committee by a 7-0 vote recently with bipartisan support.

The State LAO is California's nonpartisan fiscal and policy advisor.

Some state funding sources for education, known as categorical funds, are earmarked for

## LBUSD, TALB Reach Tentative Agreement

The Long Beach Unified School District and the Teachers Association of Long Beach have reached a tentative contract agreement that includes five unpaid furlough days next school year, along with other contract changes, in exchange for the preservation of 200 teaching jobs.

The school district has provided additional details on the tentative agreement, with supporting documents, in an online update available at [www.lbschools.net](http://www.lbschools.net) under Bargaining Update.

If TALB's membership votes for the deal, the Board of Education will consider the agreement for final approval. The school board would then vote on which 200 employees on the final list of layoff notices would regain their jobs for next year. In voting on the restoration of jobs, the board would consider seniority rules dictated by state Education Code, along with the ruling of an administrative law judge who is presiding over additional layoff hearings for teachers later this month.

The furlough days would shorten the 2010-11 school year to 175 instructional days, down from 180 this year. The 175-day school year is the minimum length allowed by law.

The tentative deal is designed to save the school district \$12 million as it copes with cuts in state funding for public schools.

## Final Layoffs OK'd For 243 Employees

The Board of Education unanimously approved final layoff notices Tuesday for 243 certificated employees, mostly teachers, as part of an effort to cope with the state's ongoing, multi-billion-dollar cuts to public schools. The final notices will be distributed to employees by the end of this week.

Additional final notices are expected to be considered by the school board next month after the completion of layoff hearings for teachers who have requested them.

At least 200 of the laid off teachers would be reinstated, pending a tentative contract agreement with the Teachers Association of Long Beach.

A list of the employees affected by the layoffs is part of the publicly posted May 11 school board agenda at [www.lbschools.net](http://www.lbschools.net).

The layoff hearing process was extended to include an additional three dates – May 24 to 26 – at Cabrillo High School. The extension of the hearings further delays final notices to roughly mid-June for the teachers involved.

## Leading the Quest for 'Race to Top' Funds

The Long Beach Unified School District is one of six California school systems that will lead the state's effort to apply for up to \$700 million in federal Race to the Top (Phase Two) funding.

The state has formed a working group of six superintendents to help write the application. The superintendents – who represent school districts in Long Beach, Fresno, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sanger and Clovis – also will develop an agreement that all of California's school districts will be invited to sign as a commitment to the goals of the plan.

Under federal Race to the Top guidelines, California is eligible to receive up to \$700 million in this second phase of funding.

California was not selected as a finalist for Phase One of Race to the Top's \$4.35 billion in funding. The state has since committed to pursuing the second round of funding.

State applications for the funds are due June 1.



**WIND POWER—** Hudson K-8 School's Math, Engineering and Science Achievement team won the MESA middle school state championship recently in Santa Barbara. Team members are Reginald Lata, Breanna Nery, Rae-Jillian Rivera and Kimberly Ventura. Story on next page.

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## Long Beach Students Learn to Love Algebra

A recent story that aired on a National Public Radio affiliate features the Long Beach Unified School District and its efforts to enroll more students in algebra during middle school.

The "Learning to Love Algebra" report cites studies showing that for students who pass algebra in middle school, the chances of going to college and earning a degree jump exponentially, as do the chances of earning high wages.

The story looks at 200 students – mostly black and Latino – at Stephens Middle School in West Long Beach, where a research-based pilot project is helping to make math fun. The Stephens students' math skills were not strong enough for them to take algebra, but they were enrolled anyway and provided with extra support, including an additional Algebra Development class. The students are now performing as well as the general population taking Algebra I.

## Nine Finalists Up for Employee of the Year

Fifty-nine nominations for the Classified Employee of the Year Award have been narrowed down to nine finalists. The top winner is scheduled to be announced during the 1 to 4 p.m. Ice Cream Social held in honor of Classified Employee Week on Friday, May 21 at the Teacher Resource Center. The awards ceremony starts at 1:30 p.m., when all finalists and nominees also will be honored.

The winner of the top award also will be recognized at the June 1 Board of Education meeting.

This year's finalists are Dominga Beltran, staff secretary at the Literacy Office; Yvette Brotherton, transportation aide at Newcomb; Jason Church, plant supervisor at Cabrillo; Michael De-Four, plant supervisor at Washington; Sylvia Flegal, office supervisor at MacArthur; Gracie Hind, school data technician at Millikan; Mingle Kwock, custodian at Harte; David Parker, office supervisor at Stevenson; and Dorothy Price, intermediate accounting assistant at the Professional Development Office.

Nomination papers were submitted by colleagues and reviewed by a committee of classified employees.

No school district funds are used for the Ice Cream Social, which is made possible by donations.

## Inspiring Evening

Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster will speak at the annual Most Inspiring Students Awards at 6 p.m. Thursday, May 27 at the Long Beach Hilton. Registration begins at 5 p.m.

The evening of stories about local students who have beaten the odds is sponsored by the Long Beach Education Foundation. One student from each school in the Long Beach Unified School District is recognized.

Masters of ceremony will be Frank Mottek, news anchor for KNX 1070 Radio and KTLA-TV Channel 5; and Mike Murray, president of the foundation.

The cost is \$100. Proceeds support the foundation and its work with students. Call ext. 8023 to reserve a seat.

The Algebra Development class uses games to help students solve formulas, graph quadratic equations and figure out other algebraic concepts.

To hear the full report, click on the archive at [www.californiareport.org](http://www.californiareport.org) and type in "Learning to Love Algebra" in the search field.

## Hudson Students Win State MESA Contest

The Hudson K-8 School Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) team took first place in the middle school competition at the state finals held recently at UC Santa Barbara.

This year's competition focused on wind energy. Students were required to build a device to capture wind energy that could lift the most weight and pull the heaviest car in the least amount of time.

Hudson team members are Breanna Nery, Rae-Jillian Rivera, Kimberly Ventura, and Reginald Lata. Their advisor is James Mills.

The Hudson team had taken first place in the regional competition at UCLA in April. Their win in Santa Barbara means they qualify for the MESA National Challenge in Denver on June 24 to 27. The Cal State Long Beach MESA program is sponsoring the Hudson team for their trip to the national competition.

## Poly High Econ Team Vies for National Title

Poly High School teacher Dan Adler and several of his students will fly to New York City this month to compete in the National Economics Challenge. The Poly team last month captured the California State Title for the Economic Challenge and placed among the nation's top six schools.

Poly team members (and the colleges and universities they will attend upon graduation) are Nikesh Bhakta (UCLA), Eric Brewster (Harvard), Sean Price (Lehigh) and Dillion Tellier (Wharton Business School).

The contest is sponsored by the Council for Economic Education. The May 22 to 24 National Championship Finals will culminate in a heated, quick-paced oral quiz-bowl round.

Learn more at [www.councilforeconed.org](http://www.councilforeconed.org).

### SCHOOL BULLETIN

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CHRISTOPHER J. STEINHAEUSER  
Superintendent of Schools

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## • Legislative Analyst

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flexibility made it easier to develop and balance a budget, dedicate resources to local education priorities, make staffing decisions, and fund programs for struggling students."

The majority of school districts "appear to be using freed-up categorical funds to support core classroom instruction," the LAO added.

LBUSD's bill, recently introduced by Sen. Alan Lowenthal, D-Long Beach, would relax spending restrictions on state funds for three eligible districts, including LBUSD, as part of a pilot program. The bill includes measures to make sure funds are used properly.

The additional flexibility would allow LBUSD to take surplus funds from some programs and redirect them to other areas where the need is greater. Such flexibility could help to prevent further job losses here.

## Rogers Musicians Earn Top Honors

The Rogers Middle School Advanced Band and Orchestra earned top awards at the recent Heritage Music Festival in San Diego, where musicians from throughout California and Nevada competed against one another.

Musical groups from Rogers, led by teacher Kevin Hamilton, earned first place in the middle school division, an adjudicator's trophy for earning a score of 92 or higher, and an outstanding band/orchestra trophy for the highest overall scores regardless of division.

Each group performed three pieces for a panel of three judges and was scored based on tone, technique, intonation and musicality. Groups also participated in a music clinic provided by one of the judges after the performance.

As an extra reward, the musicians visited Sea World, where sea lion performers Clyde and Seamore, along with OP Otter, treated the students to a private show.

## Science Fair Among Largest in the Nation

The 15th Annual LBUSD Science Fair – which is the third largest science fair in the nation – is set for 9:45 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 22 in the Cabrillo High School gyms.

This year 59 schools will be represented, with about 1,200 students participating.

The districtwide science fair is entirely community-supported, using no public funds, and it relies on more than 470 community and school volunteers.

Click on Science in the A-Z index at [www.lbschools.net](http://www.lbschools.net) to learn more.

## Retirement Events

Honoree	Date	Contact
Mike Troyer	June 8	Cindy Schiavo 421-1213
Pat Kishi	June 10	Dorothy Price ext. 2901
Pat Jernigan	June 11	Mary Poper ext. 3620