



school bulletin

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

March 5, 2010



SPEAKING OUT — Wilson Classical High School students stage a counter-protest against the Westboro Baptist Church, a group demonstrating across the street. Westboro's leaders, who travel the nation condemning people based upon their sexual orientation or religion, claim that "the Holocaust was God's work."

Photo courtesy of Ron Sylvester.

783 Layoff Notices Go Out Next Week

The Board of Education this week OK'd layoff notices for 783 certificated positions, up 28 positions over last month's total. The notices will arrive at schools by Monday, March 8 to be distributed to employees in person by March 15. The notices are necessary because of the state's ongoing, deep cuts to public education.

Most of the positions added to the layoff list are teachers on special assignment. These teachers were added because an analysis of their seniority showed that their jobs may be at risk.

For regular updates on layoffs and other budget matters, click on Budget Update at www.lbschools.net.

Manager Furloughs To Mitigate Layoffs

Most managers and other non-represented employees here will take three unpaid furlough days next school year, saving \$1.2 million. The school board OK'd the furloughs as part of a third round of budget cuts this week.

Office supervisors will take two furlough days because they have unique schedules and could otherwise lose retirement service credits. About 60 managers, including psychologists, will not be affected by the furloughs because their work schedules have already been reduced this school year.

The furloughs come after an Association of Long Beach Educational Managers and Confidential Employees survey showed that
(Continued on next page)

State Senate Bill Would Help Save Jobs Here

In a quest to become more efficient and save jobs here, the Long Beach Unified School District is sponsoring a new bill in the California Legislature.

The 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 added flexibility would begin in 2011 and run through 2014.

Some state funding sources for education, known as categorical funds, are earmarked for specific purposes. While the state recently loosened some of those restrictions in light of ongoing cuts to education, the new bill would eliminate all existing restrictions on categorical funds, providing greater freedom to LBUSD.

The added flexibility would allow the school district to take surplus funds from some programs and redirect them to other areas where the need is greater. The flexibility could
(Continued on next page)

Middle, K-8 Schools Honored for Progress

Eighteen local middle and K-8 schools earned awards from the Long Beach Unified School District this week for significant growth in academic achievement. The district's Office of Middle and K-8 Schools recognized each of the winners at a Board of Education meeting.

The Pyramid Awards recognize the cooperative efforts of parents, school staff, the principal and students.

Highest Honors went to 10 schools that showed these significant gains in student achievement: met state Academic Performance Index targets; met federal Adequate Yearly Progress criteria in English, math and API; or received special state recognition and honors.

Earning Highest Honors this year were Muir, Hudson, Hill, Hughes, Tincher, Bancroft, Stanford, Cubberley, Rogers and Newcomb schools.

Eight schools earned special recognition for meeting or exceeding API targets, with API gains ranging from 24 to 36 points (on a scale of 1,000) in a single year. These schools included Lindsey, Franklin, Washington, DeMille, Marshall, Burcham, Hamilton and Jefferson.

Senior U.S. Education Official Visits LBUSD

Describing her tour of International Elementary School as "amazing" and "magical," a senior U.S. Department of Education official reaffirmed that LBUSD's successes merit replication elsewhere.

Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana, assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education at the Education Department, visited classrooms before observing a professional development session at the school district's Teacher Resource Center.

"We want to learn what Long Beach is doing," the assistant secretary said. "There's



Meléndez

an alignment and purpose in Long Beach, from the central office to the schools, to support what goes on in the classroom. That's very clear here.

"We're also interested in the innovative work going on between Long Beach and other school districts as a potential model." Long Beach is working with other urban school systems such as the Fresno Unified School District to improve instruction and gain additional flexibility regarding the expenditure of state funding.

Appointed by President Barack Obama and confirmed by the U.S. Senate last July, Meléndez serves as the principal adviser to the U.S. secretary of education on all matters related to pre-kindergarten, elementary and secondary education.

Meléndez is former superintendent of the Pomona Unified School District.

• Furlough Days

(Continued from first page)

more than 74 percent of managers here supported furloughs to mitigate layoffs, while less than 11 percent favored job cuts as a means of saving money. See the full survey results at www.albem.org.

Along with the furloughs, the school board OK'd the elimination of high school summer sports clinics. The school board also decided to modify sports schedules at Wilson and Millikan high schools due to their block schedules, so that some sports classes would meet every other day like other classes. The school district was considering moving high school sports outside the school day to save money but ultimately decided against that change.

The full list of cuts made at the March 2 meeting is available under Budget Update at www.lbschools.net.

An Education Costs Less Than Ignorance

California now has 185,000 people in prison at a cost of \$32,500 a year, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy observed recently, urging voters and policy makers to compare that expense to what taxpayers spend per pupil.

The state spends less than \$7,500 per student, ranking 47th in the nation in per pupil funding.

Yet Californians maintained their strong and consistent support for public schools in the latest statewide survey by the Public Policy Institute of California.

Asked what areas of the state budget they would most want to protect from cuts, 58 percent of participants chose K-12 public schools — the area most Californians have wanted to spare each of the nine times PPIC has posed the question. Two-thirds were willing to pay higher taxes to maintain K-12 funding — again ranking public schools first among Californians' priorities for state spending.

Millikan Kicks Off Fitness Challenge

Millikan students and staff, joined by local and state dignitaries, recently kicked off the Los Angeles County Fitness Challenge, sponsored by the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

As part of the challenge, students, teachers, parents and community members are being asked to sign up online to perform 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity a day, at least three days a week, from March 1 to May 31.

Los Angeles County will compete against other counties in California. Contest prizes go to schools with the highest levels of participation. Among the prizes is a \$100,000 fitness center.

Joining the Millikan students at the kickoff celebration in the school's gymnasium was fitness guru Jake Steinfeld, known for his line of "Body by Jake" fitness products. Steinfeld, who chairs the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, encouraged students to be physically active.

Visit www.calgovcouncil.org for more information.

Free Dictionaries Go To All Third Graders

An annual tradition of all Long Beach third graders receiving new dictionaries continued this year, courtesy of the Long Beach Public Library Foundation and the Earl B. and Loraine H. Miller Foundation.

Students and dignitaries recently celebrated the book giveaway at Burnett Elementary School, with guests visiting classrooms to watch students as they used their new dictionaries to complete assignments. Attending the event were City of Long Beach First Lady Nancy Foster and Walt Florie, executive director of the Miller Foundation.

The program has placed more than 79,500 dictionaries in the hands of students over the past nine years. Related instructional material also is given to teachers.

Haiti Quake Relief

Parents, students and staff at schools in the Long Beach Unified School District continue to donate funds to help the victims of Haiti's devastating earthquake.

- At Birney, students and teachers collected \$1,420 for the American Red Cross.
- Roosevelt held two fundraisers, collecting \$3,000. Both fundraisers were organized by the kindergarten staff.
- Powell raised more than \$1,000.
- Webster raised \$3,900.
- Los Cerritos raised \$2,440, which was then matched by the employer of a teacher's husband.
- Tincher collected \$2,600 and is splitting the donations between the Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders.
- DeMille donated \$1,113 to the Red Cross.
- Grant donated \$1,902 to the UNICEF Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund.

Visit www.redcross.org to learn more about relief for Haiti.

Leaves of Absence

Certificated employees planning to resign, retire or request a leave of absence for the 2010-11 school year should submit the appropriate form to their site administrator now. Forms are available from site secretaries or at www.lbschools.net under Human Resource Services. Click on "For Current Employees."

SCHOOL BULLETIN

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• Senate Bill

(Continued from first page)

also allow the district to reallocate funds to reduce the need for layoffs.

In return for the extra flexibility, eligible districts would have to agree to accountability measures. Those measures include showing significant academic progress, submitting reports to state authorities and linking the superintendent's evaluation to student performance goals.

In LBUSD, the superintendent's evaluation already is linked to measurable academic goals.

Supporters of the proposed legislation include the District Community Advisory Committee (parents at Title I schools), District English Learner Advisory Committee (parents of English learners), Superintendent's Parent Forum (parents throughout the district), Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, Greater Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, Regional Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Academic Uprise, Centro Community Hispanic Association (Centro CHA), Long Beach Community Improvement League, Long Beach NAACP, Long Beach Ministerial Alliance, Cal State Long Beach, Long Beach City College, and The New City School (charter organization).

Record Number of Business Partners

The Association of Long Beach Educational Managers honored 114 new business partners recently for their contributions to local schools. These additional business partners bring the new total to an all-time high of 1,276.

ALBEM welcomed each of the new education partners with plaques during the annual Partnership Recognition Breakfast.

Earning the most new partnerships this year was Head Start with 13.

Retirement Planning

Two retirement planning workshops will be offered to classified employees on March 29 and April 27. Both workshops will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Teacher Resource Center, Bungalow ABC.

The workshops are sponsored by the Long Beach Unified School District and presented by CalPERS. Representatives from LBUSD Payroll and Risk Management will be at the workshops to answer questions.

Register at www.calpers.ca.gov or (888) 225-7377. Classes are limited to the first 100 participants.

Nurse of the Year

The Long Beach School Nurses Association is seeking nominations for the School Nurse of the Year for 2009-10. Each year the association recognizes one special nurse for outstanding contributions to the health and well-being of LBUSD students.

To nominate a school nurse for this honor, request a nomination form from Jayne Petrich at ext. 4530 or jpetrich@lbschools.net.

The deadline is Friday, April 2.