



school bulletin

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

February 22, 2013

Board, CSEA Reach Benefits Agreement

The Board of Education and the local chapter of the California School Employees Association have both voted to approve a health benefits agreement.

After CSEA approved the agreement by an 89 percent vote (90 percent of Unit A, and 88 percent of Unit B), the school board unanimously OK'd the deal at its regular meeting this week.

Under the newly approved Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), eligible CSEA bargaining unit members will no longer pay the current 5 percent employee contribution for health benefits. Instead, these employees will be subject to terms similar to the health benefits program recently approved for represented certificated employees and for non-represented employees.

View the full memorandum at lbschools.net under Bargaining Update.

Benefits Enrollment Set for March 1 to 15

Because of recently approved changes to health benefits, employees and retirees will have a chance to make changes to their medical plans during a special open enrollment period from March 1 to 15. Changes made during this open enrollment period will become effective April 1.

Employees will also have the opportunity to change contributions to their Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs), or enroll in an FSA for the first time.

FSA changes and new FSAs will become effective when the first payroll deduction occurs on March 29. A total of seven deduction periods remain for the rest of the calendar year.

Employees will receive additional information via U.S. Mail at their home addresses. Also watch for an update under Health Insurance in the A-Z index at lbschools.net.

Board Reschedules Workshop, Meeting

The Board of Education workshop scheduled for March 18 to 19 has been rescheduled to Monday, March 4, with the time to be announced.

In addition, the school board meeting scheduled for March 19 has been rescheduled to 5 p.m. Monday, March 25.

Both of these public meetings will take place in the usual location at 1515 Hughes Way, Long Beach.

LBUSD's Training Attracts National Media

An article published on the national websites of NBC and the Hechinger Report describes the Long Beach Unified School District's teacher training as "ahead of the curve" and "one of the nation's best."

The Hechinger Report is a nonprofit news organization focused on producing in-depth education journalism and distributing it to national media such as NBC.

Hechinger writer Stephen Smith detailed Long Beach's approach to professional development. Smith's report comes after he visited several schools in Long Beach and talked with local teachers, administrators and national experts about the success of LBUSD's professional development for teachers.

While many school districts rely heavily on outside experts and consultants, Long Beach creates its own training teams, and "for years, the Long Beach Unified School District has

had one of the nation's best-regarded professional development programs for new and veteran teachers," Stephanie Hirsh, executive director of Learning Forward (a national nonprofit organization focused on teacher education) states in the report.

"Our system is really invested in building internal capacity," Jill Baker, LBUSD's chief academic officer," noted in the report. "What that means is teachers become leaders and trainers. We're not bringing someone in from the outside. We're teaching teachers within to go back to their school sites to train others."

Pamela Grossman, a professor at Stanford University's Graduate School of Education, told Hechinger that LBUSD is "ahead of the curve" with its professional development.

"Professional development that's embedded in teaching and embedded in practice is likely

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Hughes a Finalist for U.S. Green Ribbon

Hughes Middle School is one of five California finalists for the national Green Ribbon Award, which recognizes schools for reducing environmental impact on their communities, promoting healthy school environments, and offering high-quality environmental education.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson announced this year's five nominees during a recent ceremony at Hughes.

"These outstanding schools are proof that every school day can provide teachable moments about protecting and sustaining our environment," Torlakson said. "As a science teacher myself, I'm thrilled to see how these schools are taking what we know about good environmental practices and putting them to work right on campus."

The honor marks the second year in a row that a Long Beach school has been nominated for the national honor by the state superintendent. Last year, Longfellow Elementary School, located adjacent to Hughes, was nominated by the state superintendent and went on to win the top national honor in the inaugural year of the U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon program.

Hughes earned a U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Energy Star 2012 award for energy conservation, with a perfect score of 100. Since 2007, students have built 12 themed gardens and planted more than 40 campus trees. New landscaping on the campus perimeter includes plants known to capture particulate

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GOING GREEN – Hughes Middle School was nominated as a finalist for a national Green Ribbon Award. Seventh grader Luci West accepts the nomination from LBUSD Superintendent Christopher J. Steinhauer and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson.



• Green Ribbon

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matter, in an effort to improve air quality for the school and its neighbors.

Hughes' Student Green Team publishes the Green Gazette, a schoolwide eco-newsletter that includes healthy recipes using produce from the school gardens. Hughes partners with a local bike store to host monthly bike repair and safety workshops on campus, encouraging ridership across the community.

"Being a finalist for the national Green Ribbon School Award has been made possible because of the dedication of our amazing Green Team parent volunteers, teachers, staff and most importantly our students who have demonstrated their commitment to being stewards of their environment," Hughes Principal Sally Gregory said. "They are forging a legacy to be environmentally and ecologically responsible, contributing to a healthy school environment and world."

This year's four other California honorees, who will compete for the national honor, include Journey School of Aliso Viejo, Redding School of the Arts, Prospect Sierra School of El Cerrito, and Ventura County's Oak Park Unified School District.

Participating states can nominate one district and up to four schools, one of which must be a private school. One must also be a school with at least 40 percent of its students eligible for free and reduced-priced lunch.

California's participation in the program is a key recommendation of Torlakson's Schools of the Future Task Force. The group brought together educational, environmental, business and community leaders to encourage the use of renewable energy sources and other sound environmental practices at schools across California.

The California Department of Education reviewed applications for the program based upon schools' demonstrated progress toward reaching the goals of the U.S. Department of Education's three Green Ribbon School Pillars: reducing environmental impact and costs; improving the health and wellness of schools, students and staff; and providing effective environmental and sustainability literacy, incorporating science, technology, engineering, and math education, civic skills, and green career pathways.

Winners of the national honor are expected to be named on April 22, which is Earth Day.

Learn more at cde.ca.gov.

Kindergarten Fest

The fourth and final Kindergarten Festival for incoming 2013-14 kindergartners and their families is scheduled for Saturday, March 2 at International Elementary School, 700 Locust Ave., Long Beach. The festival includes parent workshops, free school supplies, dental screenings, and lots of fun activities. Call 435-4080, ext. 19 for more information.

In Memoriam

Robert Jones
former teacher
Dec. 10, 2012

• National Report Extols Teacher Training Here

(Continued from first page)
to have more impact on what teachers do," Grossman says in the article. "A model where coaches are familiar with the schools, the districts and the curriculum – and are therefore able to offer fairly tailored coaching – has a better chance of moving practice along."

The Hechinger article notes that Long Beach administrators credit the Write From The Beginning curriculum – and the teacher training that accompanies it – with turning around test scores at many schools. Some LBUSD schools scoring at or below 20 percent proficiency in state writing tests have boosted their numbers above 50 percent since 2007. Other once-struggling schools have posted writing test results above 80 percent.

Fourth grade teacher Kevin Quinn told the Hechinger Report that training provided by LBUSD will help teachers "stay ahead of the game" as Common Core Standards are implemented statewide. The standards put a heavy emphasis on student achievement in writing. Quinn also speaks frankly about increased workload, including larger class sizes, more accountability and potential teacher burnout, though the article notes that professional development can help overcome the sense of isolation that a busy teacher can feel.

Teacher coach Cheryl Hubert of Starr King Elementary School stated that being a teacher in the local trenches gives her more credibility with her peers than an outside consultant who "parachutes in" to conduct training.

"They know who I am," Hubert says. "They feel more comfortable with me than someone from a business [where they] think, what are they selling?"

Some American school systems spend large sums on professional development, the article notes. New York City, the nation's largest school district, spent about \$100 million last year on professional development consultants.

"In most cases, there's little evidence to show whether the outside groups are helping schools improve," said Grossman, the Stanford professor.

Long Beach, however, has been a winner and a five-time finalist of the prestigious Broad Prize, given by the Broad Foundation to urban school districts that improve student academic performance and narrow achievement gaps between poor and more affluent students, the report notes. The Broad Foundation cited LBUSD's professional development as an essential element in Long Beach's ability to outperform other high-poverty school districts in student achievement. The foundation is among the funders of The Hechinger Report.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

Official publication of the Long Beach Unified School District issued bi-weekly during the school year from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 1515 Hughes Way, Long Beach, California 90810.
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Superintendent of Schools

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Long Beach spends \$5.4 million a year on professional development, less than 1 percent of its budget. Professional development here was cut nearly in half during and after the recession, according to the report. In 2006-07, about 4,500 employees attended more than 11,700 training sessions. In 2011-12, about 1,900 employees attended nearly 7,000 sessions.

"We've had to take a lot of things that we liked to do in the past and really narrow it down to what students are showing us they need," Baker stated. "Professional development for teachers, and for principals as well, has been at the core of the work that we've done that has garnered results. It's part of the district culture, and it continues to work over time."

Learn more at hechingerreport.org.

Learn the Latest on School Construction

The newest edition of the Measure K e-newsletter, which provides updates on school construction and renovation, is available on the home page at lbschools.net (and under Measure K Update Newsletter in the A-Z index).

Learn about the nearly completed McBride High School, upcoming renovations at Jordan High School, the Cabrillo High School pool project, the demolition and rebuilding of both Newcomb K-8 Academy and Roosevelt Elementary School, and more.

Dates to Remember

March

	American Red Cross Month
	Music in Our Schools Month
	National Middle Level Education Month
	National Nutrition Month
	Women's History Month
	Youth Art Month
1	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "One Fine Day and Take the Power," Grades 3-12, ed.tv 8
2	NEA's Read Across America
3	Adoption of U.S. National Anthem
5	Black American Day
5	9:00, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 2:00— "The Struggle for Women's Rights," Grades 9-12, ed.tv 8
6	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00— "Benjamin Franklin," Grades 2-8, ed.tv 8
7	Conservation, Bird and Arbor Day
7	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "School Bus and the Exceptional Child," Grades K-12, ed.tv 8
8	International Women's Day
8	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "Indian Artists of the Southwest," Grades 6-8, ed.tv 8
10	Daylight Savings Time Day
11	Johnny Appleseed Day
12	9:00, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 2:00— "Ask For It," Grades 1-2, ed.tv 8
13	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00; 14 - 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30; 19 - 9:00, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 2:00; 20 - 8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00; 21 - 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30; 28 - 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "Adventures in Poetry I," Grades 3-5, ed.tv 8
15	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "School Bus Safety," Grades 3-5, ed.tv 8
16	First Black Newspaper in U.S. Published
17	St. Patrick's Day
18-29	Public Schools Week Events
20	First Day of Spring
20	Open House — Middle Schools
21	Open House — Elementary Schools
26-27	Passover (Pesach), First Days
26	9:00, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 2:00— "Cesar Chavez," Grades 3-12, ed.tv 8
27	Open House — High Schools
27	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00— "Florence Nightingale," Grades 4-8, ed.tv 8
29	Good Friday
29	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— "The Velveteen Rabbit," Grades K-5, ed.tv 8
31	Easter
31	Cesar Chavez Day