

EYE ON EDUCATION

A Publication of the Paramount Unified School District

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MAY 2007

Adult Transition Students Make PAEC a Prettier Place to Learn

Paramount Adult Education Center (PAEC), located at 14507 Paramount Blvd., is now a prettier place to learn, thanks to the severely handicapped transition student program (PAT). PAT students range in age from 18 to 22 years and study on the PAEC campus. They are involved in a workability program which teaches job skills to help them transition into adult life.

During the 2005-2006 school year, teacher Karen Marquez and aide Tina Bellis created jobs on campus that would allow their severely handicapped students a chance to gain knowledge for not only job skills, but healthy eating as well. One of these jobs was a garden. Thanks to Mrs. Bellis' gardening knowledge, she and Mrs. Marquez were able to come up with a plan to make PAEC "A Prettier Place to Learn."

"I think it's beautiful, and it makes the school feel more alive!" says student Ana Monzon. According to Amber Flores, PAEC student, "Students do a wonderful job, and the flowers make for a very welcoming environment!"

Under the guidance of job coaches, transition students created and implemented a vegetable garden, herb garden, and two inviting flower gardens on campus.

The two back plots are full of vegeta-



bles, fruits, and herbs, which the students use to create delicious snacks and main courses. The vegetables include celery, zucchini, peppers, rhubarb, tomatillos, spinach, and two types of lettuce—Romaine and Bronze Leaf. Tomatoes and strawberries highlight the fruit selection. The herb garden is full of garlic, dill, cilantro, mint, rosemary, oregano, basil,

and thyme.

The front two plots are full of beautifully landscaped flowers, including larkspur, sweet peas, and Queen-Anne's Lace. The front two planters are bordered with eye-catching Alyssum, which gives off a honey fragrance...an inviting breath of fresh air as you walk onto the campus. Down the middle courtyard area are six

planters with large shade trees, surrounded by begonias, impatiens, and kolanthe. In the trees the students have hung birdhouses, wind chimes, and welcome signs.

"Our students take pride in their work and are very pleased with the job they have done. It really does add a warm, colorful, and inviting atmosphere to an already friendly campus," says Mrs. Marquez.

Mrs. Bellis adds, "I really enjoy the satisfaction I get when I stand back and watch as the adult students take time to enjoy the beauty our student workers have created."

We invite everyone to stop by to see our students' beautiful work in progress. Hopefully this project will continue to grow and thrive in the years ahead.

Thanks to Coast Nurseries for their continued donation of flowers for our garden. A very special thanks to Frank Peck (Principal) and Kathy Hamm (Assistant Principal) for allowing our students the opportunity to create such a wonderful experience for themselves and so many others.

Karen Marquez
Adult Transition Teacher
Adult Education Center

Alondra School Celebrates Dr. Seuss's Read Across America

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go".

A visit from a very vivacious Cat in the Hat, the very green and grumpy Grinch, and the mischievous Thing One and Thing Two were highlights of our celebration as students watched, bright-eyed in amazement, Dr. Seuss's stories come alive. Other special guests included Superintendent Dr. Verdugo, Mayor Diane Martinez, District Office Directors and Curriculum Specialists, as well as community hospital administrators, Police Officers, Firefighters, and our very own Alondra school staff visited classrooms to share their enthusiasm for reading. Out student leadership escorted our guests as they all donned colorful Cat in the Hat top hats.

Alondra's primary classrooms held a door contest depicting their favorite Dr.

Seuss' stories and characters. During the celebration our star readers in every classroom were awarded Reading Fluency Star certificates. All participating classrooms received a gift of books and bookmarks, and our library received a special collection of Dr. Seuss's books as a gift from our District Food Services. Our wonderful cafeteria staff served green eggs and ham for breakfast. After singing Happy Birthday to Dr. Seuss with a beautiful Cat in the Hat cake, students enjoyed ABC nuggets and birthday cupcakes for lunch.

On her way home after school, a third grader stopped by look up at the colorful Cat in the Hat balloons and said, "We had fun today, Mrs. Luya. Can we do this again next year?" I have already started preparations, I thought with a smile!

Janet Luya
Open Court Literacy Coach
Alondra School

Starting a Business in Pajamas!!!

Lincoln School had an amazing Winter Holiday Pajama Read Night this year. Nearly 300 people attended the event. Students had the opportunity to wear warm pajamas to school! Many children brought a stuffed animal to cuddle as they listened to teachers read their favorite holiday and wintertime stories.

Fourth grade students sold hot chocolate and cookies that evening to learn how to be entrepreneurs. Starting a business is something the students learned about in the Open Court unit entitled, "Dollars and Sense." Alejandro Torres, in Ms. Short's class, commented, "I learned when starting a business, you need your supplies ready. You need to be very strict. You need to make sure that your customers are happy. You need to have good service."

Another Alejandro from Ms. Short's class, Alejandro Rolon, stated, "Working hard pays off. You have to pay expenses. You have to do hard work. You have to have a plan."

Students from Ms. Naruko's class learned some lessons as well. Andres Calvillo said, "I learned that making money is called a profit." "I learned that when you are starting a business you need to investigate the market and expenses." Daniela

Montes added.

Stephanie Rodriguez smiles, "I had a great time selling because now I know how to start a business and find a market. For example, maybe I'll sell cold lemonade in the summer!"

The younger students enjoyed the event as well. Julian Cardenas, a second grader from Ms. Pritchett's class, had this to say about the event: "I liked How the Grinch Stole Christmas because it's funny. I liked the part when he stole and then tricked the little creature. Plus, I liked when he put the Christmas tree in the chimney. I had a great time at Pajama Read Night."

Sarah Rodriguez, also a second grader, said, "My favorite thing was the hot chocolate and cookies. It was fun. I saw Rebecca, Julian, and Elizabeth. I got a bell when I heard the story The Polar Express. I had a great time!"

In addition to the 4th grade snack sale, the great stories, as well as the fun with pajamas and stuffed animals, we also had a book store selling holiday books and school supplies. A great time was had by all!

Mickie Hazlewood,
Lincoln School
Open Court Coach

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING DATES

May 8, 2007 • May 20, 2007

Board of Education meetings are held at 6:00 p.m. in the Boardroom at the District Office, 15110 California Avenue, Paramount, and are open to the public

A Celebration of Black History Month



Mrs. Aiken's third grade class performed a wonderful rendition of "We Shall Overcome".

In honor of February's designation as Black History Month, the community of Howard Tanner School joined together to honor the heritage and contributions of African Americans throughout history. On February 23, 2007 we concluded our month long celebration with festivities that included food, music, and entertainment. Phil Wallace of Mobile Ed Productions took us back in time while introducing our students to the modern civil rights advocate, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and how this American hero helped transformed the views and practices of a nation. Through song, poetry, and powerful oration, Mr. Wallace shared the important characters and events surrounding Dr. King's life.

The festivities were concluded with the Visual and Performing Arts contribu-

tions of the Tanner students. Our kindergarten and first grade students painted amazing portraits of famous African Americans and displayed their life-size paintings throughout the multi-purpose room for all to view. Mrs. Juarez's second grade class shared their dreams about friendship and Mrs. Aiken's third grade class performed a wonderful rendition of "We Shall Overcome". The fourth and fifth grade students developed an interactive art exhibit while the middle school students researched historic African Americans and presented poetry and expository essays. A good time was had by all.

Hilda Verdugo
Assistant Principal
Tanner School

Just the Facts, Ma'am!

Educators are well aware of the importance of equipping students in the tools they need to succeed. Mastery of basic math facts is one tool that is vital to students' success in mathematics. In an effort to gauge students' proficiency in these facts, the District introduced a new Basic Facts Quarterly Assessment. This timed test, given to third, fourth, and fifth grade students tests their recall of basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts.

Beginning this year, the assessment was piloted at schools that have Math Coaches. Since then, a number of schools have joined in, resulting in more than half of all K-8 schools currently participating. Many of those schools have used the results from

these tests to plan targeted before-, during-, and after-school interventions.

Next year all schools will participate in Basic Facts testing, and in the future we look forward to including the primary grades for addition and subtraction and challenging middle school students with tests that measure their knowledge of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing integers. By assuring that students demonstrate proficiency in these foundational skills, they will be better able to solve demanding mathematical tasks in the grades to follow.

Debbie Stark
Director-Educational Services
District Office

Eye On Education is a monthly Publication of the Paramount Unified School District



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Good things are happening in Paramount Schools

Eye On Education

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National Read Day Celebrating Dr. Seuss's Birthday



Bill Winters, Paramount Petroleum, and Mary Thompson, PUSD Human Resources Department, are pictured with the Cat in the Hat at the Wirtz Read Day.

Since National Read Day was not only Dr. Seuss's birthday, but also the 50th Anniversary of the release of one of his most famous books, "The Cat in the Hat", Harry Wirtz School decided to celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday in style. Community members, District Office administration and staff all read Dr. Seuss's books to the K-5 students

of Harry Wirtz School. Special thanks go out to Mr. Bill Winters who came over from Paramount Petroleum to read to our Kindergarten and Second grade students.

Manuel SanMiguel
Principal
Wirtz School

Mr. Fairbanks Honored with PHS Senior Campus Teacher of the Year



Highly interactive with students and deeply concerned for his students' academic success is a good description of this year's Teacher of the Year, Mr. Fairbanks.

His students describe him as a fair man with a sincere heart. He has a real desire to see his students succeed and will go to far lengths to ensure their success. When it comes to getting a lesson across, Mr. Fairbanks is not too proud to try the silliest measure in order for his students to understand.

For the past 29 years, Mr. Fairbanks has been teaching in the Paramount Unified School District. His career started at Clearwater in 1978 where he taught 7th & 8th grade social studies for 17 years. He then transferred to the high school and has been here for twelve years. Mr. Fairbanks currently teaches Economics, AP Micro-Economics, U.S. History, and AP U.S. History.

Mr. Fairbanks puts in hours not just teaching, but in other campus activities as

well. He is the senior class advisor and is a pro at this role, for it is not his first time following a class level from their sophomore through their senior year. In addition to this, Mr. Fairbanks is also the GATE coordinator where he handles all affairs related to GATE students.

Each school in the Paramount Unified School District selects a Teacher of the Year. The process begins with teachers from each school nominating a teacher. From there, a ballot is created, and all the teachers in each school vote for one candidate. The candidate with the most votes wins. "I feel very honored that my colleagues decided to vote for me," said Mr. Fairbanks when asked about this award.

All Teachers of the Year are recognized with an award given at an upcoming District Board meeting.

Gabriela Valdez
12th Grade Student
PHS

Superintendent's Message:

School Safety

Dear Parents and Community Members,

I know you join me in offering heartfelt compassion and sympathy to the college students and families at Virginia Technical Institute as they continue to deal with the horrific shooting incident that occurred on that campus last month. Our hearts and prayers go out to the victims of this tragedy.

While we consider our schools safe havens for learning, I am sure the tragic events at Virginia Tech have made many of us stop and think about the readiness of our schools to deal with such an event. The Paramount Unified School District is committed to maintaining safe campuses that provide healthy, nurturing learning environments for students at all grade levels.



Superintendent David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.

We maintain current, effective and comprehensive school safety plans. Our school leaders know the responsibilities of our support staff and students. In addition, there is a familiarity with the school safety plans which help ensure that should an incident occur our schools are prepared to effectively respond.

David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Students Speak Their Minds

Paramount High School students met on a Saturday morning recently to participate in the annual Rotary Youth Forum jointly sponsored by the Paramount Rotary Club, Paramount Petroleum and Paramount Unified School District. Table discussions led and facilitated by approximately 40 Paramount business and community leaders gave over 250 high school students the experience and opportunity to debate issues with fellow students while community members judged the students' ideas and debating skills. This unique activity provides students practice in expressing their ideas in a poised, sophisticated and articulate manner.

After the round table discussions, students were awarded monetary gifts provided by the Paramount Rotary Club and Paramount Petroleum. Congratulations to the following students:

Most Creative Idea

Brittany Padilla, First Place

Runners-up:

Nataly Barragan, Alejandro Cortex, Diane Galindo, Devin McClellan, Marcos Nunez, Eva Quintero, Jacquelyn Robles, Victor Valdez, Nury Vargas

Most Inspirational

Faviola Hernandez, First Place

Runners-up:

Robert Gales, Monique Gray, Ronisha Hayden, Victor Hernandez, Gurdeep Kaur, Lorena Leon, Audrey Malone, Luis Mercadeo, Luis Soto

Most Distinguished Leader

Sheida Ramezan, First Place

Runners-up:

Raul Banuelos, Eddie Fuentes, Jazmine Herrera, Chell Le Jones, Yvonne Laumesima, Dolores Martinez, Mellissa Montoya, Hazel Ortiz, Triana Patel

Four additional students were recognized by Rotary Club President John Colville for their active participation in the discussions: Charlie Arce, Raquel Harris, Alfonso Peña, and Rosie Valencia.

High School Musical

The Paramount High School Little Theater was alive with singing and dancing as students performed the popular Disney production of High School Musical during the end of March.

Each night of the performances brought a theater full of family members, friends, and school staff eager to see the Pirate actors in action. Teens and preteens are familiar with the musical that brings to life the adventures that take place in a high school setting. The cast worked hard preparing for the play and rehearsed every day after school since January. Playing the lead in this year's musical were Luis Guzman, 11th, as Jock Troy; Jennifer Florimon, 11th, as Thespian Sharpay; Kimmy Navarro, 9th, as Brainiac Gabriella; and Aaron Norman, 11th, as Thespian Ryan.

The musical is based on the Disney original movie, High School Musical, which is basically about a typical high school where there are various cliques

who realize at the end that they aren't so different from each other. The reason that this particular play was chosen is because Disney is allowing high schools the opportunity to perform it for only a limited time. It's also very popular with the K-8 group, and it's a good way to get them excited about the theater.

Paramount High's very own drama teacher, Ms. Aldave, is the one responsible for bringing the play to our campus and overseeing almost every detail from choosing the actors to approving the costumes and set design. U.S. History teacher Mrs. Marchesini was in charge of the play's choreography. Ms. Aldave stated, "Throughout the process, it makes me excited that the kids are excited about working with each other and their camaraderie. Now they've even become friends."

Evelyn Garcia
12th Grade Student - PHS

West Campus: Changing the World One Step at a Time



Some of the members of the Paramount High School-West Campus Green Club are gathering cans for recycling.

Higher temperatures, tsunamis, climate changes, wacky weather, and melting ice caps, these are only some of the consequences of global warming that we are already experiencing, which could get worse. But that is only if we do nothing about this global problem that can be stopped. Simple ways anyone can help are by reducing the use of water and by turning off unnecessary electricity during the day. Sure humans are part of the problem, but if we change a few things that we do in our daily lives, we can be part of the solution.

One way Paramount High School West Campus is contributing to the solution is through recycling. West Campus has been successfully recycling paper schoolwide for two years and now. Thanks to ASB and the Green Club, the recycling has been expanded to include bottles and cans! Helping the environment is what the Green Club is all about.

The Green Club's advisors are Cara Cruzan, Cynthia Herdman, Lora Kermode, and Pat Way. "The Green Club has given many students the opportunity to get more involved at PHS-West Campus," Ms.

Kermode said. "These amazing students are truly dedicated to saving the environment and making the world a better place. The green and white recycling bins around campus really stand out and send a powerful message that PHS-West Campus is environmentally aware! Go Green!"

Thanks to the generous donation of funds by ASB, the Green Club was able to purchase the green recycling bins that are sprinkled around campus. All students and staff have to do is deposit their used bottles and cans in the recycling bins, and the Green Club takes care of the rest. The proceeds from recycling go to funding the Green Club's quest to help the environment through various activities such as beach clean-ups. Through this small step, students and staff at PHS-West Campus are changing the world.

We are saving the environment one step at a time!

Fernando Hernandez
- Green Club Press Secretary
Lora Kermode
-Teacher, PHS-West Campus

Congratulations Jonathan



Senior Jonathan Tedtaotao is pictured with Paramount High School Principal Jim Monico.

The National Pacific Islander Educator Network (NPIEN) recently selected Jonathan Tedtaotao for its Student Scholar Award. NPIEN's mission is to recognize students from the Pacific Islander community who have exhibited outstanding or improved academic achievement or excelled in the areas of

community service or extracurricular activities. As Pacific Islanders are sometimes stereotyped as "non-academic, football players, or entertainers," these awards are a significant opportunity to recognize a student's success. Jonathan is a senior at Paramount High School and was nominated by counselor Eric Lindshield.

Perfect Attendance Carnival



Did Principal Jim Monico really slide?

Paramount High School celebrated their second annual Attendance Carnival on April 6, 2007. This year over 1,700 students were eligible to attend the carnival as opposed to 1,300 last year. Students who attended school each day for the

entire month of March qualified to attend the carnival. In addition, the students received a wonderful bag of popcorn and a raffle ticket. Students were given an opportunity to win some really wonderful prizes. A fun time was had by all.

Roosevelt School PTA Honors Staff

Roosevelt School PTA recently recognized three staff members for their dedication to the school community at the PTA Honorary Service Award dinner held at Progress Park. Those who received the awards were selected by the school's PTA Board of Directors.

Mrs. Mia Tryon, the school Literacy Coach, was selected for her service to teachers, students and parents. As the coach, Mrs. Tryon provides elementary grade teachers with support in teaching reading and language arts. Mrs. Tryon makes a difference with students directly by providing tutoring sessions for our kindergarten students and running the group known as "Fluency Buddies" where students strive to improve their own reading skills. Several parent workshops have been offered at the school site and Mrs. Tryon is the coordinator of the trainings.

Mr. Jose Vargas is a fourth

grade teacher who was recognized for his efforts to gather parent support throughout the school. Mr. Vargas has made a significant difference in the success of the PTA membership drive and the active participation of our parents and teachers.

Ms. Yolanda Oliva, our school secretary, was the final honoree. Ms. Oliva is a driving force in our school's success. Her job requires her to work with parents, staff and students on a daily basis. While she can always be found attempting to complete ten tasks at once, she always takes the time to assist anyone with a question, concern or need.

The Roosevelt School PTA was proud to honor our own for the service they provide and their commitment to the students and families in our community.

Michele Dutton
Principal
Roosevelt School

What is Zome?



Collins' students are hard at work with the Zome Tool.



Even the Collins' families worked on constructing the various geometric shapes.

On Tuesday, March 13 the students and parents of Collins School gathered together for Zome Family Night. As each family arrived, the burning question on the minds of the participants was, what is a Zome? As articulate as I could be, and using educational speak, I informed the curious minds that the Zome Tool is a manipulative that explores numbers and structured connecting architecture and math. Consequently, working with the Zome Tool will help students of all ability levels build conceptual skills and teamwork.

As the presenters introduced the Zome Tool, which resembled a space aged construction set one could sense the anticipation amongst the families. Once give the green light to begin, our Collins fami-

lies eagerly dug into the construction of various geometric shapes using the Zomes color-coded and shaped coded parts to integrate the concepts of shape, number and vector into one coherent system. The concepts of teamwork, families learning and working together became extremely evident throughout the night as parents and students were working side by side, hand in hand, sharing in the learning, laughter and excitement.

The answer to our burning question became clear as it was reverberated from father to mother, from son and daughter; Zome is a lot of FUN!

Lee Besler
Assistant Principal
Collins School

"I'm Going to College"

On Sunday March 4, 2007 a group of Eighth Graders from Harry Wirtz School attended an "I'm Going to College" event at UCLA. A few of them were willing to share their impressions:

"Each time I took a step I would try to imagine what will be up ahead. The UCLA library is huge! They have dorms where you can stay and sleep, almost like a house. You get a roommate to share a room. The UCLA store has many many things. It has a mini market, clothes, souvenirs, electronics, magazines, books, and textbooks."

Daniel Oliden

"I learned that UCLA had lots of doctors study there and that got me interested in going to that university, because I want to be a pediatrician. I also learned they have lots

of sports to choose from. For example, soccer and gymnastics. I also learned they have a huge library to study in quietness. They also have a sports arena to play basketball in.

Finally, I saw that it is rewarding working hard because you could go to a big and beautiful university like this one where you could learn more and get the job of your dreams. Now I know where the university of my dreams is. Do you want to know? Well, it's UCLA, the best university I have seen!"

Stephanie Perez

"As we were getting on the bus once more to go home, everyone was glad to be able to spend their Sunday to see the UCLA campus. It was truly a fun experience for all of us. So on behalf of everyone who went from Wirtz, thanks Ms. Rutledge and all the other teachers for organizing this event and allowing us to go."

Jessenia Rivera

Wirtz School Students