



PUSD INSIDER

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The employee newsletter
of the
Pasadena Unified
School District

NEXT STEPS: SECONDARY SCHOOLS & PARENTS

By Superintendent Edwin Diaz

I am pleased to announce that the re-organization of PUSD's central office is finalized. We all faced tough choices in the last year, and I am proud to be part of a team that has demonstrated such fortitude and passion during difficult times.

We will need more strength in the months ahead. Although State legislators and the Governor appear to be deadlocked about the budget, it is clear that PUSD's budget will be significantly reduced. This week, State Superintendent Jack O'Connell and other superintendents from around the region met at McKinley school to discuss the terrible impact of the budget impasse and to urge State lawmakers to finalize the budget.

Meanwhile, we are continuing to move forward to deepen the implementation of the Excellent Middle Schools reform. We've planned a series of community workshops that engage families and school staff in the redesign of our middle schools.

On February 24 we will present a comprehensive mid-year evaluation of the John Muir High School Reinvention to the Board of Education. The evaluation will include data such as interim assessments, first semester grades, state oversight reports and other indicators of student achievement and progress of the reform plan. Also this month, we will finalize the District's parent involvement policy that unites the passions and strengths of the vibrant community of PUSD parents.



State Superintendent Jack O'Connell, L.A. County Superintendent Darline Robles and PUSD Superintendent Edwin Diaz hosted a town hall meeting at McKinley School's library. More than 40 Southern California school chiefs discussed the impact of the State's budget impasse and urged lawmakers to finalize the budget quickly. Visit www.pusd.us

KLRN-TV ADDS FEATURES, NEWS UPDATES

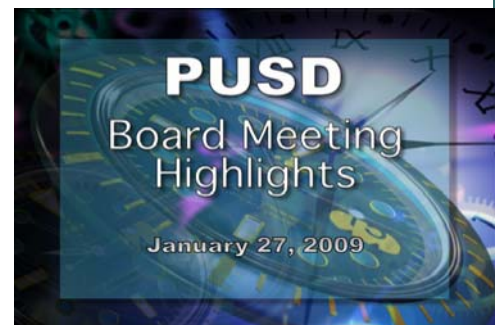
KLRN-TV, the instructional television of the Pasadena Unified School District, is featuring a re-invigorated slate of programming that reflects some of the exciting happenings at schools and in district departments.

PUSD Board Highlights summarizes actions taken at the most recent Board of Education meetings in three to five-minute programs, broadcast in English and Spanish. Segments air six times each day and are streamed online at www.pusd.us/boardhighlights. Viewers can also subscribe to video podcasts via iTunes or YouTube. KLRN-TV will continue to broadcast full coverage of the Board meetings.

"It's one example of the our efforts to increase access to information, and build stronger, more effective communication with PUSD students, parents and staff," said KLRN-TV coordinator Beth Leyden, whose production crew includes students from the ROP Television Production class she teaches every semester.

PUSD Pulse features topical stories about PUSD schools and events. The segment, also produced in English and Spanish, this month features stories about presidential inauguration activities at PUSD schools.

KLRN-TV provides educational, instructional, video production and post-production services to the students, parents, and staff of PUSD, and is available as Channels 64 and 78 on Charter Communications cable and Channel 35 on the Champion Broadband system.



Watch **PUSD Board Highlights** and **PUSD Pulse**, new features on KLRN-TV (Channel 64 on Charter cable and Channel 35 on Champion Broadband) or at www.pusd.us.

If there is no
struggle, there is
no progress.
—Frederick
Douglass

STELLAR EMPLOYEES



Congratulations to:

- Marshall Fundamental English Teacher **Armine Iknadossian** (pictured left), who prepared students for the L.A. County *Poetry Out Loud* competition. Marshall sophomore Brianna Atkins represented PUSD at the final competition with a performance of "Phenomenal Woman" by Maya Angelou and "Happiness" by Jane Kenyon at The Actor's Gang Theatre in Culver City in January. *The Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest* was created by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation.
- The PUSD **Student Health Department** for providing 335 free vaccines for PUSD middle school students during immunization clinics held at Eliot, Washington and Wilson. The clinics were co-hosted by the Pasadena Department of Public Health.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers: Earn A Master's in Educational Leadership!

California State University, Los Angeles and PUSD have partnered to offer advancement opportunities for PUSD teachers. Teachers can earn a Master's in Educational Administration *and* a California Preliminary Administrative Services Credential in the one-year program. Teachers with two years of successful teaching experience with a California Professional Clear Teaching Credential are invited to apply. The program begins in CSULA's Summer 2009 Quarter. Contact Kathy Onoye at 626.396.3600 ext 88217 for more information.

Need CPR Certification?

The City of Glendale is hosting **Super CPR Day on March 7th**. Cost is \$10 for Adult CPR certification. Morning or afternoon classes are available. Class size is limited to 200 people per session. Register at www.arcglendale.org.



PUSD employees learned about improving customer service, creating welcoming school environments and preparing for disasters at the Classified Professional Development day January 30 at PHS.

THE 411

Win Cash for Getting Healthy!

Blue Shield of California's Healthy Lifestyle Rewards offers cash prizes for all current PUSD employees enrolled in Blue Shield. This interactive program is free, online and rewards members with cash for adopting healthy habits. Get the resources, motivation, and support you need for quitting smoking, healthy eating, getting fit, stress management, and more. Go to www.blueshield.com/hlr and begin the road to a healthy lifestyle.

What's Your Number?

PUSD's Health Clinic provides cholesterol and glucose tests for just \$6 for employees. Results are immediate. Call 626.396-3600 ext. 88180 to schedule an appointment.

Job Fair March 7

Do you know anyone who is looking for a job? PUSD's Human Resources is hosting a Job Fair for certificated and classified positions on Saturday, March 7 at Pasadena's City Hall, 100 N. Garfield. 10 a.m.— 4 p.m.

Struggling to Pay the Bills in Today's Tough Economy?

You're not alone. The PUSD family can help you access programs that help with groceries, rent, utilities, childcare, medical and dental care, clothing and other household items. Contact Mirsa Serrano at the Healthy Start office at 626.795.6831 to set up an appointment.

Or contact other local resources including:

- 211, the Los Angeles County Help Line
- Pasadena's Help Line at 626.744.7445



HARVEST OF THE MONTH:

Cabbages

Green and Savoy (purple) cabbages are great sources of **Vitamins C and K**, *and* have **anti-cancer benefits**.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: CAHSEE PASS RATE JUMPS 12%

More PUSD high school students are passing the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)! According to the latest results, 84 percent of seniors and 74 percent of juniors have passed the CAHSEE. PUSD's passing rate has climbed 12 percent in two years. Passing the CAHSEE is a graduation requirement. "This confirms that our focus on CAHSEE preparation and instruction is having a positive impact on student achievement," said Supt. Diaz. "Congratulations to teachers and staff for helping our juniors and seniors acquire the skills they'll need to succeed in college and careers."

John Muir and Rose City juniors posted the greatest gains, with eleven percent more passing the CAHSEE in 2008 than in 2007. Blair High showed the biggest gain among seniors, with a seven percent increase compared to 2007. PHS posted the district's highest passing rate at 92 percent for seniors, while 87 percent of Marshall's seniors passed the exam.

But more work remains to be done among English Learners in both grades and Special Education students in grade eleven. The Division of Instruction will use the CAHSEE results to provide English Learners and Special Education students with the support they'll need to pass the exam and evaluate intervention programs that support student success.



RIGOR & RELEVANCE: FINDING WAYS TO PAY FOR COLLEGE



PUSD, high school counselors and Pasadena City College hosted the second annual weekend Cash for College Financial Aid Workshop last month at Pasadena High School.

More than 300 PUSD students and parents learned about grants and scholarships during the event, which helps families find ways to finance college costs. The deadline to submit applications for state and federal financial aid is March 2, 2009.

Students and families learned about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, as it's better known. They completed the online application and learned about other scholarship opportunities.

Counselors from Blair, John Muir, Marshall and PHS helped organize the event. Many of the classified office staff at PHS volunteered their time to make sure the workshop went smoothly.

Students who attended the workshop are eligible for a random scholarship from Cash for College. Last year, two students who attended the workshop received a one-time \$1,000 scholarship. Visit www.calgrants.org for more information.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY: ENGAGING PARENTS

Parents have a powerful impact on student achievement. As part of a broad effort to effectively engage parents in PUSD schools, PUSD and Partners in Education opened the Welcome Center last fall.

Located on the first floor of the Ed Center, the Center's bright orange doors swing open to welcome you. The center's walls are lined with computer stations and children's books, since families often come in with small children.

"We're a one-stop shop for students, families and community members who would like information about PUSD schools," said Coordinator Theresa Doran.

You can find school calendars, maps and brochures at the Welcome Center. Or you can learn how to read aloud to your children.

The Welcome Center provides a menu of services, including:

- Parent training
- Open enrollment and permits
- Student records and transcripts
- Community volunteer processing and placement
- Educational Resources Directory



Welcome Center staff is led by Coordinator Theresa Doran (left), who brings insight and experience as an active parent volunteer in PUSD. Welcome Center staff offer training, outreach and support for PUSD parents. To learn more about PUSD's Welcome Center, call 626.396-3600, ext. 88347.



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PUSD STUDENTS CELEBRATE PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION

Students at schools throughout PUSD watched as Barack Obama was sworn in as the 44th President of the United States.

Cleveland Elementary School students (right) wrote letters, weighed in on the type of dog the Obamas should get and created memory boxes for First Daughters Sascha and Malia Obama. The letters and memory boxes were hand-delivered to the Obama girls by Cleveland supporter Dr. Terry Roberts, who one of the famous Little Rock Nine who helped end school segregation in Arkansas.



Students at **Eliot Middle School** watched as President Obama took the oath of office (left) and held lively discussions about the Inauguration.

Longfellow Elementary School students received formal invitations to attend a school assembly to commemorate the inauguration. Students watched as fourth and fifth grade students performed.

TRANSLATOR'S CORNER

By *Raymundo Reynoso, Translations Unit*

"We face challenges everyday." "Nos enfrentamos a desafíos (o retos) todos los días." Nice translation, right? Wrong!

We often translate "challenge" to "desafío" or "reto" in Spanish. But in Spanish, these words denote an act of provoking or responding to an act of aggression.

In old romances, gentlemen threw down their gauntlets to "challenge" their rivals to a duel at dawn with pistols or rapiers drawn. In this particular case the proper translation to Spanish would, in fact, be a "desafío", or "reto."

But saying that we "face challenges every day in the classroom," doesn't, in most cases (we hope), mean that teachers face dawn duels. The better translation into Spanish is "Todos los días, en el salón de clases, nos enfrentamos a... Tareas, Problemas, Dificultades, Exigencias (work, problems, difficulties, demands.)" All these words are better translations for "challenges." So next time, consider these words before you put yourself into conflict when using "desafío" or "reto."

CALENDAR

February	Black History Month	February 13	Elementary Report Cards
February 1—7	School Counselors Week	February 16	President Lincoln Holiday
February 2	Spring Semester begins	February 17	President Washington Holiday
	PEN Middle Schools Meeting	February 18	National PTA Founders Day
February 3-4	CAHSEE testing	February 18	Multiple Pathways event
February 4	Teach America History Kickoff	February 24	Board of Education Meeting
February 7	Board Meeting re: Budget	February 26	PUSD Spring Music Festival—
February 10	Board of Education Meeting		Band
February 12	Open Enrollment Ends	February 26	African American History Bee