Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle All the Way!!!

Mrs. Cheryl Figueira’s Kindergarten class from Lincoln School treated District Office staff with holiday cheer the morning of December 16. Students arrived with big smiles and ready to sing a variety of Holiday songs that included We Wish You a Merry Christmas, Santa Claus is Coming to Town, and Jingle Bells, and they sure Jingled all the way throughout the various departments at the District Office.

Linda Garcia and Vivian Hansen Reelected

Newly reelected Paramount Unified School District Board of Education members Linda Garcia and Vivian Hansen were given the Oath of Office by Superintendent David Verdugo at the December 7, 2011 meeting. The Trustees were reelected for an additional four year term and ran uncontested. Both Trustees have provided extraordinary service to the students, staff and community during their prior service as members of the Board of Education.
The holidays give us an opportunity to take time out of our routines and recognize those who are in need. This year, more than ever, there are families with bare pantries. Zamboni Middle School’s Student Council recognized the needs of their community. During a recent Student Council Board meeting, students came together and suggested a Food Drive for the Thanksgiving Holiday. The students wanted to make sure the families in the community were able to celebrate the holidays with food on their tables.

The Food Drive was held November 7th through the 18th. Student Council collected over 650 cans and non-perishable items. A class competition was held and Mrs. Williams’ 8th grade homeroom was at the top of the donation list bringing in over 100 items. Three individual students went above and beyond and donated over 20 items each.

All of the items were donated to Project Hope, an affiliate of the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. Student Council members, Karen Marin, Jesse Herrera, and Kaylee Alvarez were selected to deliver the food donations to the food bank. Project Hope’s Director, Mike McKown, was overwhelmed with the donation. He stated, “I was so impressed with the students’ generosity. My hope is that this project will spark other schools to follow the lead of Zamboni students.”

The generosity of the students and the Zamboni community was overwhelming. Most impressive was the students’ sense of civic duty to their community. Today’s news reports focus on the self-centered ideals of our youth. This food drive shows us an exception and is an example of the greatness that lies within our youth. Maggie Barrera, Zamboni Student Council Advisor, was impressed because the project was a student generated idea from the onset. Mrs. Barrera noted, “The students took ownership of this project from the start. I was so proud of them and watched them flourish as leaders on their school campus.” The students have set an example for years to come and we can’t wait to see how they make a positive impact on the Zamboni campus and community.

The Zamboni Middle School community was overwhelming. Most impressive was the students’ sense of civic duty to their community. Today’s news reports focus on the self-centered ideals of our youth. This food drive shows us an exception and is an example of the greatness that lies within our youth. Maggie Barrera, Zamboni Student Council Advisor, was impressed because the project was a student generated idea from the onset. Mrs. Barrera noted, “The students took ownership of this project from the start. I was so proud of them and watched them flourish as leaders on their school campus.” The students have set an example for years to come and we can’t wait to see how they make a positive impact on the Zamboni campus and community.

Jen Pierson
Zamboni Middle School
On November 22, 2011 the counselors at Paramount Park Middle School held a Stand Up Against Bullying assembly to make students aware of the problem. Prior to the assembly date, the counselors presented lessons in all PE classes and equipped students with strategies to use if they are bullied. More importantly, they showed them how to stand up against bulling when they see it happening to someone else. Students learned how to be UPSTANDERS, not bystanders who just laugh and stand by and do nothing.

Ms. Melgaard created a video using the students as role models to demonstrate how to stand up to bullying. On assembly day, students gathered in the MPR and watched the video, too much applause. Students acted out scenarios on video depicting the right way to respond and the wrong way to respond to harassing situations. Other video clips discussed strategies that they could use to prevent bullying from happening and to learn to problem solve in a peaceful way. At the assembly, students and staff cited the following “Anti-Bullying Pledge”:

**ANTI-BULLYING PLEDGE**
I agree to stand up against bullying and all forms of violence.
I believe that everyone should be able to enjoy our school equally, feel safe, secure, and respected regardless of race, gender, popularity, and athletic ability no matter what!
By saying this pledge I agree to:
To tell, if I see someone being hurt or in danger
Be an Upstander and not a bystander
Not join in by spreading rumors and gossiping
And solve problems in a peaceful way.

At the end of the assembly, every student and received a STAND UP to bullying bracelet as a daily reminder of their commitment. As students go through their day, they are heard using the language that they were taught. As a result, Paramount Park Middle School is becoming a Bully Free Zone for all students.

Maureen Melgaard, Counselor
Paramount Park Middle School

---

**Linda Garcia Elected President**

The Board of Education elected new officers for the 2011-12 during their December Statutory meeting. Trustee Linda Garcia was elected President and Vivian Hansen will serve as Vice President/Clerk.

---

**Superintendent’s Message:**

Dear Parents,

On behalf of our Board of Education, I would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous 2012 New Year. As we begin the New Year, we often ask ourselves how we can resolve to have a positive impact on our children.

As I speak to parents and educators in our schools, I am often asked what is the best way for families to have a positive impact on their student’s education.

According to a recent national education new web-site, the following results were suggested and published as ways to help our students succeed in school:

- **Be an Upstander and not a bystander**
- **Not join in by spreading rumors and gossiping**
- **And solve problems in a peaceful way.**

It takes everyone’s focus and attention on details to improve our student’s success at school. This means that we must all continue to work collaboratively with our schools and teachers for the sake of our student’s future.

Thank you parents for the encouragement you give to your child daily.

Thank you and once again, Happy New Year!

David J. Verdugo, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Houston to Hollydale!

Moon Rocks: From Houston to Hollydale!

In November, the fifth grade students at Hollydale School saw moon rocks, moon soil samples, and meteorites in Mrs. Vaughn’s room as part of their Astronomy unit in Open Court Reading.

The lunar sampler disks arrived on October 31st from the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston. It took about 40 minutes to open the two boxes because they were so securely packed and taped. Once the boxes were opened, we could see metal cases inside that looked like something from a spy movie. Inside were samples of moon rocks, meteorites, and moon soil disks. In addition there were meteorite disks that we could hold in our hands. We were all curious to see them.

The meteorite samples in the disks were small and thin because the curators thought they would be easier to handle. The samples of soil were bound with a small metal disk, and one looked burnt. We learned that it got hot as it enters our atmosphere. We also read about two boys from Indiana who heard a meteorite land near them. They took it to scientists at the university, and gave them pieces of it, but they got to keep most of it!

The disk of lunar samples had orange soil, marron soil, and some rock samples. One of the samples, breccias, was sparkly with crystals. The samples were small because of how the technicians had prepared them. They also looked like normal Earth rocks. In the PowerPoint presentation we learned a lot more about how they were brought here by the Apollo astronauts.

Finally, we saw a vial of lunar soil that was made from volcanic dust. We could see that moon soil is very fine. This new scientific experience was awesome! The samples were cool and fun to look at. We became very interested and excited about moon rocks and meteorites as a result of this experience.

You may be wondering what all this cost. It is part of the NASA education program and free to teachers who have taken the certification class. Mrs. Vaughn took the class at the Challenger Memorial Space Center in Downey last summer, and then checked them out from the curator at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. We hope other teachers and students in Paramount will get to have the same experience we did.

Mrs. Vaughn’s Fifth Grade Class

Pirate Winter Sports Get Rolling

Paramount High’s Winter sports programs are in full swing with early tournaments, carrying the maroon and white flag to a variety of venues in California. These tournaments give our athletes and coaches an opportunity to compete in several contests as they get ready for league play after the new year begins.

Pirate boys’ soccer opened its campaign for a third straight CIF title with a good 3-1 showing at the Paso Robles tournament. Co-head coaches Juan Navarro and Rafa Villasenor are in ruffled air as the Pirates have grown into one of the dominant programs in California high school soccer. Solid opponents, such as Mater Dei and LB Wilson, will come to Pirate Stadium in December as the Pirates test themselves before the always challenging league schedule in January. A trip to the Golden State Invitational in the Bay Area will cap a pre-season slate which the Pirates hope will prepare them well.

Pirate wrestling only had one 2010-11 opponent preventing it from winning both league and CIF titles - defending champion Downey. While CIF Individual champion Antonio Lopez graduated with a wrestling scholarship, coach Don Wakefield has a deep returning squad that looks to keep improving overall as league and playoff wrestling await in 2012. Tournaments such as the Mann Classic at CS-Fullerton and the Millikan Gold Tournament will provide our athletes with much experience in the early schedule.

Both Pirate basketball programs have enjoyed solid starts to their seasons. The Lady Pirates finished second in the season-opening Pioneer Tournament, and coach Rosheka Polk has a blend of both experience and youthful athleticism that she is seeking to blend by the time league play starts in 2012. Our ladies will also play in tournaments at El Segundo and Cantwell/Sacred Heart to get as much game experience as possible. The Pirate boys opened 2-2 in the El Modena Tournament, and coach Mark McGarry’s group of “super-sophs” plan to make a splash in the Val- ley Christian and Century tournaments as they get ready for league play.

Lady Pirate soccer and water polo teams are looking to challenge the SGVL playoff tier in 2012, and multiple games in December tournaments will get them a lot of experience to try to reach those goals. Our soccer girls opened the season in the Artesia tournament and will play in another at Bellflower, while Lady Pirate water polo will play at Los Altos and Santa Ana Valley.

Good luck to all of our Winter programs as they move through their December tournament schedules.

Mark Kemp
Athletic Director, PHS

Paramount Unified School District Schools Receive High Praise from California Department of Education Team

During the week of December 4-9, 2011 a team from the California Department of Education conducted a Federal Program Monitoring Review in the Paramount Unified School District. Five team members from Sacramento reviewed PUSD’s curriculum, use of fiscal resources and other programs that serve students and families.

In addition to reviewing numerous documents, reviewers visited classrooms and interviewed administra tors, teachers and parents at Mokler, Jackson, PHS West, PHS, Paramount Adult School and in Pre School Programs. On the day of each school visit principals presented a power point that gave an overview of their school’s instructional focus and showed data that reflected their students’ academic progress in recent years.

The team visited classes to observe the level of engagement and learning at each of the four campuses. At Paramount High School and PHS West, the team spent time in Career Technical Education classes, which provide students with skills that prepare them for specific careers. These classes include offerings in Technology/Media Design, Health/Medical Services and Engineering.

After spending four days in the district the review team found all programs to be in full compliance. They stated that it is “very rare to end up with no findings in a district”. One reviewer, who has extensive experience conducting FPM reviews, commented that he had “never been part of a team with a review like this.”

The State team had high praise for the work being done in PUSD. Some of their comments included:

• We commend the district’s approach to implementing academic interventions for students who need additional support at each of the schools visited.
• It is clear that everyone in Paramount works together as a team.
• We commend your willingness to work together and extend yourself to the community.
• We would like to recommend that districts in the surrounding areas visit you as a model. This is an exceptional, extraordinary place.

Great things are happening in Paramount schools!