



La Cañada Unified

September 2006

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Message from the Superintendent

by Jim Stratton, Superintendent



These are unique and dynamic times for the La Cañada Unified School District. Staffing profiles, enrollment numbers and the physical facilities continue to change while high student achievement and program improvement remain constant.

Prompted by several staff retirements last June and by 9th grade class size reduction in English and math, LCUSD hired 23 new teachers, counselors and psychologists this year. Within the last three years, approximately 60 new staff members have joined the district. At individual schools, the percentage of new teachers since the year 2001 ranges from 20% to 35% of total staffing, making for a positive interchange of ideas between our veteran educators and those with different experiences and training. To prepare new staff members for LCUSD curriculum and procedures, teachers brand new to the profession receive two years of formal mentoring from experienced LCUSD teachers and teachers joining us from other districts receive training in district instructional methods prior to the start of school.

The total number of students entering our classrooms this September has decreased from last year. As reported on several occasions to the Governing Board and to the media, our total enrollment is down about 90 students from 2005-06. This drop represents the loss of approximately half a million dollars in state funding, an impact which was planned for in the 2006-07 budget. Put simply, the number of seniors graduating from LCUSD far exceeds the number of kindergarteners entering the district. The number of students in this year's senior class, for example, is 400 whereas the number of kindergarten students at all three schools is 177. The number of students entering kindergarten over the last three years has consistently been around 250, so the enrollment decline is real and is projected to remain with us for the immediate foreseeable future.

Changing along with our staff and our student enrollment is the physical environment of the district. Last year we completed a new choral music facility at La Cañada High School and work began this past summer on a new expanded instrumental music area and a refurbished home economics/culinary arts room. Both projects are slated for completion during the 2006-07 school year. Upcoming planned work at the high school includes upgrading of Building B second and third floor classrooms as well as improvements to the north gym facilities. At Palm Crest and Paradise Canyon, the construction work is centered on cafeteria/multi-purpose room projects. All of the high school and elementary projects are to be funded with 2004 Bond moneys.

Amid the demographic and facilities change, one constant in LCUSD is high student achievement. The state Academic Performance Index (API) scores for all of our schools and for the district as a whole are in the 900s; the state target is 800. LCUSD continues to be the third highest achieving K-12 school district in the state as measured by the API. Similarly, our Advanced Placement scores



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LCNewsl ine

The Newsboard

By Scott Tracy, Board President



LCUSD: Excellence with Community Support

In a recent interview, the superintendent of Palo Alto Unified School District - one of four California K-12 districts (along with San Marino, Piedmont and La Cañada) to exceed 900 on the 2005 Academic Performance Index - was asked what other districts could do to reproduce the success achieved by Palo Alto.

Her response: "They will need some resources. I don't want ever to say it's all money. I hate that when people say, 'Of course your kids achieve.' It's an easy correlation to make, but it's too simple. I don't know what we would do if we didn't have the money; on the other hand it isn't the only piece. They'll need commitment on the part of the community. They'll need the vision of the Board. Yes, you need deep pockets, but not as deep as you think. You need to have the focus on kids, that's your first focus. You have to set the vision and the parameters for your staff and then let 'em loose. We have high expectations. We assume every child will learn. We are not going to assume that there will be someone who doesn't. When we see that happening, we will step right in. I think half of it is these students know they're going to succeed. There's no option. They're going to succeed. And we're going to be right there if they don't."

She may as well have been describing La Cañada.

Her comments regarding vision and focus on kids are consistent with La Cañada's Core Values Statement from the Governing Board, which emphasizes success for every student.

But her reference to community commitment really struck a chord.

Yes, Palo Alto Unified recently received \$10 million from Stanford University to help open a new school.

Yes, Beverly Hills Unified receives \$7,925,000 annually from the city of Beverly Hills under a Joint Powers Agreement, which provides that city with continued use of Beverly Hills Unified's property and facilities at its five schools for recreation and other programs.

While we may not be able to equal these feats, we have a local non-profit foundation, La Cañada Flintridge Educational Foundation (LCFEF) that raises more money each year per student than either Palo Alto Partners in Education or Beverly Hills Education Foundation.

An exciting and promising LCFEF program is its Endowment Fund. With about \$2.3 million in assets, the Endowment is in the midst of a campaign to reach \$10 million by 2010. Once achieved, the Endowment would contribute \$500,000 annually to LCFEF's annual campaign.

Towards that end, the Endowment Fund has teamed up with the local Kiwanis Club to present the 4th Annual La Cañada Flintridge Wine and Gourmet Food Tasting Festival at Memorial Park on September 17.

Certainly, the community's support of LCFEF for over 25 years has been a critical factor in the on-going excellence of our schools.



Helpful Links from the LCUSD website:

Governing Board Meeting Schedule

<http://www.lcusd.net/SchoolBoard/index.htm>

LCUSD Master Calendar:

<http://www.lcusd.net/Cal/>

LCUSD GATE Advisory Council

<http://www.lcusd.net/District/councils.htm>

LCUSD Bond Oversight Committee

<http://www.lcusdnet/facilities.htm>

Whereas LCFEF raises money to benefit all District students, we also have local non-profit organizations dedicated to site-specific and/or program-specific needs including Spartan Boosters, Band Parents, Choral Parents, Friends of Drama, and Friends of Art. Resources provided by these groups have been vital to the success of the highly regarded, award winning art, athletic and extra-curricular programs at LCHS.

In addition, each year our local PTSA donates hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours in and outside of the classroom in addition to making major financial gifts to fill important funding gaps at the site level.

Plus, long standing support for elementary instrumental music and summer school programs has been generously provided by the Assistance League of Flintridge.

The District also maintains a strong working partnership with the City under a Joint Use Agreement, which coordinates City involvement with District-owned recreational facilities and programs, the Information Resource Center at the high school, Lanterman Auditorium, substance abuse prevention, and traffic and safety measures at school sites. The City's recent traffic and safety improvements at the schools have been particularly helpful.

Community volunteers who serve on District Committees (e.g. Budget Advisory, Bond Oversight, Design Review) and Site Councils provide invaluable service to the District and strengthen community relations.

The number of volunteer-run children sports leagues in the City is legendary and collectively they strengthen community bonds and serve as an invaluable feeder for the high school's champion athletic programs.

Students can participate in a host of extra-curricular activities at the high school ranging from Comedy Sportz to the Rain Forest Institute due in large part to volunteer efforts by staff and community members.

Numerous community organizations have adopted programs that provide our students with enrichment opportunities including the Kiwanis support of the Key Club, the YMCA's focus on middle school extra-curricular programs, and the wide range of activities offered by the Roger Barkley Community Center.

Our students can choose to study abroad with the assistance of local volunteers from AFS or they can intern with local businesses that volunteer as mentors to the LCHS 21st Century Institutes. Our students are active leaders and participants in local church-sponsored youth programs, and have the opportunity to join the City's Youth Chamber and the Y's Youth-in-Government program.

Complementing the District's core academic programs, these and many other community-dependent extra-curricular opportunities provide our students with a wealth of experience.

College admissions officers recognize the excellence of a La Cañada education.

Historically, forty percent of our senior class is accepted to a University of California campus, with about 25% of our seniors choosing to attend a UC.

The top-choice four-year college of our graduates has rotated among UC Berkeley, UCLA, UC San Diego and USC for a number of years.

The top three schools of choice since 1998 among our 154 "Top Scholars" (top 5% cumulative GPA) are UC Berkeley, UCLA and Stanford, with nearly 25% matriculating to Ivy League colleges.

Currently, more students are ignoring prestige ("Who Needs Harvard, Anyway") and selecting colleges that best "fit". More of our students are choosing to matriculate to smaller selective colleges including Pomona, Amherst, and Wellesley.

Continuing the theme of community involvement, a large number of community groups and individuals provide college scholarships to our graduates, most notably the La Cañada Community Scholarship Association and the bargaining units of our own teachers and staff.

Yes, the Palo Alto superintendent had it right, "they'll need commitment on the part of the community." In La Cañada, the community is fully invested in its schools and it makes a difference.



New Staff at LCUSD

New Principal at Palm Crest Elementary

Anais Wenn-Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies from California State University, Los Angeles and a Masters degree in Educational Administration from the University of La Verne. Anais' experience includes 7 years teaching 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 7th and 8th grades at Horace Mann Elementary and Roosevelt Middle School, Teacher Specialist for 2 years and English/ELD Department Chair. Anais has spent the last 5 years as Middle School Assistant Principal at Roosevelt and Wilson Middle Schools. She was recipient of the Employee of the Year award, Masonic Award Winner, Character and Ethics Award Winner. Anais began her position as Principal at Palm Crest Elementary on August 3, 2006.

La Cañada Elementary

Andrea Coates-Andrea holds a Bachelor of Science in Anthropology from the University of California, Los Angeles, she did her student teaching (5th grade) at Aldama Elementary in the Los Angeles Unified Schools. Andrea is a study skills tutor at SCORE! Educational Center and also a tutor for UCLA Project Literacy. Andrea enjoys hiking, reading novels in Spanish, Spanish telenovelas and Spanish music. Andrea will be teaching Spanish at La Cañada Elementary.

Nathan Howe-Nathan holds a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and English from the University of Iowa and is currently pursuing a Masters in Special Education from the California State University, Northridge. He has 5 years previous experience teaching 7-12 grades at Los Angeles Unified Schools and has worked with a variety of students in many capacities since 1994. Nathan will be working as a special education and reading intervention teacher.

Lilia Syed-Psychologist-Lilia holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles and a Masters in Educational Psychology from Chapman University. Lilia is a member of the National Association of School Psychologist and will be the School Psychologist for La Cañada Elementary and La Cañada High School.

Palm Crest Elementary

Mary Ellen Walker-Mary Ellen holds a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a minor in Spanish from Murray State University. Mary Ellen has ten (10) years previous experience at Paducah High School in Kentucky and Montebello, CA and has taught grades 5-12 Spanish and Social Science. Mary Ellen studied Spanish through Sullivan Language Training and at Cuauhnahuac Spanish Language Institute in Cuernavaca, Mexico. She has developed Spanish language program for elementary schools using students in advanced high school Spanish classes as mentors and was master teacher for two school districts. Mary Ellen has developed news-based academic competitions for the LA Times and she is the current editor of the Kids' Reading Room page for the LA Times. She will be teaching Spanish at Palm Crest Elementary.

Paradise Canyon Elementary

Nicole Neumann-Nicole holds a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies with a concentration in Theatre from the California State University, Northridge. She was a paraprofessional for 4 years at Paradise Canyon and did a long-term assignment in 1st grade during the 2005-06 school year from January through the end of the school year. Nicole will be teaching Kindergarten.

Mickey Reardon-Mickey holds a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish Literature from Occidental College and has been a substitute teacher in La Cañada for 5 years. Mickey was also an ELD aide at Paradise Canyon for 6 years. Mickey has lived in both Mexico and Spain and loves to travel. Mickey will be teaching 4th grade.

Odessa Scott-Odessa holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychological Services from the University of San Francisco. Odessa has 4 years previous experience in Loman School at the Los Angeles Unified School District and was lead teacher for the LAUSD Nutrition Network. Odessa ran the after school program for students with moderate to severe disabilities at Lowman School. Odessa will be working both as a Special Education and Reading Intervention teacher.

La Cañada High School

Nicole Baird-Nicole holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics Education from the University of Arizona and she has 3 years teaching experience teaching Algebra, Geometry, Algebra II, Trigonometry in Pasadena and Arizona. Nicole is a member of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Nicole will be teaching Math.

Jane Cho-Jane holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of California, Los Angeles and a Masters in Education from Pepperdine University. Jane has 3 years previous teaching experience teaching 9th and 10th grade English at Agoura High School. She's been a mentor teacher and a 10th grade level lead and is a club advisor for Habitat for Humanity and Key club. Jane is bilingual in Korean and will be teaching English.

Randy Galza-Randy holds a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies with an emphasis in history and a minor in English. He has several years experience coaching water polo. He will be teaching social science part-time and will also be coaching the women's water polo team.

Bobby Goy-Bobby holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from the University of California, Irvine and is currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Education. Bobby has 4 years experience teaching 5-8th grades. Bobby will be teaching 7th grade math.

Lina Hariz-Lina holds a Bachelor of Science in Political Science and a Masters degree in Educational Therapy from the California State University, Northridge. Lina graduated with distinctions and speaks 3 languages. She is a member of the International Dyslexia Association and the Association of Educational Therapists. She has been in private practice in Educational Therapy for 2 years and will be working as a Special Education teacher.

Mercy Jesudass-Mercy holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of California, Riverside and a Masters in Counseling from the California State University, Northridge. Mercy has 1 year counseling experience in grades 9-12 at Alhambra Unified School District and interned at Reseda High School in Reseda and at Rancho Pico Jr. High in Stevenson Ranch. She will be one of two new high school counselors.

Richard W. Mohney-Richard holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from the California State University, Los Angeles and a Masters in English from the University of California, Irvine. Richard has 30 years previous teaching experience teaching 9-12 English AP/IB/CP. Other experience includes mentor teacher for 4 years and AP reader College Board for 8 years. Richard will be teaching English.

David Nachman-David holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Business from the University of California, Los Angeles. David also has a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pennsylvania and practiced tax and corporate law for 7 years prior to becoming a teacher. David has 6 years experience teaching 9-12 Math, Law and Economics and will be teaching Math.

Tuyetdong Phan-Tuyetdong holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Math from the University of California, Irvine. Tuyetdong has 2 years previous teaching experience teaching Geometry Honors, Alg 2, Pre-Calc and Calculus at Hacienda-La Puente USD. She is a member of the National Council of Teacher of Mathematics. Tuyetdong will be teaching Math.

Cole Al Reyes-Al holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and Political Science from California State University Dominguez Hills. Al has seven years previous teaching experience teaching 12th grade Government/U.S. History at Sunny Hills High School in Fullerton, CA. He also has experience as a swimming and water polo coach and is a 3-year recipient of the "coach of the year" award at Sunny Hills High School. Al will be the new Athletic Director and will also be teaching Social Science .

Oksana Sandefur-Oksana holds a Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Education from the Ukraine State University and a Masters in Counseling from La Sierra University in Riverside. She has 7 years middle and high school counseling experience, two of which were in Moscow and the other 5 at the Los Angeles Unified School District where she sponsored the Russian Club for 3 years. She's a ballet dancer and has instructed ballet for the past 14 years. She will be one of the two new high school counselors.

Melanie Sos-Melanie holds a Bachelor of Arts in German from the Western Washington University and has 2 years previous experience teaching 10-12 grade German and K-6 ELL. She is a member of the Golden Key National Honour Society, Washington Association of Foreign Language teachers and American Association of Teachers of German. Melanie is an accomplished pianist, enjoys traveling, hiking and photography, has lived in Canada and in Germany and recently got married on July 8, 2006. Melanie will be teaching German.

Cole Spittler-Cole holds a Bachelors Degree in English and Spanish from Central Michigan University. Cole has 2 Masters Degrees, one in Spanish from the University of Northern Iowa, the other in English from Central Michigan University. Cole has 18 years experience teaching Spanish, English, Speech and Acting at Glendale Unified School District and out of state in Michigan and Kentucky. Cole will be teaching Spanish long-term for the 2006-07 school year.

Lacey Stanley-Lacey holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and Dance from UCLA and UC Irvine and a Masters degree in Fine Arts/Dance from UC Irvine. Lacey has nine years previous teaching experience teaching 6-8 grade Beginning-Advanced Drama and Dance Choreography. Lacey studied acting and musical theatre song/dance in New York and dance at the Paris Du Danse in Paris, France. Lacey was nominated for a national teacher merit award in May of 2006 and has performed in regional musical theatre productions in and around Hollywood. Lacey is a member of the Drama Teachers' Association of Southern California and the National Dance Education Organization. Lacey will be teaching Drama.

Jason Stone-Jason holds a Bachelor of Music-Saxophone and Bachelor of Science in Applied Ecology from the University of California, Irvine and a Masters in Music-Saxophone from the California State University, Long Beach. Jason has 9 years teaching experience teaching vocal and instrumental music in Upland, Mammoth, North Carolina, Tustin, Los Angeles and Huntington Beach. He's also been a JV and Varsity Boys Basketball Coach in Mammoth. Jason is a saxophone performer and has performed at the Mammoth Lakes All Star Big Band Concert. He is a member of the Northern and Southern California School Band and Orchestra Associations & the North American Saxophone Alliance. Jason will be teaching Music.

Lilia Syed-Psychologist-Lilia holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles and a Masters in Educational Psychology from Chapman University. She is a member of the National Association of School Psychologist and will be the School Psychologist for La Cañada High School and La Cañada Elementary.

Justin Valassidis-Justin holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of California, Riverside. Justin also has a Masters in Education from the University of California, Riverside. Justin has 4 years experience teaching 9-12 English in Riverside, Corona and Arcadia. Justin taught summer school at LCHS during this past summer, recently was married and bought a home, and is looking forward to visiting family in Greece next summer. Justin will be teaching English.

Jennifer Witman-Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry and Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry Engineering from Purdue University. Jennifer also has a Masters Degree in Chemical Engineering from California Institute of Technology and will complete her Ph.D. at Caltech during the school year. Jennifer's research at Caltech has centered on gels and gelation, her favorite gel is jell-o. Jennifer will be teaching Chemistry and Physics.



Upcoming Board Workshop

On Tuesday, October 24, at 6:00 pm, the Governing Board of the La Cañada Unified School District will conduct a workshop on athletics. Focusing primarily on the high school program, the workshop will review program philosophy, coaches' training and orientation, staff evaluation, summer programs, athlete eligibility, California Interscholastic Federation regulations, etc. Presenters at the workshop will include LCHS principal Dr. Damon Dragos and LCHS athletic director Mr. Al Reyes, Jr.

The workshop will be conducted in the LCUSD Board Building (the "round building") at 4490 Cornishon Avenue. All interested community members are invited to attend.



LCUSD Adopts Developmental Assets Approach

Research indicates that the correlation between student achievement and intelligence / cognitive ability is about 0.5. That means 50% of the variation in achievement scores is explained by factors other than intelligence, i.e. relationships and environment. Desiring to ensure that all members of our school learning communities are supported in the best ways to promote academic, social, emotional, physical, and creative success, the La Canada Unified School District is adopting the Developmental Assets framework. The Developmental Assets Approach was based on research by the Search Institute, an independent, non-profit, nonsectarian, research agency whose mission is to work with state and national organizations to promote the healthy development of children and adolescents. Identified through extensive research, Developmental Assets are positive experiences, relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that young people need to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

Created in 1990, the Asset Approach educates adults on becoming more deliberate and intentional in their interactions with children and adolescents so that their relationships build and support healthy development and personal resiliency. Surveys of more than one million 6th – 12th graders consistently show that young people who experience more of these assets are more likely to make healthy choices and avoid a wide range of high-risk behaviors. Unlike character education programs, the Developmental Assets Framework is an “approach” or a “movement” that applies to any stage of life because it targets fostering positive relationships in young people’s families, schools, and communities.

This past summer, all of LCUSD’s Management Team was trained in the Developmental Assets Approach. As the school year opened, each site principal introduced some element of the framework to his/her certificated and classified staffs. On the upcoming November 1st Professional Development Day, all school personnel will participate in a Developmental Assets training. To strengthen the home-to-school partnership, offering an evening training for parents is also in the planning stages. As a District, we are enthusiastic about the implementation of the Developmental Assets Approach as a global means to intentionally enhance our school climates and to continue to actively support our students – empowering them with the strengths they need to make positive choices in life.



Class Size Reduction (CSR) at LCHS

The challenge that faces all educators is how to improve the delivery and quality of the education and educational opportunities for the students in their schools. In looking at pivotal points in the educational process, many have identified 9th grade as one in the high school that can really set a tone for the balance of one’s educational path. The state of California has had in place for a number of years a class size reduction program that calls for schools and districts to identify up to two core academic areas in 9th grade that can be targeted for class size reduction. The legislation provides some supplemental funding for assisting in reducing classes in these areas to an average of 20:1 (twenty students to one teacher). Although this funding does not cover the full cost of such a venture, the generous support of the La Canada Flintridge Education Foundation has joined with the funding from the state and some district funding to accomplish this goal. The result for LCHS has been the addition of 8 additional sections of 9th grade English and 10 additional sections of Algebra and Geometry (our 9th grade Math offerings) in order to provide our students in the class of 2011 a more individualized and supported 9th grade experience. These additional sections led to the need for new staff in these key academic departments, we have been able to bring on some talented, enthusiastic and engaging teachers to help us with this undertaking.



District Technology Update

This summer, the district has been busy upgrading the technology resources throughout the district. As part of the three year cycle for refreshing computers as outlined in the district master plan for technology, nearly half of the district's instructional computers were replaced with brand new computers. Each classroom in the district has a new HP desktop computer with a built in CD burner and DVD reader running Windows XP. Additionally, new computers were placed in the computer labs at each school to further ensure that all students have access to modern computer technology to support learning and instruction.

LCCHS also took delivery of two mobile notebook carts which were donated by the 7/8 PTA. Each cart has 18 MacBook notebook computers configured to run both Windows XP and the Macintosh OS X operating systems. These notebook computers are multimedia ready with built in video cameras, wireless networking, and the ability to run the integrated multimedia authoring software (iPhoto, iMovie, iTunes, and iDVD) that Macintosh computers are famous for. With the single press of a button, the notebooks can transform from functioning as a Windows notebook computer running standard Windows programs, into a Macintosh computer for multimedia creation and authoring. The best thing about them is that they are on rolling carts so that the computer lab can be brought into any classroom, so that students can use the computers on a one to one basis.

While the rolling notebook carts are earmarked for use by 7th and 8th grade students, 9th through 12th grade students (and their teachers) will have access to a computer lab room full of iMac computers. These latest generation iMac computers have a 17" flat panel LCD screen with a built in video camera and are also dual-boot, which means they can run as a Windows XP desktop computer as well as a Macintosh OS X based multimedia authoring computer. Throughout the year, the district will be offering various trainings to help teachers learn how to use the new multimedia features made possible with these new computers.

Two new file servers were also purchased for the high school to help solve some sluggishness and reliability issues that have been plaguing the on-line ABI system used to report student attendance. When the servers are installed and configured (sometime in the next few weeks), teachers should find a noticeable improvement in the responsiveness of that system. This will work in conjunction with the newly updated Pinnacle electronic grade book program at the high school which every high school teacher will be using this year to record and submit assignments and grades. Parents will then be able to view their child's progress in virtually every class from the Pinnacle Internet Viewer program on the internet.

The Lightspeed Total Traffic Control system was fully implemented this summer for both e-mail filtering and internet content filtering. This new system does a better job of screening for spam and virus infected emails while giving teachers and staff the ability to create their own "whitelist" of email addresses to automatically allow through emails from specific addresses. For any "unknown" sender's email addresses that are encountered by the system, the incoming email is held in a holding tank while a "challenge-response" email reply is sent by Lightspeed to the sender asking for a simple reply to verify that the sender is legitimate and not a spamming robot. Once a reply is received, that email address is added to the whitelist and will not be held up again in the future. Meanwhile, the district staff member will receive a daily spam mail summary from Lightspeed listing all questionable or unknown sender emails which they can then choose to immediately forward and/or add to the whitelist. Members of the community who have sent district personnel emails are asked to be on the lookout for a challenge response email from Lightspeed to which they can simply reply in order to ensure their email gets sent on to the staff member's in box. With this new system in place, the district hopes to reign in the 90% of all inbound emails that are spam emails.

Finally, the district technology department will be implementing a new program this year to help teachers learn to use technology more effectively in the classroom. Software help clinics will be held at each campus on a regular basis where teachers can drop in for an hour after school to receive training and assistance on using any software application. Teachers may submit requests for help in advance (by sending an email to softwareclinic@lcsd.net) or they may drop in unannounced with their questions. If demand warrants, these clinics will be offered twice a month at each school.



District Master Calendar

October 2006						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Week
<p><u>2</u> (3) PTA Reflect. Prq. 10/2-11/7/06 FOUNDERS DAY NOMIN. 10/2-11/3/06 PCR Kids Art Holiday Card Sale</p>	<p><u>3</u> (6) Elem. Staff Mtg. 3:15 pm ***PCR ELAC Mtg. 7:00 pm *** Governing Brd Mtg. 7:00 pm DO LCHS Instr. Council Mtg. 3:00 pm LCHS Band Pictures 3:00 pm LCHS 7/8 PTA Mtg. 9:15 am IRC</p>	<p><u>4</u> (1) LCHS Band Photo</p>	<p><u>5</u> (6) PCR Rd. Table Pizza Night 7/8 Talent Show Auditions 3-5 pm District Wide DELAC Mtg. 7:00 pm DO LCFEF Major Donor Receipt. 7:00 pm GATE Parent Mtg. 7:00 pm DO LCE Giftwrap Orders Due</p>	<p><u>6</u> (3) LCHS VAR. FTBL @ HWHS 7:00 pm LCHS 7/8 Picture Make-up Day (T) 8-12:00 pm FOYER PTA Council Mtg. 9:15 am: CITIBANK</p>	<p><u>7</u> (1) LCHS Band Competition</p>	7
<p><u>9</u> (1) Music Parents Association Mtg. - LCHS Aud. 7:30 pm</p>	<p><u>10</u> (2) LCHS Faculty/WASC Mtg. 3:00 pm PCY PTA Mtg. 7:00 pm CAFE</p>	<p><u>11</u> (3) **20-Day Progress Reports Due** LCHS College Night PCR PTA Mtg. 8:20 am</p>	<p><u>12</u> (2) 7/8 Talent Show Rehearsal 3-5 pm LCFEF General Mtg. 7:15 pm LCE</p>	<p><u>13</u> (3) PCY Pumpkin Patch Harvest Fest. 3:00 pm LCHS VAR. FTBL @ MHS 7:00 pm LCHS 7/8 Final Magazine Dr. Order Due</p>	<p><u>14</u> (3) LCHS Band Competition LCE Campus Beautification 9:00 am LCHS-SAT Test</p>	14
<p><u>16</u> (5) LCHS 7/8 Spirit Week GATE Advisory Mtg. 12:30 DO LCE 6th Gr. Pali Mt. 10/16-10/20/06 7/8 Talent Show Rehearsal 3-5 pm PCR Make up Picture Day</p>	<p><u>17</u> (8) LCHS Instr. Council Mtg. 3:00 pm LCE 6th Gr. Pali Mt. 10/16-10/20/06 PCY Joint Staff Mtg. Joint Staff Mtg. 3:30 pm PCR-6th Gr. Pali Mt. 10/17-10/20/06 LCHS 7/8 Spirit Week LCHS 7/8 Talent Show 7/8 Talent Show Rehearsal 3-5 pm</p>	<p><u>18</u> (5) LCE PTA Mtg. 9:15 am CAFE Childcare Rd. Table 8:30 am DO PCR-6th Gr. Pali Mt. 10/17-10/20/06 LCHS 7/8 Spirit Week LCE 6th Gr. Pali Mt. 10/16-10/20/06</p>	<p><u>19</u> (6) LCHS Sch. Site Council Mtg. 3:00 pm LCHS 9-12 Choral Fall Concert 7:00 pm LCE Rd. Table Pizza Night LCHS 7/8 Spirit Week PCR-6th Gr. Pali Mt. 10/17-10/20/06 LCE 6th Gr. Pali Mt. 10/16-10/20/06</p>	<p><u>20</u> (9) LCHS 9-12 Comedy Sportz 7:30 pm AUD. PCR-6th Gr. Pali Mt. 10/17-10/20/06 LCE 6th Gr. Pali Mt. 10/16-10/20/06 LCHS 9-12 PTA Mtg. 9:15 am LCHS 7/8 Spirit Week LCHS 7/8 Assembly. Life Rolls On: AUD. LCHS 7-12 Assembly Schedule LCHS Fbl Homecoming LCHS VAR. FTBL @ LCHS 7:00 pm (Homecoming Game)</p>	<p><u>21</u> (3) LCHS Homecoming Dance **PCR Parent Mixer/Fundraiser** LCHS-PSAT Test</p>	21
<p><u>23</u> (2) LCE 4th Gr. Ocean Inst. Trip 10/23-25/06 Red Ribbon Wk. 10/23-10/27/06</p>	<p><u>24</u> (6) LCHS Fall Orchestra Concert Red Ribbon Wk. 10/23-10/27/06 Governing Brd Mtg. 7:00 pm DO LCHS Fall Orchestra Concert 7:00 pm AUD. Elem. Sch. Site Council Mtg. 3:15 pm LCHS Faculty/WASC Mtg. 3:00 pm</p>	<p><u>25</u> (4) LCE 4th Gr. Ocean Inst. Trip 10/25-27/06 PCY Make-up Pic. Day PCY Rd. Table Pizza Night Gr. 2 & 3 Red Ribbon Wk. 10/23-10/27/06</p>	<p><u>26</u> (4) CC Mtg. 12:30 pm DO IPG Mtg. 8:30 am DO PCY Reading Night 7:00 pm CAFE Red Ribbon Wk. 10/23-10/27/06</p>	<p><u>27</u> (5) LCHS VAR. FTBL @ TCHS 7:00 pm PCY Spirit Rally 10:15 am PCR Spirit Rally/Lunch On Lawn LCE Spirit Rally Red Ribbon Wk. 10/23-10/27/06</p>	<p><u>28</u> (4) LCHS Band Competition LCE Halloween Haunt & Silent Auc. 10-4:00 pm LCHS Drama Festival 8:00-5:00 LCHS LCHS-ACT Test</p>	28

Superintendent

(continued from page 1)

are at an all-time high (AP tests are administered by the College Board and used to grant college credit for high school courses). In the spring of 2006, more LCHS students than ever before (489) took the highest number of AP tests (957) in LCUSD history and 84% of those exams received a passing score of 84% or above. In Calculus BC and chemistry, the pass rate was 100% and in biology, European history and Spanish the pass rate was 94-95%. Many of you will recall that Newsweek magazine uses the number of AP tests taken compared to the number of graduating seniors to devise a ranking system for secondary schools in the United States.

Another constant element in the district picture is our commitment to continuous program improvement and expanded opportunities for students. There are many examples for 2006-07. The elementary schools are folding in an additional grade level in the Spanish program—by next year, we will have four grade levels involved in a 3rd-6th grade sequential Spanish program aligned to the high school courses. All K-6 teachers are also implementing a new reading assessment that will give us better data on student reading levels and will allow us to better identify students for our revamped and improved reading intervention program.

At the high school we have begun a new “Professions in the Arts” lecture series that enables students to meet with community members working in entertainment, publishing, visual arts, etc. and to learn about the preparation and responsibilities connected to those jobs. A new “floating” Apple lab will also be in use this year at LCHS to enable students to utilize a wider range of graphic and text applications in their work. Revisions in existing electives and in core classes will also strengthen the overall curriculum.

Perhaps our most important district-wide instructional goal this year will be to ensure individual growth and success for every student. As part of this “excellence by design” we will be reviewing and adding, as necessary, prevention



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strategies to help students transition from elementary to middle and middle to secondary school as well as a range of interventions to use when students begin to struggle academically. One component of our excellence by design is a Developmental Assets program that creatively strengthens adult-student support systems and relationships. All K-12 staff will begin training in Developmental Assets in November, and we will share more with you about the program throughout the year.

As we move forward this year, we will continue to prepare for the uncertainties but will also capitalize on the positive energy and proven talents of our staff. Staff commitment coupled with community support is the equation that makes La Cañada so successful, and hopefully 2006-07 will see us reach new levels of achievement and accomplishments.



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