



# La Cañada Unified

December 2006

Volume 02 - Issue 03

## Message from the Superintendent

by Jim Stratton, Superintendent



One of the more outrageous pieces of public school legislation passed this year was Senate Bill 1133. Also known as the Torlakson Bill, this law “settled” the dispute over the nearly \$3 billion that Governor Schwarzenegger appropriated from Proposition 98 funding. The Torlakson bill pays that money back but pays it only to the lowest performing schools.

A bit of history is in order. Shortly after assuming office in late 2003, Governor Schwarzenegger decided that Proposition 98 would need to be suspended in order to compensate for the state budget shortfall. In December of 2003, he secured an agreement (aka, “The Deal”) with education groups to set the suspension amount at \$2.0 billion and to carry the reduced Prop 98 funding base forward into the future. Actual state tax revenues from 2004-05, however, were more than \$4 billion higher than expected, yet the amount appropriated for K-14 education remained at the amount of the original, less optimistic projections. What educators argue should have been \$48.7 billion to schools ended up being only \$47.0 billion.

The lower funding level continued on as a base into subsequent years. The 2005-06 shortchange amounted to another \$1.5 billion. As a result, in August of 2005, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell and the California Teachers Association (CTA) filed a lawsuit against Governor Schwarzenegger. For several months, the plaintiffs and defendants argued whether the Senate Bill codifying the original “Deal” provided for a partial or full reduction of the Prop 98 minimum financial guarantee.

On May 10, 2006, all parties agreed to settle the lawsuit. Under terms of the settlement, it was agreed that approximately \$3 billion was owed. The money is to be paid as per the following process: \$300 million in 2007-08 and \$450 million each year thereafter for the next six years (through 2013-14). So far, so good. The problem, however, is that the money will go to only about 500 to 600 public schools ranked in the lowest two deciles by the state’s Academic Performance Index (API). In other words, the money that came off the revenue limit funding for all California K-12 public schools is now going back to only a select few.

And the money that any one of those lowest performing schools stands to receive is considerable! According to SB 1133 (again, this is the bill that implements the settlement terms of CTA, et. al. v. Schwarzenegger, et. al), participating schools will receive the following rates per enrolled student: grades K-3, \$500 per student; grades 4-8, \$900 per student; grades 9-12, \$1,000 per student.

If our three elementary schools were eligible for this money next year, they would receive about \$1.4 million. The middle and high school students would qualify us for an additional \$2.17 million. Instead, for 2007-08 and each of the



(continued on last page)

LC Newsl ine



## Revisiting Class Sizes

Nearly a year ago, La Cañada Unified School District's Governing Board held a workshop or public forum addressing Class Size.

The workshop was designed to monitor and review a key District goal "to maintain or reduce class sizes, as funding allows, in core subjects for grades 4-12." (The District has participated in a State subsidized program since its inception to reduce K-3 classrooms to 20 students.)

### Workshop Findings

Two key staff reports were presented at the workshop: 1) a summary of current and historic average class size for each of our schools and 2) a comparison by grade level of average class size in 2004-05 to five similar districts.

From the first report, we learned that average LCUSD class size was:

- + 30.6 students per classroom for grades four through six in 2005-06
- + 31.5 students per English classroom for grades seven through twelve in 2004-05
- + 32 students per Math classroom for grades seven through twelve in 2004-05
- + 34.2 students per Social Science classroom for grades seven through twelve in 2004-05
- + 34.7 students per Science classroom for grades seven through twelve in 2004-05.

We also learned that our average class size in grades 7-12 in 2004-05 exceeded the previous five year average by 12% (English), 7.1% (Science), 5% (Math), and 2.4% (Social Science).

Essentially, average class size at La Cañada High School spiked in 2004-05 to levels not seen since 1998-99.

From the second report, we learned that LCHS (grades 7-12) had bigger classes in all core subjects in 2004-05 than all of the 9-12 high schools in Arcadia, Manhattan Beach, Palos Verdes, San Marino, and South Pasadena as shown below:

District	English	Math	Science	Soc. Science
Arcadia	29.0	31.0	34.0	30.0
<b>La Canada</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>34.2</b>
Manhattan Beach	25.7	26.4	30.5	31.8
Palos Verdes	22.2	25.6	24.01	28.4
San Marino	24.7	29.2	28.1	25.9
South Pasadena	28.0	29.0	32.0	32.0



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>

## *T.H.A.N.K.S.*

At the Governing Board meeting on December 5, 2006, the Governing Board presented T.H.A.N.K.S. Awards (Things Happen And Now Kids Succeed) to the La Cañada Kiwanis Club and the La Cañada Flintridge Outreach Committee for going above and beyond to support the students of La Cañada Unified School District. Both organizations held events to raise money for the La Cañada Flintridge Educational Foundation, which in turn donate over a million dollars each year to the district. The La Cañada Kiwanis Club recently held their 4th Annual Wine & Gourmet Food Tasting Event, at which a Premium Wine Auction was held. The funds from the auction were donated to the La Cañada Flintridge Educational Foundation. The auction was so successful the Kiwanis Club is considering it as an annual event. Daryal Gant, Past President and Co-Facilitator of the event, was present to accept the award on behalf of the La Cañada Kiwanis Club.

The La Cañada Flintridge Outreach Committee held a dinner to highlight the goals and accomplishments of the Educational Foundation. This dinner was an opportunity to reach out to Korean members of the community who are unaware of the commitment of the Education Foundation to the students of La Cañada Unified School District. Once aware of the Educational Foundation's support to the district, many of the parents donated funds to the Foundation. In November the La Cañada Flintridge Outreach Committee presented a check to the Educational Foundation in the amount of \$45,482.64. Heaja Kim, President of the Outreach Committee, was present at the Board meeting to receive the award on behalf of the committee.

-- Kim Bergner, Administrative Assistant

## **Board Response**

The Board responded by committing to make class size reduction a top priority.

Effective September 2006, the Board budgeted the necessary funds to add teachers and thereby reinstate class size reduction at 20:1 for all ninth-grade English and Math classes. In addition to 20 sections of Geometry and six sections of Algebra IB, several other math sections were reduced to 20 students in support of intervention efforts or remedial needs.

For many years, the La Cañada Flintridge Educational Foundation has partnered with the District to help cover the costs for the K-3 class size reduction program that are not covered by the State.

With increased fundraising, the Foundation was able to contribute toward the costs related to the reinstated ninth grade class reduction program in 2006-07.

(In a recent survey to school families, the Foundation has determined that class size reduction is the highest priority issue facing the school community. The Foundation invites community members who have not responded to its survey to do so on-line at [www.lcfef.org](http://www.lcfef.org) by clicking on "Take Our Five Minute Survey" at the bottom of the page.)

## **Next Steps**

Reducing the student/teacher ratio in ninth grade English and Math to 20:1 in 2006-07 was the Board's first step to address the troubling student/teacher disparity with comparable districts.

With the 2007-08 budget process about to commence, the Board will once again be faced with allocating limited resources among competing needs, including teacher staffing decisions that impact class size.

Measures to reduce the size of additional classes throughout the District are dependent on Board-allocated funds from District resources and our continuing partnership with the Foundation.

The Board welcomes the community's input on La Cañada's class size.

We invite you to join the Board at our workshop on Class Size Reduction on January 16, 2007 at 6 pm at the District Office to share your views and learn more about this significant issue.



# What's Happening in Business and Fiscal Services?

## First Interim Report

The District's budget cycle is composed of four major reporting periods. The first is the adopted budget for the upcoming year (required for approval before June 30), the revised budget for the new year (required within 45 days of the Governor signing the budget act), and then the current First Interim report that updates the revised budget by encapsulating the actuals from July 1 through October 31. The fourth reporting period is Second Interim that occurs in March.

On December 5, 2006, the Board received and approved the First Interim budget report.

At this current time our budget situation remains strong due to additional State funding received as part of the final State budget. The majority of the money received by the District is through the Revenue Limit. The revenue limit provides money on a per pupil basis. Of the District's thirty-four million dollars in revenues, \$23,248,043 is obtained in this manner. Other revenues include \$1.2 million received from the Educational Foundation, and an additional \$1.3 million received from lease income. The balance of the revenues comes from Federal and other State (often categorical or restricted monies) sources. Because the District is able to maintain its financial commitments for the current and subsequent two years, we are able to "positively" certify the budget. Districts unable to do so must present a "qualified" or "negative" budget if they cannot demonstrate financial stability for that time frame. Following Board approval, the First Interim report is submitted to the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) for review. LACOE reviews the budget report, and on behalf of the State, determines whether or not the budget is positively certified. The District and the Board President will receive a letter from LACOE regarding their determination of our budget status following its review of the First Interim report.

## Negotiations

One of the major factors affecting a public school district's budget is the labor cost component of the budget. Education is a people dependent enterprise, and the delivery of the curricula is through educators, paraprofessionals, and support team members. Typically, the average school district budget labor costs run in the area of 80-85% for the certificated, classified, management and supervisory staff members. Whenever these costs change, there is a major impact on the budget. Currently, our District is in the midst of negotiations with all of the labor organizations. Once new agreements have been reached and ratified, the labor cost reflected in the current budget will be affected. An additional financial report, referred to in the industry as "AB 1200," must then be completed. This report must also be signed by both the Chief Financial Officer and Superintendent, and demonstrate that the District can sustain the increased labor cost for the current and subsequent two years before the new labor costs can be incorporated into the budget and provided to the employees.

## Superintendent's Budget Committee

A new group of community stakeholders that began meeting last year, has continued anew in the 2006-07 school year. This group includes representatives from all of the major stakeholders of LCUSD including labor organizations, school board, PTA, Educational Foundation, and Boosters. The focus of this microcosm of the district is on the details of the LCUSD budget. This group has met twice so far this year and has reviewed both the history of public school finance (to understand how the current State system operates and how that then affects LCUSD), as well as the First Interim report described above. The group will reconvene again in January to consider what is referred to as "competing needs," and to analyze the January Governor's proposal for the State budget that also includes the education funding component. Last year, the committee developed a list of additional items that they felt needed to be considered as the new district budget was developed. Our January meeting will review the status of last year's considerations, and begin to discuss and make suggestions for the 2007-08 fiscal year. With so much to accomplish and address in a 21st century school organization, the ability to adequately meet all the demands with the limited resources is very difficult. Therefore, input from the district as a whole is very important to help guide the critical budget decisions that must be made.

--Bill Loose, Deputy Superintendent



## Higher Scores Expected in Revised API

The Academic Performance Index (API) reports were released by the California Department of Education (CDE) in late August. The API is a numeric scale ranging from 200 to 1000 with 800 being the state target. While all of LCUSD schools' API Growth scores this year were over 900, questions began to arise about discrepancies that were seen in the data. After very careful and thorough review, it was discovered that some of the LCUSD data used in determining the API were incorrect. The data have now been corrected and resubmitted to the testing company. In turn, the CDE will recalculate LCUSD's API scores for all schools and the district. The revised scores will be released in February and it is anticipated that they will be higher than the original scores.

The STAR tests are highly regulated. The state requires specific student background information to be coded on each test. This data help to determine similar schools for ranking purposes. Another required element is whether a student with disabilities accessed any special testing conditions during the assessment as determined through the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. There are two levels of special conditions, as determined by the state. The first is a testing "accommodation" such as allowing a student flexible setting or extended time. There is no penalty for using an accommodation. The other special condition is a testing "modification" such as using a calculator for the math portion or having an adult read the English questions aloud. The state considers a modification something that fundamentally alters what the test is measuring. For that reason, the testing results for any student who uses a modification will be considered in the Far Below Basic range—the lowest score possible—in the aggregated results for the school and district no matter what the actual performance of the student was. The parents, on the other hand, receive the actual individual student results with the indication that the test was taken with a modification.

In November, it was discovered that some students who used an accommodation were inadvertently coded as using a modification which impacted the results. There were 32 students districtwide who were coded incorrectly. The errors have now been corrected. The recalculated API Growth scores will be released by the state in February.

--Lindi Arthur, Director of Assessment and Special Programs



## API Changes in 2007

The Academic Performance Index (API) is derived by a complex formula based on student results of statewide testing. The components of the API can change annually. The State Board of Education adopts the changes and communicates them to school districts.

The key feature of the API is its focus on academic growth. API scores are mostly formulated from the results of the State Testing And Reporting program (STAR) tests. Those tests are the California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6 Survey - grades 3 and 7 only), California Standards Test (CST) in English-language arts, mathematics, science (grades 5, 9-11), history-social science (grades 8, 10-11) and the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA). The California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE - grades 10-12) is also figured into the report. This year for the first time, in addition to overall school performance, each numerically significant subgroup (100 or more students) was also required to show growth on these assessments. The numerically significant subgroups for the district are Asian, Hispanic or Latino, White, and students with disabilities.

In 2007, the new addition to these components will be the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) tests in science (grades 8 and 10). These tests were field tested in 2005. The actual test was administered in 2006. The newest API Base report will include the 2006 NCLB science results and will be released in March 2007.

--Lindi Arthur



## Construction Update

The Band room modernization project at LCHS is 75% complete and on schedule to be completed in March, 2007. The Home Economics room is complete and students will be using the new room beginning in January, 2007. The room modernization included new cabinets, counters, fixtures, ceiling, floor and appliances. The Band room project has seen the room more than double in size to accommodate the increased size of the instrumental program. Walls have been removed with new supports added and we are currently putting drywall on all the surfaces.

Earlier this month the Governing Board accepted staff recommendations to move forward with several modernization projects. The Building "B" 2nd and 3rd floor modernization project at LCHS will include all remaining classrooms that have not been modernized yet. This modernization will include new paint, ceilings, flooring, and cabinetry. We are scheduled to begin this project in June once school is out, and it should be completed by September when we start school again. The Governing Board also accepted the recommendation from staff to begin architectural drawings on a new multipurpose building located at Paradise Canyon Elementary School. We have met with the Site committee from PCY and are moving forward with designs for an anticipated start of the project in September of 2007.

We have held staff, parent, and community meetings at Palm Crest Elementary School regarding a new multipurpose building. We will be discussing this project with the Governing Board in January and will be making recommendations. We hope to begin this project in September of 2007 as well.

-- Mike Leininger, Assistant Superintendent



## Buy Backs Move Professional Growth Forward

Gaining skills to help at-risk students; developing strategies in a specific subject area; glean- ing skills from a panel of experts to support ELD students: these are a few examples of profes- sional growth opportunities in the LCUSD 2006-2007 school year.

All California school districts provide growth opportunities for credentialed staff. LCUSD does this in several significant ways. Within the school year are two mandatory in-service days during which staff members learn skills tied to district goals. In line with this year's major goal of ensuring that every student demonstrates growth and success, the in-services have been on reading comprehension K-12 and on developmental assets, which means intentionally support- ing students so they may grow positively competent and thrive at school, at home, and in their community.

The second opportunity for professional growth is the voluntary Buy Back Program. By attending any three of 17 workshops, teachers earn a total of 6 hours, 15 minutes of profes- sional growth time and receive appropriate monetary remuneration. These workshops, which begin January 24 and continue on Wednesdays and Thursdays through April 18, fall into five distinct categories: instructional strategies specific to a subject area, such as writing or math;



instructional strategies centering on specific student needs such as ELD or special needs; technological strategies to better differentiate instruction in the classroom; overall strategies tied to assessment skills, and classroom strategies for situations that may impede instruction, such as peer bullying.

Facilitators for the Buy Back workshops are drawn from within and outside of the district. For example, Tamara Jackson, LCUSD Director of Special Education, is leading two workshops related to her field, while David Doty, UCLA Writing Project Fellow, published writer, and past writing teacher at the L.A. County High School for the Arts, will guide teachers in his interactive workshop on persuasive writing.

Last year LCUSD introduced an alternative Creative Choice well-suited for a teacher who, for example, is attracted to a museum's teacher education offering and is willing to do it on his or her own time and dollar. For this Creative Choice, the teacher seeks district approval, fulfills the agreed-upon commitment, and then reports back at Round Table discussions in the spring.

For both those interested in the Conventional Choice and the Creative Choice, the process for participation in the Buy Back Program has been simplified this year. For the first time, teachers are able to select workshop choices and enroll entirely on-line. Instead of the previous hard copy packets, teachers click on the Educational Services section of the LCUSD website, and enroll before the January 12 deadline.

The academic and personal growth of LCUSD students is directly related to the professional growth of their teachers. This year's Buy Back program, with its ease of enrollment and widened scope of offerings, provides a solid base to nurture growth.

-- Judi Healey, Professional Development Coordinator



## LCHS Accreditation Process

As part of the formal validation of the diploma students receive upon graduation, schools continually go through a 3 to 6 year cycle of accreditation to verify the authenticity of the rigorous curriculum and effective systems that are part of a secondary school or college. This procedure is overseen in our part of the nation by WASC—the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and takes the form of a self-study process. In this method, the school reviews its entire scope of operation from philosophy, to curriculum, to student support, and assesses progress made since the last accreditation, then subsequently determines action plans based on identified needs in order to drive the school forward. This self-study process began last year with the development of revised School-wide Learning Goals-- a set of 5 characteristics that represent what characteristics we want for our students. Our School-wide Learning Goals address the characteristics of: Character and citizenship, communication, critical thinking, life-long learning and technology. At the same time, perception surveys were administered for students, staff and parents. This information assisted in setting the starting points for this school year, with the next steps being the formation of focus groups (including parents, students and staff) to study each of the five key areas in the self study including: organization, culture, instruction, curriculum and assessment. The findings from these focus groups, along with a school profile, the action plans, and written evaluative review of the progress of the previous action plans, are all put together into a 5 chapter written self study report. The report is sent to the WASC offices as well as to the 7 members of the site visitation committee. The written report is reviewed, based on criteria set by WASC, in preparation for a site verification visit. Our visiting committee is set to come March 11th through 14th and will include visits to classrooms, meetings with students, teachers, parents and the various levels of leadership in the school and district to verify and validate the information presented in the written report. The visiting committee produces a written determination of the accreditation term based on this visit, and the school is notified about a month after the visit.

-- Damon Dragos, LCHS 9-12 Principal



# District Master Calendar

January 2007						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
7 (1) WINTER BREAK	8 (1) School Resumes	9 (5) LCHS 7/8 PTA Mtg. 9:15 am IRC LCHS Instr. Council Mtg. 3:00 pm GATE Advisory Mtg. 12:30 pm DO LCHS Faculty/WASC Mtg. 3:00 pm **CA Math League Contest**	10 (2) Music Parents Association Mtg. - LCHS Aud. 7:30 pm LCHS Drama Production: LCHS AUD. 7:30	11 (5) LCHS Sch. Site Council Mtg. 3:00 pm LCHS Drama Production: LCHS AUD. 7:30 LCHS 7-12 Assembly LCE PCR 4th Gr. Pilgrim Trip PCR Rd. Table Pizza Night	12 (5) LCHS Drama Production: LCHS AUD. 7:30 LCE Parent Tour 9:00 am PCR 4th Gr. Pilgrim Trip LCHS 7-12 Assembly Schedule PTA Council Mtg. 9:15 am CITIBANK	13 (2) LCHS Monte Carlo Night 8:30-11:30 pm LCHS Drama Production: LCHS AUD. 5:00 p.m.
14	15 (3) CEC Closed HOLIDAY - No School GATE After-School Info Available	16 (4) LCHS Musical Info Meeting 2:45 pm AUD. PCY PTA Mtg. 9:15 am Elem. Staff Mtg. 3:15 pm **Governing Brd Mtg. 7:00 pm DO**	17 (4) PCR 4th Gr. Pilgrim Trip LCE PTA Mtg. 9:15 am CAFE ***PCR PTA Mtg. 7:00 pm*** PARENTS ONLY: 5th Gr Grwth & Dev. Video 7-9:00 pm LCE CAFE	18 (2) LCE Rd. Table Pizza Night PCR 4th Gr. Pilgrim Trip	19 (4) LCE Spirit Rally PCY Parent Tour 9:00 am LCHS 9-12 PTA Mtg. 9:15 am PCR Parent Tour 9:00 am	20
21	22 (1) PCR:5th Gr. Grwth & Dev. Video	23 (4) LCHS Instr. Council Mtg. 3:00 pm LCHS Faculty/WASC Mtg. 3:00 pm LCE 5th Gr Grwth & Dev. Video Elem. Sch. Site Council Mtg. 3:15 pm	24 (3) PCY 5th Gr. Grwth & Dev. Video PCY Rd. Table Pizza Night Gr. K & 6 Fine Arts Spec. Mtg. 3:30 pm DO	25 (2) LCE Multicultural Days ***Kindergarten Orientation: LCE 7:00 pm***	26 (4) LCHS Comedy Sportz 7:30 pm AUD. PCR Spirit Rally LCE Multicultural Days PCY Spirit Rally Parent/Child Lunch 10:15 am	27 (1) LCHS-SAT Tests
28	29 (1) Music Parents Association Mtg. - LCHS Aud. 7:30 pm	30 (3) PCR 4th Gr. Pilgrim Trip Joint Staff Mtg. 3:30 pm LCHS-Finals	31 (2) PCR 4th Gr. Pilgrim Trip LCHS-Finals			



## District Deploys Connect-Ed Community Contact System

In order to enhance communication between the school district and the parents of children in La Canada USD schools, the school district has contracted with the Notification Technologies, Inc. (NTI Group) to bring their Connect-Ed system to the district. The Connect-Ed system works with the district student information database to allow school and district administrators to send out telephone voice mail messages to parents, teachers, and district staff members.

One important use for the Connect Ed System will be to notify parents of critical information in the event of an emergency or school closure. Principals and district administrators will be able to record a voice message that will be automatically and instantaneously sent out via telephone to all of the parents for a particular school, grade, class, or other subgroup. The system may also be used to send out important messages from the superintendent or principals, reminders for important meetings or events, or simple single question surveys to gauge school community opinion on critical issues. The district will also investigate using the system to automatically call and notify parents if a student misses a class.

Only district personnel will be able to use the Connect Ed system and the parent contact information will remain confidential. NTI Group and the school district will not disseminate the telephone numbers to marketers, solicitors, or any other third party. If you are a parent of an LCUSD student and you have recently changed your home telephone number or your mobile telephone number, please contact your school office and let them know of your new numbers so that the district will have the right contact information for you.

-- Enoch Kwok, Director of Technology



## Grades 4-6 to Participate in LA County Spelling Bee

The Los Angeles County will be holding its second countywide spelling bee competition on March 21. In order to participate, a district must register and then select one student for the countywide competition. The students will be identified through school and district spelling bees. LCUSD has informed the county of its intent to participate.

Each elementary school will hold a site spelling bee competition. They will then send their four top spellers to participate in a district level spelling bee. The district spelling bee will be held the evening of Feb. 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the District's Board Room. The winner of that competition will proceed to the countywide competition. Last year, fifth grader Zhi-He Low represented La Cañada Unified and took first place at the County level. He then represented the county at the next level of competition in Napa Valley, California.

We hope to see many of you there to support our brave spellers.

-- Ivette Ellis, LCE Principal



# Superintendent

(continued from page 1)

six subsequent years, LCUSD will be receiving not a single dollar from the Torlakson bill.

Equally disconcerting is the speed by which the bill became law. Approved in its final form by the Senate and the Assembly on August 30, 2006, it was signed by the Governor on September 29, 2006. Both the California Teachers Association, which represents our district teachers, and the Association of California School Administrators, which represents our district administrators, supported the bill. The California School Boards Association took no position on the legislation. No major educator group came out in opposition to SB 1133.

The bill passed the Senate 26 to 12. Those Senators voting no were: Aanestad, Ackerman, Ashburn, Battin, Cox, Dutton, Harman, Hollingsworth, Maldonado, Margett, McClintock and Poochigian.

SB 1133 passed the Assembly 50 to 25. Members voting against the bill were: Aghazarian, Benoit, Blakeslee, Bogh, Cogdill, DeVore, Emerson, Haynes, S. Horton, Houston, Huff, Keene, LaMalfa, La Suer, Maze, McCarthy, Mountjoy, Nakanishi, Plescia, Richman, S. Runner, Spitzer, Strickland, Villines, and Walters.

This kind of disparate, unequal funding happens frequently in California public school finance. A teacher recruitment and student support block grant at about \$25 per pupil was also approved this year for schools ranked in deciles 1-3 on the API. The last time that high performing districts like La Cañada were financially rewarded for their academic achievements was under Gray Davis' short-lived Governor's Performance Award program.

So, to finance educational innovation and advancement, La Cañada Unified School District relies on prudent budgeting and the generous support of the La Cañada Educational Foundation. Probably the best thing each of us can



## La Cañada Unified School District

### Cabinet

**Superintendent:**  
James Stratton

**Deputy Superint.**  
Dr. William Loose

**Asst. Superint.**  
Mike Leininger

### Governing Board

**President**  
Scott Tracy

**Vice President**  
Virginia Dalbeck

**Clerk**  
Susan Boyd

**Member**  
Cindy Wilcox

**Member**  
Joel Peterson



do to gain equal support for all districts is to continue to write, call and personally lobby our legislators. Sacramento needs to know that all California public school students deserve additional funding.

Since we are deeply into the holiday season, maybe the most appropriate tag line for this column would be, "How the grinch stole our share of three billion dollars."



**LC Newline Editor:**  
Enoch Kwok



La Cañada Unified  
School District  
4490 Cornishon Ave.  
La Cañada, CA 91011  
818.952.8300