

IN TOUCH

With Upland Schools

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MAY 2010

A TIME FOR CELEBRATION !

February 10, 2010 is a day Baldy View principal, Lorrie Buehler, will never forget. Jack O'Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, called to personally congratulate her on the school's selection for the 2009-10 Title I Academic Achievement Award.

As one of 238 California schools to achieve this award, Baldy View demonstrated high achievement overall and significantly narrowed the achievement gap for socioeconomically disadvantaged students. Baldy View met this challenge with a schoolwide Academic Performance Index (API) score of 800 and achievement gains among socioeconomically disadvantaged students that tripled the state expectations.

In a message to parents Mrs. Buehler noted how proud she was to announce this prestigious award for Baldy View. She thanked parents and noted, "It takes a team to make a great school, and having you on the team is something we couldn't do without." Congratulations have poured in to Baldy View.

As Jan Cowin, former principal of Baldy View, wrote, "Your hard work and planning has paid off. How wonderful! Further proof that BV is the best place in the whole wide world."

Pam Chavira, principal at Cabrillo Elementary School, knows exactly when she heard the good news. At 9:30 a.m. on April 16, Jack O'Connell called to congratulate her on the school's selection as a 2010 California Distinguished School. This most prestigious

distinction is not new for Cabrillo - which has now received this honor three times!

The California Distinguished School Program honors the state's most exemplary and inspiring public schools. Cabrillo far exceeded the eligibility criteria with its Academic Performance Index (API) score of 821 and significant gains by all designated groups of students that quadrupled their growth targets and exceeded the average gains statewide.

Once meeting the eligibility criteria, Cabrillo submitted an application that described two signature practices that led to the increase in student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap. For Cabrillo, selecting only two exemplary practices was difficult. Two practices, however, were paramount: the Literacy Lab which supports struggling students and Professional Learning Communities that teachers have embraced as a way to collaborate and support student learning. A site visit by other educators throughout the county validated the effectiveness of these signature practices.

As Michele Rachielles, Reading Specialist who oversees the Literacy Lab, commented, "I have always known that the Lit Lab does amazing things. The opportunity to put everything down on paper and share it was incredible. So many of us hadn't really ever seen in one snapshot how many students we are able to serve in one year through our literacy and language programs."



The collaboration among teachers and staff to meet student needs is a hallmark of education at Cabrillo. Becky Pellegrin, first grade teacher commented, "Cabrillo's 3rd Distinguished School Award recognition is a testimony to the Cabrillo communities' fundamental understanding that it takes a village to achieve success - students, staff, and community working in tandem to always strive toward everyone's potential."

The dedication to the success of all students is apparent. According to Elizabeth Freer, Resource Specialist, "As a special education teacher, this award is particularly meaningful to me. Part of what makes Cabrillo such an amazing school is the fact that ALL students, general education and special education alike, are accepted and treated equally: with respect and high academic expectations."

Finally, as principal Pam Chavira proudly noted, "I am so honored to be the principal of such an outstanding school. This award validates what I have always known...Cabrillo is a great place to be! The teachers, staff, students (scholars), and parents all work together to make us successful."

Congratulations, Baldy View and Cabrillo! Upland is proud of your accomplishments.

A CARNIVAL OF TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONS

The Kiwanis Club of Upland Foothill will be sponsoring a Track Meet on Saturday, May 8, 2010 for boys and girls in grades 4, 5 and 6. This free event will take place at Upland High School track field beginning at 8:00 a.m. Running events will include 60 meter, 100 meter, 200 meter, 400 meter and 4x100 meter runs. Long jump, high jump, discus and softball throw will be included as field events. Medals will be awarded to boys and girls in each of the different events. Participants will receive a t-shirt. Student entry forms are available at school sites for advance registration.

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CALIFORNIA AT A CROSSROADS - By Superintendent Gary Rutherford

When Legislative Analyst Mac Taylor began his talk at a recent forum, he did his best to present some good news. The California economy is turning around, and revenues will likely be a little higher than expected, he said. But the report on the good news lasted only a few minutes. The rest of his talk centered on the \$20 billion shortfall state leaders must grapple with in the third year of this protracted recession—about \$6 billion in the current year and \$14 billion in the 2010-11 fiscal year.

Despite Proposition 98 minimum funding guarantees, schools have been faced with larger cutbacks than many other parts of the state budget, Taylor said. "The so-called protection that many people talk about certainly hasn't worked out in the past three years."

THE UPLAND WAY

I am continually impressed by the way the Upland community pulls together to ensure students receive the best education possible. As I visit classrooms and offices throughout the district, I see teachers engaging students in outstanding learning opportunities. I watch as classified and management employees provide support services to all students in a kind, caring, and effective manner. At a time it would be easy to settle for less, employees continue to do whatever it takes to meet student needs. Parents and community have been there to provide encouragement and support. This is truly "The Upland Way."

WHERE DO WE STAND FINANCIALLY?

In January, the Governor's proposed budget brought further bad news to the UUSD. In addition to the \$12 million in projected spending cuts, the district is now facing an additional \$3 million in reductions—bringing the total to a mind boggling \$15 million.

The UUSD has been approaching this huge budget shortfall by taking a multi-year approach. Making reductions over several years helps to spread out the impact of these cuts to protect employees and programs to the greatest extent possible.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR?

In 2009-10, employees agreed to a two day cut in the work year, with no loss in the number of days that students actually attended school. Class size was increased at all grade levels, resulting in a painful lay-off process that was partially offset by an early retirement incentive. Management and classified positions were reduced or eliminated to address the shortfall. Site and district budgets for equipment, materials, supplies and conference funds were slashed. These actions are likely to carry forward to next year, and possibly beyond.

WHAT WILL WE NEED TO DO NEXT?

As we approach the 2010-11 school year, the district is meeting with our employee associations to negotiate solutions that will preserve core programs while maintaining fiscal solvency. Class sizes at grades K-3 will increase to an average of 29:1, and additional classified and management positions have been reduced or eliminated. The

Grade 4-6 physical education program, previously taught by PE specialists, will now be taught by classroom teachers. Stipends paid to employees to supervise extra-curricular programs have been reduced by nearly one-third.

Other considerations under study include reducing the school year for all students and staff, modifying the home to school transportation program, placing a temporary freeze on step and column pay increases for employees, and reducing the district's contribution to employee health and welfare benefits.

We have creative teams working every day to identify revenue generating possibilities which include: expanding our energy management program, sponsoring attendance recovery programs, writing grants to attract resources, and auditing all contracts and agreements to contain costs.

In addition, the district is taking full advantage of the flexibility allowed by the state and we continue to look for new ways to cut spending wherever possible.

HOPING FOR THE BEST, WHILE PLANNING FOR THE WORST

In closing, although this information is not good news, I remain confident that, together, we will confront these difficult times with an unwavering focus on our core values and a positive vision for the future. I encourage you to visit the website for breaking news and for more information at www.upland.k12.ca.us.

Increasingly, those who use technology in ways that expand their global connections are more likely to advance, while those who do not will find themselves on the sidelines.

2009 Horizon Report

SUMMER 2010: 21st CENTURY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

When the dismissal bell rings on the last day of school on June 9, 2010, construction will commence at six of our schools. The "21st Century Modernization Project" will transform learning environments at Cabrillo, Foothill Knolls, Magnolia, Sycamore, Upland Junior High, and Phase 2 (of 4) at Upland High School.

The transformation will include replacement of existing wall surfaces and floor finishes, installation of solar tubes for day lighting and energy savings, and a new technology package that includes laptop computers, interactive white boards, a document camera, and a ceiling mounted LCD projector. In addition, each classroom will receive new student desks, chairs and teaching stations.

Upland schools are being thoughtfully and systematically upgraded as a result of the passage of Measure K-2008, a general obligation bond approved by Upland voters. By 2012, all classrooms at every school in the district will meet these ambitious new standards.

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