

FREE

School News

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Covering the Bellflower Unified School District

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MARCH / APRIL 2015

Full Speed Ahead

By Dr. Brian Jacobs, Superintendent

Bellflower Unified School District students, faculty and staff returned from winter break at full speed.

Even as our classes launched into intense instruction, our students took center stage for their community-oriented efforts.

Intensive Learning Center students Patricia and Beman Rezkalla were honored for winning one of 10 national prizes in the 2014 Red Ribbon Photo Contest – a prize that brought their school \$1,000 and earned their family an iPad. The Bellflower siblings were all smiles Jan. 12 when they were recognized during a school-wide assembly by wDEA Special Agent VR.

For Martin Luther King Jr. Day, students at Craig Williams Elementary School dressed up in costumes representing their personal dreams for the future. The effort represents exactly just what we try to accomplish at all of our campuses – helping students to tangibly grasp their potential.

Our Bellflower students also ended the month with a first-ever community service project.



Students enjoyed selecting a pair of shoes thanks to community partners.

Sixth-graders at Frank E Woodruff Elementary School took their classroom lessons about civic engagement and responsibility to the next level, launching an effort to beautify Caruthers Park. Not only did more than 100 children from Frank E Woodruff and Bellflower Middle School show up to scrub the park clean over four hours, but they also enlisted Bellflower Unified School Board President, Jerry Cleveland, Vice President, Dr. Paul Helzer, along with Bellflower Mayor, Sonny R. Santa Ines as one of the many laborers. The Bellflower Kiwanis Club provided snacks and a water break.

At the end of those four hours, that park glistened!

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge our community partners for stepping up to provide new shoes and socks for about 70 of our students during an annual Payless Shoe Source shopping event. The event, now in its 11th year, is one of many efforts to benefit our students that shows just how compassionate and caring our community is.

See SUPERINTENDENT • Page 13

BOARD OF EDUCATION

By Jerry Cleveland, President

Spanish Dual-Language Immersion Program

As Governing Board President it is exciting to see the many positive academic transformations taking place over the last two years. One of the areas that the Governing Board members and I get excited about is the second year Dual-Language Program taking place at the Intensive Learning Center (ILC). Kindergarteners and first grade students are not only acquiring the skills of English, but at the same time Spanish.

An example of this dual language program would look something like this upon entering a Kindergarten classroom. Students would be seen seated and entranced as their teacher launches into a classic fairy tale, perfectly tracking each stage of the familiar story of the Three Little Pigs. But never once do these students hear, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in." Instead, the kindergarteners hear, "Cerdito, cerdito, dejame entrar."

Welcome to our school district's Spanish-language dual-immersion program, where a mix of English learners and native-English speakers are taught 90 percent of course material in Spanish for their first two years. Now in its second year, the Intensive Learning Center-based program has already filled to capacity, with nearly 100 students taking instruction in two kindergarten and two first-grade classrooms.

The goal of our program is for our students to become completely bilingual and bi-literate in English and Spanish. Research shows dual-immersion students not only learn the targeted language, but also gain significant understanding of cultures associated with the language, show overall cognitive advances and earn stronger grades in school.

Under the guidance of our Superintendent, Dr. Jacobs, this program is one element of a broader effort to increase academic success, cultural understanding and preparation for a global economy. Learning a second language early in a child's educational pathway is an additional avenue for accelerating success in school. This program positions our students to compete effectively in a world where English is the second most-common tongue and Spanish is the fourth.

It is because of programs such as this and the other Career Technical Pathways we are working on, that makes being a Board Member for BUSD the most exciting time in quite a while. Stay tuned to see what will be taking place for the balance of this year and the 2015-16 school year!

Board of Education



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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



The Superintendent's message makes it clear the District's goal is to help students grasp their potential.

As we enter the last half of this school year students are focused on their academic goals and testing. This issue has informative articles from Thinking Maps to community service. With technology in the classrooms students have amazing learning opportunities to set them up for success. Students are getting a head start with opportunities to earn college credits. It is an exciting time to be a student.

Our next issue is May 6.

School News

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Covering the
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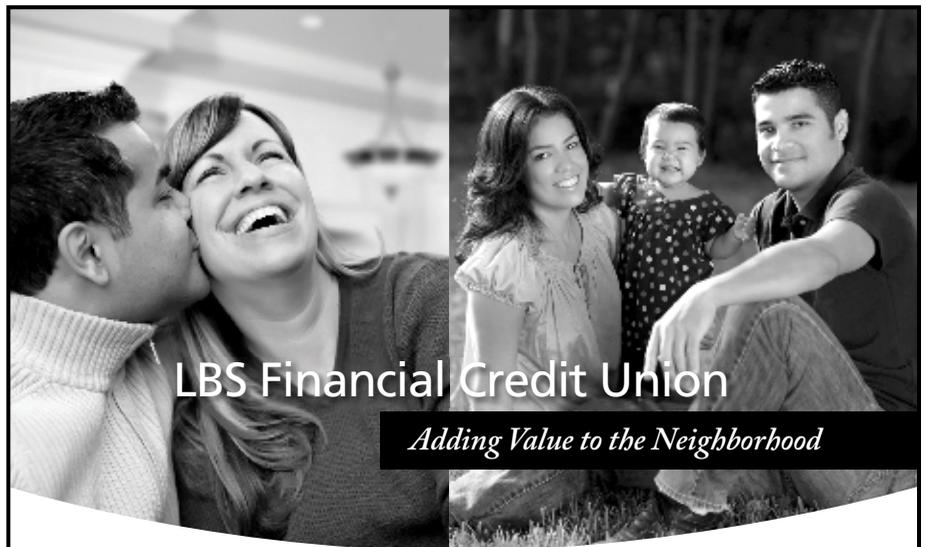
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Tamara Zylla
Program
Administrator

Thinking About Thinking

“I think, therefore I am.” This famous quote from Descartes is widely known for its philosophical reference to the human existence, yet it also aptly applies to the 21st century instruction happening at the Home Education Independent Study Academy.

From the onset of the school year, students in grades TK-8 have learned how to think about their thinking through the use of Thinking Maps. Thinking Maps are tools students can utilize to organize their thoughts in a brain-friendly way. Developed by Dr. David

Hyerle, they are concrete representations of eight cognitive skills: define in context, description, compare and contrast, classification, sequence, cause and effect, whole to part, and analogies. Using the maps, students are able to record information they gather from media, texts, or discussions in a meaningful way which better allows them to draw upon that information in later contexts.

Through Thinking Maps, students are able to gain a deeper understanding of what they are learning as they organize their thoughts both visually and linguistically. Students are explicitly taught how to connect the maps to the type of thinking that they are required to do to comprehend a text and/or answer a question. They then learn how to utilize key academic language prior to reading or answering a question, enabling them to identify the type of thinking necessary and set their brain up for success.

Thinking maps can be used across all content areas, providing for a symbiotic relationship between the learning

that takes place at home and at school. Annually, parents are provided with training on Thinking Maps and how to apply the maps in their social studies, science, and health lessons. They can then reinforce the practice of thinking when instructing their students.

Teaching students to be metacognitive empowers them and truly sets the stage for achievement throughout their academic existence. “They think, therefore they are” successful. They are successful, for they have been taught how to think.



Students in Mrs. Sanzaro's 3/4 class generate double bubble maps to show similarities and differences between two stories written from different cultures.



Alyssa Kline presents her group's Thinking Map to the class.

Bellflower Unified School District

Standard of Excellence; Nothing Less



Home Education Independent Study Academy Grades K-8

The Home Education Independent Study Academy offers homeschooling parents the best of both worlds: the opportunity to learn at home or at the Las Flores Educational Center. In addition, parents have the assistance of a credentialed teacher and access to standards-based textbooks while retaining the autonomy to design their own student's learning based on California standards. Our goal is to assist parents with the implementation of a creative, well-rounded, standards-based curriculum that is tailored to the abilities and interests of their own children.

Bellflower Unified School District Exciting Opportunities for Homeschool Parents

Classic Model

Grades K-8: Parents are the primary teacher five days a week. Students and parents meet at least once a month with a credentialed teacher to review work and set goals. Students may also participate in enrichment learning experiences on Fridays.

Core Model

Grades k-8: Students attend school three full days per week and are taught at home two days. Students and parents meet at least once a month with a credentialed teacher to review the work and set goals. Students may also participate in enrichment learning experiences on Fridays.

Enrichment Fridays

Each week students have the opportunity to come to Las Flores Educational Center for half a day to participate in an engaging, standards-based lesson and activity as well as both a music and technology class.



For More Information go to:

www.BUSD.k12.ca.us

Call: (562) 804-6565 Ext. 6600

or visit us at:

Las Flores Educational Center

10039 E. Palm Street, Bellflower, CA, 90706

Elementary Education

16703 S. Clark Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/886-9011 • www.busd.k12.ca.us



Dr. Alysia Odipo
Director

GATE Enrichment Program

The Bellflower Unified School District is pleased to launch our Gifted and Talented Students (GATE) Enrichment Program for the 2014-15 School Year. A variety of classes are available within the GATE Enrichment program for the second and third trimester and classes are taught by reputable after school providers or our own teachers. Depending on the site, students may select science, world languages, music, or art classes are offered at every elementary school for the duration of six weeks for one hour. During the enrollment period, students were permitted to select between their first, second and third choices. We were pleased most children were given their first choice selection.

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) courses offerings include Bricks4Kidz, Discovery Science Center, Mad Science, and Computer Science. World Language offerings include Mandarin and Spanish. Those students interested in performance and visual arts had opportunity to choose Creative Kids Studio, Spotlight Kids Theater, or Comic Creators. Other classes in the GATE Enrichment program include Rockin' Recorders, Picture Writing, and History Through Board Games.

Our GATE program is for third through sixth grade students, offering acceleration and enrichment opportunities for both high achieving and intellectually gifted students. For the first time this year, second grade students will participate in a nonverbal universal screening to determine admission into the program for third grade. Additional entry indicators include standardized test scores, grades, and teacher recommendation.



It is with great pride that the GATE Enrichment Program is offered to our students. For more information, please visit www.busd.k12.ca.us/parents.html.

Secondary Education

16703 S. Clark Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/886-9011 • www.busd.k12.ca.us



Colleen McKinley
Director

Students Get a College Head Start

The Bellflower Unified School district is fortunate to be in partnership with Cerritos College and its President's Middle College Scholars Academy. Three juniors from each high school attend regular courses at their campus in the morning and then Cerritos College classes in the afternoon. The students from Bellflower High School are Vanessa Avila, Karina Garcia and Karely Nevares. The students from Mayfair High School are Camille Burrus, Jeremy Huff and Sean Tavitian.

The Middle College Scholars program was developed to address the high demand for math and science teachers while also providing an opportunity for high school students to be dually enrolled and earn college credit. In addition to taking afternoon college classes, the students spend Friday afternoons tutoring at the elementary and middle school level. At the end of the two-year program the scholars will have completed a minimum of 20.5 college units including three science courses which are transferable to any CSU and UC.

The 2014-2015 school year was a pilot year for the program. Cerritos College recently announced that they will be funding another cohort of students in the 2015-2016 school year. The high schools will soon begin recruiting current sophomores for this opportunity. In order to be eligible, students must have a 2.0 GPA or higher and must be in Algebra II or higher in their junior year.



Middle Scholars Program.

Academic Accountability & Curriculum

16703 S. Clark Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/886-9011 • www.busd.k12.ca.us



Lisa Azevedo
Assistant
Superintendent

The Importance of Professional Development

Academic Accountability and Curriculum Improvement has provided multiple professional development opportunities for teachers this year. Research confirms that providing teachers the opportunity to participate in various professional developments and supporting them in applying their new knowledge or skill will improve their satisfaction and confidence therefore ensuring students' greater academic success. Professional development activities are guided by an annual staff survey in combination with the District's strategic goals and Local Control Accountability Plan.

The 2014 – 2015 professional development offerings began this past August. Teachers were provided the opportunity to attend a full day of professional development regarding the new instructional technology installed in every classroom this year. One hundred ninety teachers attended the technology training. In August the District offered a full day of Nutrition Education Obesity Prevention training to forty teachers who were interested in the topic. Teachers who attended the training are supported throughout the year, with a fresh fruit or vegetable item to share with students along with a lesson to encourage students' healthy eating habits. Academic Accountability and Curriculum Improvement provided one hundred teachers California Common Core Math training for teachers through the University of California, Irvine Math Project. Three additional training topics were included in the month of August: Managing Difficult Behaviors and Argumentative Writing. Managing Difficult Behaviors was attended by sixty four teachers who were interested in skills to assist them with students who display challenging behavior in classrooms. Argumentative Writing was attended by forty teachers. California Common Core Standards require students to clearly discuss a topic and provide a sound evidence-based opinion/argument regarding the topic.



All teachers had two professional development days prior to the start of the school year. The months of September through November contained multiple training offerings for teachers as well. The school year began with sixty six teachers attending the Thinking Maps training. Teachers focused on English language

arts and mathematics standards as well as the English literacy standards for secondary staff. University of California, Irvine continued to train second and third grade teachers. Non Violent Crisis Intervention, Discovery Education, Pro-Quest Classroom Digital Library, and Backwards Planning were attended by ninety-six teachers.

Professional development activities from the month of December through the remainder of the year have been focused on integrating the new instructional technology within lessons. One hundred ninety-nine teachers have or are signed up to attend technology training. One-hundred thirty of them are receiving specific training to Google Drive, Google Sites, Google Docs, Google Sheets and Google Classroom. Fifty three teachers attended a second session of Argumentative Writing. Our Next Generation Science Standards Committee members have attended a professional development day. A second training day of Thinking Maps was offered by our district trainers as well as an additional professional development regarding the topic of text complexity for all staff.

The Bellflower Unified School District is committed to continuing to provide professional development opportunities for staff. We know that our teachers are balancing new standards and curriculum, new assessment systems, and new technology. With extra support, the district is on the path to achieve the standard of excellence, nothing less.

Academic Assessment & Research

16703 S. Clark Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/886-9011 • www.busd.k12.ca.us



James Fleming
Director

Director – Accountability-Assessment

Smarter Balanced Assessments are right around the corner. Most students will be testing in April and May. Students in grades three through eight and grade eleven will experience their first computer adaptive Smarter Balanced exam in English language arts and in math.

Unlike the state-wide field test the students participated in in 2014, our students will experience a computer adaptive exam in 2015. The assessment system will adjust the difficulty of each question based on the student's prior responses. This process will quickly identify which skills students have mastered, and where the student still needs support. Computer adaptive exams are more efficient because students respond to fewer questions. They are also more secure, because the assessment system draws from a larger bank of questions. Most importantly, the test is more accurate. The results will provide better feedback about the skills the student has mastered, and will better demonstrate growth over time. The STAR exams gave families a numerical score and a performance band. The new Smarter Balanced assessment will provide more detailed information about the student's strengths and weaknesses within the content area.

Students in Bellflower Unified have been preparing for the Smarter Balanced exams all year. Students have taken several English language arts exams through a computer-based system to practice the skills involved in computer-based testing.

Many parents and community members are curious about how the online assessments will work. The state has released practice and training tests to the public through the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress website, CAASPP.org. The website offers several opportunities to experience Smarter Balanced assessments and they make a great family activity.

Feel free to visit CAASPP.org and select 'Practice & Training Tests' from the buttons in the center of the page. Select the third option, the 'Student Interface Practice and Training Tests'. Sign in as a guest, and select the grade level you would like to experience. You will be presented with three options in ELA and three in math.

Training Tests are short exams which demonstrate the various types of questions students will experience. This is great if you're interested in experiencing the testing interface.

Practice Tests are longer exams which focus on the grade level standards. Practice tests are useful if you're interested in grade-level expectations for your student.

Performance Tasks are assessments designed to measure a student's ability to integrate knowledge and skills across multiple standards. They focus on deeper understanding, and require students to apply problem solving and research skills. Select a performance task and work on it as a family, you'll be surprised how many different skills our students will use to answer one set of questions.

In 1998, the state of California adopted the now familiar assessment program named STAR. Districts and schools experienced a dip in standardized test scores as students and teachers adjusted to the rigor of the new assessments. Seventeen years later we anticipate a similar dip as we switch to Smarter Balanced. It will take time as our students adjust to the new challenges of taking computer adaptive tests which value higher-order thinking and writing over simple knowledge-based questions and multiple-choice strategies. The state has emphasized that scores should not be compared to previous years of STAR scores. This year's scores will form our new baseline in the Smarter Balanced era.

The most important thing is that our students feel prepared and supported as we take this first step into Smarter Balanced together. We encourage you to experience the assessments as a family, and discuss the new 21st century testing technology.



Bellflower Alternative Education Center

6024 N. Clark Ave., Lakewood, CA 90712 • 562/356-9904



Patrick Dixon
Principal

Bellflower Unified School District's Adult ReEntry Program

The Adult ReEntry Program offers the opportunity and learning support for students working toward completing the requirements for graduation or to prepare for the General Educational Development Test (GED®) or California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).

Diploma Program

The Adult ReEntry Diploma Program offers flexibility for students through online instruction to complete the requirements to earn a high school diploma. Students receive academic advisement and transcript evaluation so they know exactly what they need to do and which courses to take to complete their high school diploma.



Ms. Garr assisting Level I student with online instruction.

The Adult ReEntry Program offers two class levels based on credits earned: Level I for students who have earned 0-180 credits, and Level II for those who have completed 181-220 credits. The Adult ReEntry program is a self-paced learning environment with individualized and on-line instruction. Students generally work on one or two subjects at a time; all assignments and contracts are listed and recorded on an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Each student meets with the teacher on a weekly basis to monitor and adjust the completion dates for each subject and their projected completion date as listed on the ILP. Attendance days are based on the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) requirement. Students who have satisfied the CAHSEE requirement attend two or four days per week and students who have not satisfied the CAHSEE requirement must attend a minimum of three days per week. Each week students have the opportunity to attend the Friday morning session to expedite their completion date or make-up attendance hours.



Ms. Bello Level II small group instruction using the newly installed District-wide Mimio technology.

GED® Preparation and CAHSEE Remediation:

The Adult ReEntry GED® Preparation class offers the learning support to help students prepare for the GED® or CAHSEE through online instruction, text, and direct instruction by a certificated teacher in the core academic areas found in the GED® and CAHSEE tests. The class is an open enrollment / open exit format with a flexible schedule. Students can attend Tuesday and Thursday mornings according to their schedule. Each week students have the opportunity to attend the Friday morning session for direct instruction in mathematics and English-language arts.

We look forward to assisting students with completing the requirements for their high school diploma or in preparation for taking the GED® or CAHSEE. You can obtain more information by calling (562) 356-9904.

Intensive Learning Center

4718 E. Michelson St., Lakewood, CA 90712 • 562/804-6513 • www.bUSD.k12.ca.us/ilc.htm



Isel Taylor
Principal

Teachers and Students Becoming Tech-Saavy

As we fully implement the California Common Core Standards (CCCS) it becomes evident that integration of technology within the classroom is critical. The use of technology is no longer a standalone activity but rather a tool to enhance the thinking and learning process.

At the ILC we know that as a society we have become increasingly technology –dependent. To prepare our students for the future in middle school, high school, college and or future careers, it is critical that our students learn to be tech-savvy. The new technology now integrated into all of our classrooms helps our teachers prepare our students for real world environments.



There are multiple benefits of integrating technology into the instructional day; students are more actively engaged and excited about learning; students are able to access the most current information needed; students are given multiple opportunities to interact and collaborate with their classmates and the use of interactive simulations and illustrations can produce a greater depth of understanding of a concept. ILC is well on it's way preparing the 21st Century student.

Educational Services

16703 S. Clark Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/886-9011 • www.busd.k12.ca.us



Joe Perry
Assistant
Superintendent

Caring Connections and Project APPLE

The Office of Educational Services is responsible for providing district-level services and resources to students and their families. The office also provides the necessary oversight to maximize the after school Project APPLE program and the non-profit Caring Connections organization, consisting of 50 community agencies. Highlighted below are just a few examples of activities that support students' success in school:

Pablo Picasso once observed, "Every child is an artist..." Washington Elementary School students in the after school Project APPLE program had the opportunity to create and design a mural to express their pride in being a Washington Patriot. Making a mural requires a great deal of preparation and attention to detail. After selecting the theme, "America the Beautiful," students engaged in a 12-week series of project-based art workshops. This opportunity was made possible through Project APPLE's partnership with Accessible Arts Workshop, a grant funded program through Arts and Services for Disabled, Inc. Workshops are designed to provide creative expression for individuals with a wide range of abilities, including those with special needs. Students worked in an inclusive and collaborative environment and were taught by a skilled teaching artist who designed lesson plans using the California Standards for Visual and Performing Arts.

An important component of this program is showcasing the artwork. On January 26, 2015, at the morning flag ceremony, the murals were unveiled. The students had a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment knowing that the murals will be hung in the hallway for all to view as a reminder that patriotism will always be with us beyond on elementary years at Washington Elementary School.

Caring Connections has partnered with Bellflower Rotary Club, a local church and shoe store to provide brand new shoes to children in Bellflower Unified School District. On Saturday, January 31, 2015, sixty-one elementary school children rode the

church bus and went on a fun and exciting ride for new shoes. The shoe store employees assisted the children with measuring their shoe size and Rotary Club members and Miss Bellflower Princess Court enjoyed helping the children find the perfect pair of shoes. After picking out their favorite shoe, the children received a pair of socks and enjoyed donuts and juice before boarding the bus. Through these great partnerships, this event continues to help our kids to be better prepared for school. Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time and efforts in making this event possible!

The Easter bunny is coming to the City of Bellflower's Volunteer Center! Caring Connections works in partnership with the Volunteer Center to maintain critical programs for those in need. Cindy VanMeeveren, coordinator at the Bellflower Volunteer Center, is currently reaching out to community agencies, churches and service clubs to help provide local families with Easter baskets for children. This is the seventh year Cindy has coordinated this program. Last year she put together over 400 baskets filled with school supplies, a toy, and Easter candy. Caring Connections is helping in this effort by raising funds to purchase books to be included in these baskets. Thank you to the Bellflower Kiwanis Club for donating \$250 towards this program. If you are interested in donating items or would like more information, please contact Cindy Van Meeveren, at (562) 925-9003.



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Sue Curtiss
Principal

Baxter Bear Buddy Bench Helps Students Make Friends

The Albert Baxter Elementary School Student Council is proud to announce that a Buddy Bench is coming to our school. Student Council member Alexa Rodriguez is excited about the bench because, “It shows that we are kind at Baxter Elementary.” The Buddy

Bench is a simple idea to eliminate loneliness and foster friendship on the playground. There is a designated “Baxter Bear Buddy Bench” with a sign on the playground. If a student feels lonely on the playground without anything to do, he/she can sit on the Buddy Bench. Another student will come to the bench and ask if the student wants to play or talk. If two students are sitting at the bench, they can ask each other if they want to play! The Baxter Bear Buddy Bench is helpful for children who need more strategies for making friends and initiating play. Student Council Representative Harleigh Wallace agrees, “I think that the Buddy Bench will help kids because it will give kids that are lonely and have nothing to do a chance to make a new friend and create a new friendship.”



Bellflower *Middle School / High School*

15301 McNab Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/920-1801 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/bellflower-high.htm



Michael Lundgren
Principal

Serving Our Community

Bellflower Unified School District has an incredibly diverse student population – and that diversity represents various levels and backgrounds in how civic responsibility is defined. One of our goals is to give them a common “civic” ground and to introduce our diverse population to the American

democratic system. There is no better way for students to understand their roles as responsible citizens than to actually get involved with issues that are important to them. Through various activities, students have had opportunities to integrate their personal concerns about the larger world and the common good. We pride ourselves in promoting strong civic knowledge, skills, and values in all of our students.

Over the past month, Bellflower Middle and High students have shown their sense of civic duty and given back to the City of Bellflower. On Friday, January 30th, students from both Bellflower Middle School and Woodruff Elementary School participated in a service project dedicated to beautifying Carruthers Park. On their day off from school, students gathered and cleaned up the sandbox, removed graffiti, cleaned up the pool, and cleaned the batting cages. Students also picked up trashed and raked leaves. This service project was organized by teachers from both Bellflower and Woodruff Elementary and originated with small classroom discussions about the needs of the city; the students’ work will help both schools qualify for the California Department of Education Civic Learning Award. The project also supports our school’s efforts to become a



Flagship Civic Democracy School for California. Many thanks to Bellflower Middle School teachers Alison Kawashima and Todd Davenport for organizing this wonderful experience for our students.

Our Roots and Shoots Club, led by faculty advisor, Melissa Ellis, participated in the “Teens for Jeans” campaign, a program thru DoSomething.org and Aeropostale. Through this project, students collect and recycle jeans for homeless youth in our community. Roots and Shoots organized, collected, and delivered over 100 pairs of jeans to help those in need! These students truly exemplify what it means to be a Bellflower Buc!

Stephen Foster *Elementary*

5223 E. Bigelow St., Lakewood, CA 90712 • 562/804-6518 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/foster.htm



Deirdre Reyes
Principal

Language Learning thrives at Stephen Foster

A love of international languages has emerged at Stephen Foster this year. As you walk out to the playground, do not be surprised if a student greets you in Mandarin by saying “Ni Hao” or perhaps you might hear a student ask you in perfect French “Comment allez-vous?” We are proud to have cultivated this interest in language through two very exciting learning opportunities.

The after school Mandarin class is open to our 5th and 6th grade students two days a week for three sessions throughout the year. In October, students immediately began learning simple greetings in Mandarin, how to count up to 20 and the application of Chinese numbers in their everyday lives. Students went on to learn about introductions and the names for family members. They will continue to increase their vocabulary and conversational skills in upcoming classes.

Students learn Mandarin through songs, crafts, and activities. They are not only acquiring language skills, but are also becoming familiar with the Chinese culture and daily practices. Through the learning of another culture, students are developing a new perspective of their own culture.

Gifted and Talented students in fifth and sixth grade were offered an after school French class and the roster filled up very quickly! The eager participants were introduced to the basics of the French language and culture in a relaxed, fun classroom environment using visuals and realia to bring the language to life. Students began their journey by acquiring an understanding of the nature of language (both verbal and nonverbal communication) and an appreciation for the differences in viewpoints as expressed by cultural practices and norms in French and American society. In French class, students learned greetings, numbers, dates, weather, food, and animals with an eye to fostering a love for learning new languages and an openness to other cultures.



The study of a foreign language has been shown to have many benefits such as improved comprehension, sharper memory, enhanced multi-tasking skills and even decision-making proficiency! The excitement and interest generated by both classes was palpable. Our students are eager to continue with their language studies and are looking ahead to opportunities to continue to grow in this area as they move on to middle and high school.

Thomas Jefferson *Elementary*

10027 Rose St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6521 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/jefferson.htm



Dina Hernandez
Principal

Positive Learning-Positive Recognition

This school year we have been working to implement a school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support program, better known as PBIS. This program allows us to develop specific processes and strategies that will support all our students in developing the positive academic, social, and emotional skills that they need to find success at school.

As a staff we are working together, to implement a system of rewards, “Gotchas” that students can receive throughout the day for showing that they are respectful, responsible, and ready to learn. These “Gotchas” are then turned in to redeem prizes of their choosing. Classes also have the opportunity to earn a weekly trophy for being the quietest and cleanest class in the cafeteria during their specific lunch run. In addition, we are in the process of implementing school-wide rules for playground games, behavior, and conflict resolution, which will be posted around the school for all students to see. Although we are still in the beginning stages of implementing PBIS here at Thomas Jefferson, we are confident that these changes will help all our students understand what is expected of them, provide them with the tools they need to handle any situation appropriately, and have goals that they can work towards.

Here at Thomas Jefferson it is our goal to ensure that all of our students are college and career ready, and PBIS is just one of the many ways in which we are making certain that students reach that goal!



Esther Lindstrom *Elementary*

5900 N. Canehill Ave., Lakewood, CA 90713 • 562/804-6525 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/lindstrom.htm



Deborah Apple
Principal

Future Leaders

At Lindstrom we are proud of the many programs and activities we offer our students. One of my personal favorites is the opportunity for our 4th through 6th grade students to participate in K-Kids. We have thirty-two students involved in our K-Kids/Student Council. The joining of these two service groups allows students to build and strengthen their leadership skills and participate in valuable experiences. They are engaged in activities designed to improve our school through their commitment and dedication. Our K-Kids program provides



students with a means to practice organizational skills that will benefit them later in life. Under the guidance of Mrs. Charmaine McLaughlin and Mrs. Amy Savage, our students have joined with our high school partners in the Key Club to make blankets for the homeless and assist with the Special Olympics. They have organized, advertised, and run a shoe drive to collect old shoes to be donated to an



organization which sends them to children in need. They also led Pasta for Pennies, whereby they enlisted the entire school to contribute to helping a child with Leukemia by donating their spare change. This group of conscientious students works to enhance our school by organizing activities for all students to participate in to show their school spirit and build character. Under the leadership of the club's president, sixth grader Ethan List, members are looking into starting an anti-bullying program and partake in a few group building activities. The 2014-15 school year has been a busy one, but the K-Kids are still finding the time to help others and strengthen the sense of community at Lindstrom Elementary School.

Mayfair *Middle School / High School*

6000 N. Woodruff Ave., Lakewood, CA 90713 • 562/925-9981 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/mayfair-high.htm



Matt Eles
Principal

Monsoons Are Caring and Accepting Students

The Mayfair culture is one of understanding and acceptance and it showed this past month when the school came together to celebrate students with disabilities. With more than 40 clubs on campus, students have the opportunity to find something that interests them. One that students have really grown to love is the LAFF (Learning Acceptance through Friends and Fun) club.

On February 6th the LAFF club held their 5th annual Abilities Awareness Assembly. This assembly is meant to be an educational experience through which the club delivers a powerful message of equality, tolerance and understanding. Their goal is to educate our community on a variety of disabilities, while focusing on individual strengths and abilities. This year the theme was "Different, Not Less" and it was a huge success. Club advisers Ms. Brown and Mrs. Sharp once again did a fantastic job with the assembly and with a very special day leading up to it called "Walk a Day in my Shoes."

This day is for students and staff to sign up for a physical disability such as being blind, deaf or unable to walk. Individuals selected have to take on that disability for an entire day and then they share their experience at the assembly. Each year the participation in this day seems to grow larger and larger and this year was no different.

The LAFF club's vision is to spread the message to youth in order to build a more tolerant, accepting and understanding society. They certainly helped to do that with a great assembly.



Ernie Pyle *Elementary*

14500 S. Woodruff Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6528 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/pyle.htm



Lisa Paioni
Principal

Engaging with Learning Through Talk

"I'd like to add on to what my partner said." "I disagree with the idea that this text structure is cause and effect because it says in the text..." These are examples of what you might hear Ernie Pyle students say in classrooms. Talk is important at Ernie Pyle. All learners benefit from sharing their ideas and learning from the ideas of others. Now, our students are required to develop skills of comprehension and collaboration and learn from each other. The California Common Core Standards in Listening and Speaking and the Standards for English Language

Development for English Learners call for students to engage effectively with diverse partners on grade level topics and texts, build on others' ideas and express their own clearly. Our students are learning how to have academic conversations with their classmates and teachers. They are learning to follow agreed upon rules for discussions, stay on topic and link their comments to the remarks of others. Students are explaining their ideas and supporting their ideas with evidence. It's exciting to see and hear our students develop skills that will be of value throughout their lives as learners and in the work place.



Ramona *Elementary*

9351 Laurel St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6532 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/ramona.htm



Bonnie Carter
Principal

Enrichment Opportunities

Ramona students strive to be scholars in all aspects of their educational life, and teachers along with support staff take seriously the mission to encourage students to flourish socially, academically, and behaviorally. As the year progresses, students are fully invested in their journey toward academic success and enjoy participating in a variety of opportunities for enrichment.

Once a month, students have an opportunity to learn about and taste a new food when they participate in Harvest of the Month. This learning is extended when students visit the school

vegetable garden to learn where and how plants grow. Each trimester, students learn about and produce artwork as they participate in Meet the Masters. This month, students are learning about the artist Monet. Our upper grade students have an opportunity to build their leadership skills as they participate in Student Council activities including escorting kindergarten students to class, maintaining our recycling program, and organizing spirit activities throughout the year. Once students are in fifth and sixth grade, they have an opportunity to participate in chorus or band. Our band students not only practice for school shows twice a year, but they also participate in solo opportunities at the District band festival and during Ramona's annual volunteer breakfast. This year's band is booming and dedicated to being the best elementary band in the District.

Participation in these enrichment activities builds students' self-confidence and their knowledge of the world with which they live helping them to be well-rounded students and tomorrow's community leaders.



Somerset *High School*

9242 E. Laurel St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6548 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/somerset-high.htm



Mark Kailiponi
Principal

Career Exploration at Somerset High School

Helping Somerset students discover their career path after graduation is a schoolwide goal and focus. On January 19, 2015, 45 Somerset High School students were led on a personalized tour of the Industrial Technology Division of Cerritos College in an effort to educate students on career opportunities within this growing industry sector. Students were given information about career opportunities in Automotive Repair, Auto body repair, Welding, Machine Tooling, Plastics/Composites, Furniture/Cabinet Making, and Cosmetology. The tour consisted of discussions by teachers in each department and hands on demonstrations so students could see what they would be doing in each career path. The Machine Tooling technology instructor opened students understanding of the high tech requirements in this career by conducting a demonstration of how to operate a Computer Numeric Control (CNC) machine. CNC machines require operators to program in part specifications into the machine after which the machine carves, drills and cuts a metal block into the programmed object. Students watched as the automated technology manufactured a metal part for the aerospace industry. Students were given details about how to enroll in each program and informed about when the next classes would start this summer.

Frank E. Woodruff *Elementary*

15332 S. Eucalyptus Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6545 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/woodruff.htm



Beverly Swanson
Principal

Healthy Lifestyles at Woodruff

Many of our classes participate in Harvest of the Month, sponsored by the Los Angeles County Office of Education. This program reinforces the core curriculum and teaches lifelong skills that can easily and creatively connect with subjects like math, reading, science, social studies, geography, health, and consumer awareness. Students participate in hands-on lessons as they assist with food preparation using fresh fruits and vegetables. Students have been able to sample persimmons, grapefruit, green apples, red apples, and a variety of beans.

They measure ingredients, learn about the nutritional benefits of produce, and sample foods they may not have tried before. Additionally, the program offers

parenting classes to build healthy families. Woodruff will hold three classes this Spring that focus on choosing healthy foods to balance calories; reading food labels to decrease sugar, salt, and fats; and daily physical activities to be a healthy family. Parents who attend the classes will be given a free cookbook and participate in cooking demonstrations. Harvest of the Month is designed to improve children's eating behaviors and nourishment so they can improve academic achievement in school. This program blends well with our weekly Physical Education program that teaches our students to make healthy choices by increasing physical activities.



Washington *Elementary*

9725 Jefferson St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6535 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/washington.htm



Sulema Holguin
Principal

Have a Conflict – Ro, Sham, Bo

“Ro, Sham, Bo,” if only it was that easy to solve a conflict! We'll it can be, and that is what Washington students have been working on. With over 100 parents in attendance we facilitated a game of Ro, Sham, Bo Rock Star with our parents to show them how we at Washington have our students solve conflicts. Parents were engaged in a Parent Workshop which helped them understand how we are making a shift on our playground and classrooms to solve conflicts positively. As we continue to help our students practice our three simple rules of Being Safe, Respectful and Responsible we are also building on giving strategies to ensure they are successful with using these rules. Ro, Sham, Bo is one of them; whenever students get into some kind of conflict, they simply “Ro, Sham, Bo.” Teachers also use this strategy in the classroom at times when they are having students work collaboratively and want them to decide who will go first.



So at Washington we decided to take this one step further and invited Parents to come join us in learning some of the strategies students are using to be conflict mediators. It was a huge success and most importantly a positive experience to see how parents want to support the school and make the connection of home. Our cafeteria was filled with over 100 parents who were ready to Ro, Sham, Bo and they had a blast. Comments such as, “I am going to use this with my children when they are having a conflict; my husband and I can use it. I wish I could use this at work,” were some of the comments shared at the end of the workshop.

The purpose of all of this is to help our students work on becoming problem solvers on their own with simple strategies that don't make them feel like someone is taking another's side. We also help them understand that while conflicts are inevitable at times, they may be solved easily with a strategy that is safe and fun. For our parents it was a fun afternoon in which they were able to take away a strategy and help us bridge the home/school connection.



Craig Williams *Elementary*

6144 Clark Ave., Lakewood, CA 90712 • 562/804-6540 • www.bUSD.k12.ca.us/williams.htm



Dr. Michael Remland
Principal

Craig Williams School Community!

This new calendar year has started out with excitement, purpose, and learning.

Friday January 16th Craig Williams students celebrated the work of Dr. Martin Luther King by holding the first, "I Have a Dream" day. During this day all students were invited to dress in the attire that represented their career choice. This day celebrated the fact that through the efforts of great Americans like Dr. King everyone has equal opportunities to be successful, and work in a field that they love. Across Craig Williams, we had student scholars dressed up as doctors, nurses, police officers, and scientists.

During our ceremony, members of the Craig Williams Student Council and Anti-Bully Club honored Dr. King by providing a narrative journey through the major events of his life and his work to achieve equality for all. The "I Have a Dream" day event was such a positive success for the community that the event was covered by the Channel 7, Eyewitness News Team, and pieces of the event were broadcast all weekend long across the Southern California news.



This is Dr. Remland addressing the Craig Williams community during the "I Have a Dream" day ceremony. Dr. Remland's dream was to attend USC, and wore his USC football jersey.



A member of the Craig Williams Anti-Bullying Club and Assistant Principal Dr. Salas delivering the Dr. Martin Luther King narrative life story during the "I Have a Dream" day ceremony January 16, 2015. Parts of the ceremony were aired on Channel 7 ABC news.

We continue to challenge and innovate in education here at Craig Williams Elementary as well. Our teachers and students in the upper grades have begun to give and take their assessments using state of the art technology. For example, when students finish a unit of study and are ready for the test... our students ask for their computers! No longer are pencil and paper required with some exams. When ready for a test or exam our upper grade students go to the computer lab, or use our mobile Chromebook computers to login and access their tests. When students complete their test they click submit and instant results are sent to their classroom teachers. Teachers then use these results to immediately identify students' academic strengths and/or weaknesses and work to meet them.

Working together, Craig Williams' scholars, teachers, and parents continue to collaborate and innovate to meet and exceed the Bellflower Unified School District "Standard of Excellence; Nothing Less."

SUPERINTENDENT • From Page 1



District's Smaller Class Sizes Help Intensify Instruction

As we enter into the second half of the academic year, it has been a joy to see the increased level of student engagement in our primary and upper grade classrooms. This is due to the implementation of 24-1 in grades K-3 and the elimination of combination classes K-6. Both of these components have increased the academic learning and more increased levels of student engagement.

By the Governing Board implementing class size reduction to 24 students in kindergarten through third grade this fall, it has had an immediate impact on teaching and learning. Thanks to the new funding formula known as the Local Control Funding Formula and the District's focus on student needs through its Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) this program change has been nothing short of fantastic.

Smaller class size allows for teachers to provide students with more challenging and interesting activities and lessons. Teachers also get to know the children better, shape their teaching to their student's individual needs more precisely, and allow for quicker responses to academic learning gaps.

In all, BUSD hired 38 new teachers to help reduce class sizes in its K-3 classrooms at a cost of about \$2.85 million. The 24:1 ratio brings with it a 10.4 percent increase in per student funding under the LCF system. Schools were given eight years to meet the target; instead, here in BUSD we acted swiftly to make the change in the first year of our inaugural LCAP.

This was an important priority for the District and our parents, one we know will have a positive impact on instruction, especially now that we've rolled out instruction based on the California Common Core Standards.

As this year progresses, BUSD will review, revise and update the LCAP and be ready to continue to achieve the accolades of the "Standard of Excellence; Nothing Less."

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Every Step – a Journey!

I am 11 year old, Tyler Armstrong, mountaineer. At age 9, I set the World Record as the youngest person ever to climb Mt. Aconcagua (22,841 feet). I also set the record for the youngest person to climb Mt. Whitney (14,505 ft) in a single day (age 7), and was the second youngest to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro (19,341 ft) (age 8).



Everyone always wants to know why a kid would want to climb mountains? I wanted to start climbing because when I was 6 I watched a nature documentary on the Great Divide. What was interesting about that documentary was that you hiked all the way from Canada to Mexico! Also, my dad had just come back from a hiking trip and showed me some videos. After the video was over I was inspired by what he just had accomplished! The next night I told my parents I wanted to start hiking! Then, after my dad got home I told him, “Let’s go jogging.” At first I could only go about a quarter mile. The next time I went jogging my

goal was a half mile and it kept building from there. About a month later after a lot of hard work, it was time for my first hike!

My first hike was for about 6 miles and I could climb only to about 5,000 feet elevation, but at that time it was very challenging to me. I slowly made it to the top of the mountain and back, but I still made it all the way! The next day I was very sore. About a week later I told my dad that I wanted to do something bigger. We went on the internet and found more mountains that I was ready for. After climbing other local mountains and longer distances, I was ready for my test - Mt. Baldy (10,064 ft)! My dad decided to take a difficult trail up Mt. Baldy for 6,000 feet of elevation gain and 12 miles round trip. That day was very tough and tiring, but I was ready because of my hard training. When we got to the top I could see every thing. I was so high I could see LA! It was amazing that everything was under me, even the clouds! And right there I knew what I wanted to do... Mountain Climb!

After months of hard work I was ready to try to set a record by ...(to be continued).

Publisher’s note: I read an article about Tyler and immediately invited him to be a guest columnist. He is such an inspiration and I want our readers to hear his amazing stories. If you can’t wait for the next column, please enjoy Tyler’s web site! www.topwithtyler.com and www.facebook.com/topwithtyler and www.youtube.com/user/TopWithTyler

The Jazz Age: The Roaring Twenties

By D.H. Coop

In American social history, the 1920s period is often overshadowed by the Great War, Prohibition and the Stock Market Crash of 1929. Yet, it was a period of sudden change in the home, on the road, in the economy, in attitudes, and in behavior. These changes seem so second nature to us today that we think they have always been around.

Starting in the home we can see changes in workload, entertainment, and travel spread across the social environment. Prior to the '20s, the housewife scheduled her work according to the days of the week. Washing was done by hand and took all day, along with preparing the meals and caring for the children. Her workload was lightened with new time-saving devices, such as the electric vacuum cleaner, the electric refrigerator and stove, and the electric iron.

Also, the radio changed home entertainment. Before the radio, communities were informed of the local news by the newspaper or gossip at the market or pub. Now it was broadcast (a word from farming for scattering seeds by hand) right in their front rooms, along with other programs. Family entertainment then shifted from board games and singing to sitting and listening to the radio. As the price of the radio dropped, the children moved off to their own rooms with their very own radios. During the day, the programs were centered on housewives and sponsored by soap companies, thus the birth of the “soap opera.”

Availability of the automobile changed all aspects of life. It provided the housewife with more independence and a more convenient way to do her shopping. Automobiles required better roads and better roads cost money, which caused a shift from railroads to automobiles being the force driving the economy. Restaurants became roadside cafes, hotels became motels, and crime became more mobile. To get the car into everyone’s hands, Henry Ford produced the Model T from 1914 to 1927 with the sales pitch of “in any color (black).” Ford outsold all other carmakers until 1927. General Motors allowed credit and sold cars in multiple colors, finally overtaking the Model T in sales.

Credit shifted the sales pitch. Advertising became more scientific, with research and studies. Slogans and sayings were rooted in the '20s, such as “Say it with flowers” and “Don’t light three cigarettes with one match.” Advertising was given a boost with the Silver Screen and the images it portrayed in dress and style.

Finally, the '20s saw the development of sports and entertainment on a mass scale. Baseball became a national spectator sport. The local bar became a speakeasy that respectable couples could go to and have a drink. The new drink to appeal to women was called the “cocktail”—drinks with decorations. The drinks required illegal alcohol, which was provided by bootleggers in fast cars, which gave birth to the modern race called National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR).

All in all, the 1920s changed the modern home, transportation, the economy, and social life.

Note-ables

Build It Back Again



Kate Karp

I’m delighted whenever I come across a collection for children featuring music that isn’t formulated, childishly cute or backed with electronic tracks. *Build It Back Again* by the Billy Jonas band is none of this, even with the use of a toy piano as a percussion instrument. The melodies are catchy compositions performed by a full range of vocal and instrumental mastery—even that little piano—and the lyrics do more than instruct and educate. They traverse sometimes wonky pathways to communicate profound messages of determination, maintaining humanity in a technological world, balance and historical significance.

The title song features a strong tempo with words to match. From the



architecture of ancient Greece to the ravages of Hurricane Katrina—and certainly not stopping there—the band sings of the resolve of the human spirit to rebuild, often in new ways. The rollicking “Monkeys Driving Cars” tells how necessary it is to advance ourselves as humans to the same extent as technology if we want to survive as people. In a primal atmosphere of percussion, “Moment of Noise” seamlessly transitions from the creation of the universe to thankfulness and appreciation for every little sound and what causes it.

The CD is heavy but not any means ponderous. The songwriters also love wordplay, especially as it increases vocabulary and wallows in punning, as in “Hairy,” “Maybe Maybe Not” and “What Kind of Bear Are You?”

The Billy Jonas Band has dug a sturdy foundation in *Build It Back Again*—good stuff for any group discussion that involves young minds.

Kate Karp is an editor for *School News Roll Call* and a freelance writer and editor.

The Humming Room



Alana F.

Ellen Potter's *The Humming Room* is a novel inspired by *The Secret Garden*. In this book, 12-year-old Roo Fanshaw's parents have just been

murdered, and she is taken in by her wealthy uncle on Cough Rock Island to live in a former tuberculosis sanitarium for children of the affluent. Roos' new home is strange and eerie, with creepy noises and a wild-looking boy on the river. Ultimately, she discovers the secret of the sanitarium: a forbidden withered garden with a tragic history. Can she revive the nearly-dead garden without her uncle knowing?

I would give this book four stars because while I love it, *The Humming Room* can be slightly dull and unexciting. It's close to the standards of my usual 5-star books, but not quite there.

Alana F. is a student at Las Flores Educational Center. Alana is a columnist invited to review her favorite books for our readers. She rates the books on a scale of 1—5 with 5 being the highest.





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Going Green! Word Search Contest

Rules!!! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.
When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com (Please put BF in subject line)

Entries must be received by April 15, 2015
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

- | | | |
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| Difference | Impact | Respect |
| Eco Friendly | Low Waste | Responsibility |
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Congratulations to Our January Winners
Adrian Martinez





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