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School News



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Covering the Bellflower Unified School District

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2012

SUPERINTENDENT



A Great Place for Children

It is with immense excitement that I write you introducing, or for some of you continuing families, reintroducing myself as Superintendent for

Brian Jacobs Ed.D.
Superintendent

the Bellflower Unified School District (BUSD). As I correspond with you today, it is with even greater excitement and exhilaration that the Governing Board joins me in welcoming you to what is already a historical beginning to the 2012-2013 school year. With the Governing Board taking action to place a \$79-million dollar General Obligation Bond on the November 6 ballot, that in and of itself already makes the start of this year thrilling and historical. As we get this new school year under way, I am looking forward to surpassing the achievements of the past and meeting the innovative challenges that lie ahead.

Speaking of the future, one potential contribution for the students of our district can be the passage of the aforementioned \$79-million dollar General Obligation Bond. The passage of this type of bond will guarantee improvements to the structures and instructional operations of the district. If the measure were to pass, here is what you can expect as a taxpayer of the Bellflower Unified School District.

SEE SUPERINTENDENT • PAGE 7

Bellflower Unified School District
16703 S. Clark Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706
562/866-9011
www.busd.k12.ca.us

School Based Education—The Short-Cut to Learning



Saying good-bye to the lazy days of summer.

By D.H. Coop, Guest Columnist

School is the short cut through the school of life. Learning is enjoyable and truly a life-long experience that is unlimited.

Standing on the beach and looking at the horizon it is easy to see how once the earth was believed to be flat. Today, of course, we know the earth is a globe we have divided into imaginary lines called the grid of parallel and longitude line for navigation. How did we get to this understanding?

Education comes in two forms: the school of life and school based education. The school of life is filled with joys and often hard knocks. We try something and, if it worked, we experienced joy and success. If it didn't work, we either learned from that experience and tried again or gave up and accepted defeat. The

SEE SCHOOL BASED EDUCATION • PAGE 7

BOARD OF EDUCATION



Success for All Students

The Bellflower Unified School District (BUSD) serves approximately 13,000 students in an eight-square-mile area in southeast Los Angeles County. It includes most of Bellflower, a large portion of Lakewood, and a small portion of Cerritos. Several of our schools have been recognized as California Distinguished Schools, three have been honored as National Blue Ribbon Schools, and two are currently Title I Achievement Schools. Somerset Continuation High School has recently received its fourth recommendation as a California Model Continuation High School. The district also includes an alternative education center and a new Home Education/Independent Study Program, while also serving preschool students in Head Start.

BUSD offers programs, services, and safe and clean facilities which support classroom learning. They include computer labs, libraries, guidance programs, career academies, vocational training, health offices, tutoring programs, and cafeterias serving hot meals. The Board of Education consistently enforces a zero-tolerance policy for drugs and weapons. The clean and attractive appearance of our campuses and the safety of our students are our priorities.

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Kay Coop

Founder / Publisher



The golden days of summer have come to an end and it's back to school. Kindergarten students are entering the academic world and seniors are focusing on becoming the graduating class of 2013. Regardless of the grade level it is an exciting time meeting new friends, saying hello to old friends and getting into the groove of a new school year.

We are delighted to begin publishing the excellence from the Bellflower Unified School District.

Thank you for including *School News* among your reading choices.

School News

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covering the
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Las Flores *Educational Center*

10039 E. Palm St., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/804-6565 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/homeEducation.htm



Ruben Presiado
Lead
Administrator

At Home In the Classroom

Each fall when school begins, a growing number of school-aged children do not head off to a classroom. Instead, they learn at home with their families or with other children in their communities. Homeschooling takes many forms, from a daily routine following a scheduled curriculum to child-led learning in which parents act as their primary teacher. Choosing whether to homeschool or traditionally educate a child is often a difficult and confusing decision for parents and guardians. Bellflower Unified School District now provides educational options for homeschool parents. Unlike many homeschool academies, we offer two programs that are individualized to the abilities and interests of each child at no cost to the parents.

The Classic Model is a traditional homeschooling independent-study method in which parents have the flexibility and independence of designing their child's learning based on the California academic standards with assistance from a highly qualified credentialed teacher. Students and parents meet monthly or more often if needed to broaden the scope of home instruction and to monitor the child's academic progress. The Core Model allows students and families access to direct classroom instruction and standards-based materials three days per week: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday in a small-class learning environment. Students of both models are invited to participate in Enrichment Fridays: band and choral music, project-based activities, field trips and other hands-on learning experiences. Our commitment to your child's educational success goes deeper than the academic requirements. We offer parent workshops designed specifically for homeschooling, sources of curricula and books, and direct teacher access for support.

For further information, please e-mail us rpresiado@busd.k12.ca.us.

Intensive Learning Center

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



Isel Taylor
Principal

Achievement at Great Heights

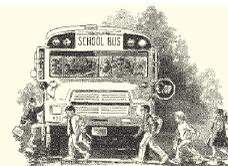
The beginning of a new school year brings excitement and a recommitment to excellence here at the Intensive Learning Center (ILC). Our staff is guided by a shared commitment to educate all of our students to attain high levels of academic achievement. We hold the vision of developing within each student's feelings of self-worth and a respect for cultural diversity and interdependence. As a staff, we recognize our own responsibility and emphasize each student's personal and social responsibility toward the school and community. In addition, our physical learning environment and school climate are student centered, safe, and orderly and foster attitudes and behaviors that are respectful and supportive.

At the ILC, we acknowledge that a home/school connection is essential to our students' success. Parents and community members are actively involved in a broad range of activities. Our well-organized, talented and dedicated PTA assists with field trips, parent education, community events and our Meet the Masters program. Students in grades four through six have an opportunity to serve on Student Council. Our active Student Council provides students with an opportunity to develop leadership skills and service to the community.

This school year, the staff at the ILC, along with district personnel, will be designing a new Spanish dual-language program to begin 2013-14.

We are the ILC Eagles! Watch us soar as we continue to provide a Standard of Excellence—Nothing Less!

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Albert Baxter *Elementary*

14929 S. Cerritos Ave., Bellflower, CA 90706 • 562/531-1602 • www.busd.k12.ca.us/baxter.htm



Sue Curtiss
Principal

Adding to Our Great Performance!

I am thrilled to be the new principal at Albert Baxter Elementary. Having served in the Bellflower Unified School District for over 20 years, I am fortunate to already know many of the teachers and staff members at the school. I look forward to getting to know the Baxter families in the coming months. Baxter Elementary has a history of academic excellence and has received recognition as a California Distinguished School and a National Blue Ribbon School. The school has dedicated teachers, supportive parents and enthusiastic students. Together we will continue the commitment to academic excellence.

Over the past few months, neighbors may have noticed construction on the school campus as a new multipurpose room is being built. The finished building will include inside lunch seating, an outdoor lunch shelter, a kitchen and a performance stage. We will enjoy many terrific student band and chorus shows on the new stage.



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

Well-Rounded Education

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the start of the 2012–13 school year at Bellflower Middle/High School. I am extremely pleased and honored to be the new principal of Bellflower Middle/High School, a school with a rich tradition and a legacy of excellence. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you and your child to provide an outstanding educational experience. We have many changes this school year, but with the support of our dedicated parents, students, teachers and staff, I am certain that we will be able to achieve high standards of excellence and academic achievement.

Beyond our core academic courses, Bellflower Middle/High School offers courses in technology, art, business, choral and instrumental music, drama and physical education. We also encourage students to explore the courses offered through our Regional Occupation Program (ROP). A well-rounded high school experience includes active participation in cocurricular activities. Students should become involved in our athletic programs, visual and performing arts programs, ASB and student clubs. We encourage all parents to join PTSA, which provides financial support for our students and programs on campus.

Our staff and community are committed to providing a safe and positive environment that promotes respect, productivity and active participation in school activities. Bellflower High/Middle School has made a long-standing commitment to provide students with learning experiences that enable them to feel confident about their abilities and begin to plan for their future after high school. We recognize that the high school and middle school years can be the most influential in a student's formal education; it is a time when career paths are determined and solid academic growth establishes the foundation for dreams to be achieved.

Stephen Foster *Elementary*

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



Deirdre Reyes
Principal

Working Together

At Stephen Foster Elementary School, we are very excited to be starting another school year. Our diligent custodians have been hard at work all summer long. Thanks to their efforts, the campus is clean and fresh and ready for the new school year. New textbooks have arrived, and our teachers have returned to work and are busy planning and preparing for the upcoming year.

At Foster, the home-school connection is very strong, and this benefits our students enormously. Teachers look forward to meeting with all parents at Back-to-School Night in September and for fall parent conferences in October. The fall conference is particularly important because parents and teachers will collaborate to set goals for the academic year and academic intervention plans will be put into place to ensure that every student is successful.

The new school year will also be filled with family events, such as Veterans Day, Grandparents Day, Family Math and Reading Nights, Talent Show, Jog-a-thon for Computers, and the Stephen Foster Carnival. The common thread running through all of these events is the home/school connection. These events would simply not be possible without the support we receive from the families of our students. We also welcome parent volunteers in our classrooms, and teachers really appreciate the contributions of these hardworking parents.

Our goal is continuous improvement for all students. We are fully committed to the district motto: Standard of Excellence—Nothing Less. When home and school work together, we can make that goal a reality for all students.

Thomas Jefferson *Elementary*

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



Dina Hernandez
Principal

High Expectations

It is with great excitement that I welcome each of you to the 2012-2013 school year! My name is Dina Hernandez, principal at Thomas Jefferson Elementary School. At Jefferson, we have high expectations. The goal of our school is to provide each student with a challenging and rigorous curriculum appropriate to his/her academic level. We believe all students can achieve academic success. By working in collaboration with staff, students, and parents, we will ensure that our students get the best quality education possible. I am really excited and am looking forward to another great year!

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Esther Lindstrom *Elementary*

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



Deborah Apple
Principal

Change is Good

With each new school year, there seems to be an element of change. This year that word will have a little more impact than usual for me since I am at a new school, Esther Lindstrom Elementary School. This high-achieving school earned the California Distinguished School award last year. Even though the bar is already high, we will continue to emphasize moving each student at least one academic achievement level forward by using growth goals. Working together with the school community is a must in order to achieve the best educational outcome for our students.

That is why I feel very lucky to have such a strong, supportive PTA. With their team effort, our students will have the educational and emotional support to continue succeeding at a rigorous level.

This year a feeling of excitement is also in the atmosphere because of the Common Core State Standards. Teachers and administrators will be working together to begin incorporating them into the curriculum. Even though everyone is a bit leery of what will be expected of them with this change, they need not worry because we are all in this together. Our school community will step up and implement these new standards in such a way that our students will not even be aware of the change. As we know, high expectations are the key to success, and the Common Core Standards will help us to move forward into achieving the Standard of Excellence—Nothing Less.

Mayfair *Middle/High School*

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



Matt Eeles
Principal

Focus on Excellence

I would like to welcome everyone to the 2012–2013 school year. I am honored to be the new principal of Mayfair Middle/High School. I have worked for the Bellflower Unified School District for 12 years as a teacher, counselor, and assistant principal, all at Mayfair. I am proud of our mission at Mayfair: to provide our students with a rigorous, challenging academic program and classroom instruction of the highest quality. I will be working hard to continue our “Standard of Excellence—Nothing Less.”

Our focus areas this year include: continuing the culture of collaboration established through our professional learning teams; increasing the number of students prepared for college through completion of the University of California A–G requirements; and the use of Direct Interactive Instruction (DII) to increase the use of engaging instructional strategies, which improve teaching and learning for all students.

I am truly looking forward to the school year!



Ernie Pyle *Elementary*

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



Lisa Paioni
Principal

Lights on Communication!

I am so pleased to introduce myself as the new principal of Ernie Pyle Elementary School. I am very excited to be joining the Ernie Pyle team and look forward to supporting them in their continued focus on student achievement and attaining high levels of student success.

Parent involvement is essential to student achievement, and good communication with parents is vital. Ernie Pyle guidance intern Gail Davenport worked with Principal Sulema Holguin and the Ernie Pyle Student Council on a short video and essay for a nationwide contest sponsored by a major discount chain. The video explains how a digital marquee would help keep parents informed of workshops and events. As a result of the efforts of the entire Ernie Pyle community, we are the recipient of a \$2,000 third-place award! The money will go to our newly created digital marquee fund. Thanks go to the corporation, Ms. Davenport and Mrs. Holguin!

Ramona *Elementary*

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



Bonnie Carter
Principal

Rams are Scholars!

Students who attend Ramona Elementary quickly realize that the staff expects nothing less than their best. At Ramona, we believe in teaching the whole child by ensuring that all students are academically on the path to excellence and are also successful socially and behaviorally.

Students are reminded that to be a Ramona scholar, they are more than students who attend school. They are students who come to school daily, prepared and eagerly engaged in their learning. Working together as a team of student, parent and school, we can help build a foundation for our scholars to be successful in the future.

There are many ways that you can be involved in your child's education, such as joining the PTA, attending school events and meetings, and making sure your child is prepared and ready to learn every day. One of your first opportunities to support your child is to attend Back to School night on Sept. 20. During this event, you will receive information regarding what your child will be learning this year and will be able to speak with local organizations at our Community Faire before Back to School night and learn about local resources available to your child and family.

We look forward to seeing you at Back to School night and to working together this school year. Don't forget to show your Ram Pride and wear red on Fridays. Go Rams!

Contest!!

This drawing is in this publication. When you find it, email the page number to:

Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com
Please put BUSD in the subject line

Your entry must be received by October 15, 2012.

From the correct entries, we will draw a winner to receive a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble Book Stores



Somerset *High School*

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



Patrick Dixon
Principal

Education: The Choice is Yours

Somerset High School is off and running for the 2012–13 school year, which began on July 23. For over 40 years, Somerset has been serving students who need an alternative setting to recover credits or a smaller learning environment better suited for their learning style. The school is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and has been recognized as a model continuation high school by the California Department of Education for four consecutive terms. The school offers students the flexibility of attending a morning session, an afternoon session or all day. Students can also enroll in the Work Experience program to earn elective credits or in the Regional Occupational Program at any ROP class in the district to gain valuable experience and vocational skills.

There have been some exciting changes at Somerset High School with the addition of online instruction through GradPoint virtual learning and the expanded Somerset Reentry program. GradPoint allows teachers to supplement their regular assignments with online instruction and enables students to extend their instructional day by working online at home in the evenings and on weekends. Students also have an opportunity to enroll in online credit-recovery classes as part of their regular school day. The Somerset Reentry program, which serves students 18 years of age and over who may need more time to complete the requirements for graduation, has expanded from one class to two classes. The counselor, Belinda Dávila, and I are excited about the new school year and programs here at Somerset High School as we work toward a Standard of Excellence—Nothing Less.

Washington *Elementary*

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



Sulema Holguin
Principal

Quality Versus Quantity

Washington Elementary School is excited about starting the 2012–2013 academic school year. As your new principal, I am looking forward to meeting all of you and want to thank you for giving us the opportunity to work with your children.

Our district and school will continue to provide a high level of education, which will focus on excellence. Therefore, I would like to challenge all of us to focus on quality versus quantity. As educators, we are always looking for additional time to teach our students everything that they must master for that grade level and beyond. As we are providing instruction for your children this year, we will additionally continue to look at the quality of our instruction and all of our programs. Our commitment to excellence is that our focus will always be on quality.

So how does this tie into us working together as a partnership? As parents, we may sometimes feel we don't have enough time to spend with our children due to work obligations and commitments. We may feel that we are not involved parents because we do not attend school functions. If we focus on providing quality time, then we are doing more during that short span of time to really show our children we love them and are involved. Take at least 15 minutes of your day and turn off your cell phone, television, and any other distractions. Make a commitment to provide quality time focused on your children. Sit down and talk with your child about what he or she learned or allow your child to choose something important about school to share with you. I hope you will find this as a simple step towards becoming our partner in educating your child.

Frank Woodruff *Elementary*

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



Beverly Swanson
Principal

Doubling Our Reading Record!

During my years with Bellflower Unified School District, I have been an administrator at Craig Williams Elementary, Ernie Pyle Elementary School and Esther Lindstrom Elementary School. I am excited to begin the 2012–13 school year at Frank E. Woodruff Elementary School.

The Woodruff Wolves are phenomenal readers and continue to be motivated by the Parent Partnership's Million Minutes Reading Challenge. During the 2011–12 school year, students read books for two million minutes! That is quite an accomplishment, and I look forward to working with this literacy-rich community. I'm certain that the Woodruff Wolves will rise up and read another two million minutes during 2012–13.

Craig Williams *Elementary*

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



Keisha Sawyer
Principal

Greetings, Wildcat Community!

Welcome to the 2012–13 school year! The entire learning community at Craig Williams Elementary is looking forward to yet another successful year. We will continue to work toward increasing academic achievement by setting a standard of excellence to ensure that all students meet or exceed the challenging state standards. We will strive to work toward our goal of increasing academic parent/community involvement by providing learning opportunities that will have a direct impact on student achievement.

At Craig Williams Elementary, we believe that every student can achieve academic success, and we will provide them with high quality, rigorous instructional experiences to make sure that they do. We will accept nothing less than excellence from our staff, students, parents and community members. Working together, we will make sure that our students are getting smarter each day!

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SUPERINTENDENT • FROM PAGE 1



Brian Jacobs Ed.D.
Superintendent

The measure will provide for our children's classrooms and all schools by:

- Expanding district vocational education programs and facilities, including welding, automotive technology, medical and health technology, and construction trades.
- Upgrading classrooms with up-to-date computers and technology.
- Repairing aging school classrooms and facilities throughout the district.
- Replacing outdated heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems.
- Upgrading and improving physical education facilities and programs.
- Making restrooms and classrooms compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Repairing and replacing leaky roofs.

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- By law, the measure funds must be used for our children's schools and cannot be taken away by the state and spent elsewhere.

Reflecting upon the many aspects of last year, I am extremely proud of the accomplishments we have achieved as the district continues to focus on student achievement, instructional improvement, and an action plan to ensure the most effective and efficient organizational performance. This has led me to an even stronger belief that we are capable of the "Standard of Excellence—Nothing Less." Together, our ongoing challenge is to have the standard of excellence memorialized throughout the entire district and ensure we hit the markers charged to us as a high-performing school district.

I also believe that extraordinary success for each and every one is possible in the Bellflower Unified School District. What does it take to make extraordinary success a reality? It will occur when we have positive relationships and personal connections, expect the best from each other and make positive differences for others, and focus on our strengths, provide support, and make our shortcomings insignificant.

As Superintendent, my promise to the district and community is to continually strive to provide a quality school district that everyone in the community can be proud of. It will always be my goal to give our students a safe and positive experience while they attend the schools within our district. We are blessed with great kids, supportive parents and community, and a caring staff. Those ingredients are all part of the recipe for success! Thank you to everyone who makes BUSD "A Great Place for Children."

SCHOOL BASED EDUCATION • FROM PAGE 1

school of life can be as simple and painful as touching a hot stove and learning not to do it again or as self-fulfilling as learning to tie a shoe. School based education offers the opportunity to learn from those who have gone before us.

In the past, when most of the world was involved in agriculture, knowledge doubled at a slow rate. Then when industry came along the speed of knowledge became faster. Today knowledge is doubling in some fields every three months. For example, the moment an educational book is completed it is likely outdated. The internet has made knowledge so available that fact has become blurred more than ever.

School is the short cut through the school of life. The horizon is not the end of the earth and the mountains are not as close as they appear. Learning is enjoyable and truly a life-long experience that is unlimited.

BOARD OF EDUCATION • FROM PAGE 1



Paul Helzer, D.C., PhD.
President

With Content and Performance Standards at every grade level, a strong curriculum, and textbooks for every student, we are teaching fundamentals which will empower students to become active lifelong learners. We provide opportunities for support services for students at risk to further enable them to become informed, productive, independent, and contributing citizens in today's diverse society.

The Board of Education is committed to maintain high-quality programs and beautiful facilities. We are continually looking for ways to strengthen our services and support programs in order to improve student learning.

Our students are at the center of all of our decisions and our goals. We value our students, and we have high expectations for them. We want every student to succeed!



Paul Helzer, D.C., PhD.
President



Laura Sanchez-Ramirez
Vice President

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