**Superintendent’s Message**

As another successful school year comes to an end in the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District (PVPUSD), we are grateful for the hard work and support of our students, parents, staff, and community.

We applaud Palos Verdes High School and Palos Verdes Peninsula High School for being honored among the top high schools in California and the nation. The Washington Post ranked Peninsula High 31st in the state and 281st nationally on its America’s Most Challenging High School list, while Palos Verdes High ranked 33rd in the state and 295th nationally. U.S. News and World Report recognized Peninsula High as the 24th best high school in the state and 156th in the nation and recognized Palos Verdes High as the 43rd best high school in the state and 269th in the nation.

We encourage you to donate to the Peninsula Education Foundation (PEF), the Parent Teacher Associations and the booster clubs to help us continue to provide students with an outstanding education. Please contact the PEF at www.pvpef.org or (310) 379-2278.

Have a happy and healthy summer break.

Walker Williams, Superintendent of Schools
supt@pvpusd.k12.ca.us

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**PVPUSD Preschools Information**

Mary Ellen Haworth, site director
Miraëste Early Learning Academy (MELA)
(310) 732-0922, ext. 200, haworthm@pvpusd.k12.ca.us

Carolyn Martinez, site director
Valmonte Early Learning Academy (VELA)
(310) 791-5078, ext. 3, martinezc@pvpusd.k12.ca.us.

Also visit www.pvpusd.k12.ca.us/index.php/schools/pre_school_and_early_learning. The preschools are open this summer and provide before- and after-school care.

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**Preschool Program Grows**

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District (PVPUSD) is expanding its preschool program to serve more children.

Miraëste Early Learning Academy (MELA) and Valmonte Early Learning Academy (VELA) are adding two more 2-year-old preschool classes to its campuses in August. The preschools will have additional space for the 3- and 4-year-old classes as well. And, for the first time, both schools will offer Mommy and Me classes for toddlers, infants and their parents.

PVPUSD hopes the new preschool offerings will increase kindergarten enrollment. In 2012-2013, PVPUSD had 6,966 kindergarteners compared to 653 in 2010. Expanding the fee-based preschool programs will also generate more revenue for the district. PVPUSD currently has 300 preschoolers.

Shirley Resich, PVPUSD’s director of pupil services, says the South Bay has very few preschool programs for 2-year-olds. The 3.5-hour program helps children with their social and emotional development while teaching them how to interact as group learners. MELA and VELA offer child care and are open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. “When families join our preschools with their 2-year-olds, they form a close bond with us that we hope continues until their children graduate from our high schools,” Resich says.

The Mommy and Me program will provide the parents of infants and toddlers a nurturing and supportive environment where children will hear stories, listen to music and participate in developmentally appropriate gross and fine motor activities.

To make room for the expanded preschool offerings, MELA’s two kindergarten classes will return to the Mira Catalina Elementary School campus and two transitional kindergarten classes at VELA will move to elementary schools that have yet to be selected.

Mira Catalina Elementary School Principal Jeff Keeney is pleased to have his 420 students united on one campus. Supervising two sites has caused financial and programming challenges in the past. The kindergarten classes were moved to MELA in 1996 during a modernization project at Mira Catalina.

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**Student Spotlight**

Soleado Elementary School students were able to speak via satellite with Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield while he traveled through space aboard the International Space Station in February. Soleado’s participation was part of the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station program to engage students in science, technology, engineering and math. A Peninsula Education Foundation grant supported the effort.

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**Important Information about our local schools.**
**Summer Programs**

The following are fee-based summer programs for students, with no residency requirements for participation. All programs are closed on July 4. For more information visit: http://pvpusd.k12.ca.us/index.php/schools/summer_school_2013/

### Preschool
(310) 791-5078
June 17 – June 28 and July 1 – July 26
Valmonte Early Learning Academy and Miraleste Early Learning Academy

### Elementary School
(310) 378-8695
**Summer Break Academic Readiness**
Grades K-5
June 17 – July 12 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Dapplegray and Silver Spur Elementary schools

**Summer Break Enrichment Programs**
Grades K-5
June 17 – June 28 and July 1 – July 12 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Silver Spur Elementary School

**Summer Break DaVinci Institute**
Grades 3, 4, 5
June 17 – July 12 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Dapplegray Elementary School

**Summer Break K-2 Readiness**
Students entering grades K-2 in Fall 2013
June 17 – July 12 6:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Mira Catalina and Vista Grande Elementary schools

### Elementary School Camps
(310) 541-7626
**PV Kids’ Corner Before- and After-Summer School Child Care Program**
Students entering grades TK-5 in Fall 2013
June 17 – July 12 7 a.m. to school start and school dismissal to 6:30 p.m.
Dapplegray and Silver Spur Elementary schools

**PV Kids’ Corner Summer Day Camp**
Students entering grades TK-5 in Fall 2013
June 10 – August 16 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Rancho del Mar High School

### Intermediate School
(310) 378-8695
**Summer PEP**
Grades 6-8
June 17 – July 12 8:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Miraleste Intermediate, Ridgecrest Intermediate and Palos Verdes Intermediate schools

**Teen Scene After Summer School Program**
Students entering grades 6-8 in Fall 2013
(Junior school enrollment is not required)
June 17 – July 12 12:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Ridgecrest Intermediate School
(310) 541-7626

### High School
(310) 378-8695
**Summer High School**
Grades 9-12
June 17 – July 3 and July 8 – July 25 7:30 a.m. to 12:55 p.m.
Palos Verdes High School

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**School District Prepares for Budget Cuts**

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District (PVPUSD) is projecting a $6.6 million in budget cuts over the next two years based on current state education funding estimates. Although the final state budget will be adopted in June and details about Gov. Jerry Brown’s new veto is expected to be confirmed, PVPUSD administrators do not anticipate receiving enough state dollars to offset projected deficits.

The Local Control Funding Formula proposed by Gov. Brown increases funding for students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch and those who are English language learners. Less than 3 percent of PVPUSD’s students meet those criteria.

Meanwhile, the passage of Proposition 30—the state school funding ballot initiative—kept school aid at the 2011-2012 budget levels and did not restore previous drastic cuts to public education in California.

“All Prop 30 did was keep us from falling off the cliff,” says Bill Franchini, PVPUSD’s director for human resources. “We need a 3 percent increase in state funding annually to keep up with the rising costs of utilities, salaries and supplies.”

To cope with the $2.3 million in budget reductions for 2013-2014, the PVPUSD Board of Education has eliminated numerous classified and certified positions for 2013-2014, including teachers, counselors, psychologists, instructional assistants, behavior interventionists, custodians and maintenance workers.

Since 2007, when the state began cutting public school funding, PVPUSD decreased its budget by:

- Shortening the school year
- Furloughing employees
- Capping employee contributions for health benefits
- Reducing teaching, management and classified positions
- Spending less on supplies, technology and other services

These budget reduction strategies are under consideration for 2013-2014, says Lydia Cano, the district’s deputy superintendent for business services. She says 2013-2014 is the last year PVPUSD can use its reserves to protect programs and jobs. The district, which is projecting a $4.6 million budget shortfall for 2014-2015, must maintain a minimum 3 percent reserve for economic uncertainties.

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**High Schools Add Rooms**

A new building with 10 classrooms at Palos Verdes High School (picture below) will be ready for students in August. The district is using state matching funds to build the classroom wing. Construction is set to begin in January on a new building with six classroom-rooms and a weight room at Palos Verdes Peninsula High School. Roofing and plumbing projects at various schools will continue throughout the summer.

**Distict Prepares for New State Tests**

Students at Cornerstone at Pedregal School and Palos Verdes High School took part in a pilot test of California’s new assessments this spring.

The Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District (PVPUSD) has been educating teachers and administrators about the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment, the new testing system aligned to those more rigorous standards.

The new standards and tests will replace the California Content Standards and STAR testing. Beginning in 2015, students in grades 3 through 8 and 11 will be tested in English Language Arts and math on the new assessments.

Joan Romano, PVPUSD’s director of curriculum and instruction, says the pilot assessments were administered to gather information about the performance of test items and the computer-based test delivery system under real-world conditions. The pilot tests are being administered nationwide and did not measure student or district performance.

When testing begins in 2015, the online assessments will be adaptive, which means the computer program will adjust the difficulty of questions throughout the test. As a result, Ms. Romano says students will be presented with individually tailored sets of questions based on their level of mastery.

The online assessment means the district must test large groups of students on computers during a 12-week period.

District administrators are currently reviewing PVPUSD’s technology needs. Ms. Romano stressed that any new technology – tablet, laptop or desktop computers – will support daily instruction as well. PVPUSD has until 2018 to complete the transition to online testing.

This fall, more teachers will incorporate new instructional strategies in their classroom lessons. The district’s instructional coaches, who were funded by the Peninsula Education Foundation, are working with teacher leaders at all schools to ensure these educational practices are aligned to the new standards and tests.

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**Cheers to the Class of 2013**

Palos Verdes High School, Palos Verdes Peninsula High School and Rancho del Mar High School will hold graduation ceremonies for the Class of 2013 on Thursday, June 6. PVPUSD sends our graduates to highly selective private universities, like Stanford University, big state schools such as The Ohio State University, and small liberal arts colleges like Middlebury College in Vermont. We are proud of our students’ accomplishments and wish them the best in the future. Find a sampling of the colleges and universities where PVPUSD students have attended at www.pvpusd.k12.ca.us and click on “PVPUSD College Destinations.”

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Learn more about the CCSS at the PVPUSD/Palos Verdes Library District Community Night on Wednesday, May 15 at 7 p.m. at the Peninsula Center Library.