

Measuring Progress

SEPTEMBER 2011

PALOS VERDES PENINSULA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

VOLUME 16

A Message from the Superintendent

Local Support Makes the Difference for PV Students and Community”

For the past five years successful school districts in California have learned how to maintain high quality educational programs for students with less State funding. It now requires local support in order to provide programs and services students need in order to compete in the 21st Century.

The test results from last year are now available for review. As you will see in this edition of Measuring Progress our students have once again demonstrated that they are able to compete with students from the best schools in the nation. This doesn't happen by accident, it starts with a Board of Education that is focused on student needs, development, and accomplishments. It requires a Board of Education that is dedicated to providing strong educational programs and activities as well as modern facilities to support those programs.

Our success also requires a team effort that includes outstanding principals, teachers, counselors, support staff, the Peninsula Education Foundation (PEF), PTA, and a local community that expects us to maintain an outstanding school system.

Local support for schools in Palos Verdes represents almost 15% of the District's annual income. This includes funds from the parcel tax, Peninsula Education Foundation, and local PTA units. Without this support many of the programs that lead to a high level of student success would have to be reduced or eliminated.

On July 28th, the Board of Education approved the following resolution asking voters to help maintain the District's high level of success:

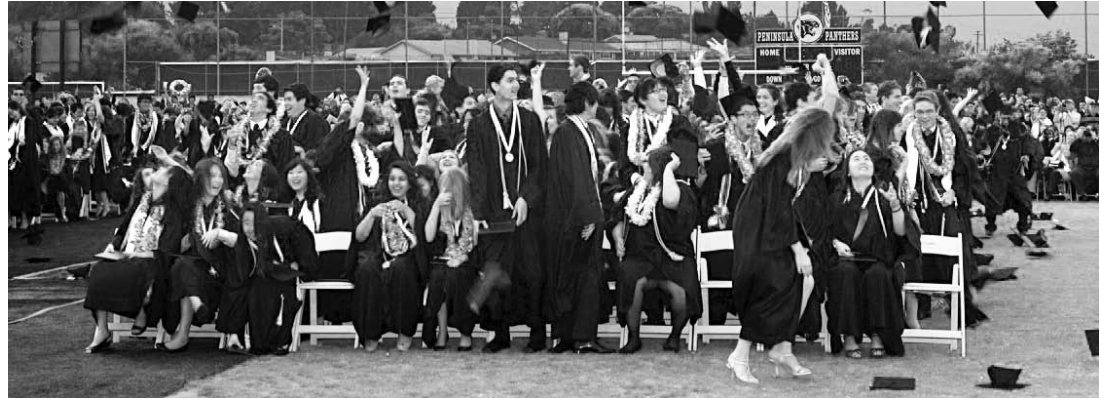
“Without increasing existing taxes and to protect the quality of education and promote student achievement shall Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District extend the existing school parcel taxes to fund advanced programs in math, science and technology, keep classroom technology up-to-date, attract and retain highly qualified teachers, and maintain manageable class sizes, with an exemption for seniors, a cost of living adjustment for inflation, with all money staying in our community to benefit local schools.”

The investment the local community has made in its public school system has provided many dividends to residents. With your ongoing commitment to excellence, we will build upon our success and continue to provide schools that are among the best in the State and the Nation.

For more information, please contact me at: supt@pvpusd.k12.ca.us

Walker Williams

Walker Williams, Superintendent of Schools



District Students Continue to Perform at the Highest Levels

Federal/state mandates and community expectations require PVPUSD to focus on measurable outcomes and determine whether or not students are being prepared for the next phase of their lives in college and/or the workplace. The following are some measurements that teachers and staff use to evaluate instructional programs and services. Once again, District students continued to perform well on all measurements.

Academic Performance Index (API)

In 2011, the District-wide API score on this statewide standards test increased by seven points to 920. The state expectation is for all students to show annual progress on this test and for all schools to reach a score of 800.

Advanced Placement Test (AP)

This test demonstrates that our students are prepared for college-level work in numerous subject areas. In 2010-11, over 3300 tests were taken by high school students in PVPUSD with a passage rate around 80%.

ACT (College Preparedness Test)

The ACT is another nationally recognized test that measures whether or not students are prepared for college in the areas of English, mathematics, reading, and science. Around the State there is concern about last year's results and the fact many students are not adequately prepared, while in PVPUSD, our students far exceeded the benchmarks for all four subjects that determine "college readiness."

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

This test is one of the factors considered for college admission. Almost 98% of District

students attend a four-year university or two-year college after graduation.

These standardized tests are just some examples of how the District's preschool through 12th grade program prepares students for future success. In addition, other benchmarks and tests in reading/writing, math, world language, physical education, and other subject matters allow for ongoing evaluation of our programs with an eye on continuous improvement and the development of the whole child.

PVPUSD High Schools are Nationally Ranked

The Washington Post recently identified the best high schools in the nation using the "challenge index." The challenge index is a formula consisting of the results of advanced placement (college level) courses and tests divided by the number of graduating seniors. Competing against all public comprehensive, magnet and charter schools in the nation, Palos Verdes Peninsula High School (Peninsula High) ranked #193 and Palos Verdes High School (PV High) ranked #308. Among California high schools that made the list, Peninsula High is #18 and PV High is #33.

In addition, in June 2011, *Newsweek* magazine once again acknowledged Peninsula High School as one of the top 100 public high schools in the nation. Peninsula High was ranked #60 in the country and #5 in California.



Measuring Progress

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Important information about our local schools

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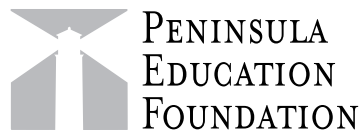
Student Success Enhanced by Community Support

With the support of the community, directly and through our partners, The Peninsula Education Foundation (PEF), the local PTA units, and Booster Clubs, the District is able to maintain the excellent education that the community expects and our students deserve.

The Peninsula Education Foundation (PEF)

Andrea Sala Returns as Executive Director

After a year away as the Associate Vice President of Development for California State University, Dominguez Hills, Andrea Sala has returned as the Executive Director of the Peninsula Education Foundation. She is a long-time resident of Palos Verdes and served nine years as Executive Director before taking the position at Dominguez Hills. Andrea is faced with a very difficult task right from the beginning. The PEF Board of Trustees has once again increased its fundraising goal to \$2.7 million in 2011-12.



PEF Support is Crucial to District Success

PEF funds allow the District to retain teachers and counselors thereby keeping class sizes and counseling ratios as small as possible. In addition, these funds support many valuable programs that enrich the overall school experience for District students.

PVIT/SMERT / High School Engineering Programs:

These programs introduce students in grades 6-12 to the world of engineering. The United States is facing a critical shortage in the number of engineering students graduating from our universities. The Palos Verdes Institute of Technology (PVIT) and Science Math Engineering Robotics and Technology (SMERT) programs at both Peninsula and Palos Verdes High offer students pre-college engineering/technology courses as well as opportunities to participate in a variety of competitions, internships, and research projects.

Safe School Coordinators: Coordinators serve students in grades 6-12 and are responsible for the implementation of student programs and services that promote healthy behavior and a positive school environment. They provide activities and programs that promote leadership, healthy choices, decision-making, positive social skills, coping, and recovery. In addition, they provide parent education programs; coordinate with law enforcement and/or community agencies to stay current on issues affecting students; and they consult with staff to develop strategies for addressing individual student concerns.

Elementary Music: All elementary school students in the PVPUSD benefit from the high quality music instruction provided throughout the school year. In addition, students in 3rd-5th grades may participate in chorus, which culminates in an annual performance at the Norris Theatre. The District is highly committed

to offering a comprehensive arts education based on the California Visual and Performing Arts Standards. Vocal and instrumental music are vital components of our arts education program. Please contact your principal for additional information.

PEF is obviously an integral piece of the puzzle when it comes to local support for outstanding educational programs in the PVPUSD. Please help by donating to the Peninsula Education Foundation. You can contact the PEF at help@pvpef.org or call (310) 378-2278.

The Parent Teachers Association (PTA / PTSA)

The PTA is another valuable partner in terms of local support for our schools. Over the last few years, local PTA units have provided the support for necessary school supplies and classroom technology. They also fund field trips, art programs, and assemblies that help develop well-rounded students. In addition, to their financial support, PTA members donate 1000s of valuable hours to our schools and District.

Our close working relationship with PTA leaders provides District leaders with a valuable forum for parent input on District programs and services.

All parents are encouraged to join their local PTA unit.

Other Programs for Students

The District offers enhanced programs/services for students from ages two to graduation. This includes:

Independent Study

PVPUSD offers an Independent Study Program for students in grades 6-12 who are unable to attend school regularly for a variety of reasons and/or have educational needs that may not be met in the more traditional schools/programs. This includes working with home school students to design programs that provide them with a more enriched educational experience. Please contact Mrs. Rosemary Humphrey at (310) 377-6691 for more information.

Preschool Program

The District operates two licensed preschool programs for students ages 2-5. The programs are located at Valmonte (VELA) and Miraleste Elementary schools (MELA). Both programs are open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and offer a variety of enrollment options.

VELA and MELA are extremely popular because of their proven success at preparing students for kindergarten. For more information, please contact Mary Ellen Haworth at (310) 732-0922.

Recreation / Community Programs Department

Please call (310) 541-7626 to learn more about these other District programs.

- **Elementary Before/After School Day Care—“PV Kids’ Corner”**
- **Intermediate After School Care—“Teen Scene”**
- **Elementary School Enrichment Program**
- **Adult Education Classes**

Construction Update

We are now in the final stages of a very successful construction and modernization program. Much has been accomplished since voters first approved Measure K in 2000. The Board of Education and District leaders have worked hard to maximize all potential resources in order to provide modern facilities for the next generation of students.

Many thanks to our community for its support of local construction bonds (Measures R&S). These resources are restricted to construction and modernization projects and cannot be used for ongoing costs such as salaries and educational programs.

The District completed or plans to complete the following projects in the upcoming year.

- ▶ Renovation of the Valmonte Elementary School site in order to expand our preschool program
- ▶ Building another classroom wing at Peninsula High
- ▶ Building another classroom wing at Palos Verdes High
- ▶ Building a practice gymnasium and band room at Peninsula High
- ▶ Renovating the pools at Peninsula High School & Miraleste Intermediate schools
- ▶ Plumbing projects at various schools
- ▶ Library at Montemalaga Elementary

Once these construction projects are finished all of the high priority items on the District’s Facilities Master Plan will be completed. There are still some plumbing and asphalt jobs the District plans to complete in the future.



Top: Construction of the new practice gymnasium and band room at Palos Verdes Peninsula High School. Bottom: The beautiful quad at Peninsula High following the plumbing modernization project completed over the summer.

Welcome to the Newest Members of Our Leadership Team

PALOS VERDES HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. Nick Stephany has been named the new Principal of Palos Verdes High School (PVHS). Dr. Stephany replaces Chris Bowles who provided PVHS with ten years of outstanding leadership, and a total of 30 years of service to the District.



Our new team at Palos Verdes High School: Trista Ramirez, Nick Stephany and Brent Kuykendall.

Dr. Stephany graduated from the University of California at Davis with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biochemistry in 2002, and earned his Doctorate Degree in Educational Administration at the University of Southern California. He joined the Palos Verdes High School staff in 2005 as a biology and chemistry teacher, became the Dean of Students in 2007, and Associate Principal in 2009.

Trista Ramirez has been appointed the new Associate Principal at Palos Verdes High School. Prior to accepting her new position, Mrs. Ramirez served as the Lead Counselor at PV High since September, 2004. She has twelve years of experience in the PVPUSD including a year as Safe School Coordinator at Palos Verdes Intermediate School and four years as a counselor at Ridgecrest Intermediate School. Mrs.

Ramirez has a Masters Degree in Counseling and Guidance from Loyola Marymount University.

Brent Kuykendall is also joining the administrative team at Palos Verdes High School as an Associate Principal. He was Assistant Principal at Miraleste Intermediate School for the past three years.

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

Brett Egan is the new Assistant Principal at Ridgecrest Intermediate School. He is replacing Karen Darling who retired after 37 years of outstanding service to the District.

Rick Licciardello is the new Assistant Principal at Miraleste Intermediate School. Last year he was the Dean/Counselor at Rancho del Mar High School.