

# Perris Union High School District Newsletter

## THE "SUPES" ON.....



February 2015

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### DID YOU KNOW

Did you know staff has access to emergency information and updates?

Staff Hotline for Emergency Announcements and Updates:  
(951) 92-ALERT (922-5378)

(Please note this line is not monitored)

Emergency updates on website:  
[www.puhsd.org/emergency/info](http://www.puhsd.org/emergency/info)



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## Superintendent's Message

by Dr. Jonathan L. Greenberg



Beginning this spring, our students including all students in California will be taking the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBAC). The SBAC, as it is commonly called, is a response to our new California Standards in English-Language Arts, mathematics, and science. These new standards focus on ensuring that every student who graduates high school be better prepared to enter their post-secondary educational program of choice and the 21st Century work place. In short, these new standards are a game-changer both for the teacher and the student in that the bar has

been raised in both rigor and relevance.

While we had a trial one year ago, this year's results will serve as a baseline for student achievement in the District. Thus, it will serve, along with other metrics, to give us our strengths and weaknesses in terms of both curriculum and instruction. In so doing, this report card of sorts will drive our professional development, Professional Learning Community agendas, and ultimately how we spend additional resources to improve student achievement.

One particular area of concern is the anticipated dip in student scores. It is important to understand that these new results will measure proficiency on a different and more rigorous curriculum that

is new for teachers and students. On top of that, the assessment system is both different and new as well. "Proficiency" in these new standards is not comparable to proficiency in the previous state standards. Scores from the new assessments will represent a realistic baseline that provides a more accurate indicator for educators, students, and parents as they work to ensure our students meet the rigorous demands of college and career readiness for the 21st Century.

Thanks to our Scholar Plus Initiative, new lessons and units developed by our own teachers, and a variety of professional development opportunities, our students will have a head start in terms of being successful on the SBAC assessments.

## PUHSD Joins the Quake Catcher Network



The Quake-Catcher Network (QCN) is a collaborative initiative for developing the world's largest, low-cost strong-motion seismic network using motion sensors attached to internet-connected computers. Stanford University and USGS-Pasadena and the Southern California Earthquake Center have installed over 100 sensors in California, Oregon, Washington, and Alaska.

Starting with Perris High School, all campuses in the District are being outfitted with QCN seismometers to provide students with new and exciting learning opportunities. In addition, the QCN data from District stations will be analyzed by earthquake scientists from a variety of agencies. QCN provides software so that individuals can join together to improve earthquake monitoring, earthquake awareness, and the science of earthquakes. For more information: QCN: <http://qcn.stanford.edu> / Shakeout: <http://www.shakeout.org/california/>

## Educational Services

by Marcy Savage, Assistant Superintendent



Over the last five years, we have worked together on new standards, a new assessment system, new frameworks, a new school finance model and soon, a

new accountability system. Remarkable pursuits in the Perris Union High School District have been undertaken and accomplished and there is to be great applause for the efforts of our staff and administration, and for our phenomenal students and families who have walked the

steps of change with us. Thanks to all of you, our classrooms today are filled with greatness and an energy to learn more.

Technology advancements in our District have influenced creativity and one's quest for further knowledge, created new connec-

tions and understanding of our world, thus promoted much student engagement. Rigorous and in-depth subject content illuminates from the works of teacher teams recognizing the changes in student expectations and aligning instruction and strategies to avail success. New learning for all is occurring and changes in our areas of emphasis is being noted.

The LCAP (Local Control Accountability Plan) provides us an opportunity to share our stories of greatness as well as outlines the how, what, and why programs and services are selected and provided to support positive student outcomes across a broad spectrum of areas. It focuses on strategic goals, progression of outcomes, and services and related expenditures based on local need.



As we all know, the process for developing the LCAP must include input from stakeholders (students, parent/guardian, classified and certificated

staff, local bargaining units, administration, etc.). Your voice continues to play a critical part in its development. Parent advisory committees, school events, parent-student-teacher conferences, student groups, staff meetings, Board meetings, and District workshops are opportunities for your voice to be heard and for you to provide input in the development of this important PUHSD strategic plan. You can access the LCAP (2014) on the District website and view the LCAP (2015) as it develops (after March) as well as contact District and/or site administration for further information.

#### LCAP Goals

1. All students will attain proficiency in all academic content areas.
  - ◇ *Increase in proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math*
  - ◇ *Increase in proficiency in ELA and Math in district's lowest performing groups*
  - ◇ *Increase in Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) enrollment*
  - ◇ *Transcript analysis to ensure access and success in A-G course offerings*
2. All students will graduate from high school prepared for post-secondary and career options.
  - ◇ *Increase students meeting graduation requirements*
  - ◇ *Increase A-G completion, Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) identification, Advanced Placement (AP) enrollment, California High School Equivalency Exam (CAHSEE) passage/proficiency*
  - ◇ *Increase passage of the Early Assessment Program (EAP)*
3. All departments and sites will provide a safe and positive learning environment for all staff and students.
  - ◇ *Increase participation in clubs, activities, programs*

◇ *Reduce incidents of bullying, drug use, violence, truancies, chronic absenteeism, suspensions and expulsions.*

4. Increase home-school connections and outreach throughout the District and School Community.

◇ *Increase parent capacity and participation*

◇ *Increase business/community networking*

◇ *Increase technology opportunities for school/community use and access to school information.*

We will continue to provide robust 21st Century learning spaces for all and strive to meet the needs of ALL learners. Today and tomorrow, we will continue to promote information literacy and Common Core State Standards (CCSS) mastery in all content areas while keeping students engaged and acquiring necessary skills for continued enriched learning. We will continue to teach like a champion to instill a mindset of "I Can Do It."

#### Special Education Rocks!

The Special Education Department continues to move all students to the "least restrictive environment." Even when working with our severely handicapped students, our teachers are including them in the mainstream curriculum to the best of their ability. Teachers are experimenting, implementing, and becoming more and more creative in finding ways to meet the needs of their students. We are finding the CCSS better supports the learning styles of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) than more traditional forms of instruction. Students with IEP's are finding success working in groups and with projects. A "hands-on" approach with our special needs students is proving to be highly successful and effective.

The Special Education Department continues to move forward in CCSS implementation. Our teachers are working collaboratively with general education teachers to deliver lesson plans that align with CCSS and prepare students for spring Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) testing. The Special Education teachers have received training on Universal Access tools that students with IEP's can use on state and District testing. In December, most Special Education teachers participated in an all day training on CCSS implementation for students with IEP's. They will complete day two of this training in February. We are proud of the hard work of our staff and students in CCSS implementation!

Plans are in place to begin the spring orientation meetings which transition 6th graders to Pinacate as 7th graders and 8th graders to our high schools as 9th graders. Plans are in place to more effectively gather and disseminate information to case managers, school psychologists and general education teachers. Our Special Education staff has a terrific relationship with staff in our collaborative districts; we are now working to gather and provide information in a more efficient manner. We look forward to our spring transition meetings!

#### College and Career Readiness for All!

The Common Core State Standards has a central focus of ensuring that all students leave high school with the College and Career Readiness (CCR) skills necessary to lead successful lives. While much of the focus on the CCSS has revolved around the creation of new rigorous academic standards, it's important to note that these standards were developed around the skills necessary for students to be College and Career Ready. College and Career Readiness can be described as the skills high school graduates need to master in order to be prepared for the rigors of college level course work and the demands of a career.



This new focus on CCR has resulted in California's consideration of new school accountability indicators that will be introduced during the 2015-16 school year. It has been recommended that up to

40 percent of high school Academic Performance Index (API) scores be composed of components that measure CCR. An example within this model would include the possibility of high schools receiving API points for students completing a career pathway and meeting A-G requirements. There is also a consideration for schools receiving points for the number of students enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) classes and who also pass the AP placement examination. The areas listed below are current considerations for the new API system that will be utilized to develop the graduation indicators for high schools:

- ◇ Graduation Rates
- ◇ CTE Pathway Completion
- ◇ A-G Completion
- ◇ CAHSEE Scores
- ◇ Enrollment in AP Classes
- ◇ AP Exams (passing scores)

In reviewing these new indicators, school districts in Riverside County have started focusing on increasing their A-G completion rates and the Career-Technical Education (CTE) pathways which they are offering. Currently, our data has shown an increase in our A-G completion rates and we are working diligently to increase the number of CTE offerings at all of our school sites. Additionally, the Riverside County Office of Education is currently working with our counselors, site administration and District personnel in a collaborative effort to help us develop systems to support our efforts in ensuring that all of our students graduate from high school with the necessary CCR skills.

During the next few months, it is our goal to keep staff informed about updates regarding the new API indicators that are being recommended. Once we increase teacher awareness of these new indicators, we hope to start the process of brainstorming strategies to increase the completion of A-G courses in all departments throughout our District.



# Business Services

by Candace Reines, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services



## FACILITIES UPDATE

### Perris High School Phase 2A

The very exciting Perris High School transformation is getting ready to take another step in its progression. With the completion of Phase 1 in 2014, the campus gained a total of 28 classrooms located in the new 2 story buildings which front Ruby Drive. As part of the summer 2014 work that occurred at Perris High, a total of 13 classroom buildings were removed from the center of the campus to make way for the Phase 2 project. The first portion of Phase 2, known as Phase 2A, includes the construction of the new boys/girls locker rooms, along with two 2 story classroom buildings and a satellite kitchen kiosk. This project was submitted to the Division of State Architects (DSA) in Janu-



ary of 2014 and was approved for construction in December of 2014. Currently the Facilities Department is hard at work developing the project for bidding by contractors, with construction scheduled to begin by April 2015. The State approval process was not completed according to our original project schedule and continued through the original start date for this project, necessitating an adjustment to the original scheduled completion date of August 2016. Phase 2A is scheduled for completion December of 2016.

### Pinacate Middle School Phase 3

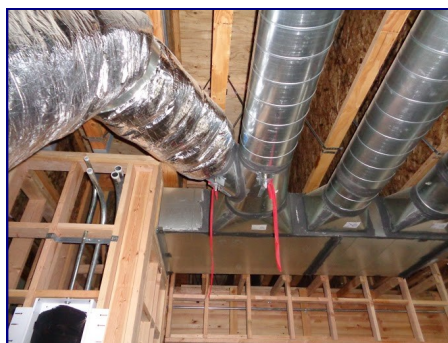
The final phase, Phase 3 of the Pinacate Middle School project is currently under way. If you have been on the Pinacate campus lately you have seen the next addition to the already awesome campus at Pinacate. The new 2



story building that is being constructed in the location of the previously demolished gym will house 14 classrooms, including two special education classrooms, two science labs and a set of rooms, on the first and second floors that have the ability to open to each other for collaboration. These rooms are divided by an operable wall that is also a full whiteboard



writing surface on both sides. Along with the classrooms in this building there is also a collaboration/break out space on both the first and second floors. Also included in this building is a teacher work room on both floors. The shell of the building, along with the framing of interior walls and the roof is complete. Building components, including HVAC units, ducting, electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems



are being installed. Also being installed is the unique spiral stairway that connects the first and second floors and can serve as an instructional space. The Pinacate Phase 3 project will be completed in time for the 2015-16 school year. Additionally, 10 portables will be removed, opening up the area to the south of the new building for the addition of basketball courts, which are located next to the lunch court.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development (PD) is an important component of every job. PUHSD supports and fosters a myriad of professional development opportunities. Adult learners thrive in environments that allow them to be self-directed, have subject matter that is highly interesting or relevant to them, and is on subject matter that they can immediately put into practice. Below are four examples of PD that takes these aspects into account.

### Personal Learning Networks

Many educators have developed what is called a Personal Learning Network (PLN). Using your PLN for professional development is much different than attending a conference or workshop. When you attend a workshop there most likely will be an outcome from the learning. A PLN is a growth mindset not an outcome. A PLN is about using the most valuable resource that education has, its people. These connections are made more efficient through various uses of technology,

letting educators prove that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. For more information on PLN's, please read this short article from Edutopia. <http://bit.ly/1EMnV9b>



### EdCamps

It is an exciting time to be in the field of education. Teachers seeking out rich and rewarding professional development opportunities are flocking to EdCamps. Think of an EdCamp as an unconference. If you were to attend an EdCamp, this is what you will find. There is no pre-planned agenda. The sessions are created at the beginning of the day by participants proposing ideas that interest them. There are no pre-planned presenters. Once the crowd decides on the session, the host school provides the classroom and resources. Anybody in the room can present and facilitate. There are no tourists at EdCamps. EdCampers actively participate in each session and are not passive observers. There are no prisoners at EdCamp. Nobody is making you attend an EdCamp and nobody will make you learn. All EdCampers want to be there. They give up their time on the weekend to meet with energetic and motivated professionals. For many, this will be the first time they meet their PLN face-to-face and invariably, EdCampers will leave with more collaborators to their PLN.

A group of District teachers have been planning an EdCamp Perris that will be hosted by our school district. Even though the atmosphere of an EdCamp feels informal, the planning to host an EdCamp can be quite detailed for it to be a success. Be looking for an announcement of our EdCamp date in late February. For a listing of EdCamps, please check this link.

<http://edcamp.wikispaces.com/complete+edcamp+calendar>



### Twitter

When we talk about PLN's and EdCamps we are also talking about the social aspects of learning. All learning is social. This can be face-to-face learning or using online tools. But what EdCamps and PLN both have in common is using social media as a force multiplier. Info about upcoming EdCamps are posted on Twitter. Attendees to EdCamps live-tweet their aha moments, resources, pictures and much more. Your PLN is reliant on Twitter as it is where educators curate blog entries, research journal articles, and participate in daily discussions toward best practices and more complete perspectives in education. Many District staff members use Twitter effectively to grow and contribute as educators. You can find an ever growing list of District Tweepers on the spreadsheet found at this link. [goo.gl/d3hoRw](http://goo.gl/d3hoRw)

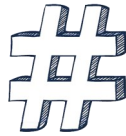


### Education Chats and Hashtags

An EdChat is an organized discussion format that utilizes the twitter platform with hashtag cate-

# More from Business Services....

gories. Many EdChats are either categorized by location or special area of interest. These conversations may focus on special interests or location. There have been chats that represent states, for example #CAedchat takes place weekly on Sundays at 8 PM. While these chats are great for discussing current issues in education, there is also value in making connections with others that have real passion and insight. Many districts in the San Diego area hold EdChats tagged by their dis-



trict acronym, and then come together for a San Diego area chat monthly. IEedchat has been established by Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) in PUHSD in order to reach out to other passionate educators in the Inland Empire. Making connections with neighboring areas will make our network stronger. If you

would like to join in the conversation, or simply listen in on what others are saying, check the #IEedchat hashtag. The weekly chat takes place on Mondays from 8-8:30 PM PST.

If you miss that live chat, you can always go back and review the conversation at #IEedchat. That is the beauty of the hashtag. Similarly, staff members at PUHSD regularly use #Scholarplus in their posts when they are promoting the great educational opportunities we offer.

## Human Resources

by Tonya Davis, Executive Director, Human Resources



The Employee Morale Committee was formed in the spring of 2014 and over this past year the committee has discussed various ways that the District can help improve morale. Some ideas happen at the site/departments level and others are big ideas

that we hope will be a whole lot of fun for our employees. Our first big event was held on February 6th and according to many of those who attended our first PUHSD Casino Night, it was a huge success! Approximately 200 people enjoyed a night of "going all in" at the Texas Hold'em tables, taking "another hit" at the blackjack tables, and hoping they didn't "crap out" at the craps tables. We had delicious food that was served by some of the fabulous and talented culinary students in Ms. Hakala's class at Perris High School and as you can see, Paloma Valley represented big time with the photo booth that we brought in for the event. Pictures from the photo booth are available on the District website under the Human Resources Division/Employee Morale link.



I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone on the committee for your thoughts and ideas about how, as a District, we can improve. Your time is valuable and so very much appreciated. This event couldn't have happened without you. In addition, we sincerely appreciate the Governing Board's commitment to this very exciting mission!

## Human Resources

by Steve Swartz, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources



As I write this, we are in negotiations with the Perris Secondary Teacher's Association (PSEA), our teacher's bargaining unit, and anticipate beginning shortly with our classified unit as well as the California Military Institute (CMI). While the Governor's budget continues to be very positive, we are also very aware that like most of the time education seems to get money, expectations on how that money is to be spent comes along with it, both for the short and long term. This is certainly the case again this year with our Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) requiring

evidence of how the money provided to each district through the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) translates directly to increases in student achievement. Many of you have been directly involved in the formation of this plan, and know full well what the demands are. Of a more long-range concern that requires our attention as well is the significant increases in the percentage of employer (district) contribution to the State Teacher's Retirement Fund (STRS) both immediately and in the years to come. Having said all this, I am confident that, just as like last year, we will work together collaboratively to address these expectations and meet the needs of all the stakeholders.

We are still recovering from a period of economic recession. As you all are aware, our Governing Board and Superintendent made the commitment from the start that we would do everything we could do to retain all of our employees during this very challenging period. Working collaboratively with all Bargaining Units (Certificated, Classified, and Management), we were the only district in Riverside County that did not issue layoff notices to any of our employees.

However, one of the on-going challenges that all districts throughout California are faced with now is a shortage of fully-credentialed, qualified teachers. While many (most) of those teachers who received lay-off notices have transitioned into new careers, not surprisingly at the same time was a dramatic decrease in the number of college students who were entering the field of education as there were virtually no teaching jobs available.

To address this issue we have continued our already close relationships with many of our local universities, and have actively sought to broaden that network to establish student teaching agreements with other teacher prep programs so that we can recruit and train some of the best and brightest. We as a District have a lot to offer, from our availability of instructional technology both for the students and teachers, to our very competitive salary and benefit packages, to the opportunity to be trained by the best overall group of teachers I have ever been associated with in my close to 30 years in education. We, as a District, are second to none, and I welcome and seek out any opportunity I have to "tell the story" of the Perris Union High School District.

We just came off a holiday in January where we recognized a great American leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and I would like to close with a statement he made:

*"If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well."*

The best part of my job is when I have the opportunity to be on any of our sites and witness first-hand the job you are all doing, whether that be working directly with our students through teaching or your work as a para professional, or providing food so they are well-fed and can better concentrate in class, or providing a clean and safe environment as a custodian, campus supervisor, maintenance and/or landscape crew, or providing clerical support in some manner, you all seem to understand and personify the message of Dr. King, and make me proud to be a part of this District. Have a great rest of the year!