

SUPE'S ON...



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

By Grant Bennett



October 2017 – Fall Edition

The 2017-18 school year has started with a great deal of excitement and growth. We are excited about the more than 30 new teachers we have hired. We are excited for the two new principals we have hired, Jennifer Thomasian at Paloma Valley High School and Juan Santos at Perris High School. We look forward to the tremendous impact they will make on their campuses. Additionally, we have added Kirk Skorpanich to our team, as Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. Not to mention the dozens of new classified members that have joined the District team.

There have been areas of tremendous growth in the District, one of those areas is in our High School Graduation Rate. In one year the rate of high school graduates increased to 92 percent, which was more than a 4 percent growth. The percentage of students completing the A-G requirements to qualify to go to a four-year university grew by 5 percent. In three years, our AVID program district wide has nearly doubled. The significance of the growth in the AVID Program comes in the fact that 99 percent of the AVID students graduate from high school and 93 percent of the AVID students complete the A-G requirements. Our AP enrollment has risen by 32.6 percent over the last three years and the number of students challenging themselves to take the AP test is up 17.5 percent during that same time period. Dual Enrollment participation is up 36 percent and student success in the program is up to 81 percent. The number of students taking a Career Technical Education class has increased by 60 percent over the past three years. More than 23 percent of our English Learner students reclassified last

year. We showed some nice growth on the CAASPP assessment in English Language Arts and we are expecting similar growth in math this year, with the development of new curriculum and textbooks. I congratulate our certificated educators, our classified educators and our management team for continuing to make a difference to the students we serve.

The growth continues in our student population, as well. Paloma Valley High School has more than 3,200 on campus and with the continued growth in housing in the area; Paloma could reach nearly 4,000 students in five years. Heritage High has a student population in excess of 2,800 and Perris High is more than 2,300. Our facilities continue to improve. Pinacate is like a new school. We opened a new classroom building at Perris High in January and two more buildings will open next August. Paloma Valley High had lifts installed for the auto program and a new fabrication lab is in the works. Heritage High had the entire first floor re-carpeted and tiled this summer, not to mention the redesign of a couple of areas to improve service. The building formerly housing the Academy is being repurposed to become our Special Education hub for the District, including next year housing our 18-22 year old program that previously went to the Riverside County Office of Education Schools. We anticipate a savings of a million dollars, once this program returns to the district. The district wide solar project has been slow in getting going, but will continue throughout the year.

The picture I see forming on the canvas for the 2017-18 school year is one of continued excitement and growth. I am excited for the opportunities that our students will have to develop their minds, passions and dreams. We will once again see growth in their academic performance. I am excited as our staff continues to increase student engagement and performance. I am looking forward to seeing the masterpiece created in this school year.



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to emergency information
and updates?

Staff Hotline for Emergency
Announcements and Updates:

(951) 92-ALERT

(Please note this line is not monitored)

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This year has gotten off to a great start and Educational Services continues to work with school sites for implementation of new programs and materials.

In particular, the new math adoption materials were distributed to all the sites, and teachers are working hard to plan meaningful lessons for their students.

October will be a busy month as we focus on college and career readiness for all students. The third annual Perris Union High School District Kick Off to College Event will be held on Wednesday, October 11, 2017. The focus on college and career readiness aligns with District Goal #2; all students will graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary and career options.

Also taking place in October is the District Wide College and Career Fair located at Heritage High School on Thursday, October 26th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Special Education

The Special Education Department has had a very busy summer and has experienced quite a few changes. The greatest of these is that we have relocated to 515 E. 7th St. However, we are excited for the opportunities the new location will bring.

We have several new additions to our district support staff. James Holmes III joins us as a program specialist supporting Paloma Valley High School, Pinacate Middle School, and some of our Riverside County Office of Education programs. He comes to us from Irvine and has hit the ground running. Two experienced school psychologists, Joseph Jones and Antoinette Vallejos, join our District and the Special Education Department. Both of them are knowledgeable in their fields and are a welcomed addition to our already strong psych department. Also joining us is Rebecca Burgess, a speech and language pathologist from Temecula. She brings great experience and knowledge with her. We are also fortunate to have another Adaptive PE teacher join our staff. Lusiza Felix comes to us from Lake Elsinore. She will be a great support to our students.



There are also a few changes to our existing support staff. Dr. Rebecca Gehlke is now the Coordinator of Mental Health and Don Williamson has joined our staff as a program specialist. Mr. Williamson will be servicing Perris High School, Heritage High School, and some of our Riverside County Office of Education programs. Both Dr. Gehlke and Mr. Williamson have put in tireless hours and have already been an amazing asset to the department. On a sad note for our department, Martha Chapa, a mental health therapist for the district has resigned her post to be closer to home and her family after getting married this summer. We wish her the best and thank her for the countless students she has supported over the years. We will miss her!

Finally, we are happy to announce that Lucia Barragan, a long time Speech and Language Pathologist for us, has added a new addition to her family, a beautiful baby girl born on August 7th.

We look forward to providing support services to our students and sites this year!

ESL & Citizenship at PUHSD



The District and Mt. San Jacinto Adult Education have collaborated to offer ESL and Citizenship classes to our families at no charge. The ESL classes are offered at Perris High School, Pinacate Middle School, Heritage High School, and at our Student Services Center. The ESL classes provide the adult learner with fun activities to practice real life conversations and situations. Our adult learners develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills and also learn to develop the ability to reach their goals in education and employment. The Citizenship class is offered at Perris High School and provides focused ESL instruction in United States history, government and institutions. Students practice listening and speaking skills in English necessary to pass the oral test with an Immigration and Naturalization Service Official.

All parents can be helpful in their student's education regardless of their language, education, or literacy level.

Parents who speak little or no English can contribute to their student's education in valuable ways. The District's partnership with Mt. San



Jacinto Adult Education is geared to provide our families with the tools that they need to help support

their student's educational success. When parents view themselves as partners in education, a caring community forms around students and great things begin to happen.

Pupil Services

Every Class Counts/Attendance Initiative 2017-18 is being implemented at all sites. The district wide focus of Every Class Counts is to ensure that students are aware of and working towards meeting the expectation to attend every class, every day.



Every Class Counts is based on prevention, early intervention and intense intervention, all which are designed to result in students

establishing and maintaining Excellent (absent less than 1 percent of school year) or Satisfactory (absent between 1 and 4.9 percent of school year) attendance.

Each site is designing, implementing, and analyzing a Positive Attendance Incentive Program that rewards students that meet attendance expectations. The Pupil Services Department has provided \$4,000 per site to purchase incentive items for their students.

The support of every staff member in the Perris Union High School District is needed in order for our students to make Every Class Count!





Facilities & Planning Update

Beginning in the spring of 2017, the District's facilities team utilized an extensive process to update the Facilities Master Plan, which was last completed in 2009. This process included opportunities for participation and input from site-based representatives (students, parents, certificated, classified and administrative staff) throughout the District to formulate site-based plans to help direct site-specific facilities planning over the next decade. This type of collaborative approach to facilities planning ensures all stakeholders share an equal voice in developing a long range facilities plan that takes all needs into account and ensures that facilities planning is comprehensive and in line with our District's goals. The 2017 Long-Range Master Plan was presented to the Board of Trustees at a Study Session on July 25, 2017. During this session the District's facilities team reviewed past strategies and facilities-related accomplishments, as well as presented current findings pertaining to suggested facilities improvements throughout the District. The Study Session included extensive discussions regarding facility-financing options and initiated discussions relative to the development of facility financing plan options in order to advance implementation of the Long-Range Facilities Master Plan.

The first of the facilities improvements to come with the 2017 Long-Range Master Plan will be a new classroom building at Paloma Valley High School (PVHS), as well as ancillary athletic facilities. While this project is still in the early planning stages, it is envisioned to include an approximate 15,000 square foot, two-story classroom building in the vicinity of the current J Building. This will allow PVHS to keep up with the demands of increasing enrollment without placing additional portable classrooms on the campus. At such time the new high school in Menifee can be funded, constructed and ultimately opened, having these additional permanent classrooms will allow the PVHS campus the necessary flexibility within the overall campus layout to complete additional components within their facilities master plan. As a result of the location for the new classroom building, plans to expand the pathway area in front of the gymnasium are also being explored. This would address the current and additional congestion as students travel to and from the J Building area and also

connect traffic flow between these areas of campus. Along with a new classroom building at PVHS, planning will also take place for ancillary athletic facilities, which will likely include the addition of restrooms, a snack bar and ticket booths at the stadium. It is anticipated this project will take approximately 18 months to move from the design phase to completion of construction. The facilities team will be working with site administration to coordinate the planning efforts with various staff members at PVHS so additional input can be received.

The campus master plan for Perris High School (PHS) has been in a constant stage of development and implementation over the past several years. Phase 2A of the campus has been completed and has been in use since January 2017. Phase 2B is currently under construction and is scheduled for completion during the summer of 2018. Planning and design for the remainder of the Perris High School campus as a single completion phase was also discussed in the Board's Study Session and as a result will commence in late Fall of 2017 following selection of an architect for the project. While funding for construction does not currently exist for campus completion, having plans approved by the Division of State Architect (DSA) advances the District's position if and when funding sources may become available. As with PVHS, the facilities team will work with site administration to coordinate the planning efforts to include input from PHS staff members.

The final facilities improvement that was recommended and approved at the Board's Study Session was a gymnasium at the California Military Institute (CMI). This is an important first step in implementing the CMI master plan. Like the completion phase at PHS, funding for construction does not currently exist for this project, but having DSA approved plans strengthens the District's position for future funding. Planning for the gymnasium building is in the very early stages and input will be gathered from CMI staff members in coordination with site administration. Also at CMI, the development of a 17-acre, 360 unit apartment community at the northeast corner of Metz Road and A Street adjacent to CMI was recently approved by the City of Perris. The City has conditioned the developer to widen A Street due to the increased traffic the project will bring. Widening A Street will reduce the frontage of CMI by 27 feet affecting existing on-site parking. Due to the loss of frontage as well as increased traffic, District administration has been diligent in negotiating with both the developer and the City to require the developer to mitigate its impact to CMI. The

District reached an agreement that will require the developer to fund the relocation of existing parking lots and extend the ingress and egress to the school allowing more cars onto the campus, thereby reducing traffic on A Street during drop off and pick up times. It is anticipated these improvements will begin in May of 2019, but the timing will be contingent upon the development schedule for the apartment complex project.

Lastly, as part of the Facilities Study Session in July, the Board of Trustees authorized District administration to study the feasibility of a local general election bond in 2018 as one way to fund additional facilities improvements, including the State's portion of the new high school in Menifee. The voters within the District boundaries voted for the last bond measure, Measure T in 2012, which authorized the sale of \$153 million in bond sales over a 10-12 year period. These bond proceeds are to be split 50 percent for the Menifee portion of the district and 50 percent for the Perris/non-Menifee portion of the District. At that time it was anticipated there would be State facilities funding and other funding mechanisms; however, that unfortunately was not the case as State facilities funding has become essentially nonexistent over the last four years. That said, absent State funding, the Perris portion of the bond proceeds will have been exhausted upon the completion of phase 2 at PHS. The Menifee portion of the bond proceeds have thus far only been spent on the architect design fees for high school 4 in Menifee. The remainder of those funds, approximately \$75 million, remain for the construction of high school 4 and improvements at PVHS. The District believes there is a need to study the feasibility of a new bond measure due to the lack of reliable State funding, and because the Menifee portion of the remaining Measure T bond funds will not cover the cost of a new high school (approximately \$150 million), and especially not improvements to PVHS in addition to a new high school. In addition, for the Perris portion of the District, a new bond measure would complete PHS and fund improvements around the remainder of the District, including the gymnasium at CMI. A bond feasibility committee has been formed and includes stakeholders from across the District representing PSEA, CSEA, CMITA, parents, business leaders and elected officials. More information about the progress of this feasibility study will be presented to the Board of Trustees at a Special Study Session on October 24, 2017.

TECHNOLOGY by Joseph Williams, Executive Director



Students and teachers have a myriad of tools at their disposal to help shape learning, make meaning of complex concepts, and demonstrate a deep understanding of subjects. One subject school districts are grappling with is staff, students, and parents attaining digital literacy and digital citizenship. In order to meet this challenge, educators at the Perris Union High School District (PUHSD) have partnered with Common Sense Media to provide the tools to keep students safe online while preparing them to use modern technology tools to connect, learn, and grow. Common Sense Media has certifications for districts, schools, educators, and students. This certification shows that districts have taken measures in keeping students safe while using technology to transform teaching and learning. Here are some of the high points that have been implemented or are in progress using Common Sense Media:

- District staff becoming Digital Citizenship Certified Educators
- District staff becoming Common Sense Ambassadors
- Creation and Distribution Family Media Agreements
- Digital citizenship lessons implemented by grade level
- School Wide Marketing Campaign: Digital Literacy and Digital Citizenship
- All schools and the District becoming Common Sense Certified by the end of the 2017-18 school year

To further support educators as they facilitate digital citizenship, The District rolled out Go Guardian Teacher at the beginning of this school year. The District has already been using Go Guardian for years as a Chromebook extension that filters and protects students on their devices at all times. Go Guardian Teacher is a Chromebook classroom management tool. Some key features of Go Guardian Teacher are the ability to chat with students, monitor student screens, and set limitations on websites and tabs. Free Go Guardian Teacher training can be found at:

<http://training.goguardian.com/p/goguardian-teacher-training>

"Social media is like water. You can either let us drown, or teach us to swim."
Student

HUMAN RESOURCES by Kirk Skorpanich, Assistant Superintendent



Hiring Superheroes

The popularity of such superhero movies as *The Avengers*, *Iron Man*, *Spiderman*, *Thor*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*, and *Captain America* indicate our affinity for superheroes. However, we also know that these caped-crusaders are not real. In the 2010 documentary *Waiting for Superman*, the filmmakers argued that we are waiting for a superhero to swoop in and "save" public education. However, they failed to identify that public education superheroes already exist. In fact, within the District, we have teachers, custodians, counselors, campus supervisors, nutrition service assistants, administrators, secretaries, paraeducators, and other staff, who display extraordinary human powers in helping students learn and grow. Our role in Human Resources is to recruit and retain individuals with superhuman abilities to meet the needs of our students. In short, *we're hiring superheroes!*

This past year, we recognized the amazing talents of our some of our champions. Forty-five employees were acknowledged for their powers to do good as "Employees of the Month". In addition, another twenty-nine (29) employees were recognized for perfect attendance throughout the year. We also identified thirty-nine (39) Employees of the Year within our District. Eight (8) of these employees went on to represent our District in the Riverside County Employee of the Year program: Kerry Bobbitt (Classified Administrator of the Year), Elizabeth Carvajal (Classified Employee of the Year), Nick Hilton (Principal of the Year), Leslie Machado (Teacher of the Year), Gary Miller (Teacher of the Year), Lori Ortell (Confidential Employee of the Year), Liu Yeung (Classified Rookie of the Year), and Julie Zierold (Certificated Administrator of the Year). These employees are the District's Avengers!

We also had numerous employees recognized for their super-abilities by professional groups and organizations. In April, three (3) of our District employees were honored as Employees of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Region XIX: Shane Pinnell (Technology Administrator of the Year), Mayra Chavez (Confidential Employee of the Year), and Nick Newkirk (Business Services Administrator of the Year). The Western Riverside County Association of

School Managers (WRCASM) honored our Director of Facilities, Hector Gonzalez, as Classified Administrator of the Year and Assistant Principal Erika Tejeda-VanRensburg as Middle School Co-Administrator of the Year. Joseph Williams, Executive Director of Technology, was recognized *nationally* by Education Week as a "Leader to Learn From" for his leadership in technology. He participated in an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. in the spring.

We also have amazingly awesome employee associations who serve as the defenders of our superheroes. This past year, we successfully completed re-opener negotiations for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 with our Perris Secondary Educators Association (PSEA). We continue to utilize the Perris Relationship Council (PRC) and Site Relationship Council (SRC) as a forum to address labor relations issues as they arise and work collaboratively with PSEA to resolve concerns. With our CSEA superheroes, we continue to utilize Interested-Based Problem Solving (IBPS or IBB) to address issues as they arise. We are preparing for CSEA negotiations this year to continue to improve the working conditions for our classified employees. Finally, we are working on a successor agreement with the heroes in the California Military Institute Teachers Association (CMITA). We know that together, we will achieve greatness.

In preparation of this current school year, we have hired our version of Batman, Superman, Daredevil, and the Iron Fist. Year to date, we have hired five (5) new certificated managers; fifty-two (52) new certificated employees; and seven (7) new certificated staff for the California Military Institute. We have also hired five (5) new classified managers; fifty (50) new classified employees; and promoted seventy-five (75) classified champions! To support our permanent defenders of justice, we have hired three (3) management substitutes; seventy-seven (77) certificated guest teachers; and one hundred-one (101) classified substitutes. We continue to look for individuals with extraordinary talents to meet the needs of our students. Our vacancies are posted in EDJOIN, Twitter, and LinkedIn.



With all the Supermen and Wonder Women within the District, maybe we should change our department's name from Human Resources to *Super-Human Resources*. *We're hiring and retaining superheroes!*