



### Superintendent's Message by Grant Bennett

June 2017

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As the 2016-17 school year comes to a close, it is a time to look back at what has been accomplished. There has been some very nice growth in the area of academics. Our facilities continue to get better and better. Our students

have excelled in extracurricular activities and have been a great example to our communities. We have a lot to be proud of and we need to celebrate our successes.

The graduation rate in the Perris Union High School District has never been higher. We are now having more than 92% of the students entering the ninth grade graduating on time. This is a 9% increase over the past two years. This is testament to the hard work of our entire team of educators, both certificated and classified. Our new English Learner program is showing great progress for our students that struggle with learning English. The scores on the CAASPP test this year are trending to a nice increase over previous years. The District is once again one of the leaders in FAFSA completion rate in Riverside County, which can show some students that money is not an obstacle in them going to college. We are proud that CMI was named a Gold Ribbon School for their outstanding academic program.

In terms of facilities, we were very happy to be able to open a new two story Fine Art Classroom Building at Perris High School for the second semester. At the same time, construction of a new Cafeteria/Career Technical Education Building and an Agriculture Science Building began on the Perris High School Campus. An expansion on the Auto Technology Classroom at Paloma Valley will begin shortly after school gets out in June. In addition, a new Career Technical Education Building will be constructed at Paloma Valley this summer. A settlement was reached with the contractors at Heritage High and the flooring on the first floor of every building will be replaced this summer.

The Paloma Valley NJROTC placed very well in regional competition and represented our district well. I have seen tremendous growth in all four of our comprehensive high school's bands. Athletically, many of our teams had outstanding seasons this year; Paloma Valley High School's girl's soccer and girl's tennis, Perris High School's boy's volleyball, PVHS and HHS baseball, HHS and PVHS football just to highlight a few. The Key Clubs, Interact Clubs, and ASB at our schools have donated thousands of hours of community service time to help our local communities,

When we take a few moments to look back at the year, we have much to celebrate. However, we can't sit on our laurels. We must continue to strive to give each and every student the best education possible and to make them competitive in college or careers. We must continue to push the envelope by trying new and innovative methods to reach our students at their current reality. It is incumbent on us, as the educators, to raise the level of engagement and achievement for our students.



**Summer BBQ Food Tips**  
Brought to you by  
TerraBites Cafe

Everyone wants to enjoy their summer break so let's make sure you're doing it RIGHT!

- Make sure to keep perishable food items cold (e.g. potato salad, macaroni salad, creams/sauces and cream desserts).
- Keep cool and stay hydrated. Make sure to drink at least 8 glasses of water a day.
- Use a food thermometer and cook all raw meats to an internal temperature of at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.
- Never reuse tongs once they have touched raw meat.
- Use insulated coolers to keep your food items cold until ready to serve or cook.

# Educational Services by Dr. Marilyn Saucedo, Assistant Superintendent



As we complete another school year, it is important to step back and reflect, acknowledge, and celebrate our many accomplishments. Here are just a few:

- Development of a new District Vision and Mission Statement with input from all stakeholders
- Enrollment in AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) increased at all sites
- District graduation rates continue to rise and dropout rates decline
  - 92.1 percent graduation rate district wide
- New math adoption is implemented for 2017-18
- Early data indicates that English Learners are making significant progress towards meeting state standards as measured by the California Assessment of Student Progress and Performance (CAASPP)
- Participation in Riverside County African American Achievement Initiative and increased participation in District and site African American Parent Advisory Councils
- Kick-Off to College Campaign
- Increase in AP enrollment by 32.6 percent
- Increase in CTE enrollment by 60.3 percent
- Increase in Dual Enrollment by 150 percent
- Increase in FAFSA completion rates
- Increase in A-G completion rates



These accomplishments are truly the results of a concerted effort on the part of all community partners: parents, students, teachers, support staff, administrators, and school board.

## Special Education

During this time of celebration and transition there are a few which we would like to bring to attention. First, the graduation of our 18-22 year-old students occurred at Rancho Verde High School for our students attending the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE), Severely Handicapped/Intellectually Disabled Program. This accomplishment is a large milestone in the lives of our students. We are grateful for the partnership with RCOE and thank them for their hard work with our students.



The Special Education Department would also like to thank Barbara Naples and Marcy Savage for their tireless efforts (once again) for the students of our District. They will be missed (again). As these ladies head back to retirement, we would like to welcome James Holmes to the team. He comes to us from Irvine and we look forward to his work as a Program Specialist for the District.

## Other Events



Other happenings include the annual Sports Challenge, a District event that allows Special Education students in our severely handicapped classes to participate in sporting events on one of our football fields. Thank you to Perris High School for hosting and Rachel Post for coordinating this amazing event. In addition, Patriot Olympics was another spectacular success, which was a series of athletic events (including races and capture the flag) and booths to raise money for Club TTI's (Transition Toward Independence) VIP Prom for students with special needs! The VIP Prom was so much fun for all who attended. Thanks to Heritage for supporting a special prom event for our students in our severely handicapped classes.

## Pupil Services

As we rapidly approach the end of the 2016-17 school year, our focus is on student placements for the 2017-18 school year. With the closing of The Academy, individual student placement meetings will be conducted for students in Independent Study Program (ISP)/Online Learning, Community Day School and for students on a contract. Placing students in the appropriate sites/programs is the focus of these meetings in order to provide each student with a clear and reachable path to success.

There have been a few changes in the staffing in Pupil Services: Ana Gonzalez and Martha Valenzuela are our lead District Translators; and, Andrea Pierce joined Pupil Services in the Secretary II position with Janie McWilliams, Senior Clerk; and, lastly, our two Attendance Specialists, Brandie Smith and Marlen Hernandez complete the office staff in our department.

## **Summer Lunch Program**



As the school year ends, the summer lunch program begins! Even when school is out, the TerraBites Cafe still ensures our students and the local community are provided with delicious and nutritious meals. This summer TerraBites Cafe will be serving FREE meals to kids ages 18 and younger. No application or registration is needed. Free meals will be provided at Paloma Valley High School, The California Military Institute, and Perris High School from June 15 - July 20. Free meals will also be served at Pinacate Middle School and Rotary Park from June 15 - July 28. Service time is from 11:30am to 12:15pm. No meal service will be provided on June 30, or July 3-5. Please help us spread the word to our students and community members!

## Business Services by Candace Reines, Assistant Superintendent

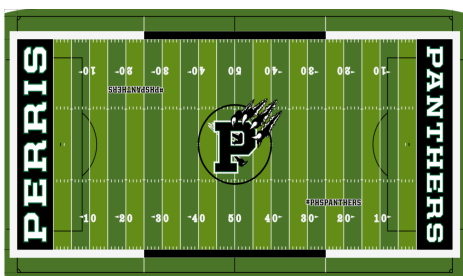


### Summer Maintenance and Facilities Projects

The Maintenance and Facilities Departments will be busy this summer with a large number of projects that enhance the safety, aesthetics, and longevity of our sites. This summer, the list of projects range from roofing and flooring projects to the construction of new buildings. So, put on your hard hat and let's take a tour around the

District.

At the California Military Institute (CMI), the kitchen floor will be replaced with new vinyl sheet flooring. The roofing throughout the entire CMI campus will receive a coating of cool roofing material that will extend the existing roof warranty by 10 years.



1963. The floor in the large gym will also be refinished. Scheduled for painting this summer are the interiors of the large gym (including the gym lobby), the learning commons/media center, and the exterior of the buildings at the stadium. Other exciting improvements for the PHS stadium include the replacement of the artificial turf at the stadium. The entire turf area will be replaced using the most up to date and modern turf system available. The subsurface will also be replaced with a padding system underneath the new turf creating a safer environment for student athletes.



As we all know construction has been ongoing at Perris High School for the last few years. Students and staff were able to move into the new Phase 2A buildings in January. Phase 2A included the new two story 4000 building, new boys and girls locker rooms and the new satellite kitchen. Currently the Phase 2B is under construction. Phase 2B includes a new student union, cafeteria and kitchen facilities, and classrooms that will house engineering, auto shop, ROTC and agriculture mechanics. Phase 2B also includes the "PACE" Building, or Perris Agricultural Center for Excellence. Located on the school farm, the PACE building includes both classroom and laboratory space. Phase 2B is 50% complete and will be ready for students by August 2018.

Over at Paloma Valley High School, we will see an auto shop and multi-use career technical education building come to life. The current auto



shop classroom will be reconfigured and expanded to include vehicle lifts and equipment that will give students real-world, hands-on experiences. Planning is also well under way for a 2400 square foot multi-use career technical education building. This building will be located at the grass area on the side of the C building, across from the auto shop. Construction will begin this summer and completion is

targeted for November of this year. The gym flooring will be refinished, including sanding down to the bare wood with the center court logo and lines repainted. This summer, Heritage High School will undergo a flooring replacement project that will take place across the entire campus. All carpet and tile will be replaced with the exception of the areas that are located in the STEM and ARC buildings, and the second floors of the Lincoln and Washington buildings. Excessive moisture due to faulty installation, construction and defective sealants, has caused the flooring to completely fail since the time Heritage was originally constructed. To remedy this, the flooring needs to be removed and a moisture barrier installed before new flooring is installed. As a result, the administration will be relocated to the STEM building and the remainder of the campus closed beginning June 10<sup>th</sup> and will not reopen until August 6<sup>th</sup>. Unrelated to this project, the entire gym floor will be refinished and look like new when students and staff return from summer break.

At Perris Lake High School, flooring in restrooms will be removed and replaced. The campus will also take on a new feel as it transitions to a more complete alternative education campus welcoming independent study students formerly housed at The Academy.

Speaking of The Academy, with its closure, special education will be moving to this location. Plans are being developed that will include a remodel of the campus to accommodate special education programs currently run by the Riverside County Office of Education. The special education department administration and staff currently located at the Student Services Center on A Street will be moving to this location.

As an update to the districtwide solar project, planning and engineering are ongoing however the completion date has been extended. Originally planned for completion this summer, the project will now need to continue into the fall due to project components beyond the control of Perris Union High School District. We are currently targeting to begin construction mid-summer and with an anticipated completion date of October 2017. Facilities staff will coordinate with each individual school site on the precise construction activities, locations and timing in order to limit construction impact. We are excited that once complete, this project will provide clean solar energy for use at our sites.



## Technology by Joseph Williams, Executive Director



The District Information Technology Services (ITS) department prides itself on providing unparalleled customer service in support of the District's mission. We know that you depend on the technology in your classroom, at your desk, in your office or in your pocket to get your job done. Whether that job is facilitating learning in the classroom, celebrating achievement & engaging the community, keeping the A/C running, feeding our students or paying our employees and the bills, we know that any problems that you may run into with the technology that you use will impact your ability to serve our students.

Over the past 12 months we have solved nearly 13,000 tickets (which is a 11.9% increase over last year) while maintaining a consistently high satisfaction rating of 99%. We pay close attention to our satisfaction ratings and respond to all of the surveys that are negative (yes, it does happen). We know that we occasionally make mistakes, or don't fully resolve a problem to your satisfaction, and we appreciate when you let us know how we have done. We review every response every week to make sure we have met your needs. We encourage you to take advantage of this and to please let us know how we are doing!

Finally, we want to thank you for a great year, it has been a pleasure to serve you and to support the great work that you all do. We also want to thank our amazing ITS staff for all of their hard work and dedication. We could not provide you with the level of customer service you deserve without them. We appreciate the kind words and kudos you give us; it means a lot to us to know that you appreciate our efforts. We hope everyone has a great summer (working or not) and we look forward to another great year together.



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## Human Resources by Leslie Ventuleth, Interim Chief Human Resources Officer



Our District has had much to celebrate this time of year. Our annual Employee Recognition event held in March was well-attended and everyone seem to enjoy the 50's Sock Hop theme. Kudos to the committee who worked all year to make this event a success. They have met to discuss what went well, and what they want to improve on, for next year's event. One of our District's Teachers of the Year, Dr. Leslie Machado, Heritage High School, was named a semi-finalist to be Riverside County's Teacher of the Year. Congratulations to Leslie! All of our Employees of the Year were honored in May at the Riverside County Office of Education's "Celebration of Educators" in May.

On May 17 a reception was held in honor of our employees who have, or will be, retiring this school year: Teresa Anzures, Carmelita Apodaca, Paul Beltz, Wendy Ellingsen, Ann Fedorchak, Rose Mary Guvlekjian, Wanda Jarvis-Mastin, Jay Marcus Jones, Nora Kaio, Karen Martin, Mary (Jan) Meyer, Teri Ann Neigel, Byron Ramirez, Yvonne Seaborn, Steve Swartz, and Gloria Verrett. We wish them all the happiness that being retired brings.

With the closing of The Academy at the end of this school year, we were able to place all of the employees working at that site in positions throughout the District. I know that these types of transitions can be difficult but we are very happy that the closing of a school site did not result in any layoffs.

We are working hard to fill all of our vacancies, including the Principal of Perris High School and the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. Our District enjoys a reputation of being a good place to work resulting in large pools of qualified candidates for most positions. Thank you to all of our employees who have assisted in this process by taking the time to serve on our interview panels.

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**Congratulations to all our Graduates  
&  
Have a Safe and Restful Summer!**