



Spotlight

December 2003 No.27

The newsletter for Los Angeles Unified School District employees

LAUSD All-District High School Honor Band Smelling Roses

The Los Angeles All-District High School Honor Band of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) will make its 31st consecutive appearance in the Tournament of Roses Parade, January 1, 2004, in Pasadena.

The All-District High School Honor Band will entertain an anticipated crowd of more than a million people gathered in Pasadena, and a national and worldwide television audience, estimated at more than a quarter of a billion viewers, with the following musical selections: "Patriotic Melody," "Spanish Skies," "Let's Get Loud," "Ant's Marching" and "Ain't No Mountain High Enough."

Since 1973, the Honor Band has been representing the LAUSD in the Tournament of Roses parade and other high profile events such as Super Bowls, World Series, Inaugurations and Olympic Ceremonies.

All of the musicians, drum majors and flag bearers audition and compete for the opportunity to perform in a band that includes the finest high school marching band musicians in the Los Angeles area.

The Honor Band is known for its racial and ethnic diversity, its all-brass and percussion instrumentation and the ability of nearly 300 young musicians and other performers from most of the District's high schools to blend into the band's traditional quick-cadence marching style.

In preparation for the big event, during the final two weeks before the Rose parade, the band spends about 80 rehearsal hours perfecting its musical and marching skills daily on the rolling hills of the immense parking lots at Dodger Stadium near downtown Los Angeles. The terrain simulates the rigors of the six-mile Rose parade route. The band

also rehearses at Wilson High School to work on a half-time show for Bandfest.

"We are very proud of the students in this program," said John Liechty, Associate Superintendent, Beyond the Bell Branch of the LAUSD. "Their hard work is exemplary and they serve as role models for music excellence both in and out of our District. I look forward to seeing them on New Year's Day."

Drum majors for the All-District Honor Band this year are: Maya Perez, Hamilton High School; Alberto Rivera, Jefferson High School; Bryan Vargas, Chatsworth High School. Anthony L. White, Visual and Performing Arts Specialist in the Beyond the Bell Branch, is the head director/coordinator.

For 20 years, Art Duardo, principal at El Sereno Middle School, and Fran Herman have been working with the band. Other directors this year include Elaine Collins and Darnella Davidson. Assistants include Anthony Rios, Virgil Lewis, Ricardo Luna, Ramon Mendez, Raul Fernandez, Veronica Gonzalez and Ernie Sandoval.



All-District High School Honor Band
Rehearsal and Performance Schedule
December 22-23, 2003 Dodger Stadium
(9 a.m.-4 p.m.)

December 26-28, 2003	Dodger Stadium/Wilson High School	(9 a.m.-4 p.m.)
December 29, 2003	Tournament of Roses Bandfest	Pasadena Community College (2 p.m.)
December 30, 2003	Disneyland	(9 a.m.-2 p.m.)
December 31, 2003	Dodger Stadium	(9 a.m.-2 p.m.)
January 1, 2004	Tournament of Roses Parade	Pasadena (5 a.m.-4 p.m.)

LAUSD's OLDEST KNOWN LIVING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE TURNS 106

A delegation from Los Angeles High School celebrated the birthday of one of its own alumnus, Ferne McCleery Wiles, who turned 106-years-old on December 15.

Ms. Wiles is believed to be the oldest known living high school graduate in the Los Angeles Unified School District. She currently resides in a nursing home in Alhambra.

She was born in Nevada, Iowa on December 15, 1897 and to escape the cold, her family moved to the Los Angeles area when she was around the age of six. She attended school in Los Angeles and entered Los Angeles High School as a ninth grader in 1912. An excellent student, she studied Latin and French and graduated from Los Angeles High School in 1916.



Ferne McCleery Wiles

Ms. Wiles spent her first year in college at Pomona College before transferring to the University of California, Berkeley where she earned a degree in Library Science. Upon graduating, she landed a job as a librarian for the Alhambra Library where she worked until she retired many years later.

She lived in South Pasadena in a house her parents built until she married in her 40s. She and her husband lived in South Pasadena before moving to Alhambra.

Travel has always been her passion and during her lifetime she has enjoyed great wanderlust. Among her many adventures, she went to Europe in the 1920s and stayed six weeks with her girlfriends. She also traveled to Peru, visited the Great Wall of China and took a mail boat to the Netherlands.

A real storyteller, Ms. Wiles can recall her roommate at UC Berkeley, Edith Head, who later became the famous costumer designer to the stars and motion picture studios. Then there's the time she took the first passenger flight from San Francisco to San Diego. The plane flew along the coastline so low she said she could feel the spray from the waves breaking below since there was no glass in the airplane window.

LAUSD Mission Statement: The teachers, administrators and staff of the Los Angeles Unified School District believe in the equal worth and dignity of all students and are committed to educate all students to their maximum potential.

Eagle Rock Elementary School Nominated for Top Honor

Eagle Rock Elementary School has been nominated by the California Department of Education for the national 2004 *No Child Left Behind* – Blue Ribbon Schools Program. The California Department of Education announced this year's California nominees for the prestigious national prize on December 4.

The U.S. Department of Education has recognized schools across the country for outstanding academic performance and for providing excellence and equity in education since 1982. This year, under the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) legislation, nominees are selected based on school data provided by each state's department of education.

For the past six years, Eagle Rock Elementary has demonstrated steady improvement in California's Academic Performance Index (API), scoring 806 points this year. School principal Jane Sierra credits "the school's 50 dedicated teachers, its staff, its students who apply themselves and work hard, and supportive parents for the school's

success." Another key to Eagle Rock Elementary School's success is a combination of dedicated literacy and math coaches, the Open Court reading program and the school's teaching structure, she said.

Sierra also cites the myriad extracurricular programs that enrich student learning. "Strong arts programs have a demonstrable and positive effect on academic improvement," said Sierra. "At Eagle Rock Elementary, we provide structured 12-week art lessons in music, dance and visual arts."

Schools that garner this prestigious award must demonstrate a strong commitment to educational excellence for all students. Schools are nationally identified, recognized and share information and best practices with other teaching institutions and provide research-based data for self-assessment and improvement.

United States Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, will announce winners in mid-2004.

District Awarded \$900,000 Grant

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has received a \$900,000 planning grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to develop a Districtwide strategic plan to reshape existing high schools and create smaller schools that emphasize personalized learning.

The new investment, which will be administered by the California Community Foundation, seeks to accelerate the district's efforts to enhance high school options and raise student achievement and graduation rates.

Small high schools offer increased personalization, provide rigorous coursework, cultivate adult-student relationships, and better prepare students for college and work. Studies show that students in small high schools pass more courses, graduate and go on to college in greater numbers than those in large schools. These positive outcomes appear to be greatest for low-income and minority students.

The announcement was made November 18 at a Town Hall Los Angeles luncheon panel discussion entitled, "Transforming High Schools: Helping All Students Succeed." The panel was moderated by Tom Vander Ark and featured LAUSD School Superintendent Roy Romer, and Robert M. Hertzberg, former speaker of the California State Assembly.

The District's goal is to have all of its high schools transformed into small learning communities within three years. Research and discussion of small school models that would best fit LAUSD is currently underway in order to ensure strategic implementation.

The initiative builds on the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's nationwide effort to improve the graduation and college-going rates, particularly among African Americans and Hispanics, by strengthening America's high schools. To date, the foundation has invested \$590 million to support 1,600 schools nationwide.

Magnet/Permits With Transportation/Public School Choice Brochure Available for 2004-2005 School Year

The annual application period to enroll students in magnet schools and centers in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) for the 2004-2005 school year has begun and will continue through **Friday, January 23, 2004**.

Full information about the District's Magnet Program, Permits with Transportation (PWT) and a new program, Public School Choice (PSC), required by the federal *No Child Left Behind* Act, can be found in the CHOICES 2004-2005 brochure. The brochure also contains an application for these programs and a postage-paid return envelope. The personalized brochure was mailed during the first week in December to parents or guardians of all kindergarten through 11th grade students **presently** enrolled in LAUSD schools.

Students presently enrolled in magnets do not need to reapply unless

they want to change to a different program or plan to request a magnet at the next school level. Likewise, current PWT participants do not need to reapply unless they would like to apply for a magnet program.

The CHOICES brochure is mailed directly to parents/guardians at home to help assure receipt. The application on page nine in each brochure is pre-printed with personalized information for each student (name, address, birth date, etc.). To be considered "on time," the magnet application must be returned postmarked on or before **Friday, January 23, 2004** to the Student Integration Office. The same form may be used for the PWT program and the PSC program.

For additional information about the CHOICES brochure, visit the District's website at <http://www.lausd.net>

Announcements

UCLA is recruiting outstanding educators for its 40-doctoral program (Ed.D) in Educational Leadership. The next program is scheduled to begin Fall 2004. Visit the Educational Leadership Program website at www.edd.eseis.ucla.edu or email: lemke@gseis.ucla.edu or call (310) 206-1673 for additional information.

LAUSD schools are encouraged to apply for the 2004 Inviting Schools Award, which recognizes schools, school districts and colleges/universities throughout the world that exhibit the philosophy of invitational education (intentionally inviting). The award is sponsored by the International Alliance for Invitational Education (IAIE). The invitational philosophy is centered on four propositions: respect, trust, optimism and intentionality. Awards will be presented at the 19th Annual World Conference to be held at Kennesaw State University, October 7-9, 2004. For additional information, contact Nancy Jean Dotson, California coordinator, at (310) 638-8513.

A Section 504 Conference is scheduled for February 11, 2004 (Local Districts F, G, H, I, J and K) and February 12, 2004 (Local Districts A, B, C, D and E). New administrators and local school-site Section 504 Designees are invited to attend. School attorneys and Local District support personnel (Coordinators/Directors of Instruction/Psychological Services/Nursing Services) are also invited.

Teachers may apply for the FEDCO Classroom Enrichment Fund, which awards small grants up to \$500 per teacher, for projects and field trips. Full-time LAUSD teachers serving K-12 students are eligible. Applications will be accepted through February 9, 2004. Complete details and online applications available through the California Community Foundation website at www.calfund.org/6/fedco_2003.php

People

Myriam Jimenez, a second grade teacher at Miles Avenue School, has volunteered to participate in a research project in Costa Rica to save the endangered Leatherback Turtles, the largest turtles in the world. This dream come true was made possible through the generosity of the Helen and Peter Bing Foundation and work with the Earthwatch Institute. Earthwatch Institute promotes the conservation of the natural environment by creating partnerships among scientists and educators. As a volunteer, Jimenez will serve in the field with a team of field staff, graduate students and at least one principal investigator whose duties will include tagging and

identifying turtles, recording their sizes and counting baby turtles as they hatch. "I am very excited about this project because I will be able to aid in the preservation of an endangered species and share this knowledge with my students and peers," she said. "I hope to promote this awareness about Earthwatch and my experiences through presentations, lesson plans, a photo exhibit and a detailed research paper about my work with Leatherback Turtles." For additional information about Earthwatch Institute, visit www.earthwatch.org or phone (800) 776-0188.

School Board Votes to Place \$3.87 Billion Bond on March 04 Ballot

The Los Angeles Board of Education recently voted unanimously to place a \$3.87 billion bond on the March 2, 2004 ballot. The bond will help the District repair and upgrade school facilities and to build additional classroom seats for the District's 750,000 students. The bond was developed after unprecedented community input.

Voter approval of the March 2004 School Repair and Overcrowding Measure will fund construction of an additional 49,000 classroom seats (approximately 50 new schools), which allow the District to begin returning year-round schools to the traditional nine-month, summer-free calendar. Currently, 234 LAUSD schools are so overcrowded that they must operate on staggered, year-round calendars. At some of these schools, the school year is shortened by 17 days.

Approval of the March 2004 bond will help protect District schools against expected State budget cuts and help maximize District funds meant for the classroom. In the last 18 months alone, the District has had to cut \$956 million from its budget because of state reductions. If the bond is approved by voters, the LAUSD can access \$1.5 billion in matching State funds from the planned \$12 billion State school construction bond also on the ballot in March.

Approval of two previous local bonds have allowed the District to begin building 112,000 new seats (about 120 new schools) as part of the first two phases of the District's construction program to reduce severe campus overcrowding. Combined with the seats added by this new March 2004 bond, the LAUSD will build a total of 163,000 new seats. Already, the District has completed work on seven new schools and 10 classroom additions and another 57 school projects are currently under construction. More than 10,000 repair projects have been completed.

December

22

Winter recess
All LAUSD schools closed

23

LAUSD Board of Education Meeting
Cancelled
Winter recess

25-26

Christmas
Holiday
All LAUSD schools, offices closed

31

New Year's Eve

Dates, times are subject to change

Academic Decathlon Volunteers Needed

The 2004 LAUSD Academic Decathlon competition is shaping up to be one of the most exciting ever. School teams are working hard in preparation for the two-day event, which will be held on Saturday, January 31, 2004, at the Bravo Medical Magnet High School, and Saturday, February 7, 2004, at UCLA. You can see some of the most dedicated students in the nation by volunteering to help with this competition. Volunteers are especially needed to serve as speech or interview judges at Bravo. You can access a volunteer application at the Academic Decathlon web site, www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/Academic_Decathlon.

Beyond the Bell/Employee Recreation

Ticket offices will be closed for the holidays from December 23, 2003 to January 2, 2004. They will re-open on Monday, Jan. 5, 2004.

Employee Discount Tickets

Knott's Berry Farm, Legoland, Long Beach Aquarium, Six Flags Magic Mountain, Sea World and Universal Studios Hollywood

AMC/Edwards/Mann/Pacific/Regal Cinemas/United Artists Theatre Tickets
Limit 10 per person. Tickets available at three locations:

600 E. Pico Blvd., L.A.
(213) 743-3679
Monday-Friday, 11 a.m.- 5 p.m.

5607 Capistrano Ave., Room 26, Woodland Hills
(818) 904-2084
Monday-Friday, 11 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Beaudry Building, 14th Floor, Reception Area
333 S. Beaudry Ave., downtown L.A.
Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
No parking validation

Cash, cashiers checks or postal money orders are accepted, payable to: Auxiliary Services Trust Fund. **NO PERSONAL CHECKS OR CREDIT CARDS.** All sales are final. **NO refunds or exchanges. MAIL ORDERS ARE NO LONGER ACCEPTED.**

News from our Local Districts

District A

Superintendent: Debbie Leidner

8550 Balboa Blvd., Suite 150

Northridge, CA. 91325

(818) 256-2800 • Fax: (818) 894-6506

www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_a/

In the recently released statewide Fitness Gram test scores, 16 percent of all 7th grade students in the Los Angeles Unified School District passed six of six fitness tests. Students must pass all six tests to be considered healthy. At Patrick Henry Middle School, 42 percent of the 7th grade students passed

improvement benchmarks that allow each pupil a greater chance for success based on their individual starting point.



“It does feel

good to have 42 percent of our students passing

all fitness tests, but we are aiming for an even higher percentage,” said Chad Fenwick, the school’s physical education department chairperson.

Student Joshua Servin, above, practices on the Cat Walk at Patrick Henry Middle School in Granada Hills.

all of the fitness tests.

Representatives for Patrick Henry Middle School attribute this success to a comprehensive sequential and innovative physical education program, working in collaboration with the after school program. Some of the activities include a fitness center class, rollerblading, mountain biking, ropes course and rock climbing.

The program emphasizes fitness skills for lifelong health. Fitness concepts are incorporated throughout the school year and teachers encourage students to set fitness goals that they can achieve. Those students are evaluated on individual

District B

Superintendent: Sue Shannon

5200 Lankershim Blvd.

North Hollywood, CA. 91601

(818) 755-5300 • Fax: (818) 755-2810

www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_b/

Beams of solar energy charged up students and guests at San Fernando Middle School for the 50th installment of cosmic ray detectors located through Southern California.

San Fernando Middle School is the third installment school in Local District B that has two 250-pound white, funnel-shaped cosmic ray detectors on top of its

building.

The California High School Cosmic Ray Observatory (CHICOS) “captures” cosmic rays entering into Earth’s atmosphere with the energy of a brick falling from the rooftop. In order to detect the cosmic rays, detectors must be deployed like a large fishing net over many square miles to capture signs of the incoming rays. Schools participating in the CHICOS project make up parts of this critical net. Students and schools contributing in the research project will have their names printed in research papers that the California Institute of Technology (CalTech) will submit to science journals.

Superintendent of Local District B Sue Shannon stated, “CHICOS is offering students something they wouldn’t normally get in the classroom. We’re very fortunate for this unique partnership with such well-known educational organizations.”

The primary research goal of CHICOS is to collect data on these cosmic rays in order to characterize their rate of arrival and directions of origin. This project demonstrates how real life experiences can generate enthusiasm for science among middle and high school students.

CHICOS is a collaborative effort between the California Institute of Technology, California State University Northridge, UC Irvine and public and private high schools and middle schools in Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley.

Other Local District B schools with CHICOS sites are Pacoima Middle Schools and Sylmar High School.



From left to right: Local District B Superintendent Sue Shannon and LAUSD Board of Education member Julie Korenstein, along with participating students, were present for the 50th installation of the cosmic ray detectors at San Fernando Middle School. Pictured far right is Arturo Del Rio, principal.

News from our Local Districts

District C

Superintendent: Robert Collins
6621 Balboa Blvd.
Van Nuys, CA. 91406
(818) 654-3600 • Fax (818) 881-6728
www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_c/

Recognition included the 25 Local District C elementary schools that have been identified by the State of California as eligible to apply for the California Distinguished

Local District C held its “Celebration of Excellence” on Thursday, December 11, at the Sherman Oaks Center for Enriched Studies. The celebration recognized principals, chapter chairpersons, teachers, classified staff and parent leaders from each school for their outstanding academic accomplishments this past school year.

School Award. Ninety-seven percent of Local District C schools that met their overall Academic Performance Index (API) target growth also were acknowledged. Schools that over the past four years increased their API target growth by more than 400 percent also were recognized.

Legislators, business leaders, homeowner associations, chambers of commerce and civic leaders were invited to the celebration. A commitment of Local District C to the greater community helped restore confidence in public education to ensure that our schools would be a source of pride to the community. In the past four years, Local District C has accomplished much of that goal.

District D

Superintendent: Ronni Ephraim
3000 S. Robertson Blvd., Suite 100
Los Angeles, CA. 90034
(310) 253-7100 • Fax (310) 842-9170
www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_d/

In his book, *Radical Equations: Civil Rights from Mississippi to the Algebra Project*, author Robert Moses asks, “Are we going to have a society where only a small group of people are prepared for the future, where there’s a huge knowledge gap? How does such a society stabilize itself?”

These questions frame the on-going work of Local District D mathematics coaches. Coach coordinators Pauline Haber and Merrie Wartik are working closely with coaches to implement Tenet 1 of the *Blueprint for Implementation of the Action Plan for a Culturally Relevant Education That Benefits African American Students and All Other Students*. This will ensure that coaches receive comprehensive professional development that guarantees students’ access to a rigorous core mathematics curriculum.

Coaches are working together to examine their understanding of relevant and responsive teachings and studying disaggregated data from the first mathematics periodic assessments. “It helped me to think more deeply about how teaching practices need to change in order to address our various populations – not a new thought, but it’s resonating,” said one coach.



Math coaches receive comprehensive professional development that examines their understanding of relevant and responsive teachings and study data from the first mathematics periodic assessments.

District E

Superintendent: Edgar Seal
4201 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA. 90010
(323) 932-2266 • Fax (323) 932-2115
www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_e/

Local District E is pleased to welcome Dr. Edgar Seal as our interim superintendent. Dr. Seal fills the vacancy left by Dr. Liliam Leis-Castillo who has been appointed Executive Officer to the Superintendent and will be leading the development of Small Learning

communities and acted as interim superintendent for both the Pasadena Unified School District and Local District K in the LAUSD.

At a recent meeting for Local District E principals, Dr. Seal discussed his plans to move forward with the study and implementation of Smaller Learning Communities in the secondary realm. He also stressed the importance of standards-based education relating it to the work of Local District E and the accomplishment of our schools. It is Dr. Seal’s intent to continue the work already started by Local District E. We look forward to working with him.

Communities and the Office of Staff Relations.

Dr. Seal has worked in the field of education for more than 45 years. During that time, he has had a broad range of experiences including working with the Los Angeles County Office of Education as a principal mentor for the Open Court Reading and Language Program for LAUSD. He has also served as a private education

News from our Local Districts

District F

Superintendent: Richard Alonzo

2151 N. Soto Street

Los Angeles, CA. 90032

(323) 224-3100 • Fax (323) 222-5702

www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_f/

The purpose of these hearings is to gather data and hear testimony from health experts, community advocates, business leaders, governmental officials and consumers on the best way to bring about systemic change at America's health professions schools and, ultimately, eliminate unequal access to health services.

Local District F and Bravo Medical Magnet High School hosted the Los Angeles hearing on November 14 at Bravo High School. The Sullivan Commission selected the site to underscore the need to increase the number of minority health professionals, which begins with a strong education and expansion of postsecondary opportunities.

Present to great Dr. Sullivan were Richard A. Alonzo, superintendent, Local District

The Sullivan Commission on Diversity in the Healthcare Workforce is named after the former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, Louis W. Sullivan, M.D. Comprised of 15 health, business and legal professionals and other leaders, the Commission has held field hearings in Atlanta, Denver, New York and Chicago.

F, and Jennifer Garcia, student body president, Bravo High School. Among the various workshops offered were *Models for Recruitment, Admissions and Retention of Minority Health Professionals* and *Best Practices in Training a Diverse Health Professions Workforce*. These workshops were led by panelists in the medical professional career sector who are interested in increasing access and opportunities to minorities in medicine.

"Efforts from the commission are key to improving the dismal rate of minority students entering the medical field. If we want to have a community of well-prepared and educated minorities in the medical profession, the recruitment and information efforts are necessary while students are in senior high school," said Alonzo. He was pleased to see that Bravo student body has students from Van Nuys Medical Magnet Center.

Among some of the health organizations present were representatives from White Memorial, UCLA School of Nursing, East Los Angeles County's Nursing, USC's Keck School of Medicine, USC School of Pharmacy and the Multicultural Area Health Education Center.

As the day-long event came to a close, Maria Torres-Flores, principal of Bravo, commented, "I am really pleased to see a direct effort made by the Commission to address students who have already shown an interest in the medical field. This will surely be a motivating experience for our students."

District G

Superintendent: Sharon Robinson

3710 S. La Brea Ave.

Los Angeles, CA. 90016

(323) 421-2800 • Fax: (323) 299-1965

www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_g/

Marlton School is located at 4000 Santo Tomas Drive in Los Angeles' Crenshaw area.

For the hearing audience, off-stage actors read the various roles to accompany the signed performances by the student actors. The play, translated into American Sign Language by the school's drama teacher, Wanda La Coure, is developed from a 2003-2004 City of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department grant awarded to the playwright.

"We were delighted to have Henry Ong work with our staff and drama students on this whimsical message play," said Nancy Huerta, principal at Marlton. "We are glad that Henry also conducted workshops in the school to broaden the students' experience on a variety of topics including acting, lighting set and costume design."

"My aim was to stimulate interest in the students in all aspects of production, not just performing," said Ong, a six-time Cultural Affairs grant recipient. "It was fun to have the students contribute ideas that could be incorporated into the actual design and production of the show."

Marlton School, the District's only day school for the deaf, presented "The Old Lady Who Popped Out of the Sidewalk and Became a Christmas Tree," a play written by Henry Ong. The play was performed as part of the holiday program by the school's deaf students on Thursday, December 11 and Friday, December 12.

Ong is an internationally-produced playwright whose signature play "Made Mao's Memories," based on the life of Chairman Mao's widow, was performed in Singapore, London and Edinburgh, as well as many U.S. cities including San Diego at the prestigious Old Globe Theatre. He also wrote "People Like Me," "Fabric" and "Sweet Karma."

Ong is a member of the Dramatist Guild, the Los Angeles Stage Alliance and the Alliance of Los Angeles Playwrights. He is the literary manager and an artistic associate of Playwrights' Arena.

Presiding Justice Candace D. Cooper recently returned to her alma mater Dorsey High School with her colleagues of the District Court of Appeals to show students what it's really like to be a judge and a lawyer.

It was the first time that an appellate court panel in Los Angeles had packed up its briefing books and staff and convened at a high school to hear oral arguments on pending cases. More often, students are invited to watch the proceedings. The Dorsey High School court session made a definite impression on the students.

"It gave me something to think about," said Carla Umana, 16, who attend the law magnet school. "I thought about law, but I didn't think about being a judge or a lawyer."

Juan Preciado, 16, said he was inspired knowing that Cooper had graduated from his school "It actually, like, motivates you," he said. "It opens your horizons."

The program is part of a statewide effort to educate the public about the justice system. "Interaction with a judge can only help everybody," said Associate Justice Lawrence D. Rubin, who planned the event. "It makes us less secretive, less unknown."

District H

Superintendent: Rowena Lagrosa

1115 S. Boyle Ave.

Los Angeles, CA. 90023

(323) 266-7300 • Fax: (323) 266-1168

www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_h/

provide more personalized instruction and "better service," as Roosevelt High School principal Cecilia Quemada describes it.

"The students in each house are not just numbers in a school of 5,000," she explains. "They get to know each other, their teachers and counselors well because their house is a learning unit."

Education research confirms that smaller learning communities produce more successful students. The house system began at Roosevelt and Jefferson high schools at the beginning of the last school year. English and math teachers assigned to each house stay with those students. Already some teachers report that they can see the benefits.

"They like that they are really getting to know their students well," said Lori Pawinski, Roosevelt's assistant principal for Track B, which contains four houses. "The teachers have common conference time to plan and talk together." Attendance also has improved among ninth graders.

Several Roosevelt houses have held events that brought parents and students together informally. One house held a family barbeque. Another chose a name for their house, The Titans. "The kids identify with the personalized nature of this new learning system," said Pawinski.

The effort to strengthen academic achievement for Local District H high school students is expanding with the implementation of "houses" for ninth grade students. These "houses" are small schools within a school, comprised of as few as 120 students and a team of teachers who work together to

The house system will include 10th graders next year and the team of house teachers will expand to include social studies and science. For the upper grades, an academy system has been proposed in which students will continue in small learning communities similar to the houses, but possibly themed around a career or interest such as technology or journalism. "I believe smaller is here to stay," said Quemada. "In high schools, we need to stop quantity and start doing quality education."



Students at Roosevelt High School work together to successfully expand implementation of the small school "houses" concept on campus.

News from our Local Districts

District I

Superintendent: Sylvia Rousseau

611 West 6th St., 35th Floor

Los Angeles, CA. 90017

(213) 599-5800 • Fax: (213) 627-5504

www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_i/

More than 600 students, parents, teachers and friends were treated to the outing compliments of the Getty. The museum provided luxury tour buses, complimentary audio guides, family discount lunch coupons and a gift for each child.

It was a wonderful experience for our students and a real treat for the parents," said Elsa Guarneri, principal. "It is these types of learning opportunities that enrich our education program and get our students excited about learning."

Among the many exhibits the visitors were able to see, the favorites were the Greek and Roman antiquities and the *Michelangelo to Vasari* exhibit, which featured drawings by contemporaries and followers of Michelangelo.

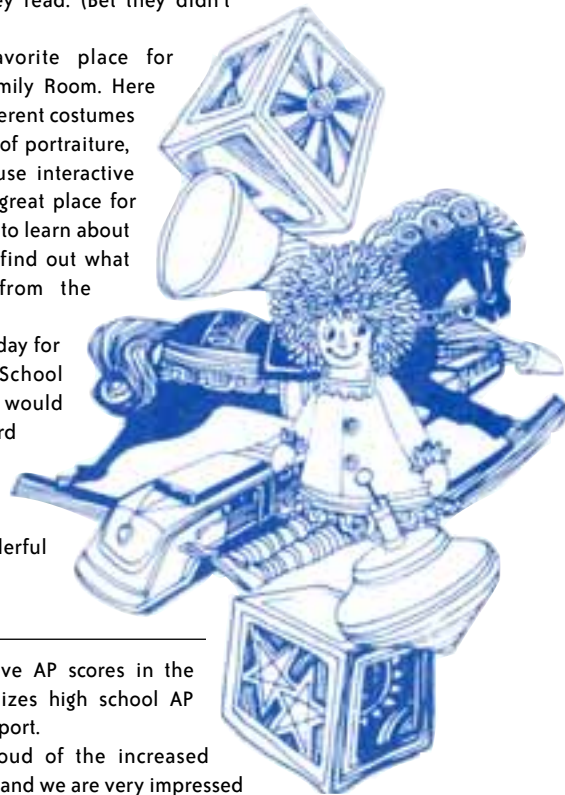
The drawings were something the students could relate to. One young man even said he could draw something better than that! Another popular exhibit showcased medieval manuscripts. The students were amazed that each book had to be copied by hand and that the process was lengthy and costly. They also were

"Incredible, awesome, fantástico, cool. Pinch me; tell me it's not a dream!" These were just a few of the comments made by the 61st Street School community regarding a recent Saturday field trip to the Getty Museum.

surprised to learn that most people did not own books nor could they read. (Bet they didn't have Open Court!)

By far the favorite place for children was the Family Room. Here they could try on different costumes and discover the art of portraiture, pick up a book or use interactive computers. It was a great place for parents and children to learn about the museum and to find out what they could learn from the museum.

It was a terrific day for the 61st Street School community and we would like to recognize third grade teacher Mary Huggins for her efforts in organizing this wonderful event.



District J

Superintendent: Dale Vigil

5800 S. Eastern Ave.

City of Commerce, CA 90040

Phone: (323) 278-3900 • FAX: (323) 720-9366

www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_j/

South Gate High School is a winner of the prestigious 2003-2004 Siemens Award for Advanced Placement (AP). South Gate High School is one of only 12 high schools nationally to win the award this year.

These awards are presented to two schools in each of the College Board's six regions. South Gate was selected as a Western Regional winner. The award is based on the increased participation of South Gate High School students in the Advanced Placement Program in the Sciences. The Siemens Award also honors high school students who have achieved

the highest cumulative AP scores in the sciences and recognizes high school AP teachers for their support.

"We are very proud of the increased student participation and we are very impressed with the number of students passing the AP exams," said Pat Moretta, principal, South Gate High School. He added that the AP exams provide an important gateway to college for many students and, for some students, scholarships to the college of their choice.

Local District J Superintendent Dale Vigil and the entire Local District J team congratulates these outstanding students and salutes the dedicated teachers, staff and parents for their commitment to academic excellence.

District K

Superintendent: Myrna Rivera

1208 Magnolia Ave.

Gardena, CA. 90247

(310) 354-3400 • Fax: (310) 532-4674

www.lausd.k12.ca.us/district_k/

career opportunities including nine assorted vehicles on display, bringing broad smiles and giggles to the children's fascinated faces.

Kindergartners, first and second graders were excited to see their presenters along with their vehicles on the Point Fermin playground. Police cars, fire engines, trolleys, a lifeguard van, a plumbing truck and mechanic's equipment filled the yard. Students in grades 3-5 participated in more sophisticated presentations, which included a video-game marketer, neonatal nurse, an air flight traffic controller, a NASA flight engineer and a district attorney.

Many presenters were parents and representatives from the local San Pedro community who were eager to share their expertise and knowledge.

Teachers Christie Caric and Michelle Magallon provided the outstanding leadership responsible for this remarkable opportunity that allows children to begin setting career goals and making road maps to their dreams. Following the presentations, a reception for the guests was held by Point Fermin's PTO.

Local District K's Point Fermin Elementary School students were treated to their 9th Annual Career Day event that featured varied professions ranging from a dog trainer to a trolley car conductor. More than 20 guest speakers presented the students with an assortment of



David Hurley of the United States Army participates in the 9th Annual Career Day at Point Fermin Elementary School.