



ABC UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# District Digest

January/February 2013 - Volume II - No 1



## Message from the Superintendent - Dr. Mary Sieu

# ABC Begins a New Year with Better Budget News

**Unlike the previous five years, ABC Unified School District began 2013 with encouraging news regarding the budget forecast for 2013-2014.** At the January 22<sup>nd</sup> ABC Board of Education Meeting, information was presented regarding the Governor's budget package for 2013-14. **Overall, the proposal is encouraging with full funding for Proposition 98 guarantee, including a \$1.6 billion increase in general purpose funding for school districts.** This latest package reflects a significant improvement in the state's finances, due to the economic recovery, prior budgetary restraint, and voters' approval of temporary tax increases.



*Dr. Mary Sieu speaking with Furguson Elementary School students*

For the past five years, education funding has been cut by \$8 billion and ABC's budget was cut by almost \$30 million. The Governor proposed the following funding for K-12 education:

- \$1.8 billion to reduce inter-year deferrals to \$5.6 billion
- \$1.6 billion to begin implementation of a new school finance formula called Local Control Funding Formula
- \$400.5 million for energy efficiency projects in schools from Prop 39
- \$100 million increase for the K-12 Mandate Block Grant
- \$62.8 million for a 1.65% Cost of Living Adjustment for selected categorical programs

The Governor is proposing a sweeping reform of California's school finance system. His proposal of a new Local Control Funding Formula will replace the current revenue limits and categorical programs funding. The budget proposal includes several significant and specific changes. The District could receive supplemental and concentration grants for English language learners, low income students, and foster children. Career technical education funding will be included in the grades 9-12 student funding rate. The Governor also proposes to shift responsibility for Adult Education programs from K-12 school agencies to community colleges effective 2013-2014.

The District is waiting for more information to be able to estimate the impact of the budget proposal. The State Department of Finance is expected to release greater details in a couple of weeks. If approved, the new formula will have a major impact, both fiscally and programmatically for ABC Unified School District. ▀

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*Gonzalves Elementary School Honored at the Board of Education Meeting*

# News from our Schools



## Awards Season in ABC

### Leal Elementary School Selected as a Nominee for 2013 National Blue Ribbon School

Last December, the District received notification from State Superintendent Tom Torlaksen that Leal Elementary School-Magnet School for the Visual Performing Arts located in the city of Cerritos, is a nominee for the 2013 National Blue Ribbon Award. **The National Blue Ribbon Schools Award sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education highlights and gives recognition to both public and private elementary and secondary schools that are producing outstanding results for all students regardless of race or socioeconomic status.** They are schools that have demonstrated consistent excellence and made progress in closing the achievement gap.



Leal ES 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Living History Museum

Leal ES is one of only eight in Los Angeles County that have been nominated for this national honor. It is also one of 35 schools in the state of California to be selected. ▶

### 2013 California Distinguished Schools Nominees



Tetzlaff MS Broadcast Studio

State Superintendent Tom Torlaksen recently announced that two secondary schools in ABC Unified School District are eligible for the 2013 California Distinguished Schools Award. **The two schools are Tetzlaff Middle School, located in the city**

**of Cerritos and Artesia High School located in the city of Lakewood. The recognition program honors schools that are successfully implementing the educational priorities of the State as well as identifies models of achievement for others.** The overall eligibility include improvement on the California's rigorous assessment standards through the Academic Performance Index results.



Artesia HS and Manenberg HS in South Africa begins a new project together.

As in previous years, the school's application allows each school the opportunity to share their successful signature practices. A team of educators will visit Tetzlaff MS and Artesia HS to verify the signature practices as part of their application process. The State Department of Education will officially announce the award winning schools in April. ▶

### Niemes ES Selected for the CABE Seal of Excellence Award

Niemes Elementary School, in the city of Artesia, been notified that the school will be the recipient of the 2013 CABE Seal of Excellence Award. State Superintendent, Tom Torlaksen will be presenting the recognition to Niemes Elementary School at the California Association of Bilingual Education 2013 Conference on Friday evening, February 15 at the Long Beach Convention Center.



Niemes ES Literacy Picnic Awards Ceremony with Principal Meg Jimenez and Dr. Mary Sieu, Superintendent

**Niemes ES has offered a Spanish/English Two Way Immersion Program for over two decades for the K-6 students.** For the past two years, students meeting the requirements of the CABE Seal of Excellence Award receive a medallion at their 6<sup>th</sup> grade promotion ceremony. **A CABE Seal of Biliteracy Award is presented to students who demonstrate proficiency in two languages.**

Last year, approximately 266 high school students in the District received the CABE Seal of Biliteracy as part of their diploma for being proficient in a language other than English. ▶



# Cerritos High School HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) Club



Southeast ROP HOSA Club is off to a strong start again this year. The Club has over 45 student members.

Many activities are planned this year for the students. The following are some of the fundraisers and activities that the club will be doing the next few months: The Southern California Food Bank, a movie ticket fundraiser, club bowling night and Flu Clinic.

They also have Facebook, Twitter, and Weebly accounts for student members to communicate. Please find more information on their link: <http://cerritoshosa.weebly.com/index.html> ▶

The Club Director is Kim Thomas, an ROP teacher at Cerritos High School who teaches Pharmacy Clerk, Pharmacy Technician, and Hospital Careers.

HOSA is a national organization supported by the U.S. Department of Education and the Health Science Education Division of ACTE. HOSA's two-fold mission is to promote career opportunities in the health care industry and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people. HOSA provides a unique program of leadership, development, motivation, and recognition exclusively for high school students enrolled in Health Science Programs. **Students who participate in HOSA will have the opportunity to compete in various health care related areas. Students who excel at the Regional competition will then go on to the National competition. The Cerritos High School students compete in both Regional and National competitions.**



## Cerritos High School Wind Symphony going to New York!

Photo: David Samuel



Cerritos High School Wind Symphony will be performing in Carnegie Hall at the 2014 New York International Music Festival. **Only five outstanding musical ensembles throughout the United States and Europe were selected to perform in this prestigious event.** Tim Trost, Music Director, is very honored to have been selected and will proudly represent Cerritos High School and the ABC Unified School District. ▶

## Cerritos HS Varsity Girls Tennis Team Wins!

**Cerritos HS Varsity Girls Tennis Team is the CIF Division IV Champions.** This is the first championship win for them. Congratulations!

Team Members are: Karishma Gokhale, Rachel Guaderrama, Taylor Heath, Angela Hugh, Michelle Jen, Alyssa Le, Eugenee Lee, Niyati Patel, Colleen Phong, Adhithi Raghavan, Katrina Tan, Christine Truong, Toby Tsai, Katie Wee, Shirline Wee, Michelle Yang, Head Coach Alvin Kim, and Assistant Coach Brandon Chang. ▶



*Cerritos HS Varsity Girls Tennis Team with Board Members and Dr. Mary Siew at the January 8 Board Meeting*



# Migrant Education Cyber High Program

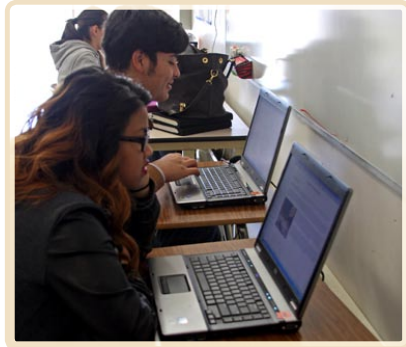
The Migrant Education Program currently offers the Cyber High Program at Artesia, Gahr, and Tracy High Schools.

**Students who qualify for Migrant Education services and who need to recover credits needed to graduate are referred by counselors to this on-site, after-school program.** Students take approved on-line high school classes and must pass course exams in order to earn credits. ABC teachers facilitate the program, providing tutoring when needed and supervising the exams for all courses.

Artesia HS has 80 students enrolled in Cyber High. Gahr HS and Tracy HS each have students in their program. The Coordinator of the Migrant Education Program is Maria Macias. ▶



*Dr. Mary Siew, Superintendent, visits the Cyber High Program at Artesia HS.*



*Artesia HS students go online to take classes after school hours.*



*Artesia HS students are able to make up credit through the Cyber High Program.*

ABC Adult School offers more than just ESL or Career Training classes! Check out the Spring Catalog at [www.abcadulthood.edu](http://www.abcadulthood.edu) for exciting courses like:

- Accounting
- Social Networking
- Fitness/Zumba/Yoga
- Dancing
- Painting/Ceramics
- Baking/Cooking



**ABC** Unified School District  
**Education Foundation**

## Update on the ABCUSD Education Foundation

The ABCUSD Education Foundation was founded last June to support ABC to ensure **“Every Student, Every School Succeeds.”**

In its first year, the Foundation sponsored a Ragnar Relay race and raised nearly \$18,000 in April, 2012. In June, the Foundation organized a pedestrian safety public education campaign involving all crossing guards and a community walk, led by then-Superintendent Gary Smuts. As school started, the Foundation organized a school backpack initiative for homeless children, giving over 200 ABC students brand-new backpacks stocked with school supplies from the Cerritos Office Max. In October, as part of the Foundation’s first Walk to School Day event, hundreds of students, parents, teachers from Kennedy Elementary and dignitaries from the California Assembly, cities of Artesia and Cerritos, Sheriff’s Department, Kaiser Permanente and Tri-City Regional Medical Center, participated in fun walking activities to promote healthier lifestyles. The Foundation has provided funds to support the “Spark of Love” Toy Drive in December; awards for the District’s first Reading Olympics to be held March 2013; and will co-sponsor a summer 2013 Enrichment Camp for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at Furgeson and Hawaiian Elementary Schools. **On Saturday, June 22, 2013: a 2K Walk and 5 & 10K “Into The Summer” Fun Run at the Cerritos Regional County Park will be held to raise funds for 2013-2014 school programs.**

The Board Directors is comprised of business and education members who donate their time, finances and expertise to the Foundation.

**For more information on how you can help contact:**

Terri Villa-McDowell, 562-926-5566, ext. 21150 or [terri.villa-mcdowell@abcusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:terri.villa-mcdowell@abcusd.k12.ca.us). ▶

Visit our website for ABCUSD schools’ addresses, contact info, enrollment boundaries and more!

[www.abcusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.abcusd.k12.ca.us)



# News Around the District

*Hello from Kakamigahara, Japan!*

## International Exchange Programs with the City of Kakamigahara, Japan

In 2001, ABCUSD and the City of Kakamigahara, Japan formally signed a Sister School-District Agreement to work cooperatively on a number of international projects together.

Stacey Hamagiwa, District Program Specialist and teacher at Leal Elementary School annually coordinates the four main programs that have been implemented involving hundreds of students and teachers traveling across the Pacific. The following are programs that are part of the 2012-13 school year:

### 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Japanese Middle School Program (Oct. 30-Nov. 2, 2012)

**Families in the District opened up their homes to host a total of 30 middle school students from Kakamigahara, Japan in the fall.** During their stay, the students visited three schools in the District including Whitney HS, Carmenita MS and Haskell MS. Their visit included spending time in the classrooms interacting with ABC students, participating in a Halloween dance, and visiting the Cerritos Library and City Hall.



*Students from Kakamigahara, Japan, performing a special dance for the school.*



*"Peace" from our Japanese students from Kakamigahara, Japan*

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Elementary School Program (March 27-April 1, 2013)

**The District will be hosting ten elementary school students from Kakamigahara, Japan.** They will be visiting Stowers Elementary School, IB World School, and Leal Elementary School Magnet School for Visual Performing Arts as part of their stay.



*Japanese students visiting Carmenita Middle School*



### 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Japanese High School Program (June 22-July 1, 2013)

For over a decade, high school students who are enrolled in a Japanese language class in the District are eligible to apply for the Japanese High School Program in Kakamigahara, Japan. **Each year, approximately ten students are selected for this special program representing Artesia HS, Gahr HS, Cerritos HS, and Whitney HS.** During their time in Japan, they live with a Japanese host family, attend their local high school with their counterpart and tour local attractions in Japan.

### 10<sup>th</sup> Annual English Teacher Training Program

**For over a decade, two teachers from the District are specially invited by the City of Kakamigahara to provide a weeklong teacher training program.** The teachers provide lessons in English language

development to Japanese elementary and middle school teachers. In August, 2012, Carla Herrera, District Program Specialist and Maria Tristao-Nunes (Elliott ES) participated in the English Teacher Training Program. ▸



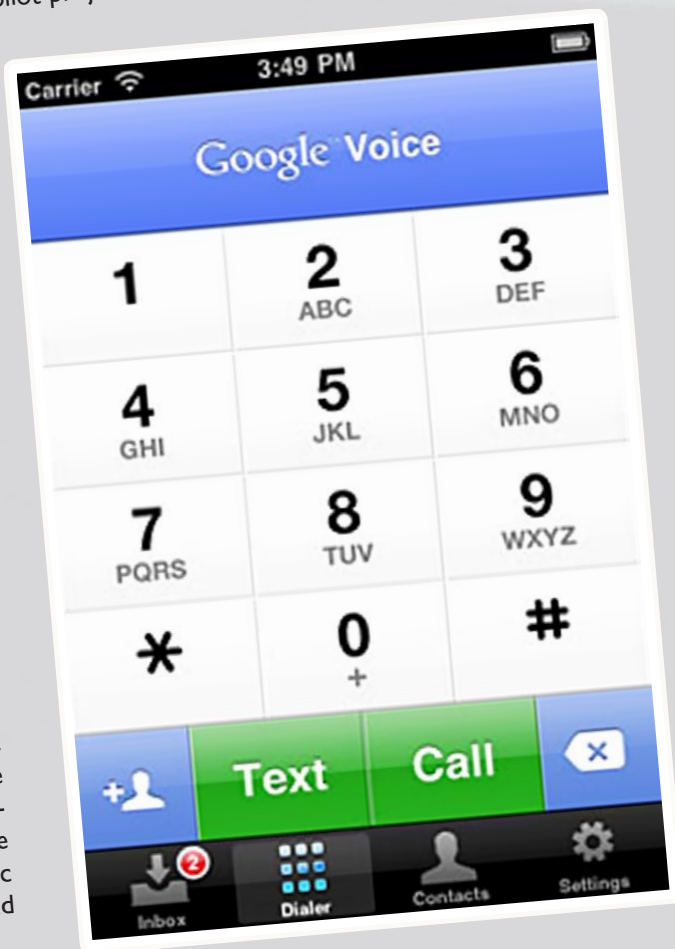


## INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY ABC School Safety Hotline

The District will soon kick off a new pilot project called ABC School Safety Hotline at Gahr High School and Willow Elementary School.

**The purpose of the School Safety Hotline is to provide students an easy and anonymous way to report safety related issues using their personal cell phones at a moment's notice.** Students remain anonymous, yet provide vital safety information to school administrators. The idea was born out of the District's CyberSafety Month where a planned telephone hotline was to enable students to report instances of cyber-bullying in an anonymous fashion. However, it was apparent that such a hotline would serve a variety of additional safety issues (e.g., a school fight, drug use, etc.). The project will use the sophisticated Google voice technology that allows student telephone reports to be logged and routed to specific school administrators assigned to receive tip-line calls.

The pilot program was designed by the Information and Technology Department and a group of school and district staff. If successful, the program will be rolled out to all ABC schools. ▶



# ABC and Loyola Marymount University “Partnering for Student Success”



Secondary math coaches, teacher leaders, and administrators engage in discussion about Depth of Knowledge levels in mathematics.

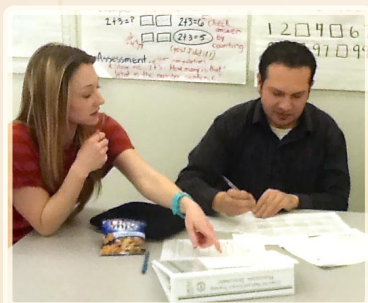
**dards (CCSS).** The CCSS demonstration program teaches how to address the standards for mathematical practices within instruction designed to elicit depth of knowledge from students.

A core component of the training is learning how to systematically create a culture of mathematical and scientific thinking through a process of Math and Science Teaching (MAST). The MAST system enables teachers to shift their thinking around how to deeply engage their students, prepare their students for success in CCSS, create a culture where students are equal partners in the learning process, sustain this culture throughout the school site, and engage administrators as equal participants in the process.

The CMAST vision for coaching and teacher leadership is to transform math education by training, supporting, and growing a team of expert scholar practitioners (teachers) who collaborate and take action to lead the transition to CCSS within their schools and district.

**The goal of ABC is to strengthen its academic rigor to enable students to attain in-depth mathematical skills.** It also aims to provide a balanced program and an environment that addresses the learning styles and social development needs of emerging adolescents, while providing instruction within state- and board-adopted curriculum. **Students will be encouraged to become independent and self-directed learners.**

Tuesday, January 15, 2013 was the first of twelve professional development days for math coaches, teacher leaders, and their administrators. In addition, teachers will have the opportunity to continue exploring the MAST system by visiting other CMAST partner schools. These Instructional Rounds are scheduled to take place in early February. Further, the four math coaches will receive extended rigorous professional development as they participate in additional course work at the LMU campus twice a month. According to Debi Gonsalves, Supervisor of Curriculum and Professional Development, “This is one of the most exciting, and potentially transformational, professional development opportunities ABC has been part of in many years!”



Gilbert Arrellano, math teacher leader from Fedde, and Lindsey DeVerny, LMU math coach work together.

ABC Unified School District in partnership with Loyola Marymount’s Center for Math and Science Teaching (CMAST) are joining forces on a new venture in the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. **Over the next two years, four secondary math coaches and eleven math teacher leaders will participate in a comprehensive training program that teaches how to effectively balance teaching students, coaching colleagues, and sharing leadership with administration in the transition to Common Core State Stan-**



Michael Castiglione of Loyola Marymount University’s Center for Math and Science Teaching, explains the importance of establishing learning targets for instruction.

## Common Core Technology

The District is implementing a series of Common Core Study Teams under the leadership of Assistant Superintendent Valencia Mayfield. Each team will focus on a specific element of the new Common Core standards. The teams will facilitate district-wide readiness for the successful implementation of the Common Core Standards and the subsequent Smarter Balanced Assessment that students will first take in 2014-2015.

**Technology is the focus of one of the Common Core study teams. The new Common Core standards embed technology within the math and language arts standards.** Therefore, the school district must prepare educators to integrate technology into everyday teaching and learning. The current standards treat technology as a “separate” subject, while the new Common Core acknowledges (via its new design) that technology cannot be separated from students’ thinking within math and language arts, just as it cannot be separated from our everyday lives as 21<sup>st</sup> century citizens.

The team’s focus is to embed an understanding of the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS), and access to supporting technology resources within the new Common Core standards. **The vision is to create an interactive online document of the new Common Core standards that links all instances of technology references to technology resources.** The Common Core standards provide exciting new opportunities for educators in ABC and provides institutional acknowledgement of technology’s importance across the curriculum in everyday teaching and learning. ▸



## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Leadership Summit



*Superintendent, Dr. Mary Sieu, Marisol Torres, Denise Macias, Silvestre Vasquez, President Celia Spitzer, Mike Gomez, Mayor Pro Tem City of Hawaiian Gardens*

Nearly 200 students representing all of ABC's middle and high schools attended the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Youth Leadership Summit as part of the Youth Leadership Initiative on January 14, 2013 at USC's Ronald Tutor Campus Center.

**The ABC's Youth Leadership Initiative links adult mentors with youth identified as "students at-promise" of becoming positive leaders.** Participants include formal (ASB-officers) and informal leaders, students of color, special education students and English Language Learners population. The goals of the annual ABC Youth Leadership Summit are to develop leadership skills by: 1) Building relationships with positive adult mentors; 2) Providing students the skills they need to address on-campus and off-campus threats such as the potential for violence or bullying; developing positive intergroup relations, and preventing risky behavior such as tobacco, alcohol or drug use; and, 3) Developing Action Plans at each school, designed by the youth leaders. This year, the Opening Speakers included Marisol Torres, teacher at Tetzlaff MS; Denise Macias, Teacher at Artesia HS, and Silvestre Vasquez, business owner in Hawaiian Gardens. The three spoke of their early experiences growing up and the challenges they faced with learning the English language and overcoming many obstacles.



*Breakout Session on "Healthy Living vs. Risky Behavior"*

Also attending the event were Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu, President of the Board Celia Spitzer, and City of Hawaiian Gardens Mayor Pro Tem, Mike Gomez. The ABC Youth Leadership Initiative is supported by grants from the State of California Department of Education and Kaiser Permanente Downey, as well as USC's School of Social Work, Panda Express and key adult mentors at all ABC's secondary schools.



*Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu and President of the Board, Celia Spitzer with Youth Leaders from Fedde MS*

This program is coordinated by Terri Villa-McDowell, Coordinator of the District's Safe Schools Office and Valencia Mayfield, Assistant Superintendent-Academic Services. ▀



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## Monty Armstrong, AP Teacher Cerritos High School

Cerritos High School is pleased to announce that Monty Armstrong has again been chosen to be a *Reader* and *Table Leader* at this year's Advanced Placement (AP) World History Reading. Monty has been involved as a respected and highly prized AP Reader for 17 years, initially as a reader in AP European History and in 2002, a reader in AP World History. He has been involved in the development of the AP World History course and the lead author of one of the AP "prep" books. He is the author of AP Teacher Manuals and a reviewer/contributor for 4 other AP texts. He also leads both workshops and summer institutes in AP World History for the College Board, the administrative organization. Monty wants to encourage AP teachers to apply to be AP Readers. He stated that although it is hard work, it is the "best professional development experience you will ever have."

## Terri Villa-McDowell, Coordinator Safe Schools Office

In mid-December, Terri Villa-McDowell, Coordinator of the District's Safe Schools Office received news that the grant she worked on for construction of a new health care center was approved for funding. The grant of \$250,000 is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is a joint effort benefiting two school districts, ABC Unified School District and Lynwood Unified School District.

In ABC, the new Health/Behavioral Health Center will be housed at Fedde MS's Community Resource Center. The Community Resource Center will be expanded to accommodate the new services. It will join the behavioral health services currently provided by Masada and Helpline Youth Counseling.

## Linda Harbin, President of AFSCME and Steve Highland, Vice President of AFSCME

Last month Linda Harbin, President of AFSCME, and Steve Highland, Vice President of AFSCME, spearheaded a toy drive with the District to support the "Spark of Love Toy Drive" sponsored by ABC7 News. Over 1,500 toys were collected from employees for the toy drive. The toys were delivered to the Los Cerritos Center where ABC7 News Reporter Garth Kemp welcomed them at 4:30 a.m. and collected the bus load of toys. The toys were later delivered to families in our local area. This was a new collaborative effort by the District, ABCFT, CSEA, and AFSCME. ▶



Visit our website to learn about ABCUSD's outstanding Magnet Schools!

[www.abcusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.abcusd.k12.ca.us)

# Send your children to one of the top school districts in California!

## ABCUSD's Award Winning Magnet Schools -

- Aloha Elementary School - Health Medical Academy
- Burbank Elementary School - Visual, Performing and Folk Arts Magnet
- Carver Elementary School - Academy of Communication Arts
- Elliott Elementary School - World Navigators
- Ferguson Elementary - Academy of Communications & Technology
- Leal Elementary School - Visual and Performing Arts
- Niemes Elementary School - Environmental Science & Technology
- Nixon Elementary School - Academy of Multimedia Arts
- Stowers Elementary School - School of International Studies
- Fedde Middle School - International Studies Academy
- Ross Middle School - Academy of Creative and Media Arts
- Tetzlaff Middle School - Accelerated Learning Academy
- Artesia High School - Bridge to the Future



Mark your calendar!

**YOU ARE INVITED to ABCUSD Magnet Schools Recruitment Fair!**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2013 FROM 6 TO 8 PM**  
**ABCUSD District Office • 16700 Norwalk Blvd., Cerritos, CA 90703**  
Learn more about ABCUSD's magnet schools!  
Meet representatives from each school!

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL THE DISTRICT MAGNET OFFICE: (562) 926-5566 EXT. 21075  
[WWW.ABCUSDMAGNETSCHOOLS.COM](http://WWW.ABCUSDMAGNETSCHOOLS.COM)



# ABC Unified School District

*cordially invites you  
to the*

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMUNITY FORUM**

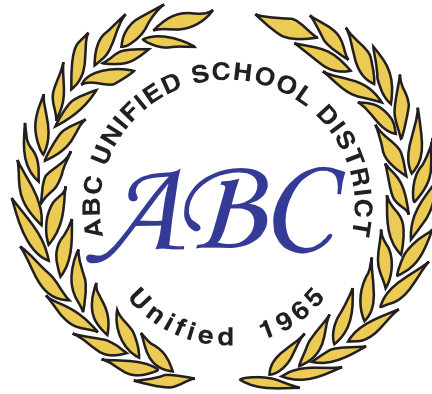
- Creating Classrooms for 21st Century Learners
- Budget Updates for 2013-2014

February 21, 2013  
6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Fedde Middle School  
Multipurpose Room  
21409 Elaine Ave.  
Hawaiian Gardens, CA 90716

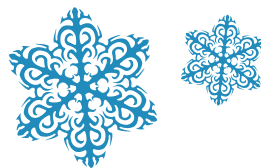
Board Members will be available  
to participate in this forum.

Refreshments will be served.



## Board Members

Celia Spitzer - President  
Sophia Tse - Vice President  
Lynda Johnson - Clerk  
Olympia Chen - Member  
James Kang - Member  
Maynard Law - Member  
Armin Reyes - Member  
Dr. Mary Sieu - Superintendent



ABC Unified School District's **District Digest** is published  
bimonthly by the Superintendent's Office.

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