



ABC UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Digest

March/April 2018 - Volume VII - No 4

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A Message from the Superintendent - Dr. Mary Sieu
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ABC Unified Selected as the 2018 CA Exemplary School District

It's with great pleasure to announce that ABC Unified School District has been selected for the 2018 California Exemplary School District Award by the Los Angeles County Office of Education. In light of California's adoption of the new accountability and support system, the California Department of Education has expanded the California Distinguished Schools Program to include the California Exemplary Districts Award. Districts that have made considerable progress in the implementation of state priority areas were nominated for this new award by their County Office of Education. They may select one district in their county.

The Los Angeles County Office of Education plays an integral part in the LCAP process, as they are the body responsible for the review and approval. They reviewed the data from all the districts in Los Angeles County, including suspension rates, graduation rates, absenteeism rates, dropout rates as well as the results on the SBAC tests in English language arts and math. The review panel at LACOE determined that ABC Unified School District met their criteria to receive the 2018 California Exemplary District Award representing Los Angeles County.

Our District will be recognized and honored at the California Distinguished Schools Award Ceremony held at the Disneyland Hotel on May 3, 2018. We also have four schools selected as 2018 California Distinguished Schools Finalists. They include Cerritos ES, Elliott ES, Gonsalves ES, and Leal ES.

Congratulations to the Board of Education, our staff, students, families, and community members for earning this prestigious title as the 2018 California Exemplary District in Los Angeles County! ▶



22nd Annual Parent Leadership Conference

News From Our Schools and Around The District

ABC Superintendent Honored as a National Superintendent of the Year Finalist

ABC Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu was selected as the Association of California School Administrators 2017 “State Superintendent of the Year.” She was honored at the President’s Dinner held at the ACSA Leadership Summit on November 3, 2017. Dr. Mary Sieu was also selected as a 2018 National Superintendent of the Year Finalist by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). She was honored in Nashville, TN on February 15, 2018. ▶



AASA Executive Director Dan Domenech, ABCUSD Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu, and AASA President Gail Pletnick

Four Elementary ABC Schools Finalists for the 2018 California Distinguished Schools Award

Cerritos ES, Elliott ES, Gonsalves ES, and Leal ES are finalists



for the 2018 California Distinguished Schools Award. The CA Distinguished Schools Award is sponsored by the California Department of Education. This year only elementary schools are recognized based on the latest California School Dashboard results. ▶

ABCUSD Spelling Bee

On Tuesday, February 27, 2018, ABC hosted its 13th Annual District Spelling Bee at Cerritos HS. Students in 4th, 5th, and 6th grade represented each of our 19 elementary schools by participating in the event. We want to thank our Board Member Ernie Nishi for his attendance in support of this event. Dr. Colin Sprigg acted as our Spell Master for the evening. Cerritos HS Assistant Principal Adam Wright, Haskell MS Assistant Principal Jose Torices, and Carmenita MS Assistant Principal Dale Ross-Williams served as judges.



Vaishnavi Sam, 6th Grader from Leal ES, along with her mother, Board Member Ernie Nishi, Leal ES Principal PA White, and Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu

After an intense night of competition, Vaishnavi Sam, a 6th grade student from Leal ES, was awarded 1st Place and Vijendra Garikapati, a 6th grade student from Gonsalves ES, was the runner up. Vaishnavi represented ABCUSD as our District Champion at the Los Angeles County Spelling Bee on March 28, 2018, in Alhambra. ▶

Fedde MS International Studies Academy Redesignated as a 2018 School to Watch



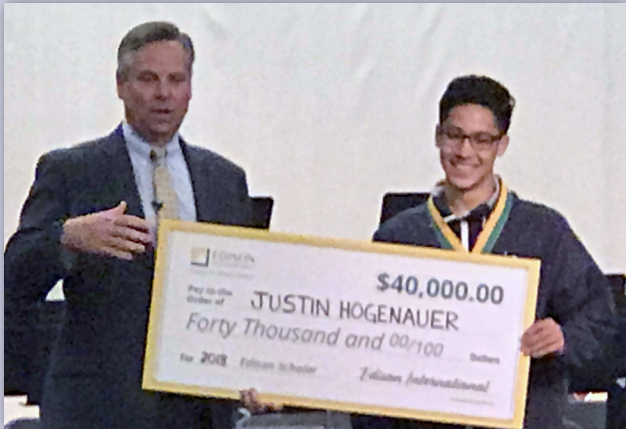
Fedde MS International Studies Academy was redesignated by the California Department of Education as a 2018 California Schools to Watch. In order to retain the designation, each school is re-evaluated every three years. Middle schools selected as Schools to Watch are high performing model schools that demonstrate academic excellence, responsiveness to the needs of young adolescents, and social equity. These schools host visitors from California and around the world who are looking to learn practices they can use to improve their middle grades schools and close the achievement gap.

The Schools to Watch-Taking Center Stage Program is sponsored by the California League of Middle Schools (CLMS) and the California Department of Education, in partnership with the California Middle Grades Alliance. Fedde MS was honored at the CLMS Conference on March 1-3, 2018.

ABC Unified School District has all five middle schools honored as Schools to Watch/National Model Middle Schools. Fedde MS will also be honored at the national level at the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades in Washington, D.C. Haskell MS, Carmenita MS, and Tetzlaff MS were honored at the national level at the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades in Washington, D.C. last June 2017. ▶

Congratulations to Southern CA Edison Scholarship Winners

Cerritos HS Seniors Irisa Chang and Peter Chea and Whitney HS Senior Justin Hogenauer were awarded a \$40,000 scholarship each from Southern CA Edison on March 20, 2018. ▶



New District Website

ABC's new District website (Edlio) is being designed at this time, currently on its second design iteration. All ABC schools have submitted their design preferences for their new websites. Schools will receive their first design mock-ups in the near future. The IT Department is currently working with each school and District department to clean up their existing Edline website content for migration into Edlio. The website project is progressing smoothly and we expect the launch of the new District and school websites to be this school year. ▶

History Day L.A. Winners

Fedde Academy MS

Fedde's History Day team had another great showing at History Day L.A. Fedde took seven teams comprised of 18 students and competed in the exhibit, documentary, and performance categories.

All their documentaries received big ovations and their documentary entitled The Christmas Truce took Fourth Place/First Alternate. If any of the top three teams from the other schools cannot attend, Kevin Soto, Alejandro del Villar, and Coby Peterson would qualify to go to Sacramento. The Fedde exhibits were a crowd favorite in the exhibit hall and Fedde took First Place in the Junior Individual Exhibit category. Bao Chau Pham and her exhibit entitled, Battles of Shame, The Conflict in Vietnam won First Place and she will travel to Sacramento to participate in History Day California in May. The team of Jessa Reyes, Jaidyn Clark, and Christina Subrai took First Place with their performance entitled, Emmeline Pankhurst, The Woman Who Was Not Afraid of Conflict. They also will compete at History Day California in Sacramento.

Haskell MS

The History Day L.A. "Conflict and Compromise in History" State Winners include: Katherine Garcia-Guerrero, 7th grader, for Junior Historical Paper entry, John Fitzgerald Kennedy: Facing Conflicts and Compromising with the Soviet Union During the Cuban Missile Crisis; and Kaela Guidry, 7th grader, for Junior Individual Website entry, Segregation in American Schools. They will be going to Sacramento in May to compete against other schools. ▶

Next Generation Scientists (NGS) Clubs

In the fall of 2016, a group of ABC secondary science teachers met due to concerns about the disparity between under-represented groups, such as girls, choosing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) classes in high school. The result was the creation of the Next Generation Scientists (NGS) Clubs. The after school bi-monthly clubs meet at all of ABC's middle schools involving engineering projects and exposure to STEM careers. The meetings are designed not only to get the students excited about science & engineering, but also to reduce any anxieties they might have and realize that risk-taking and persistence is a part of the engineering process. A key component of the NGS Clubs is to also provide students with information on how they can continue to explore their STEM interests as they enter high school and college. The clubs take field trips to all ABC high school's STEM departments as well as a trip this year to Cypress College on March 15. Each school wears their own NGS Club t-shirts that they designed themselves on their field trips. ▶

News From Our Schools and Around The District

Introduce a Girl to Engineering

Gahr HS held their 2nd Annual “Introduce a Girl to Engineering” Day on Thursday, Feb. 22. It was exciting to participate in this event that promotes young women to consider engineering as a career. Over 350 middle school female students participated in the “Introduce a Girl to Engineering” Day. The stations provided throughout the day were facilitated by Gahr HS female students who are in the STEM Program. Special thanks to the following partners for their contribution: Cerritos College, California Community Colleges, Waddell & Reed, Toolots, and the Central Basin Municipal Water District. ▶



Director of Secondary Schools Dr. Rhonda Buss, Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu, Vice President of the Board Letty Mendoza, and Board Member Sophia Tse

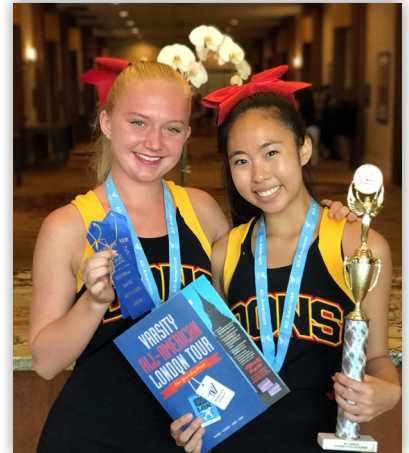
Hidden Keys to Personal Success Workshops

On Thursday, March 1, 2018, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, twenty-nine Secretary IIIs from ABC Unified School District participated in the Hidden Keys to Personal Success Workshop provided by Schools First Federal Credit Union. Participants were engaged in learning and collaborating with colleagues around defining personal accountability, teamwork, and leading by example. The group came up with specific actions and steps they can apply at their school sites.

On Monday, March 5, 2018, from 9:00 am to 11:00 am, a follow up to Hidden Keys to Personal Success Workshop was held with principals from all levels. The same topics were reviewed and the Secretary III actions and steps were shared with principals. The workshop encouraged principals to work with their secretaries in continuing to improve our practices in providing world class service for our students, parents, and staff. ▶

Cerritos HS Cheerleaders in London Parade

Sasha Nielsen and Varsity Song Captain, Josephine Kim of Cerritos High School were two of more than 650 high school cheerleaders and dancers who took part in the famous London New Year’s Day Parade. The top cheerleaders and dancers in the nation were chosen to perform at the event during the All-American summer camp hosted by Varsity Spirit brand. The summer camp included participants from across the U.S. who are members of Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA), Universal Dance Association (UDA), National Cheerleaders Association (NCA), National Dance Alliance (NDA), and/or United Spirit Association (USA).



To be picked in the top 10% of over 325,000 cheerleaders and dancers is not an easy task, but Sasha and Josephine did so by going through a grueling three days of training. In this time they learned a routine to perform and compete against all who tried out. By winning the competition they earned the honor of marching in the holiday spectacular with other members from all over the world. More than 20 countries were represented in this parade. This year celebrates the greatest show on earth under the title “Showtime”. We are sure that juniors Sasha Nielsen and Josephine Kim heard the cheers of their Cerritos HS fans as they marched past Westminster Station and Parliament Square! ▶

Trauma Informed Practices Workshop

Over the course of two days and four three-hour sessions, a total of 83 permanent paraeducators participated in the Trauma Informed Practices Workshop presented by Senior Program Specialists from LACOE. Participants learned and collaborated with peers in learning about trauma, its impact on individuals, and ways they can effectively work with students in a multitude of experiences. Participants viewed and discussed several powerful videos (*ReMoved, Parts 1 and 2*, *Power of Words-Mohammed Qahtani*, and *Every Kid Needs a Champion-Rita Pierson*) that enhanced the overall message of building relationships to help all students by seeking to understand, no matter their background or experience. Participants also left with helpful resources and guides (*Conscious Communication Cards*, *2X10 Strategy - two minute conversations for ten straight days*, *Understanding Trauma, Dos and Don'ts of a Trauma Informed Compassionate Classroom*, and *the Self Care Wellness Wheel*). These resources were also shared with school sites to be shared with teachers. ▶

Community Involvement

Melbourne ES's Parent & Community Center Grand Opening

Melbourne ES's Parent & Community Center Grand Opening was held on Friday, February 9 in the MPR. Melbourne ES sent invitations to school district administrators, City of Lakewood City Council, City of Hawaiian Gardens City Council, community members, and partners. This was a momentous event at Melbourne ES. ▶



Diana Morales, Field Rep for Assemblymember Anthony Rendon, Hawaiian Gardens City Councilman Reynaldo Rodriguez, Board Clerk Dr. Olga Rios, City of Hawaiian Gardens Mayor Hank Trimble, Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu, Board Member Maynard Law, and Board Member Ernie Nishii



Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu, Melbourne ES Principal Karina Martir, and Diana Morales, Field Rep for Assemblymember Anthony Rendon

Nationwide Great Kindness Challenge

Students and staff throughout ABC participated in the Great Kindness Challenge. The Great Kindness Challenge is one school week devoted to performing as many acts of kindness as possible, choosing from a fifty-item checklist. This national program is a terrific way to promote kindness at California's public schools. The challenge also matches perfectly with our District's LCAP goals to meet the social and emotional needs of the whole child. At Bragg, Burbank, Cerritos, Hawaiian, Kennedy, Niemes, Palms, Stowers, Willow, and Wittmann Elementary Schools and Carmenita and Fedde Middle Schools activities included: setting up a Kindness Station at lunch for students to write notes to thank others for acts of kindness; creating a kindness chain; school spirit activities focused on kindness; teachers provided office coverage for the office staff enabling them to have a surprise break; celebrating kindness at PeaceBuilders assemblies; morning kindness podcast; kindness You Tube channel; and an all school photo taken from overhead forming a "Be Kind" message. Kindness Challenge week activities were organized and coordinated by the students, school social workers, psychologists, teachers, and administrators at each school. Students also shared a fifty-item checklist with their families to promote acts of kindness in the community. ▶

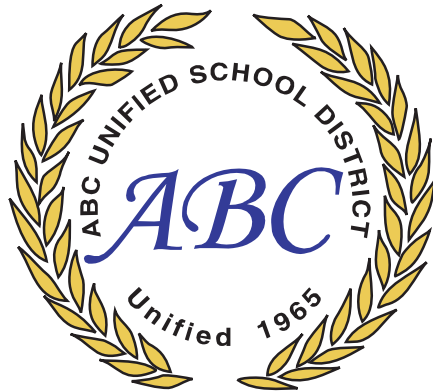


Fedde MS International Studies Academy Redesignated as a 2018 School to Watch

Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon recognized Fedde MS on the State Assembly Floor on March 1, 2018 with a Resolution for being a 2018 School to Watch. ▶



Board Member Chris Apodaca, Fedde MS teacher Melissa Obando, Board President Soo Yoo, Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon, Fedde MS Principal Ricardo Lois, Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu, and Fedde MS teacher Hector Lechuga



Board Members

Soo Yoo - President
Leticia Mendoza - Vice President
Dr. Olga Rios - Clerk
Chris Apodaca - Member
Maynard Law - Member
Ernie Nishii - Member
Sophia Tse - Member

Superintendent

Dr. Mary Sieu



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

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