



ABC UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Digest

May/June 2014 - Volume III - No 3



Message from the Superintendent - Dr. Mary Sieu

Twitter: @abcsupt

“Navigating the ‘C’s of Change in ABC”

If there is one word to define the 2013-14 school year in ABCUSD, it’s the “C” word—change. Navigating the “C”s has included the transitions to the Common Core State Standards, moving from an at-large Board election to a Trustee Area for the November 2015 election, the development of a new Local Control Accountability Plan, the new Local Control Funding Formula, and the exploration of a bond measure.

At the May 6th Board of Education Meeting, there was a fascinating juxtaposition of events that occurred in the evening. The evening began with schools and students being highlighted for their accomplishments and achievements representing schools in every city that the District serves. **The California Business for Education Excellence (CBEE) named 16 schools in ABC to the 2013 Honor Roll.** The Honor Roll includes public schools recognized for demonstrating consistently high levels of student achievement, improvement in achievement over time, and reduction in achievement gaps. This year, in ABC, we have Honor Roll schools located in Artesia, Cerritos, Hawaiian Gardens, and Lakewood. The 2013 Honor Roll Program is made possible with support from numerous businesses and organizations including the California Business Roundtable and several private foundations.

Three Whitney HS students were recognized by C-SPAN for their award winning videos last month. Over 2,500 videos were submitted to C-SPAN for their annual contest and our three students, Melina Castorillo, Raji Gnopathy, and Sabrina Wu produced a video titled “The American Dream” focusing on Education.

The California Department of Education also officially announced that three elementary schools in ABCUSD have been selected for the 2014 California Distinguished Schools Program. They include Cerritos ES (Cerritos), Elliott ES (Artesia), and Leal ES (Cerritos).

We recognized Fedde MS in Hawaiian Gardens who won the 2014 State Championship in the History Day Competition and will move on to the National History Day Competition held at the University of Maryland in June. Teacher Chad Laines and the students had to compete with over 24,000 students to earn the title of State Champions in the History Day Competition.

At a Special Learning Session with the Board on May 20th, Math teachers, parents, and District staff discussed the new instructional shifts in the Common Core Math for secondary schools. New math vocabulary and titles were discussed as we adapt to the Common Core State Math Standards and expectations beginning in the next school year.

Navigating these changes will continue after this school year ends. We ask the community to stay informed by attending parent and community forums as well as checking our website for updated information at www.abcsud.k12.ca.us.

Thank you to all those who contributed toward making this a wonderful school year. Have a wonderful summer vacation. ▶

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Fedde MS's Global Scholars Night at the City of Hawaiian Gardens with Daizee Sanchez.



News From Our Schools

Fedde International Studies Academy

Fedde International Studies Academy has earned the title of History Day California State Champions. Fedde MS represented the state of California at the National History Day competition at the University of Maryland in June. Their Topic was “Japanese Internment, Title of Project: Executive Order 9066: Rights Denied Over Race.” The Fedde Team Members are Anita Khammann, Jenine Cadlaon, Odessa Lobarbio, Kalifa Battiste, and Joseph Licas. Congratulations Fedde Knights! ▶



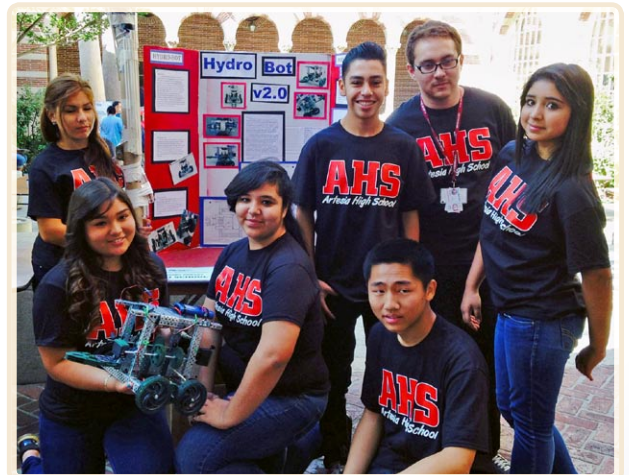
Fedde International Studies Academy History Day State Champions being recognized by the ABCUSD Board of Education

Artesia High School Wins USC MESA Robot Competition

Artesia HS competed for the first time in the USC Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) robot competition against 16 teams from the five Southern California centers: UCLA, USC, CSULB, Chapman, and CSULA. Artesia HS competed in display board, oral questions, and performance. The performance was to provide clean water to a city by taking dirty water, filtering it and then transporting it to the city. **Artesia won first in performance and first overall.** The team included juniors Derek Ting and Rudy Sandoval, freshmen Gladys Ceja, April Ceja, Jason Lopez, and Jennifer Lopez. Alternate team members were Maria Ramirez and Adrian Lopez. The robot was a VEX bot remote control that was designed, built, and programmed by the team. During the competition modifications were made to enhance the performance which moved the team from 3rd place to 1st. ▶



Artesia HS wins 1st Place at USC MESA Robot Competition



Artesia HS Team with their VEX bot remote control robot

16th Annual Middle School STEM Olympics

At the 16th Annual Middle School STEM Olympics on Saturday, May 10, students and families enjoyed participating and observing all the STEM events from “Recycled Dragster Project, Roller Coasters, LearnStar Superquiz to the Packaged Egg Catapult.” **There were 13 events facilitated by our dynamic middle school science teachers. Congratulations to all our Gold, Silver, and Bronze Medal student winners!** Thank you to Paul Killian, District STEM Project Director, and the Cerritos Optimist Club for co-sponsoring this special event each year! ▶



Special exhibit by Whitney HS Robotics Club



Recycled Dragster Event at the MS STEM Olympics

Whitney HS and C-SPAN

Three Whitney HS students won “Honorable Mention” for their video on C-SPAN. C-SPAN was at Whitney HS on April 15 for a school-wide assembly, during which time they screened the winning video and presented certificates to the winners. After the assembly, students toured the C-SPAN Bus. The C-SPAN Bus is an interactive, multi-media learning center that brings C-SPAN’s coverage of public affairs to communities nationwide and teaches students, teachers, and the public how to follow *Washington Your Way*. ▶



Principal Dr. Rhonda Buss, Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu, Whitney HS students Melina Castorillo, Sabrina Wu, and Raji Gnapathy, Board Member Celia Spitzer, ABCFT President Ray Gaer, and City of Cerritos Mayor Mark Pulido

News From Our Schools - CONTINUED

Annual Middle School Track Meet

On Saturday May 17, 2014, the Annual ABCUSD Middle School Track Meet was held at Gahr High School. The track meet was sponsored again this year by the Cerritos Optimist Club. Due to high temperatures and the heat wave during the week, the preliminary events were held on Saturday as well as the finals. The participating middle schools were: Carmenita, Fedde, Haskell, Ross, Tetzlaff, and Whitney. The starter for the track meet for the 39th year was Dr. Gary Smuts, retired ABCUSD Superintendent and the track meet official was Mr. Jim Edwards, former Mayor of the City of Cerritos. **Thank you to each and every Optimist member for their support and help during the track meet.**

The ABC middle school students prepared and trained for the track meet for several months in advance. The field events were held first in the morning and then the races began soon after. The stands were filled with cheering families and friends as the athletes did their best in all of the events.

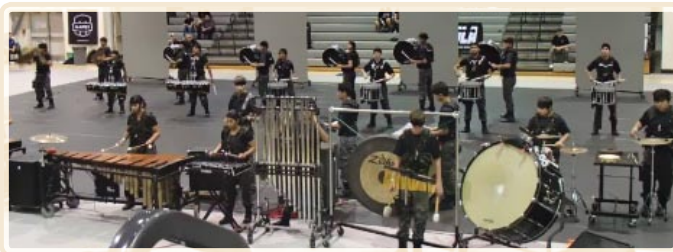
Congratulations to the following overall Winning Teams: 7th Grade Girls – Carmenita MS; 7th Grade Boys – Carmenita MS; 8th Grade Girls – Tetzlaff MS; 8th Grade Boys – Whitney HS; Best Sportsmanship Award – Ross MS; and Overall Champions – Carmenita MS ▶



2014 Middle School Track Meet Champions.

Gahr High School Winter Guard/Drumline

On April 12, the Gahr HS Winter Guard competed in the Winter Guard Association of Southern California (WGASC) Championships and earned 4th place in the Regional AAA division! The Guard also received special pins for being promoted from the 2A to 3A division. This is a tremendous achievement for Gahr's first successful Winter Guard season in seven years! The Winter Drumline performed April 13 at American Drum Line Association (ADLA) Semi-Finals and won 1st place in their round. Gahr advanced to ADLA Finals on Saturday, April 26th at Long Beach City College. **This is an incredible accomplishment for Gahr's first indoor-marching drumline in 13 years.** ▶



Extended Day Care 1st Annual Family Fun Day

The Extended Day Program hosted a free 1st Annual Family Fun Day for the students enrolled in our program and their families. The purpose of this event was to extend our appreciation to the families of our program for their continued support during the school year. Under the direction of Fayroze Mostafa, Coordinator of Child Development, this event resulted from the coordinating efforts of the District Office West EDP staff Diane Garcia-Budget Technician and Maria Wasserman-TOSA, as well as the Extended Day Program Leadership team (Renee Navarro-Burbank; Jose Casas-Leal, Leontonaye Felix-Kennedy; Natalie Ornelas-Nixon; Griselda Moreno-Elliott; Jessica Vallejo-Palms & Team Rep), the program staff, and many volunteers. **Approximately 1,100 guests had the opportunity to take part in this first time event.** We provided our guests with a variety of carnival style games such as a “Milk Can Toss,” “Knock-A-Block,” and “Wheel of Fortune” among others. Additionally, we had a few interactive inflatable games, a maze, and an inflatable for toddlers. We also had a Disney themed picture booth with Mickey & Minnie costumed characters. To add to the excitement we also gave each student in our program the opportunity to receive a bigger prize (table games, LEGOs, toy cars, etc...) and a raffle ticket to win one of 14 themed gift baskets that were created by the teachers of our programs. Three food trucks from Carl's Jr. came on site and provided our guests with lunch. We were fortunate to also have Chick-Fil-A in Cerritos, send out one of their character COWs to distribute “Be Our Guests” cards to the children. **The students and parents had a wonderful time and could not thank the staff enough for hosting such a phenomenal event. ▶**



ABC Run/Walk & Wellness Fair

Every Dollar Raised Will Help Our Kids!

Saturday, June 21, 2014

7:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Los Cerritos Center

239 Los Cerritos Center, Cerritos

5K begins at 7:45 a.m. • 2K at 9:00 a.m. • Kids' Run at 9:30 a.m.

Wellness Fair from 7:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Register Today!

www.abcsummerfunrun.com



ABC Unified School District
Education
Foundation



News From Our Schools - CONTINUED

ABC Adult School Celebrated 2014 International Day

On Friday, May 23rd, the Adult School hosted the Annual "International Day" Program. **This year, Adult School ESL students represented 32 countries, and 26 of them proudly carried their flags during the flag parade while fellow students and teachers cheered on.** Board members Celia Spitzer and Olympia Chen, Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu, and Cabinet member Dr. Susan Hixson participated in the fun filled event. Dr. Susan Hixson, Principal Dr. Pao-Ling Guo, California Council for Adult Education Chapter President Gene Avila, and Regional Vice President David Saavedra presented five scholarship award winners with \$200 grants to further their educational goals. The ESL department was very pleased to see over 350 students enjoying the event.

The ESL students at ABC Adult School presented the culture, food, art, and traditional costumes of their native countries. Students prepared extraordinary presentations, including a Korean drum performance, Thai art display, and a tea ceremony. Presenters wore traditional costumes and demonstrated everything from native dance to calligraphy to stitchery embroidery. All visitors received a "passport" and traveled through the many exhibits sampling the food, trying on the native costumes, learning about history, geography, and customs, and getting their passports stamped. For many it was an "around-the-world-in-80-minutes" experience.

Adult School International Day was awarded a "Making a Difference Award" from California Department of Education in 2013. ▶



California Council for Adult Education Grant Award Winners



Visit our website for ABC USD schools' addresses, contact info, enrollment boundaries and more!

www.abcusd.k12.ca.us

News Around the District

ABC Unified School District's 25th Annual Employee Recognition Dinner

At the 25th Annual Employee Recognition Dinner held at the Cerritos Sheraton on May 22, 2014, employees reaching a milestone of 15 to 40 years career in the District received a "Years of Service" pin. The evening also honored 17 employees retiring from the District including teacher Judith Newkirk, who served 50 years in ABCUSD! ▶



Judith Newkirk was honored for her 50 years of service to ABC



Honoring District Director Mike McCoy who is retiring.



Honoring Julie Yabumoto for her 20 years of service to ABC

ABC Adult School offers
Great Summer Classes!



Check out the Summer Catalog
at www.abcadultschool.edu

SUMMER FUN AT ABC ADULT SCHOOL



www.abcadultschool.edu • (562) 926-6734



REGISTER ONLINE!

www.abcadultschool.edu

Online Registration Begins: Friday, May 2 9 am

Walk-in Registration Begins: Friday, May 16 8 am

Contact an ABC Adult School Campus Near You for More Information:

Cuesta Campus

12254 Cuesta Drive, Cerritos, CA 90703
(562) 926-6734

Cabrillo Lane Adult Center

20122 Cabrillo Lane, Cerritos, CA 90703
(562) 809-9011

High School
Students 16 & older
welcome in most classes.

*Choose your classes carefully! There will be a charge of \$5 to transfer or \$10 processing fee to drop before the first day of class. NO REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN AFTER THE FIRST CLASS MEETING.



News Around the District - CONTINUED

'US History' Comes Alive with the 'Go for Broke' Presentations

High school students on May 8th at Cerritos High and May 20th at Gahr High had the honor of meeting an active veteran who served in the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team in WWII. Mr. Mas Takahashi, who is now 90 years old, came to share his experiences as a 2000 Medal of Honor (the nation's highest military honor) soldier and member of this prestigious unit when he was a young man. Mr. Steve Sato also shared his perspective as a sole surviving son of a veteran killed in action during WWII. Students had the opportunity to ask both gentlemen many thought-provoking questions about the war and the Japanese internment camps, had time to interact and take pictures with them, as well as see first-hand real artifacts, such as letters, medals, and pictures display in the classrooms.

The Go for Broke's mission is to educate the public about the responsibilities, challenges, and rights of American citizenship by using the life stories of the Japanese American soldiers of World War II.

The presentations gave students a real-life perspective about the sacrifices that these men served to the United States as well as more background information about the history of this team. Students will be writing a 250-500 word essay as part of the Go for Broke 2014 High School/College essay contest, which focuses on a Nisei soldier experiences/story, and how they can preserve the legacy of the Nisei soldiers.

The Coordinator for the Progeam was Stacey Hamagiwa, District Program Specialist. The teachers who prepared their students for the program included Ms. Grace Kwak from Cerritos High School, and Mrs. Kym Larkin, Ms. Kim Suzuki, Mr. Mike Drago, and Ms. Jennifer Flores from Gahr High School. ▶



Mr. Mas Takahashi at Cerritos HS



Mr. Mas Takahashi at Gahr HS



Mr. Steve Sato "Go for Broke" presentation at Cerritos HS

Teacher Interview Event

With close to 20 teachers retiring in June, lower class sizes in our primary grades, and the creation of additional transitional kindergarten classes, ABCUSD is busy hiring new teachers for fall 2014. **We anticipate hiring approximately 35 new teachers in grades K-12.** The Human Resources department received over 800 applications for positions ranging from transitional kindergarten teachers to high school advanced placement physic teachers. On April 16, 2014 approximately 135 top teacher applicants were invited to interview with our site administrators at the District Office. Top candidates were advanced to final interviews at various school sites. **Before the close of the school year, new candidates will be offered contracts for assignments to begin with the new school year.** ▶



Curriculum and Professional Learning

Course Planners Celebration

On Monday, May 19th, the Office of Curriculum and Professional Learning held a celebration at Artesia D.E.S. to honor the English Language Arts Course Planners in grades K-12. The event began with a welcome message from Dr. Mary Sieu and a heartfelt acknowledgement from ABCFT President, Ray Gaer. Assistant Superintendent Valencia Mayfield emceed the event and helped commemorate the hard work that the teachers put forth this past year. The work of the English Language Arts Course Planners will officially commence in the 2014-2015 school year; teachers in ABC will have access to high-quality ELA Common Core State Standards aligned materials to begin the school-year! ▶



Principal Leadership Development Program

On Thursday, April 10th, a graduation celebration luncheon was held for the first group of leaders who completed the Principal Leadership Development Program (PLDP). The participants/graduates included: Fran Barron, Magnet Coordinator; Jeff Heilig, AP RMS; Chuck Minear AP-CHS; Larry Natividad, AP GHS; Dale Ross-Williams, AP-CMS; Danielle Saldavia, Program Specialist; RoseEllen Shea, Dean-WHS, Tuesday Stoffers, Dean-TMS. The purpose of the program is to prepare co-administrators and teachers currently serving in leadership roles for a principal position within ABCUSD.

Within each seminar we strive to provide professional learning to promote individual success, performance, and leadership growth. Participants attended seminars on identifying your leadership core values, developing a vision, instructional leadership, human resources, site operations, community outreach, labor-management relationships, and interview skills.

The program is based on the belief that the most effective leadership development programs are those that involve the professional development and coaching of leaders by current leaders. This is why the PLDP was created and led by current administrators in ABCUSD. The following group of administrators were on the planning committee for the program and served as facilitators and presenters for many of the seminars: Robert Benko, Dr. Cheryl Bodger, Dr. Beth Bray, Dr. Rhonda Buss, Eveline Huh, Mayra Lozano, and Mike McCoy and is led by the HR Department, under the direction of Dr. Carol Hansen. ▶

Partnership with Administration and Labor with CSEA (PAL2)

PAL 2 Staff Development – Learning Together!

This year the ABC Unified School District, in partnership with CSEA, has offered high quality staff development opportunities in the area of technology to all interested PAL 2 participants. Mrs. Mary White, retired ABC teacher and Technology Specialist, presented a comprehensive four part series throughout this school year which included: Migrating from Office 2003 to 2010; Mail Merge; Intermediate Excel; and Working with Graphics in Word 2010. Participants received a User's Guide for each one of the workshops they attended.

A special thank you to the PAL 2 Council members for their leadership and guidance in planning these special learning opportunities: Rebecca Michel-Macias, Fil Macedo, Teresa Hooper, Evelyn Lopez, Danielle Weseman, Lourdes Johnson, Georgeanne Schwecke, and Dorothy Garcia. Thanks to the PAL 2 participants for giving this staff development series a collective “thumbs up” to the outstanding instructor and the topics covered. The PAL 2 committee is already planning next year's staff development calendar! **PAL 2 participants love – Learning Together!** ▶

In the Community

38th District Congressional Art Contest

Congratulations to Cerritos HS students for sweeping the Graphic Arts prizes at the 38th District Congressional Art Contest on Thursday, May 15th: Chris Joe received third place for his artwork titled "Our First Community Memory"; Ramya Raghavan received second place for her artwork titled "Faces of Equality"; and Ryan Kim received first place for his artwork titled "New Beginning." We are extremely proud of all 20 Cerritos HS students under the leadership of Sal Balmarito who entered their creative artwork in the Congressional Contest. ▶



Friends of Arts Education

On Sunday, May 18th, Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu was honored with the Director's Award for Outstanding Leadership from Friends of Arts Education (FAE) Executive Director Helene Trudeau at the Creative Expressions Recognition Ceremony held at the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts. She congratulated all the students and school leaders who were recognized at the ceremony representing Gonsalves ES, Carver Academy, Wittmann ES, Cerritos ES, Nixon Academy, Gahr HS, Leal ES, Cerritos HS, and Ross MS. James Brink, Band and Choir Director, was also honored for his outstanding contributions to FAE's Programs. ▶



Executive Director Helene Trudeau presented the Director's Award for Outstanding Leadership to Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu at the Creative Expression Recognition Ceremony, Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, May 18, 2014



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Lakewood Celebrates

At the City of Lakewood “Lakewood Celebrates” reception students from Melbourne ES and Willow ES were recognized for winning the Book Mark Contest. Two students, Ashley Scott and Anne Allen from Whitney HS were also honored for their volunteer community service activities in the City of Lakewood. ▶



Bookmark Contest winners from Willow ES



Dr. Mary Sieu, Superintendent, and Silver Award recipient Ashley Scott from Whitney HS.



Bookmark Contest winner Alize Parado, 5th grade student at Melbourne ES, at the “Lakewood Celebrates” reception.

City of Artesia Honors Graduating Seniors

Graduating seniors living in the City of Artesia were honored by the City of Artesia at the Artesia Chamber of Commerce on May 21, 2014 at the Artesia D.E.S. Hall. **Selected students were provided scholarships by the Artesia Chamber of Commerce.** ▶



Artesia Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Recipients

In the Community - CONTINUED

Lakewood Pan American Association Scholarship Winner

It's scholarship season! Anne Allan, senior at Whitney HS, was one of 14 students who received a scholarship at the El Comienzo Luncheon held at the Centre at Sycamore Plaza in Lakewood on Thursday, May 1. The luncheon honored students from other districts in the Pan American Association Ambassador Scholarship event. ▶



Lakewood Pan American Association Scholarship Winner

City of Hawaiian Gardens Celebrates its 50th Anniversary

On April 5, 2014, the City of Hawaiian Gardens celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a parade. Dr. Mary Sieu was selected as the Community Grand Marshal. District staff from Furgeson ES, Hawaiian ES, Melbourne ES, Fedde MS, and Artesia HS participated in the event. Board Members Soo Yoo and Olympia Chen, along with Principals Mayra Lozano, Sergio Garcia, and Ricardo Lois, and other District staff joined in the celebration. ▶



Superintendent Dr. Mary Sieu, Community Grand Marshal, in the City of Hawaiian Gardens 50th Anniversary Parade



District Staff and Board Members with City of Hawaiian Gardens Mayor Reynaldo Rodriguez

Title I Academic Achievement Award Elliott Elementary School



Elliott ES has been selected as a Title I Academic Achievement Award School. The Title I Academic Achievement Award is given to schools receiving federal Title I funds. More than 6,000 schools in California participate in the Title I program. To receive the distinction, the school must demonstrate that all students are making significant progress toward proficiency on California's academic content standards. Additionally, the school's socio-economically disadvantaged students must have doubled the achievement targets set for them for two consecutive years.

Only 106 schools in California will be receiving the Title I Academic Achievement Award this year. Elliott ES is one of 34 schools in Los Angeles County that is receiving the Award. Elliott ES was recognized at the Regional Awards Ceremony held on June 5th at the Westin LAX Hotel. **Congratulations to Principal Danielle Mitchell and the Elliott school community!** ▶

2014 California Distinguished Schools



Three ABCUSD elementary schools have been selected as a California Distinguished School for 2014. Congratulations to Cerritos ES, Elliott ES, and Leal ES! They are three of 122 in Los Angeles County and 424 California Elementary Distinguished Schools selected in the State. This award is a direct reflection of the schools' vision and hard work of the entire school community.

Each school went through an application process followed by a validation visit in March. Principals Dennis Wilson-Cerritos ES, Danielle Mitchell-Elliott ES and Laura Makely-Leal ES and selected staff and community members were recognized at the California Distinguished School Regional Awards Ceremony held on June 5th at the Westin LAX Hotel. State Superintendent Tom Torlakson presented the schools with a Distinguished School Banner and plaque that is effective over the next four years. Congratulations! ▶





Board Members

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



ABC Unified School District's **District Digest** is published
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