



ABC UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# District Digest

September/October 2012 - Volume I



## “Back to School Convocation Opens New School Year in ABC”



Left to right: James Kang, Dr. Mary Sieu, Olympia Chen, Mayor Diane DuBois, Ray Gaer, Sophia Tse, Mayor Mike Gomez, Lynda Johnson, Maynard Law, Celia Spitzer, Valencia Mayfield, Mayor Jim Edwards

ABC Unified School District opened the 2012-2013 school year with a Back to School Convocation on Tuesday, September 4, 2012. Over 1,000 teachers and administrators filled the Cerritos HS Gym in the morning to meet and hear from Dr. Mary Sieu, the new Superintendent of the ABC Unified School District. Her story of her humble beginnings resulted in a moving standing ovation from the audience. Later, she outlined the five major strategic plan directions for the District and the activities that were aligned with each goal.

Other presenters included Olympia Chen, President of the Board of Education, Mayor Jim Edwards with the City of Cerritos; Mayor Mike Gomez with the City of Hawaiian Gardens and Mayor Diane Dubois with the City of Lakewood. Each commended the great work of the teachers and leaders in the schools serving these communities. Ray Gaer, President of the ABC Federation of Teachers announced the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ABCFT Charter as part of his presentation. Sergio Garcia, President of the ABCMA welcomed everyone back to school on behalf of the leadership in the District.



Superintendent, Dr. Mary Sieu welcoming back teachers in the District.



Teachers from Nixon Academy of Multimedia Arts Productions.

## Board Members

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

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This was the first Back to School Convocation for all teachers and administrators that included civic leaders, the Board of Education and district administrators. The Convocation welcomed all the teachers representing 30 schools in the District, along with teachers from the Preschool/Child Development Programs and Adult School.

Following the Back to School Convocation in the morning, everyone returned to their school sites to get ready for the opening of school on Thursday, September 6<sup>th</sup>. ▶

# PAL II = Partnership with Administration and Labor



*Dr. Mary Sieu, Superintendent, Dr. Susan Hixson, Director of Human Resources, Rebecca Macias, President CSEA, Filomeno Macedo*



The ABC Unified School District and the California School Employees Association and Chapter #24 (CSEA) have united together in a Partnership with Administration and Labor (PAL II) to offer high quality staff development opportunities to all ABC CESA unit members. Dr. Mary Sieu, ABCUSD Superintendent and Rebecca Michel-Macias, CSEA President provide the leadership and support for this noteworthy and successful partnership. **Our motto for this year is "World Class Service."**



On June 28, 2012, Secretaries and Clerical Assistants attended the Hidden Keys to Personal Success workshop provided by Carol Chaney, School and Community Relations Specialist, from the Schools First Credit Union. During this workshop participants gained insight into how specific on-the-job relationships play a role in achieving personal success through teamwork and leading by example. The ABC District Office Classified Staff members will participate in the Hidden Keys workshop on October 15, 2012.



Future workshops will include topics such as: The State of Technology in our Schools; Dealing with Difficult People; and Time Management. A PAL II Advisory Council, comprised of classified employees, has been established to assist with the planning of the staff development opportunities. Please contact Dr. Susan Hixson at (562) 926-5566 extension 21102 for further information. ▶



Visit our website for ABC USD schools' addresses, contact info, enrollment boundaries and more!  
[www.abcusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.abcusd.k12.ca.us)



# News Around the District

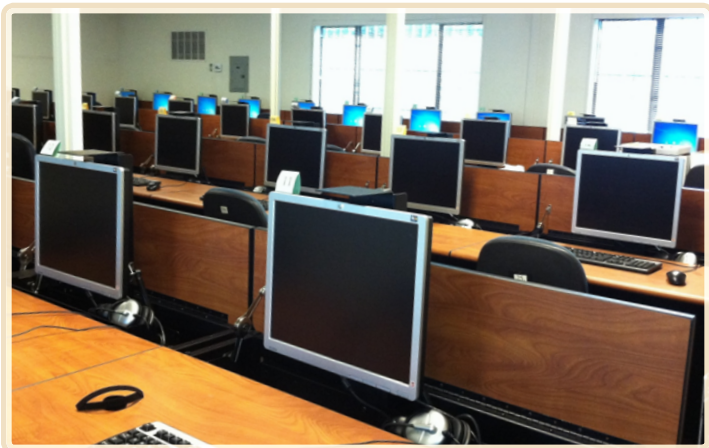
## ABC Adult School



**ABC Adult School has established a new Assessment Center at the main campus on Cuesta Drive.**



Current adult school CAH-SEE, GED, and CASAS (California Adult School Assessment System) tests will now be offered exclusively at this center, which is also fully equipped for the transition to GED CBT (Computer-Based Test) in 2014. Adult School is in the process of being approved as a Pearson VUE Testing Center, which will then allow us to offer various standardized tests required by state regulations or as part of industry certifications. Currently, Adult School is an authorized official testing center for Adobe, Microsoft Certification, IC3 (Internet and Computer Core Certification), QuickBooks, Medical Services National Exams. (Medical Assistant, Pharmacy Technician) and we may soon be able to expand our offerings to industry examinations in information technology, construction, finance, legal services, real estate, etc. The Assessment Center will also be available for certain AP Tests.



With this new center, ABC Adult School will be able to better serve the needs of our district and community. ▸

## Information Technology



This year, the **Federal Protecting Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act** requires that school districts across the nation implement Internet safety instruction. In preparation, last year ABC developed a CyberSmart month program via the IT Department and a committee of outstanding grade level teacher representatives. All ABC schools will participate in CyberSmart month this October.

Students regularly communicate, create, collaborate using technology, and hardly know a time without a device connected to the Internet. Growing up with these devices does not mean students necessarily have the knowledge and skills to make responsible, respectful, and safe choices. The ABC CyberSmart month helps all ABC students understand conscientious digital citizenship!



All schools will deliver the provided CyberSmart month lessons during October. ABC's CyberSmart month program provides schools the materials and resources for age appropriate instruction. Schools will deliver five 10-minute lessons to their students.

The individual classroom setting is the preferred format for delivering this curriculum, however, each school may provide the lessons in other methods including a school assembly, video presentations, computer lab teachers, etc.

Schools and the public may access the complete CyberSmart month lesson packages, materials and instructions by clicking on the **CyberSmart Month** – October tab located on the District's homepage at: [www.abcsd.k12.ca.us](http://www.abcsd.k12.ca.us) ▸

# ABC Unified 1:1 iPad Pilot at Niemes Elementary School

On Wednesday, September 19, **Niemes Elementary School kicked off the District's first iPad 1:1 student to computer pilot program.** The District's Information and Technology department wrote a grant in partnership with Niemes Elementary School. The effort was awarded with a \$50,000 Verizon Innovative Learning Schools Grant to train the Niemes 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> teachers to integrate iPad technology into daily classroom activity. The pilot program will inform similar projects expected to rapidly emerge in ABC schools.

September 19 was a special night at Niemes Elementary School! The entire 5<sup>th</sup> grade class of students and their parents attended iPad Night. The parents learned of the program's objectives to integrate technology into the daily teaching and learning. The parents attended various iPad training sessions, which included the set-up of an iTunes account, iPad care, and the checking out of eBooks through the Artesia Library. The parents and students also signed the iPad Policy Agreement that stipulates iPad responsibilities. Afterwards the students received their iPad to take home for the first time.

The Verizon Foundation grant provides Niemes 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers intensive training over the next two years to learn to teach differently. With students' possession of their own iPad within their backpack's arsenal of tools, Niemes teachers are learning new ways to integrate this technology into daily teaching and learning. For example, the teachers can interact with students using the iPad as a mobile teaching device to project images via an LCD projector, or share documents via Edline with students to view and annotate on their iPads. Teachers can assign students to communicate and collaborate using online tools such as Gagle safe email, blogs, and a social wall. Students will store their work in digital lockers and turn work in via an online homework drop box. **The iPads allow students to use online productivity tools for writing, presentations, and enables students to be highly efficient in sharing information and collaborating for project based learning.**

In addition, teachers are learning how to prescribe specific curricular Apps to individual students based on their specific needs. A class of 30 students could see each student using a completely different app that best meets their individual needs.

The future is bright for all ABC schools, as Niemes Elementary School helps pilot the District in how to teach differently using iPads in hands of every student. ▸



*Principal Meg Jimenez hands out iPad to Niemes student Kayley.*





*Dr. Mary Sieu, Maureen Conklin, and Maureen Mulvaney joins Nutrition Services staff for an inspirational opening to the school year.*

## Safety Training for Noon Duty Supervisors

**On September 5, 2012 at Artesia High School FAC Center, the District conducted its first Noon Duty Supervisor Safety Training.** New hires were joined by others who had more than 15 years of supervising experience at ABC Unified. This event was a joint presentation by Human Resources and Risk Management. Joshie Cox, Director of Purchasing and Risk Management started the event off with a welcome message followed by Dr. Hixson, Director of Human Resources who delivered a presentation on the essential duties of and expectations for Noon Duty Supervisors. Avelina Alvarez of Keenan and Associates then gave a short but thorough training on Playground Safety, Workers Compensation, Student Safety and Heat Illness Prevention. The training was interactive and a common goal for student safety was shared by all. ▶

## Nutrition Services

**This year, all cafeterias across the country are meeting tougher new federal nutrition standards for school meals, ensuring that meals are healthy and well-balanced and provide students all the nutrition they need to succeed at school.** School meals offer students milk, fruits and vegetables, proteins and grains, and they must meet strict limits on saturated fat and portion size. Starting in School Year 2012-2013, school lunches will meet additional United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) standards requiring:

- Age-appropriate calorie limits
- Larger servings of vegetables and fruits (students must take at least one serving of produce)
- A wider variety of vegetables, including dark green and red/orange vegetables and legumes
- Fat-free or 1% milk (flavored milk must be fat-free)
- More whole grains
- And less sodium

The District is working to offer ABC students healthier and tastier choices. In addition to implementing the new USDA standards referred to previously, we also added new entrees that are soon to become students' favorites. At the elementary and middle schools we have added lasagna and manicotti, whole grain pasta dishes filled with creamy cheese. At the middle schools we have added BBQ pork with polenta (corn cakes) and at the high schools we are offering a wide assortment of made to order items as well as a few grab and go items. They have added a surimi salad as well as a pepperoni pizza salad to all grade levels and added some new vegetable sides like broccoli slaw with sesame ginger dressing and pinto beans with jalapenos to entice students to try vegetables in a new way!

This is an exciting time in School Nutrition and they are thrilled to take on the challenge of meeting these new requirements and using this opportunities to change the perception of school lunch. ▶

# New Teacher Orientation 2012



*Board President, Olympia Chen welcoming new teachers*

On Wednesday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, the District held its Annual New Teachers' Orientation in the Board Room. This year, we also included new administrators in the Orientation. Participating this year were thirteen new elementary teachers; twenty five new secondary teachers; two new nurses; two speech and language teachers; one special education full inclusion teacher; five new administrators (four psychologists and one special education supervisor); and eight long term substitute teachers.

The program was coordinated by Human Resources under the direction of Dr. Carol Hansen and Dr. Susan Hixson. Ray Gaer, President of the ABC Federation of Teachers as well as District staff provided general information to the new certificated employees. ▀



*Olympia Chen - Board President, Maynard Law - Member, Celia Spitzer - Vice President, Sophia Tse - Clerk*



*Whitney Principal, Rhonda Buss welcoming new teachers*

*Union President - Ray Gaer, Ruben Mancillas, Betty Harris*



Visit our website to learn about ABC USD's outstanding Magnet Schools!  
[www.abcusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.abcusd.k12.ca.us)



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### Lisa Douglas, Teacher-Aloha Health Medical Academy

Lisa Douglas, Teacher at Aloha Health Medical Academy, was selected as a math, grade 6, item writer for the new Smarter Balanced Assessment to be administered to California students in 2014-2015. Mrs. Douglas will join a team of teachers from across the State to receive training and instructions in writing test items. Each team will be expected to write approximately 50-60 test items.

### Patrick Gordon, Teacher-Gahr HS

The Yale Office of Undergraduate Admissions has recognized Patrick Gordon of Richard Gahr High School as a recipient of the 2012 Yale Educator Award. The Yale Educator Recognition Program recognized outstanding educators from around the world who support and inspire their students to perform at high levels and to achieve excellence. Matriculating students are invited to nominate high school educators, and a committee of Yale admissions officers reviews each nomination individually and designates recipients. Of this year's 274 nominees, who represent 33 states and 12 countries, 50 teachers and 40 counselors were selected to receive the award. In September, the winners were sent engraved desk sets and congratulatory letters, and administrators of the high schools were notified of their achievement.

### Dr. Carol Hansen, Assistant Superintendent-Human Resources

Dr. Carol Hansen recently participated on the State Superintendent's Task Force on Educator Excellence. The Task Force was co-chaired by Linda-Darling Hammond of Stanford and Superintendent of Long Beach USD, Chris Steinhauer. The 48-member Task Force partnered with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to create a new report call "Greatness by Design." According to State Superintendent Tom Torlakson, the report provides a coherent vision for the development of high quality educators and its impact on teaching and learning. The report's findings and recommendations are available online at the California Department of Education Educator Excellence Task Force Web page.

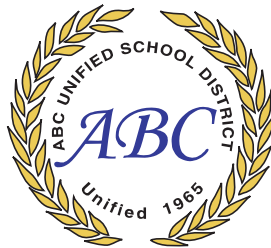
### Carla Herrera, Program Specialist-Academic Services

Carla Herrera, Program Specialist in Academic Services has been selected by the Senate Rules Committee to serve on the State's Instructional Quality Commission (IQC). The IQC, formerly, called the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission, is an advisory body to the California State Board of Education on matters related to curriculum, instructional materials, and content standards. It is currently chaired by Bill Honig. Approximately seven IQC meetings will be held during the 2012-2013 school year in Sacramento.

The first activities of the IQC will be revising curriculum frameworks and evaluation criteria aligned to the Common Core State Standards with California additions for math and English language arts. Carla's role will be to ensure that the K-12 frameworks include the English language development standards and English language development strategies in the core subjects.

### Annette Janeway, Principal-Bragg ES

ABC Bragg Elementary Principal Annette Janeway has been selected to serve as a reviewer on the California Board of Education Supplemental Instructional Materials Review Committee. Ms. Janeway serves with a team of other curriculum experts from around the State who are conducting an independent review of new Supplemental Materials provided by textbook publishers. The purpose of the review is to recommend instructional materials which cover the California Common Core Standards to the State Board of Education for adoption in California. The Committee began its work this summer and will finish their work in February 2013. ▶



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

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