



La Cañada Unified

November-December 2005

Vol 01 - Issue 03

Message from the Superintendent

by Jim Stratton, Superintendent



We are just over three months into the first semester and have already made great progress on our 2005-06 focus areas: strengthening communication, ensuring individual success and reviewing our educational program in light of best practices.

As superintendent, I have regularly visited teacher classrooms and have attended staff meetings, PTA meetings and community meetings to share district news and answer questions. The Governing Board has also visited all of the sites and observed lessons in many individual classrooms.

In three issues now of the district newsletter, district staff members have communicated news related to finance, facilities, assessment, curriculum, achievement and other aspects of schooling. To facilitate better communication and cooperation during contract talks, we will be implementing interest based bargaining procedures. Rather than proceeding from positions and demands as in traditional bargaining, interest based bargaining establishes common interests and then negotiates what each party needs to best achieve those interests. Members of the district management negotiating team, the La Cañada Teachers Association, the La Cañada California School Employees Association and the LCUSD Governing Board will receive intensive training in the IBB process. Training is scheduled for January 22-23, 2006.

Student success continues to soar. Our fall sports teams secured impressive successes in league competition, our test scores in the Advanced Placement, SAT and California Academic Performance Index programs have maintained or exceeded record highs and our fine arts students continue to produce and perform at a very high level of excellence. Currently we are reviewing our K-12 reading and math intervention programs to strengthen the ways in which we help students in need of support to achieve standards at grade level expectations and to pass the California High School Exit Exam. In addition, our elementary Spanish instruction program is in full operation in the third and fourth grades, and we are developing additional classes and electives at the middle and secondary levels to expand curriculum and to offer opportunities for in-depth study in specific student interest areas.

The mission statement of the La Cañada Unified School District is that “we are a learning community dedicated to academic excellent and personal growth.” A critical component of any professional learning community is the continuous examination of practice to ensure that it matches the best models and developments in the field. In their book *Professional Learning Communities at Work*, Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker declare that “the engine of improvement, growth, and renewal in a profes-



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LC Newsletter

Seasons Greetings!



December 6, 2005 Board Meeting

At the Governing Board meeting on December 6, 2005, departing board members Ron Dietel and Andy Beattie were recognized for their service and dedication to our schools and our students. Following a brief reception, newly-elected board members Susan Boyd and Joel Peterson were sworn into office. We are truly fortunate to live in a community with such highly-qualified and committed individuals who are willing to serve the public interest. Thank you, Ron and Andy. Welcome aboard, Susan and Joel.

I have been elected Board president for 2006. My colleagues Jinny Dalbeck and Susan Boyd were elected vice president and clerk, respectively.

Governing Board student representative, Marissa Shipley, introduced Coach Larry Naeve and the entire CIF Champion boys' water polo team to sustained applause. In his brief remarks, Coach Naeve referred to this year's team as "my best ever" in his long and storied career as water polo coach at LCHS.

The Board approved the 2005-06 First Interim Budget, which reflects the recently approved contract settlement with LCTA. The \$30 million budget reflects over \$1 million of deficit spending in the current year to be funded from district reserves.

Two new high school classes were approved for the 2006/07 school year – Spanish IV (AP Spanish will continue to be offered) and Sports Medicine. Both courses are expected to be well attended by students.



Core Values

The Board will finalize its Statement of Core Values on December 13. The Board's Core Values, which are highly student-centered, will serve to provide a foundation for all District decision-making. The Board will distribute and strongly promote its Core Values throughout the District in recognition of the community's passion for superior education.



Helpful Links from
the LCUSD website:

Governing Board
Meeting Schedule

[http://www.lcusd.net/
SchoolBoard/index.htm](http://www.lcusd.net/SchoolBoard/index.htm)

LCUSD Master
Calendar:

<http://www.lcusd.net/Cal/>

LCUSD GATE
Advisory Council

[http://www.lcusd.net/
District/councils.htm](http://www.lcusd.net/District/councils.htm)

LCUSD Bond
Oversite Committee

[http://www.lcusdnet/
facilities.htm](http://www.lcusdnet/facilities.htm)

New District Offices



The district office is moving to its new location at 4490 Cornishon Ave. on December 20, 2005. The entryway to the reception area is shown in the photo above.



The famous "round" building on the corner of Foothill Blvd. and Cornishon Ave. is now the location of the new Board Room and district meeting hall.



The board room/meeting hall is spacious and can be re-configured to meet a variety of needs.

Workshops

The Board has scheduled three workshops with broad interest and encourages community interest and attendance. The workshops are currently scheduled for 4 pm at the soon-to-be re-located District offices on the FIS campus.

January 17, 2006 Class Size Reduction Workshop

February 28, 2006 Staff Evaluation Process Workshop

March 21, 2006 Developer Fees Workshop

On behalf of the District, the Governing Board appreciates your confidence and support. We look forward to a highly productive 2006.



Writing Assessment Workshop

On January 31, the district will have a Joint Staff Meeting for the elementary schools. At these meetings all three elementary school staffs meet to discuss current district issues. The focus of this meeting will be writing assessments. Teachers will be asked to score writing samples for comparison of how closely they rate papers according to the current rubric. After the samples are scored and results compared, the rubrics may be revised so that they are clear and in keeping with state standards and our own requirements for appropriate writing.



LCHS Class of 2005 Graduates Attend Top Schools

The La Cañada High School (LCHS) class of 2005 has much to be proud of. Of its 341 graduates, 336 have enrolled in college. Of those, 261 are four-year institutions.

Once again, LCHS is a top feeder school to the University of California. Forty-four percent of the class was accepted to at least one UC school, and 22% of the class chose to enroll at a UC campus.

While UC Berkeley was the top-choice four-year college of LCHS seniors last year (20), more LCHS graduates in 2005 matriculated to USC (19) than any other university.

Of the 18 LCHS graduates from the Class of 2005 recognized as 'Top Scholars' (top 5% cumulative GPAs), four matriculated to UCLA, three each enrolled at BYU and USC, and the others selected Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Georgetown, Stanford, UC Berkeley, Washington U., and Wellesley. 'Top Scholars' from 2005 also received admittance offers from Duke, Northwestern, and others.

(Of the 134 'Top Scholars' since 1998, 30 matriculated to Ivy League colleges, 26 selected UC Berkeley, 20 opted for UCLA and 13 enrolled at Stanford.)

Equally impressive, the remaining 95% of LCHS graduates of 2005 are also attending highly selective colleges including Amherst, Cornell, Duke, Johns Hopkins, Michigan, NYU, Oxford, Pomona, UC's including Berkeley and UCLA, USC, and Wellesley – and also received acceptance offers from Emory, Georgetown, Northwestern, Tufts, and Vanderbilt among other acclaimed colleges.

A number of LCHS graduates of 2005 who entered two-year colleges received offers of admission from prominent four-year institutions including USC and several UC's.

LCHS students excel both in the classroom and on the playing field. The average unweighted GPA for varsity team members at LCHS in 2004/05 was 3.23; moreover, two teams (football and wrestling) earned the top GPA in their sport among all CIF Southern Section schools with enrollment greater than 1,500. Twelve of 21 varsity teams won league championships. A total of 19 of 21 varsity teams qualified for CIF Southern Section postseason playoffs, of which four teams reached the finals.

Reflecting the quality and strength of the Fine Arts Department, many 2005 graduates received scholarships; national and regional awards in art, drama, choral and instrumental music; and admittance to leading fine arts-related programs at Art Center College of Design, California College of the Arts, Chapman, Curtis Institute of Music, Laguna College of Art & Design, Maryland Institute College of Art, NYU, Otis School of Art & Design, Rhode Island School of Design, UCLA, and USC among others.

The district expects this trend toward excellence to continue: the LCHS class of 2006 has produced 12 National Merit Semi-finalists.



LCHS Drama Update

We currently have 5 periods of drama provided to students 9-12, serving 171 students in the various levels of drama and the stagecraft class. Our new drama teacher is Tracy Clavin, joining us this past summer from the Ramona Convent Secondary School in Alhambra. Tracy has jumped into our school with enthusiasm and a fresh

perspective. Working together with administration, she has been researching pieces for the various productions for this school year that meet three basic criteria. Pieces need to:

1. Be curriculum appropriate
2. Be age appropriate
3. Fit with the students and performance groups on our campus

Miss Clavin proposed a number of pieces for the fall this past summer. They were all read by the Principal, and then they were run through the above criteria. An overarching goal for the process was to make decisions that would best benefit our students, both in the productions as well as those who would attend the productions. In addition to the curricular rationale mentioned above is the requirement gaining timely approval of the rights to perform copyrighted works. As we are now in preparation for the final selection of our Spring Musical, we are awaiting this verification. We are hoping for verification related to our request of *West Side Story* in order to announce it as our Spring Musical.



State Releases Physical Fitness Results

The 2005 Physical Fitness Test scores were recently released by the state. As described in the November LC Newsline, the Physical Fitness Test is given to students in grades 5, 7 and 9 annually. La Cañada Unified students performed better than the state in most of the individual physical fitness tasks. The greatest difference between the district and state performance is found in the fifth and seventh grades.

The test assesses six major fitness areas, including aerobic capacity (cardiovascular endurance), body composition (percentage of body fat), abdominal strength and endurance, trunk strength and flexibility, upper body strength and endurance, and overall flexibility. Aerobic capacity is considered the most important of the six areas tested. LCUSD students did better than the state in all but trunk extension and upper body strength in grade 7 and trunk extension, upper body strength and flexibility in grade 9.

The district's highest performance is in fifth grade where three-quarters or more students achieved the healthy fitness zone in each task. The highest performance is in abdominal strength in grade 5, 7, and 9 with 97%, 93% and 82% of students respectively in the healthy fitness zone (HFZ). The lowest performance is in ninth grade upper body strength with less than 46% of students scoring in the HFZ.

Percentage of Students in the Healthy Fitness Zone (HFZ)

FITNESS TASK	5th Grade		7th Grade		9th Grade	
	STATE	LCUSD	STATE	LCUSD	STATE	LCUSD
Aerobic Capacity	58.4	75.9	59.8	82.4	50.9	70.4
Body Composition	66.4	78.5	66.7	83.5	66.9	74.4
Abdominal Strength	80.2	97.0	83.7	93.1	81.3	82.1
Trunk Ext. Strength	87.4	90.4	88.5	88.5	84.3	72.8
Upper Body Strength	66.6	91.4	68.5	62.4	68.7	45.6
Flexibility	65.7	81.2	71.5	85.1	69.3	65.3



Information Resource Center

Winter 2005 UPDATE

La Canada High School has a state of the art library available to its students and staff. It is opened for the parents and community of La Canada Flintridge three evenings each week. These extended hours (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 PM to 8:00 PM) are funded by a Joint Use agreement with the city and school district. The entire community benefits by having this after-school access. During most of these mid-week evenings, approximately 60 to 85 students from 7th through 12th grades stay after school. Many are tutoring one another; some are meeting to complete group projects using technology and print materials. A large majority of our students use the IRC to finish daily homework while waiting for their parents in a safe, well-lit and supportive environment.

Later in the evenings, the Information Resource Center becomes a more traditional library setting for quiet independent study. Our high-speed access to the internet makes the library an excellent place to use the world wide web. We provide access to Microsoft Office including Word, Excel and PowerPoint. Adobe Photoshop Elements and the Macromedia suite of Flash, Fireworks and Dreamweaver are also available on the network. LCHS students have server space to save their work at school; we recommend that parents and community members make use of flash drives to transfer their work from library computers to home. We currently have 160 community members who intermittently use our facility during these evening hours. The second Saturday of each month, a variety of computer classes are offered to the community at no charge. Introductory instruction to Word, Excel, PowerPoint, scanning and creating PDF documents, as well as internet searching are addressed.

La Canada High School students are repeatedly exposed to the online database subscriptions, which are also available to the LCHS community. From the library web page, a "library without walls" or digital library can be accessed from home computers at any time of the day or night. This training will be offered to parents and community members on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2005 and again on Sat. Feb. 11, 2006.

Class hours: 10:00 AM – 12 noon. No Charge. 818-952-4239 to sign-up.

USC Trojan Family Magazine sent a fascinating article to its alumni this winter explaining that in this post-industrial age, the amount of knowledge being generated has exploded; today, most of this new knowledge is born digital. Director of USC Libraries, Lynn O'Leary-Archer states "When you look at the future of libraries-virtual versus physical-virtual is where the real potential exists." The Information Resource Center is challenging students to prepare themselves for the university library experience in the digital format. LCHS students and the adults working with them must be inspired to learn these new technologies as basic skills in the twenty first century.



Preventative Maintenance

As part of the Facilities Department responsibilities we have instituted several different programs on Preventative Maintenance including service contracts. These programs allow us to check on items before they become a problem.

The following is a list of the PM (Preventative Maintenance) projects we have in place throughout the District:

Scheduled changing filters on all a/c units (monthly or quarterly, based on the unit)

- Checking belts to the HVAC units (quarterly)
- Bi-weekly Pest Management - spraying
- Monthly Vehicle inspections
- Monthly use of emulsion (weed control) to supplement hand work on landscape areas
- Annual Fire Extinguisher servicing and replacement within 48 hours after reported
- Fire Safety testing of all the High School elevators
- Daily testing of the chemical adjustments in the High School pool
- Monthly custodial reports on campus conditions



First Interim Budget Update

By Dr. William Loose, Deputy Superintendent Human Resources and Fiscal Services



We are happy to report to our community that the La Cañada School District budget remains fiscally solvent. On the December 6 school board meeting, the Governing Board received and approved the First Interim Budget update and report. The First Interim budget report is a mandated requirement by the State where the District updates the initial 2005-06 operating budget to reflect actual budgetary transactions representing the period of July 1 – October 31. This actual data then helps the District update the budget assumptions and projections for the rest of the current year as well as the following two subsequent years. When a district can successfully do this, it is known as a “positive certification.” We have submitted our first interim report to the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and fully expect to have the positive certification verified following a budget review from LACOE.

While the District and State budgets are dynamic, fluid entities, Board President Scott Tracy publicly shared the concern that while the budget does retain the required reserve of 3% in the budget, that in the projected 2006-07 District budget, there is only a razor thin margin of \$86,500 over the required minimum reserves. Additionally, Mr. Tracy recounted a much higher ending balance that has been continually spent down during this era of major State funding problems that the District has had to deal with in the past several years. On behalf of the Board, Mr. Tracey pointed out the budgetary challenges in making the District budget continue to work in light of inflationary factors and rising costs.

The budget cycle continues in January when the Governor presents the first projection of the State Budget. From his presentation, the District will begin building the proposed 2006-07 budget. Our Superintendent, Mr. Stratton has made plans to include input from the new Budget Advisory Group as part of the budget building process. This group, that began meeting in the fall, will meet again on January 25, and will also be meeting throughout the Spring as the new budget is developed.



Online Transcripts Coming to LCHS

This year, the college admissions process will get a little easier for LCHS students because the high school administration has partnered with Docufide Secure Transcript™ to handle student transcript requests electronically.

Students will be able to order their transcripts online with the ease and 24/7 convenience of the internet. The Secure Transcript™ system eliminates paper by delivering student records electronically from end to end. How it works: Students request transcripts through the LCHS website. After a simple registration, they select destination colleges and delivery options, and pay a \$5 per-transcript fee online. Fee waivers are available for qualifying students. After that, the high school registrar approves their requests online, and Docufide prepares official transcripts and sends them to each college. Students then receive a confirmation of sending and delivery, so they know when their applications are complete. Assistant Principal, Kevin Buchanan said, “We are once again trying to stay abreast of current trends and this is just another way that we can help our students with the college application process.” The service will be up and running in May 2006, in time for final transcripts for this year’s seniors.



District Master Calendar

December 2005						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Week
			<p>1 (3) 7/8 Dine N Dance: Cafe 5-7:00 pm PCR-Round Table Pizza Night CPC Dir. Mtg.: VHHS 7:00 am</p>	<p>2 (1) 9-12 Comedy Sportz: Aud. 7:30 pm</p>	<p>3 (3) Band Championships SAT Tests Y-Winners Basketball Sign Up: Grs. 1-6th</p>	
<p>5 (2) ***PCY-ALF Instru. Music Concert - Lanterman, 6:00-9:00 pm*** LCE Food Drive. 12/5-12/9/05</p>	<p>6 (6) Instructional Council Mtg.-IRC 3:00 pm ****7-12 Orchestra Tour Elem. Sites*** Elementary Staff Mtg. 7/8 PTA Mtg.: LCHS-IRC 9:15 am ***PCY - Drama Rehearsal: Lanterman 8:00 am-3:00 pm*** ***LCE-ALF Instru. Music Concert- Lanterman, 6:00-9:00 pm***</p>	<p>7 (4) Childcare RT - DO 8:30 am 7/8 PTA Holiday Luncheon 7-8 Holiday Concert: LCHS Aud. 7:00 pm ***PCY Drama Production: Lanterman 8:00-12 pm & 5:30-9:30 pm***</p>	<p>8 (4) LCHS Orchestra Concert: LCHS Aud. 7:00 pm ***PCR-ALF Instru. Music Concert- Lanterman 6:00-9:00 pm*** 7-12 Tech Leaders Meeting: LCHS IRC 3-4:30 pm LCEFEF Mtg.: LCE 7:15 pm</p>	<p>9 (3) LCE Spirit Rally 9-12 PTA Holiday Luncheon PCR Spirit Rally/Eat Lun. w/Child Day</p>	<p>10 (3) LCHS Choral Song-A-Gram Fundraiser 9:00-4:00 pm PCY-Book Fair: CAFE 12:00-4:00 pm ACT Tests</p>	
<p>12 (1) PCY-Book Fair: CAFE, 8:00-4:00 pm</p>	<p>13 (3) 7-12 School Site Council: LCHS Rm. 305 3:00 pm PCY-Book Fair: CAFE, 8:00-4:00 pm PCY-PTA Holiday Luncheon</p>	<p>14 (5) LCE PTA Open Mtg. & Holiday Luncheon/Choral Concert PCR-Holiday Luncheon Mtg. 11:00 am K-6 Tech Leaders Mtg. (See Description for Specific Dates) 3:30-5 pm Booster Mtg.-LCHS IRC 6:30 am PCY-Book Fair: CAFE, 8:00-6:30 pm</p>	<p>15 (4) LCHS Holiday Concert: Lanterman 7:00 pm PCY Book Fair: CAFE 8:00-4:00 pm LCE-Round Table Pizza Night 20 Day Notices Due - Grs. 7-12 Parents Check Grades On-Line</p>	<p>16 (2) 8th Gr. IMAX Science Trip 7/8 Holiday Assembly</p>	<p>17</p>	
<p>19 (2) CEC Child Care Open w/Pre-registration WINTER BREAK - NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>20 (2) CEC Child Care Open w/Pre-registration WINTER BREAK - NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>21 (2) WINTER BREAK - NO SCHOOL CEC Child Care Open w/Pre-registration</p>	<p>22 (2) CEC Child Care Open w/Pre-registration WINTER BREAK - NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>23 (2) CEC Child Care Closed WINTER BREAK - NO SCHOOL</p>	<p>24 (1) CEC Child Care Closed</p>	
<p>26 (2) CEC Child Care Closed Winter Break - No School</p>	<p>27 (2) Winter Break - No School CEC Open w/Pre-registration</p>	<p>28 (2) Winter Break - No School CEC Open w/Pre-registration</p>	<p>29 (2) Winter Break - No School CEC Open w/Pre-registration</p>	<p>30 (2) Winter Break - No School CEC Open w/Pre-registration (T)</p>	<p>31 (1) Winter Break - No School</p>	

January 2006

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><u>2 (2)</u></p> <p>**HOLIDAY- NO STUDENTS** CEC Child Care Closed</p>	<p><u>3 (2)</u></p> <p>**SCHOOL BEGINS: Teachers & Students Return** Instructional Council Mtg.-IRC 3:00 pm</p>	<p>4</p>	<p><u>5 (2)</u></p> <p>PCR-Round Table Pizza Night CPC Dir. Mtg.:VHHS 7:00 am</p>	<p><u>6 (5)</u></p> <p>9-12 Winter Sports Assembly 7/8 Assembly 9-12 Comedy Sportz:Aud. 7:30 pm LCE/PCR Parent Tour 9:00 am PTA Council Meeting-Citibank. 9:15 am</p>	<p><u>7 (1)</u></p> <p>9-12 Monte Carlo Dance, 8:30-11:30 pm</p>
<p><u>9 (1)</u></p> <p>**GATE Advisory Mtg. - DO 12:35 pm***</p>	<p><u>10 (3)</u></p> <p>7/8 PTA Mtg-IRC 9:15 am PCY-PTA Meeting: Cafe, 9:15 am 7-12 School Site Council:LCHS Rm. 305 3:00 pm</p>	<p><u>11 (3)</u></p> <p>K-6 Tech Leaders Mtg:(See Description for Specific Dates) 3:30-5 pm Booster Meeting-LCHS IRC 6:30 am LCE - 5th Gr. Growth & Dev. Video- PARENTS ONLY in Cafe</p>	<p><u>12 (4)</u></p> <p>LCFED Mtg:LCE 7:15 pm BTSA Support Provider Mtg. - DO 3:30 pm CPC Parenting Forum 1: RBCC, 7:00-9:00 pm 7-12 Tech Leaders Meeting:LCHS IRC 3-4:30 pm</p>	<p><u>13 (3)</u></p> <p>LCE Spirit Rally Var. G/B Bskbl:Blair @ LCHS 5:30 pm PCY Parent Tour, 9:00 am</p>	<p>14</p>
<p><u>16 (2)</u></p> <p>**Martin Luther King Day (Observed)-NO SCHOOL** CEC Child Care Closed</p>	<p><u>17 (4)</u></p> <p>Elementary Staff Meeting Instructional Council Mtg.-IRC 3:00 pm GOVERNING BOARD MTG. - IRC 7:00 pm PCY - 5th Gr. Growth & Dev. Video</p>	<p><u>18 (5)</u></p> <p>PCR - PTA Mtg. - 7:00 pm LCE PTA Mtg. - Cafe 9:15 am PCR 4th Gr. Passage to Mother Lode - Lee's Class Var. G/B Bskbl:San Marino@LCHS 5:30 pm LCE - 5th Gr. Growth & Dev. Video</p>	<p><u>19 (7)</u></p> <p>PCR 4th Gr. Passage to Mother Lode - Lee's Class IPG Mtg. - 12:30-3:00 pm LCE-Round Table Pizza Night LCE Multicultural Days LCHS Drama Production:LCHS Aud. 1/19-1/20 Curriculum Council Mtg. - 8:30-11:00 am PCR - 5th Gr. Growth & Dev. Video</p>	<p><u>20 (4)</u></p> <p>PCR-Spirit Rally: Lun. w/Child & Parent LCE Multicultural Days 9-12 PTSA Mtg.-LCHS Cafe Lounge @ 9:15 am PCY-Spirit Rally:Lunch - 10:15 am</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>23</p>	<p><u>24 (3)</u></p> <p>LCHS Staff Mtg. LCHS FINAL EXAMS Elem. Site Council Meeting (SSC):Library 3:15 pm</p>	<p><u>25 (3)</u></p> <p>LCHS FINAL EXAMS PCY-Round Table Pizza Night , Grs. 1 & 5 Fine Arts Specialist Mtg. - 3:30 pm</p>	<p><u>26 (3)</u></p> <p>PCR 4th Gr. Passage to Mother Lode- Caire's Class LCHS FINAL EXAMS END OF 2ND QUARTER</p>	<p><u>27 (5)</u></p> <p>END OF 1ST SEMESTER CEC Child Care Open @ Elem. Sites w/Pre-registration Var. G/B Bskbl:Momrovia@LCHS 5:30 pm PCR 4th Gr. Passage to Mother Lode- Caire's Class Teacher Workday - NO STUDENTS</p>	<p><u>28 (1)</u></p> <p>SAT Test</p>
<p>30</p>	<p><u>31 (2)</u></p> <p>Joint Staff Meeting PCR 4th Gr. Passage to Mother Lode - Hu's Class</p>				

Superintendent

(continued from page 1)

sional learning community is collective inquiry. People in such a community are relentless in questioning the status quo, seeking new methods, testing those methods, and then reflecting on the results." This "action research" into possible ways to adjust and improve our practice is evident all throughout the district. The various elementary staffs are investigating best practices in writing across the curriculum, the teaching of math problem solving strategies, the teaching of social interaction skills for autistic children, ways to help students move from "basic" to "proficient" on state standards tests and effective hands-on science activities. At the middle and secondary level, staff members are reviewing sequential progress through the algebra curriculum, the issue of weighted grades and the use of quarterly benchmark assessments to adjust instruction. District office staff members are studying best practices in disaster preparedness, food services and personnel "position control."

As we move into the second half of the school year we will continue to work on the above projects and to communicate the results. Thanks to all members of the learning community for your support and contributions and best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season.



Technology Update

The move of the district office to its new location at the Foothills School campus has prompted the district to upgrade its telephone, voicemail, and internet service to help improve district and community communications.

The new Mitel telephone system will allow better call routing features to en-



La Cañada Unified School District

Cabinet

Superintendent:
James Stratton

Deputy Superint.
Dr. William Loose

Asst. Superint.
Mike Leininger

Governing Board

President
Scott Tracy

Vice President
Virginia Dalbeck

Clerk
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Member
Cindy Wilcox

Member
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able a more efficient way to receive and distribute incoming telephone calls. It also integrates a more sophisticated voice mail system which will allow the district to provide voice mail services to every teacher in the district. When operational, teachers will receive an email notifying them every time a new voice mail arrives. The teachers will then be able to retrieve their voice mail from any campus or home telephone. We hope to have teacher voice-mails operational by spring break.

Students and teachers will see a boost in speed when they access the internet due to the district's choice of a new internet service provider. Charter Communications is providing a fiber optics based internet connection to the new district office which will be shared with all of the schools. The new internet connection will start at 10 Mbps (more than 3 times the previous capacity) and will be able to accommodate growth to even greater speeds as needs and resources dictate. We expect the new fiber optic service to be much more reliable than the former service it is replacing. Network reliability is being further enhanced by adding additional T1 data lines to interconnect the different schools to each other and to the district office for redundancy. With these new measures in place, we hope that network outages will be a thing of the past.



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