

San Diego City Schools

Staff Bulletin – August 20, 2003

WHILE YOU WERE OUT...

100 CAMPUSES UNDERGO PROPOSITION MM WORK OVER SUMMER

During summer break, campuses were noisy and bustling – but not with students. Construction workers were digging trenches for technology, climbing scaffolding to make repairs, installing wiring, painting classrooms, laying floor tiles, and pouring foundations for new buildings.

Proposition MM touched nearly 100 sites this summer, reaching the highest peak of activity since the \$1.51 billion bond program began in 1998. Work included just about everything: construction on new libraries, science labs and classroom buildings, major repairs, painting, roofing repairs, and more.

Carson Elementary wrapped up its Proposition MM project in July, just in time for students and staff to host a ribbon-cutting ceremony before summer vacation. The event included a visit from SDSU football players who signed autographs and emphasized the importance of reading.

While construction activity was at an all-time high at existing schools, the Proposition MM team also had its hands full planning for the 13 new schools and three rebuilt schools.

This summer's new school milestones:

- Lincoln High School closed in June. Demolition will begin this fall, and the brand new school will reopen in fall 2006.
- Community Design Task Forces were in progress for 8 of 16 new or rebuilt schools.
- Staff continued to work with owners and renters within new school sites to purchase property and arrange for relocation. So far, the district estimates it will relocate more than 3,000 people to make way for new schools.
- The Board approved making the final undesignated school a middle school to relieve overcrowding at Memorial Junior High.
- The Board approved the final site for a school in City Heights that will relieve overcrowding at Jackson and Marshall elementary schools.
- Two more new schools got names. The new school in Barrio Logan (near King, Logan and Perkins elementary schools) will bear the name of the late Laura G. Rodriguez. An elementary school next to Kennedy Elementary will carry the name of the late Dr. Walter "Wally" Porter. Both were respected community activists.

Proposition MM staff are working with numerous state and local agencies to ensure that sites are environmentally safe for new schools. To learn more about who is involved in evaluating sites for our new schools and ensuring that we comply with all environmental regulations, read the profile on Jim Bray, the district's civil/environmental engineer. He is profiled in this issue's "Getting to Know You."

VOLUNTEERS SUPPORT STUDENT SUCCESS IN SDCS

According to a recent survey of volunteer hours and services, over 23,000 volunteers aided San Diego City Schools (SDCS) in the 2002-03 school year. The volunteers donated 665,169 hours of their time, which has a monetary value of over \$11 million.¹ This tremendous contribution to SDCS is a vital part of the district's mission of improving student achievement by supporting teaching and learning.

SDCS volunteers represent a microcosm of the economic, social, racial, religious and educational backgrounds within the community. They include parents, business/community partners, community members, K-12/college students, and senior citizens. Perhaps most importantly, volunteers are united by their desire to help students at all levels- elementary, middle and senior. They provide services as tutors and mentors, Rolling Readers and senior exhibition panel members. Volunteers organize and help with school and classroom activities and events such as career fairs, jog-a-thons and field trips.

School site staff and students appreciate the assistance they receive from volunteers, including Partners in Education. "Our partners provide valuable resources, time and money to enhance the learning, health and overall well-being of our students," said one. Another staff member praised their site's "viable and energetic partners," noting that each partnership brings "added insight and positive resources that allow our students to grow academically and socially."

District students and staff are not the only people who benefit from the volunteer program. Volunteers also reap the rewards of their time at school sites. One volunteer, who works with schools through the OASIS intergenerational tutoring program, cites "the satisfaction of knowing that my students look forward to my visit every week." Another OASIS tutor finds work with students in literacy activities to be most rewarding. "Watching the eyes and expression of a child 'get' the connection between the letters, sounds and words as he learned to become reading ready" was the highlight of her time at school.

The SDCS Volunteer Program is overseen by the Community Relations Department, which provides assistance to schools to help them facilitate their volunteer programs and holds training sessions for site volunteer coordinators. These meetings, and the Volunteer Coordinator's Handbook, provide participants with valuable information, strategies and resources to help strengthen and support community and parent outreach efforts at school sites.

All volunteers are required to be screened for tuberculosis and complete a volunteer application. Work is done under the direction of an assigned teacher, site volunteer coordinator, and/or principal/vice principal that has been trained by the Community Relations Department. To learn more about SDCS volunteer procedures, view the "Summary of Volunteer Procedures" fact sheet.

Additional assistance and materials regarding volunteer programs and procedures are available from the Community Relations Department by calling (619) 725-5595 or emailing etiffany@sandi.net. You may also visit the [Volunteer Program webpage](#).

DISTRICT WIDE APPLICATIONS (DWA) TRAINING UPDATE

The new DWA training schedule for fall is now available online! Here is just a sample of the key topics covered:

¹ Monetary value of volunteer hours is determined by the Independent Sector. The 2002 hourly rate is \$16.54.

Time & Labor

This course provides the detailed information needed to record employee time and submit time for approval. Information about completing the new electronic Assignment Authorization form (an electronic form called the Personnel Action Request (PAR) form) will also be covered. It is required training for all Site Timekeepers and Backup Timekeepers.

eProcurement

This course provides employees who create and approve requisitions with the detailed information needed to create and submit a requisition. It is required training for Site Financial Clerk/Secretary and/or site requisitioner (employee creating requisitions).

Site Administrator Training

This course provides site administrators an understanding of the general PeopleSoft concepts, the new Chart of Accounts, how to approve a requisition, how to complete the new electronic PAR form, and how to manage and approve employee timesheets. It will also address Worker's Comp (benefits) issues. It is **required** training for all Principals and Central Office Managers.

The updated training schedule includes a complete course description, and expanded course schedule.

Not sure which training sessions you need to attend? Talk with your site administrator and review the "who should attend" section of the DWA website, www.sandi.net/dwa. Please remember to sign up only for the classes you are *required* to take, as seating is limited and it is critical that employees who are required to take the training are accommodated first.

Still need to sign up for training? Visit the PeopleSoft Training webpage and click on either the School Site Registration section or the Central Office Registration section. For additional information, or to review the latest DWA news, visit the DWA website at www.sandi.net/dwa.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Jim Bray

Civil/Environmental Engineering Coordinator

From *San Diego Fairy Shrimp* to *Nuttall's Scrub Oak*, Jim Bray often finds himself dealing with the "strange and wonderful" aspects of Mother Nature; he also has to deal with less than wonderful substances, such as lead and asbestos. Working with complex and unique environmental issues is part of his job. He's the civil/environmental engineering coordinator for Facilities Management, the division that implements the Proposition MM program for San Diego City Schools (SDCS).

Bray brings more than two decades of engineering experience to the Prop. MM program. Before coming to San Diego in December 2000, Bray spent nearly 10 years in the Navy as a civil engineer. During his tenure with the Navy, he worked in several areas, including construction management, grounds maintenance, the Environmental Office, and the Health & Safety Office. His work took him to Guam, Okinawa and Sicily.

After leaving the Navy, he worked as a civilian engineer for the Navy and as consultant for private companies. He earned his bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from Michigan Technological University and is a registered engineer in California.

As coordinator of the environmental/civil engineering process for the Prop. MM program, Bray evaluates property and determines whether or not it's acceptable for a particular use, usually that of a school. He oversees the environmental review process, which takes approximately 18 months.

“Jim is an integral part of the Prop. MM team, and his expertise is invaluable to the program,” said Lou Smith, chief operating officer of Facilities Management. “He has successfully streamlined and guided the environmental review process for our new schools, and he has been instrumental in keeping our new schools-schedule on track.”

Bray said that the most rewarding aspect of his work for SDCS is watching a new school project come together and develop into something the community can be proud of, and at the same time, alleviate overcrowded conditions at other schools.

“It’s especially rewarding when you’ve got something you can use after all the work is done,” he said. “With the school sites and some of the jobs I’ve been on in the past, it’s also a way to prevent or clean up pollution. When we’re done, things are better than when we started.”

Bray said that one of the most challenging aspects of his job is dealing with a limited number of consultants who understand how the school district requirements fit with the requirements of the City of San Diego, the California Department of Education (CDE), the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

“While the consultants seem to understand how CDE or DTSC work, they don’t seem to understand how all of the requirements fit together,” he said. “It’s been an education effort on all sides.”

“It’s up to us to pull all the regulations and procedures together, and most of my efforts go toward ensuring that everything is lined up as it should be,” Bray added. “It’s both interesting and challenging trying to get the order right.”

Bray said dealing with the technical aspect of his work is typically easier than dealing with the regulatory aspect. The regulations are ever-changing and always increasing, he said.

“California is typically more stringent than other states when it comes to environmental issues,” he noted. “It’s difficult to balance all of the requirements and to get everyone to agree on what’s acceptable and what’s reasonable.”

When selecting a site for a new school, Bray not only ensures that the environmental review process goes forward and that the regulations and agency approvals line up; he also participates in the district’s public outreach process. The proposed sites for our new schools go through a lengthy and multilayered selection process.

Ultimately, the Board of Education decides whether or not a new school project goes forward and how. Getting the Board’s approval on a new school site marks the culmination of hundreds of hours of staff, consultant and community work.

“Getting that approval is very rewarding,” Bray said. “It means that we actually get to build something after all the work that has been done.”

The next challenge on the Prop. MM horizon is picking a site for the potential new middle school to ease crowding at Memorial Junior High.

“The land base of a middle school is twice as large as that of an elementary school,” Bray said. “We have a lot of work to do with the community.”

When he isn’t working on environmental/civil issues for the school district, Bray enjoys renovating the East County home he shares with his wife of 11 years, Remona. He and his wife also spend a lot of their free time volunteering at their church.

HALL OF FAME

- Each year, following the administration of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests, school districts are provided the opportunity to make corrections of student demographic information prior to the final scoring and reporting by the STAR Scoring Center. Since the cost of edits is subtracted from the reimbursement the district receives from the state for STAR testing, a low error rate maximizes the reimbursement.

In spring 2003, a total of 103,365 district students in grades 2 through 11 were on the California Standards Tests (CST)/California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition (CAT/6). This year, the San Diego City Schools **Testing Unit** had to submit edits for a total of only 47 students, representing a .05% (5 hundredths of a percent) error rate.

Since each student's answer document contains an average of 24 demographic fields, the total number of demographic fields for 103,365 students is 2,480,760. This means the error rate for the total number of demographic fields represented by these students is .0002% (2 ten thousandths of a percent)!

This is a very commendable achievement. Students, along with their teachers and school staff involved in testing, as well as the staff of the Testing Unit, are to be congratulated for this remarkably low error rate.

- **Eric Burtson**, a National Board Certified teacher who currently teaches International Baccalaureate (IB) physics, IB chemistry, and science technology at **San Diego High**, is one of only four teachers in California to be selected as state finalists for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). Burtson and the other teachers will be honored at the fall meeting of the State Board of Education for innovative and creative approaches to teaching.
- **Curtis McGlown** has been selected to replace longtime **San Diego High** head basketball coach **Dennis Kane**, who will move to **Mission Bay High**. **Andy Diaz** has taken over as athletic director at SDHS.
- Videos of exemplary lessons by two SDCS math teachers are featured on the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics website. **Mark Acorn**, now at **Jackson Elementary**, is shown teaching a 6th grade class at Zamorano and **Kathleen Gallagher** is shown with a 3rd grade class at **King**. "Reflections" are part of a video-based, interactive, professional development website designed to help teachers — individually and collectively — examine their teaching of mathematics.

To view the videos, go to <http://my.nctm.org/eresources/reflections/index.htm>. Select "Reflect by Topic," then play the video you choose in either RealTime or QuickTime streaming video.

STUDENT SALUTES

- Six district students were honored as "Cox Heroes" for their perseverance through adversity and dedication to learning, receiving scholarships from the Cox Kids Foundation. Congratulations to **Susan Lakaraber**, **Beth Novoa** and **Jessica Vera (Hoover)**; **April Deibert (Patrick Henry)**; **Leeanashaa Alexander (Garfield)**; and **Menahile Biru (San Diego High)**.

- **Natalie Gattrell**, a recent graduate of **Scripps Ranch High**, was one of four local athletes honored by the Pacific Women's Sport Foundation (PWSF) with a scholarship. The PWSF honors young women from around the county who excel in athletics, maintain a 3.0 grade point average or better, demonstrate leadership and have a financial need. The **Patrick Henry High basketball team** received a Team Fund Scholarship. For more information on these scholarship programs, visit www.pwsf.org.
- **Muir** student **Fatima McField** was recognized at a graduation ceremony on August 16 for students who successfully completed the Academy of Business Leadership's Summer Business Institute. As part of the Institute, students learn the basics of business from people who hold MBAs, learn to read a financial report and to present a business plan, and take field trips.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

- The Instructional Media Center (IMC) is a lending library available for the use of SDCS teachers. The IMC provides multimedia instructional materials, elementary print materials and a professional library with a Teacher's Media Center (TMC).

The IMC and TMC are open for browsing Monday-Friday 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. There are no Saturday hours scheduled for the 2003-04 school year. The circulation staff will take phone orders during these hours. The phone numbers for the circulation desk are (858) 496-8293, 496-8340, 496-8429, or 496-8438. Teachers may also place orders for instructional materials anytime using the order forms found on the IMC webpage, <http://ww2sandi.net/imc>, or by fax at (858) 560-7218.

- The Registrar of Voters is looking for San Diego County residents willing to volunteer at polling places on Election Day. They have had an increasingly difficult time finding enough people to volunteer due to a critical shortage of potential poll workers. If you are willing to help and want more information, contact:
 - South Bay residents- Patty Navarro, 858-694-3452 or Patricia.Navarro@sdcounty.ca.gov
 - East County residents- Linda Italiano, 858-694-3465 or Linda.Italiano@sdcounty.ca.gov
 - North County residents- Carmen Valenzuela, 858-694-3462 or Carmen.Valenzuela@sdcounty.ca.gov
 - Central County residents- Sherri Luke, 858-694-3455 or Sherri.Luke@sdcounty.ca.gov

RETIRING TYPES

- The **Administrative and Legislative Services Office** recently honored **Estrella "Lally" Thompson** after more than 20 years of service to the district. Her future includes plans for spending time with grandchildren and shopping.

CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale: '93 Harley Davidson Sportster, custom black & chrome, \$7,000/obo, 619-271-8262; '98 Pontiac Grand Prix, all pwr, excl cond, white, \$8,900, 619-654-3697; USD CLAD video tapes, set 2 & 4, \$50, 858-457-8661. **For Rent:** New furnished condominium in Rosarito, 2bd/2ba, 619-427-8726.

The next Staff Bulletin will be posted on September 17, 2003. Please submit all items by Monday, September 8, 2003, to the Communications Office, Room 2145, Eugene Brucker Education Center.