

Bulletin Board

Summer 2012

Accomplishments, Challenges, and Plans for the Future

By Dr. Lisa Fontana, Superintendent

A Wonderful School Year Concludes

As the school year ends, we can all be proud of student accomplishments. A large class of 8th graders was promoted from Diamond Valley Elementary School into high school, an Alpine County student speaker received a standing ovation at the Douglas High School graduation and test scores continue to improve overall and by sub-groups. Students became increasingly aware of the impacts of negative peer relationships and how they can improve them through programs funded by Alpine County Health and Human Services and Behavioral Health Services. We've even been able to review discipline data and have determined next steps to continued improvements in student behavior. We partnered with many community organizations to host a wonderful last-day-of-school bicycle, barbecue and baseball event and are now enjoying a beautiful Alpine summer!

Economic Uncertainties Are Certain

Within both the District and County Office, we are using our reserves for economic uncertainties because these are certainly uncertain economic times! This is a new way of doing business for us. Fortu-

nately, funds were put away many years ago for economic uncertainties and now we know what that means. Instead of planning for expenditures (money we pay out) from revenues (money that comes in) we are actually planning on how much we can spend out of our reserves (savings) before the money runs out. We are planning again this year to deficit spend which means we will bring in less money from property taxes, state programs and the federal government than we



will need to spend. Since the state and federal budgeting timelines in no way match our mandated timeline, we are doing this with lots of assumptions (educated guesses). We also have to plan at least a few different scenarios this year depending upon whether or not the governor's tax initiative passes in November. If it does not pass, the schools will suffer new mid-year cuts.

Aside from our Kindergarten through 12th grade programs, there is also a sad state of affairs with funding we normally receive for our County Office of Education Early Learning Center programs for our children birth through age 5. We have relied heavily on First 5 Alpine to fund the majority of those programs but First 5 funding has been drastically reduced as well. The other grant streams that once brought funding into our Early Learning programs have all dried up including state School Readiness and Native TANF funds. On top of the funding crisis, the number of infants, toddlers and preschool age children has dropped significantly, so even the number of parents who pay for childcare is much smaller than in years past. Childcare and preschool services are still needed for this smaller number of young children but that smaller number does mean reduced income. Due to our small size, the expenses for staff, facility and licensing requirements remain high in proportion to the number of children served so our per child expenses are significant.

California Common Core State Standards

More than 40 states, including California, are implementing the Common Core State Stan-

Accomplishments (continued from page 1, Superintendent's report)

ards, which provide consistent learning goals for students regardless of where they live. These standards are designed to make sure that all students graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college and career.

To help students meet these goals, the State is working with a company to develop assessments that will replace current state tests in the 2014-2015 school year. These new tests will provide teachers with new tools to more closely monitor student progress.

We will keep our communities informed of changes in teaching and learning as we move into this new era of common standards.



We hope all our students and families enjoy a relaxing summer with plenty of opportunities for fun activities together in our beautiful county.

But don't forget: Diamond Valley Elementary and the Secondary Community Day School (CDS) begin Monday, August 20. The Early Learning Center preschool program begins Tuesday, September 4. We look forward to seeing you in August.

Compliments and Confirmations by Laura Parks, Principal

As I walk among our students I am often encouraging and reminding students to use the simple yet "magic" words of: please, thank you, and you're welcome. I'd like to cultivate a culture where both adults and children in our community were in the habit of using these complimentary and confirming words with one another. As you interact with children in our community this summer, please try to foster these habits by practicing the following:

- Compliment children when they hold the door for you, or use manners. Say loud and clear, "What a fine example you are to me!"
- Avoid forcing a child to acknowledge a compliment, normal shyness may prevent children from responding positively. Simply do your part as an adult by modeling appropriate words and actions.
- If you have a close relationship with a shy child, practice and teach them how to receive and give compliments. Nodding and smiling at an adult can be sufficient acknowledgment until the child becomes more secure and less shy.
- Correct rude behavior in private by suggesting a more positive and appropriate way to respond.



Notice and compliment successful encounters with others by complimenting your child or a child you see exhibiting great behavior. Many times on our campus students have offered to hold the door and help me from my car when I am carrying heavy items. How nice to know we are teaching more than reading, writing and math in our homes, community and school!

School Board Highlights by Terrie Peets

February, 2012 – The District Board presented to Mr. Joe Voss the Board Appreciation Award. Public gratitude was given to John Baker, Karrie Kunich, Walter Bell and Robert Gunter for their generous donations to the Kindle book readers and rock wall dismantling. Categorical Tier III funding was approved by the District Board. Two permanent certificated job share assignments were approved. A seniority tie breaking resolution was approved noting no changes from previous year's criteria. The Bear Valley Elementary School continued closure was reviewed and no comments were received from the public present. Continued closure was approved for the 2012-2013 school year. Board policies were reviewed and approved. Final approval of the District-Wide/School Safety Plan was approved with appreciation given to Ms. Dawn Riddle and Mrs. Cheri Warrell for their hard work on the comprehensive document. The County Board approved the Categorical Tier III funding.

March, 2012 – Mrs. Fowle and Mrs. McCully presented Kindergarten curriculum using the new Promethean Board technology to the District Board members. The Board approved the Superintendent's recommended reduction in 2012-2013 programs or services and the resolution for the intention to dismiss certificated employees. Approval was given for a reduced workload program and the district 2012-2013 certificated contract renewals. The district positive certification for the 2011-2012 second interim financial reports was approved. A public hearing and resolution adoption of the developer fee justification study was approved. The County Board approved the positive certification of the 2011-2012 second interim financial reports.

April, 2012 – The Superintendent's small district funding waiver for the Alpine County Secondary Community Day School was approved along with the District Superintendent's contract renewal effective July 1, 2012. Board members shared their conference sessions on Brown Act, ethics, general fund, finance, saving money opportunities, retirement procedures & plans, culture of poverty, school budget mandates and social media from the Small School District Conference. Dr. Fontana updated the County Board of the Early Learning Center staff changes for the next year noting that reductions were made in work days and hours.

May, 2012 – Additional 2012-2013 certificated contracts were approved by the District Board. A public hearing date for the district budgets was set for June 19, 2012. A fee waiver to use the non-profit tier I rate schedule for the use of the Bear Valley facility was approved for the Bear Valley Music Festival. A county certificated contract was renewed for the Youth & Workforce Transition Teacher/Adult Education and Community Workforce Development Teacher in the County Office of Education. A public hearing was set for the County Board budgets on June 19, 2012. Apportionment of Forest Reserve Receipts for the Superintendent of Schools was approved. Dr. Fontana shared a MOU with Alpine County Behavioral Health Services noting that this was a direct result of a change in the law by the former governor's repeal last year. All student behavioral health costs not covered by MediCal and anything above what MediCal covers will now be paid by the schools versus the mental health departments.

Future Board Meeting Dates

June 19, 2012, First District Meeting Open Session at 5:00 p.m., First County Meeting Open Session at 5:15 p.m., Second District Meeting Closed Session at 5:30 p.m. with General Open Session at 6:00 p.m. followed by second County Meeting in the Administrative Annex Building.

July 10, 2012, District Meeting Closed Session at 5:30 p.m. with General Open Session at 6:00 p.m. followed by County Meeting in Administrative Annex Building

August 14, 2012, District Meeting Closed Session at 5:30 p.m. with General Open Session at 6:00 p.m. followed by County Meeting in Administrative Annex Building

**Alpine County Unified
School District**

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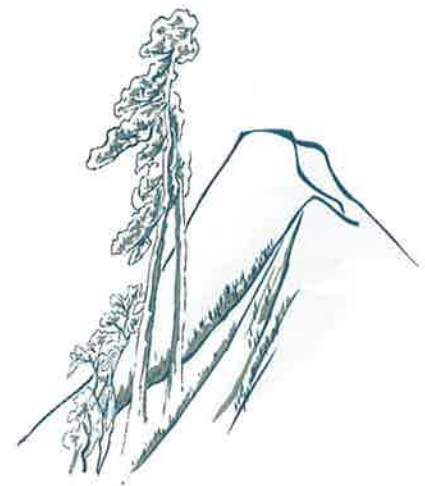
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**Alpine County Unified School
District and
County Office of Education**

Vision
**All students are engaged and
successful.**

Mission
**We provide a safe and engag-
ing learning environment**



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