



**Orange
County
School
Boards
Association**

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2005-2006

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SPOTLIGHT ON NEWS

May 2006 Edition

A Message from Sue Kuwabara President

Through the Eyes of a Child

As a board member I get calls or e-mail communications from parents, teachers, and district staff, but rarely do students ever contact me. This month was an exception when I received a number of e-mails and calls directly from students in our District. I would like to share two stories with you because they remind me that it is so easy to get caught up in the day-to-day operation of a large school district, and one begins to see everything only from the perspective of an elected administrator.



The first e-mail I got was from a third grade student at one of our elementary schools. She told me about the school's upcoming Open House and her third grade class's decision to have each student take on the identity of a famous person he/she wanted to represent. Each student had to learn as much as possible about the person so that he/she could answer questions from parents touring their classroom. While I view my school board duties as extremely important, I have never considered myself to be a famous person. As I exchanged information with this student, I realized that she took this project very seriously. From her perspective, school is a very important part of her young life, and so anyone who is responsible for making sure her school is the best it can be is important in her eyes. It made me stop and think about why I wanted to be on the school board. It was for the very reasons that this young girl considered me a famous person. I am here to make sure that each student receives the best educational experience that our district can possibly provide. It is not only the three Rs, but also music, art, and the sciences. It was a very flattering yet gentle reminder about what my focus should be as seen through the eyes of a child.

The second e-mail, or should I say the next eleven e-mails, I received came from fourth grade students in a different elementary school. Each e-mail was a simple request for a donation to help one of their classmates who had been diagnosed with bone cancer in early December. Sadly, their young friend was not responding to treatment. As a class, they had become involved in the program called "Relay for Life." Each student, in their own words, asked if I would be part of the "Relay for Life" program by sending in a donation for their friend. I did what all of you would have done and sent in a donation immediately. I also decided to send an e-mail to the teacher to let him know how hard his students were working on this project of love. I got an immediate e-mail reply from the teacher. What he shared with me took me a little bit by surprise. He said that while the students were appreciative of my donation, they were more impressed by the quickness of my response. They felt that someone in a position of authority had heard their young voices and responded to them. Their spirits were uplifted because they felt a sense of accomplishment. Simply put, they had made a difference in the life and death struggle of their friend. This experience reminded me that my job is not just about getting things done. It is equally important to remember that how I go about getting the job done can have an impact on the students I serve. Being accessible to those I serve and being responsive to them are as important as the actions I take to help them.

It has been a very interesting and rewarding month. I hope these experiences I have shared with you serve as a gentle reminder that how we handle our duties as school board members should always be seen through the eyes of the students we serve.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the wonderful officers and directors that served on the OCSBA Board this year. You are terrific and have made my year as president a wonderful experience. Another big thanks to Ellin Chariton and Blanca Zimmerman!

2005-2006 Marian Bergeson Award Winners
Mary Fuhrman and Donna McDougall

The Marian Bergeson Award recognizes an Orange County School Board member(s) who has(ve) provided outstanding governing board service and community service to promote and enhance public education. The award serves as a tribute to Marian for her exemplary leadership. The selection committee is represented by past recipients of the award. This year the OCSBA honors two Marian Bergeson awardees. Each recipient demonstrates exemplary dedication and commitment to their school district and community.

Our first honoree, Mary Fuhrman, was elected to the Buena Park School District Governing Board in 1994, after she retired from 23 years of teaching in the district. Mary is retiring from the Buena Park Governing Board at the end of her term in November. Mary is known for being passionate yet quietly effective. Her emphasis is on volunteerism both in her district's schools and in her community. She is active in the American Association of University Women and League of Women Voters. Mary has been actively involved with CSBA in many capacities including Delegate Assembly and has served for many years on the Orange County School Boards Association, most recently as Newsletter Editor. Mary exemplifies the district's motto in her personal and professional life to "Believe, Achieve, Succeed." We wish Mary a sincere congratulations and continued opportunities to make a difference in the lives of so many.



Mary Fuhrman
Buena Park School District



Donna McDougall
Cypress School District

Our next Marian Bergeson honoree has been a valued Board of Trustees member of the Cypress School District since 1984 and a first grade teacher in the Savanna School District. Donna has served Cypress School District in many capacities over the years. She has served four times as School Board President and four terms as President of the Greater Anaheim SELPA. She is an active CSBA member and participates in diverse civic activities. Donna has the distinction of having served as OCSBA president during the Orange County bankruptcy. Donna provided extraordinary leadership keeping OCSBA members informed and she provided the face of Orange County schools to people around the state. Donna was the calm centering force during that difficult time that kept school board members working together effectively to reach a final settlement for our schools. Whether in the community or as a school board trustee, Donna always lives up to her commitment and garners a great deal of respect for all her efforts! Congratulations Donna on this most deserved recognition.





In memory of
Dr. William D. Eller
Superintendent of
Cypress School District
From 1993 to 2006





In memory of
Dr. K. Turner
Board Member of
Laguna Beach Unified School District
From 1994 to 2006





Charter, Private, Public Schools and Academic Achievement: New Evidence from National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Mathematics Data

Analysis of US mathematics achievement finds that, after accounting for the fact that private schools serve more advantaged populations, public schools perform remarkably well, often outscoring private and charter schools.

To summarize the most important findings once demographic and location differences were controlled:

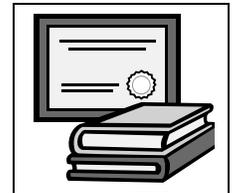
- Public schools significantly out-scored Catholic schools (by over 7 points in 4th grade, and almost 4 points in 8th grade).
- Of all private school types studied, Lutheran schools performed the best.
- The fastest growing segment of the private school sector, conservative Christian schools, were also the lowest performing, trailing public schools by more than 10 points at grades 4 and 8.
- Charter schools scored a significant 4.4 points lower than non-charter public schools in 4th grade, but scored (a statistically insignificant) 2.4 points higher in 8th grade.

Major findings can be found at: http://www.ncspe.org/publications_files/OP111.pdf

(Submitted by Dr. Alexandria Coronado, President, Orange County Board of Education)

HOW MANY NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFIED TEACHERS DOES YOUR DISTRICT HAVE?

By Mary Fuhrman

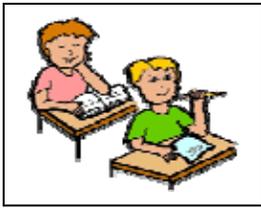


Research has proven that National Board Certified Teachers have a profound impact on student learning and achievement. It is a gateway to excellent teaching and the highest honor in the profession. The process drastically refines teaching practices resulting in higher student achievement.

This program was created in 1987 in response to “A Nation at Risk” and “A Nation Prepared.” The certification program may be a three-year process but approximately 38% of the candidates achieve NBCT the first time they apply. The certification lasts 10 years with a renewal process available. Teachers are involved in preparing extensive portfolios, which include videotapes of their lessons, student work, and evidence of how student learning is impacted beyond the classroom. They prepare many papers describing, analyzing and reflecting about their teaching. At Assessment Centers they take six content tests and illustrate their computer skills.

The fees are currently \$2,600 with some scholarships and subsidies available. Nationally, 1 % of the teaching force is NBCT. California ranked seventh with 298 newly certified teachers in 2005 for a total of 3375, ranking the state fourth for the total number of National Board Certified Teachers. Orange County has 150+ National Board Certified Teachers. Many districts are providing monetary incentives, technology support and other support measures to help during the certification process and to encourage teachers in this very worthwhile but difficult endeavor. What is your district doing?

For more information go to www.nbpts.org or contact Dr. Nina Winn, OCDE Institute for Teaching Excellence at: nwinn@ocde.us or (714) 708-5880



ORANGE COUNTY SUPERINTDENT

Karen Colby

Ocean View School District

Karen Colby was appointed the new Ocean View School District Superintendent on January 10, 2006. Prior to her appointment she served for seven months as the District's Interim Superintendent.

Mrs. Colby received her B.A. from UCLA, her teaching credential from UC Irvine, and her M.A. from the University of San Francisco. She began her career with the district in 1971 starting as a classroom teacher with 7th and 8th grade students. She went on to serve as the District GATE Coordinator and then as Director of Learning Resources. In 1990 she was made Director of Curriculum and Instruction and in 1999 was promoted to Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. Mrs. Colby also is an antique dealer and collects children's books. She loves to read and attend the theatre having season tickets at the O.C. Performing Arts Center and South Coast Repertory. She and her 19 year old daughter, Kristina (who attends college and also works at a graphics firm) live in Irvine with their pet Siamese cat.

Westminster School District Interim Superintendent Hired

Westminster, CA – The Westminster School District Board of Trustees has hired an Interim Superintendent, Dr. Mel Lopez, effective April 24, 2006. Last November, Superintendent Sheri Loewenstein notified the Board that she would be resigning at the end of her contract on June 30. It is expected that Dr. Lopez will serve the District until a permanent superintendent is hired. Dr. Lopez was the Superintendent of the Anaheim City School District for ten years before he retired in 1995 and he was an Associate Professor at Chapman University from 1996-2004. He holds a Ph.D. from Wayne State University, a Master of Science Degree from California State University–Fullerton, and a Bachelor of Arts Degree from University of Texas–Austin.

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Thank you to the OCSBA 2005 – 2006 Board of Directors



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