

# SPOTLIGHT ON NEWS

May 2007 Edition



**Orange County  
School Boards  
Association**

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**2006-2007**

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## *A Message from the OCSBA President – Suzie Swartz*



As school board members, we “have been entrusted with the power and authority to make decisions which will crucially affect the lives of many people – now and for years to come.”

*(Boardsmanship, A Guide for California School Board Members, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition CSBA.)*

An awesome responsibility indeed!

Our school districts are like multi-million dollar corporations. In addition to providing students with the best educational opportunities possible, our school districts are often the largest employer in our communities, with the largest transportation and food service operations and the most facilities to maintain.

Accountability is not just about monitoring student achievement, the budget and curriculum. It is also about evaluating the effectiveness of the superintendent and board as the governance team.

With the new fiscal year just around the corner, it is a good time to reflect on how well we do our job. While evaluating the superintendent and ourselves is not an easy task, it is critical to the success of our mission.

For resources and help with your evaluation process, go to [www.csba.org](http://www.csba.org), find the “Search” box in the upper right, type in “Evaluation” then click “Go.”

Best regards,  
Suzie Swartz

## **A Surprising Secret to a Long Life: Stay in School**

James Smith, a health economist at the RAND Corporation, has heard a variety of hypotheses about what it takes to live a long life — money, lack of stress, a loving family, lots of friends. But he has been a skeptic.

Yes, he says, it is clear that on average some groups in every society live longer than others. Longevity, in general, is not evenly distributed in the population. But what, he asks, is cause and what is effect? And how can they be disentangled?

He is venturing, of course, into one of the prevailing mysteries of aging, the persistent differences seen in the life spans of large groups. In every country, there is an average life span for the nation as a whole and there are average life spans for different subsets, based on race, geography, education, and even churchgoing.

*(continued on Page 2)*



## *2006-2007 Marian Bergeson Award Winner*

### **Susie Sokol**

The Marian Bergeson Award recognizes an Orange County School Board member who has provided outstanding governing board service and community service to promote and enhance public education. The award serves as a tribute to Marian Bergeson for her exemplary leadership.

Susie Sokol, the 2006-2007 Marian Bergeson award recipient, has demonstrated dedication and commitment in her nineteen years of service as a governing board member of the Brea Olinda Unified School District.

Susie exemplifies the qualities of an active OCSBA member, a participant in school board organizations, a leader who is visible in the community and engaged in civic and business organizations, and a school board member working to enhance public education.

Susie has used her well-earned and considerable influence to provide guidance and leadership, make decisions and policies, and pursue an innovative and creative direction for the Brea Olinda Unified School District. As a school board member (and nine-time officer), Susie has positively benefited the students and their families, the employees, and the community.

Susie's education philosophy focuses on setting high standards for students and teachers and holding them accountable. Her top priorities are quality education for all students, fiscal accountability, and safe and well maintained schools and facilities. As the longest-serving member of her current school board, Susie offers the district the widest experience base and the most personal knowledge. Congratulations, Susie Sokol!



*Marian Bergeson with  
Susie Sokol*



### **A Surprising Secret** *(continued from Page 1)*

But the questions for researchers like Dr. Smith are why? And what really matters? The answers, he and others say, have been a surprise. The one social factor that researchers agree is consistently linked to longer lives in every country where it has been studied is education.

Year after year, in study after study, says Richard Hodes, director of the National Institute on Aging, education "keeps coming up." And, health economists say, those factors that are popularly believed to be crucial — money and health insurance, for example, pale in comparison.

Dr. Smith explains: "Giving people more Social Security income, or less for that matter, will not really affect people's health. It is a good thing to do for other reasons but not for health." Health insurance, too, he says, "is vastly overrated in the policy debate."

Instead, Dr. Smith and others say, what may make the biggest difference is keeping young people in school. A few extra years of school is associated with extra years of life and vastly improved health decades later, in old age. It is not the only factor, of course. But there is little dispute about the primacy of education.

"If you were to ask me what affects health and longevity," says Michael Grossman, a health economist at the City University of New York, "I would put education at the top of my list."

—*adapted from Gina Kolata in the New York Times.*

## ***Let's Get the Facts Straight about California Community Colleges***

*By Marcia Milchiker, Board Trustee, South Orange County Community College District*

The California Community College System (CCC) is the largest higher education system in the country, serving over two and a half million very diverse students every year. Its mission includes general education, transfer to four-year institutions, basic skills and English as a Second Language, economic and workforce development, and adult education. Many Californians access and use the CCC system. Participation rates are high, with 66 out of every 1,000 people in the state enrolled in a CCC in 2005-2006.

The system enrolls more than one-third of all 18-19 year olds in California, with participation rates of 353 per 1,000 for 2005-2006. At the same time, 22% of CCC students are over 40 years of age; some are second career, minimum wage earners, homemakers and immigrants. Community colleges serve far more low- and middle-income families than universities, and far more underrepresented groups. These students also bring varying degrees of competency in basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics for success in rigorous college-level courses and programs.

The community college education has many well-documented benefits. About 75% of career and technical education students complete their programs of study each year. Close to 80% find employment within a year of leaving the community college. Community college students who earned a vocational degree or certificate saw their wages jump from \$25,600 to \$47,571/year, three years after earning their degree.

Students enrolling in community colleges have diverse goals of which transfer and degree completion represent a very limited subgroup. In any given year, fewer than 130,000 of credit community college students system wide, which is less than 6% of all credit students, intend to transfer based on enrollment patterns. Of those, 50% every year achieve the number of transferable units and the grade point average needed to be eligible for transfer to a California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) campus.

The success of the transfer function for the community colleges is highly dependent upon the capacity of the receiving institutions. Factors outside the control of the community colleges, such as the CSU and UC admissions requirements and practices, academic major and general education requirements, and course articulation affect the success of the transfer function. In spite of limitations, the CCC prepares 58% of all CSU graduates and 28% of all UC graduates. In 2005-2006, the CCC transferred more than 94,000 students.

California Community Colleges serve well millions of students with far fewer resources than the other educational segments in the state. This year, UC is expected to receive \$21,365 per full time equivalent student (FTES), CSU \$11,004, K-12 \$8,720, and the CCC only \$4,367.

The CCC believes in accountability and the importance of tracking and reporting institutional performance at all levels of education. California community colleges are accountable to the Legislature and the taxpayers. Recently, the CCC System released the Accountability Reporting for Community Colleges (ARCC – AB1417) available to the public at [www.cccco.edu](http://www.cccco.edu).

*In memory of*

***Sheila Meyers O'Neal***

*Former Board Member of the*

*Orange County Board of Education 1980 to 2001  
and the Fountain Valley School District 1967 to 1981*



*In memory of*

***Denise Mansfield-Reinking***

*Board Member of the*

*Anaheim Union High School District  
from 2002 to 2007*

## Governor Schwarzenegger Appoints David Long Secretary of Education

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has announced the appointment of David Long as Secretary of Education. The Office of the Secretary of Education is the primary education advisor to the Governor and is committed to creating, promoting, and supporting the Governor's policies that ensure access to quality education for all Californians.

Long has more than 40 years of experience in the field of education and for 21 of those years he taught in a classroom. Since 1999, he has served as the Superintendent of Schools for Riverside County. He served on the Board of Directors for the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA), where he is also immediate past-president.

David Long is an outstanding educator who will serve as a dedicated advocate for California students. Long has a keen understanding of the important link between the success of our economy and the success of our schools. He has been a leader in implementing effective intervention programs for challenged schools and has also been a champion of improving school facilities.

### *Orange County School Boards Association 2007-2008 New Board of Directors*



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**CSBA Region 15**..... Martha Fluor, NMUSD  
**Newsletter Editor** ..... Sheila Benecke, CUSD

## TENTATIVE SAVE THE DATES

### OCSBA Dinner Meeting

Wednesday, September 26, 2007, PAGE 5:30, Social 6:00, Dinner 6:30 PM

### ACSA XVII/OCSBA Joint Dinner Meeting

Wednesday, November 14, 2007, PAGE 5:30, Social 6:00, Dinner 6:30 PM

### OCSBA Reception at CSBA Annual Conference

Thursday, November 29, 2007, San Diego Convention Center, 5:00 to 7:00 PM

### ACSA XVII/OCSBA Joint Dinner Meeting

Wednesday, February 13, 2008, PAGE 5:30, Social 6:00, Dinner 6:30 PM

### OCSBA Annual Dinner Meeting/2008-2009 Board Elections

Wednesday, May 7, 2008, PAGE 5:30, Social 6:00, Dinner 6:30 PM

*Thank you to the OCSBA  
2006 -2007  
Board of Directors*



*A special thank you to  
Debbie Cotton  
of the  
Ocean View School District's  
Board of Trustees for her two  
years of service on the  
OCSBA Board of Directors.*

