



Spotlight On News

November 2006 Edition

Orange County School Boards Association

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A Message from the OCSBA President – Suzie Swartz



Most often the expression a "gaggle of geese" brings to mind a large, noisy gathering of people. I believe, however, that there are important lessons to be learned from geese as they gather to fly south for the winter. Here is what science has discovered about geese flying in their famous "V" formation heading south for the winter:

As each goose flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in "V" formation, the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone and then quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power from the bird in front.

When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wing formation and another goose flies point.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep moving forward, to keep up speed.

Finally, and this is important:

When a goose gets sick or is wounded and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out and follow down to lend help and protection.

I do believe that by sharing through OCSBA our common goal to provide the best possible education for our students, and building a sense of community with all stakeholders in our districts, we can get where we are headed more assuredly and increase our range of success.

Staying united in our efforts, we can take advantage of learning opportunities, each other's experience, knowledge, and perspective. We truly can uplift one another. What is good for the goose is good for the school board member -- it makes sense to take turns doing demanding jobs. As someone once said, "leadership is action, not position." With thoughtful encouragement through words and actions, we can help one another to move forward in improving the quality of education for all our students. Finally, just as we strive to ensure that no child falls through the cracks, we should have the good sense of geese and stand by each other, too.

Hope to see you on November 15!

Suzie Swartz

With thanks to "Lessons from the Geese" by Robert McNeish.



New District Superintendents

Newport-Mesa Unified School District—JEFFREY HUBBARD, Ed.D.

Dr. Jeffrey Hubbard assumed the role of Superintendent of the Newport-Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD) in July of 2006. This role marks Dr. Hubbard's second career Superintendency of his 14-year educational administrative career. Prior to coming to NMUSD, he served as Superintendent of the Beverly Hills Unified School District in Beverly Hills, California, for three years. Dr. Hubbard is an active member of the educational community. His organizational involvement includes California City Superintendents Group, USC Dean's Superintendent Advisory Group, and Pepperdine University Dean's Superintendent Advisory Group. He is the proud father of three children. Dr. Hubbard quotes many great leaders as mentors that guide his life and career. He recently shared that one of his most inspirational figures is Sir Winston Churchill who said when speaking at the Harrow School in 1941, "Never give in - never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense." Welcome to Orange County, Dr. Hubbard.

Savanna School District—SUE JOHNSON, Ed.D.

OCSBA welcomes Savanna School District's new Superintendent, Dr. Sue Johnson, who has spent the past sixteen years serving in a variety of positions in Savanna including Curriculum Coordinator, Director of Curriculum, and Assistant Superintendent. Prior to this, she worked at Cal State University, San Bernardino in teacher education, as a site Administrator in Riverside County, and as a teacher in the Wrightwood School District. Johnson received her B.A. degree from Cal Poly Pomona, her M.A. degree from Cal State University, San Bernardino, and her doctorate from the University of Southern California. Johnson has been actively involved in educational and community activities including PTA President, School Site Council Chairperson, President of TOC (Telecommunications of Orange County), Dean's Advisory Committee for Cal State University of Long Beach and Fullerton School of Education, and as a member of the Partners in Education Committee for Cal Poly Pomona.

UC Placement Scores for Private and Public High Schools Enrollees

Last year, I shared with several of you that a Capistrano Unified School District (CUSD) staff member had found the UC placement scores for incoming freshmen by high school of attendance. Interestingly, the results included scores from private high schools as well.

Keep in mind that these are the scores of those who had to take the placement test. High scores students earned on subject AP tests or SATs exempt a student from needing to take the placement test.

Here are the directions to find the writing placement exam results. You can look around for the math and English results too.

- 1) In your internet address box type: www.ucop.edu/sas/awpe/index.html
- 2) Hit -- Student Test Data
- 3) Hit -- Results
- 4) Hit -- Orange County

The page will open to a list of all public and private high schools in the county. Check the statistics for yourself.

Sheila Benecke, OCSBA Newsletter Editor

“Opting Out of Private School”

Excerpts from the September 15, 2006, *Wall Street Journal* article by Nancy Keates.

“It’s the lurking fear of every private school parent: The kid next door is getting just as good an education at the public school—free of charge...

“Across the country, some schools and education professionals report a growing movement from private to public. Among the possible reasons: Private-school tuition has grown sharply, while some colleges are boosting the number of students they take from public schools. New studies have suggested that public-school students often tested as well or better than their private school peers. And increasingly, public schools are enriching their programs by holding the same kinds of fund-raisers often associated with private schools, such as auctions and capital campaigns...

“Not all public schools are seeing these transfers: Top-scoring schools in affluent areas tend to get the highest influxes from private schools.

“...a number of educational consultants and academics interviewed say they’re beginning to see more parents opting in to public schools. ‘Most people agree there’s always been some movement between private and public schools,’ says Jeffrey Henig, a professor of political science and education at Columbia University. ‘But lately there’s strong anecdotal evidence of frequent movement from private schools to public schools. There are more choices now for parents.’

“Interest in private schools shows signs of waning. The number of private-school enrollments in kindergarten through grade 12 increased at a slower rate than the number of enrollments in public schools between 1998 and 2001, according to the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics...

“Higher costs are a big factor in the switch. The median tuition for private schools nationally was \$16,970 in 2005-06, up 16% from five years earlier. In some parts of the country, tuition is now as high as \$30,000 a year...

“Two studies that came out in the past year showed that public-school students often tested the same or better than private-school students, after accounting for certain socioeconomic variables and background characteristics. One, from the National Center for Education Statistics, compared fourth- and eighth-grade reading and math scores in 2003 from nearly 7,000 public schools and more than 530 private schools. The results: Public-school fourth-graders did as well in reading as the kids in private school and somewhat better in math. In eighth grade, public-school children did the same in math but somewhat worse in reading. A study from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that looked at the same data found similar results in the math scores. ‘It’s quiet eye-opening for a lot of people,’ says Christopher Lubienski, a professor of education who co-authored the report.

“Still, the studies are contentious: Harvard University researchers come to the opposite conclusion after evaluating the data with different methodology...

“The image of public schools has been slowly evolving. In the latest Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup annual poll called the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, 49% of respondents gave their local schools a grade of A or B. The number has steadily increased every year from the 36% recorded in 1978.

“Growing Options

Some attribute the shifting sentiment to students having more choices in deciding which public school to attend – whether it’s charter, magnet or out of district...

“Any movement toward public schools could be short-lived. With the ‘baby bust’ generation now following the baby boomers, there will be fewer school-age children overall, and public schools are forecast to have sharper declines in enrollment growth nationwide than private schools through 2013.” For a complete reprint of this article, go to wsj.com.



**JOINT OCSBA/ACSA Region XVII
Annual Dinner Meeting**

Wednesday, November 15, 2006
Irvine Marriott Hotel

Dinner Speaker

Rick Reiff

*Executive Director/Columnist "OC Insider"
Orange County Business Journal*

"Orange County's Identity Crisis"

Rick will provide his perspective on the impact of the lack of electronic media in Orange County and the battle for public television station KOCE. Don't miss this thought provoking and informative speaker.

Rick is executive editor of the Orange County Business Journal and the host and producer of the weekly "Inside OC" program on public television station KOCE. He is also a media and journalism professor at Chapman University, a media consultant, and a director of the Orange County Press Club. Reiff has received a Pulitzer Prize and a Golden Mike Award, distinguishing him in both print and broadcast journalism. A native of Chicago, Reiff is a graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University.

Special greeting by

Bob Wells

Executive Director, State ACSA

Y'All Come to San Francisco!

OCSBA will host a reception at the CSBA Annual Conference at the San Francisco Marriott on Thursday, November 30 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Sierra room. All school board members and superintendents are encouraged to stop by for refreshments.



SAVE THE DATE!!

Speaker to be announced.

February 21, 2007

**ACSA XVII/OCSBA
Joint Dinner Meeting**
PAGE 5:30, Social 6:00,
Dinner 6:30 p.m.

PAGE

Political Action Group Efforts

November 15, 2006

5:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Do Your Students Have The Arts Advantage?

Presented by

Jim Thomas

*Coordinator, Visual/Performing Arts
Orange County Department of Education*

Numerous studies show the positive results of the arts on creativity, student learning, behavior and attitudes. The current state budget provides both one-time (\$500 million) and ongoing (\$105 million) funding to support the inclusion of dance, music, theatre and visual arts instruction in California public schools to align with the California Education Code. *The Arts Advantage* initiative from OCDE can benefit your district planning and implementation processes to assure program success and sustainability.

Jim has co-authored both the California standards and the framework for visual and performing arts. His work supports districts and teachers as well as the world-class arts organizations in Orange County that provide outstanding programs for our schools.



November 15, 2006
Joint OCSBA/ACSA Dinner Meeting

PARKING

While construction is going on at the Irvine Marriott, hotel parking is markedly reduced because the parking lot is being used to store construction material. Please carpool to the dinner meeting if at all possible. Thank you!



New Board Members Reception

January 10, 2007
6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

OCDE-Board Room
200 Kalmus, Dr.
Costa Mesa, CA 92626