

United Parent Council

Newsletter

Paradise Valley Unified School District

September 2007

Highlights

President's Page - Happy New Year

"The Doctor Is In" - The final Round of Jeopardy

Committee Briefs

- *E-Bulletin*
- *K-6 Literacy Adoption Committee*
- *Membership*

PVUSD "Tally Sheet"

E-bulletin

Do you receive the monthly UPC e-bulletin? If you are a UPC representative, your name will be added to the e-bulletin database automatically. If you aren't a representative, please sign up to receive this monthly update of district news of interest to parents and community members. For example, in the August e-bulletin, items included a recap of new district principals, advice on when to contact your child's teacher, and UPC meeting and membership information.

To be added to the mailing list, contact UPC--send your e-mail contact information to upcmail@hotmail.com or fill out and return a request form (available on the UPC website www.pvupc.org or from your UPC representative at your parent group meeting or school). Be sure your in-box will allow you to receive our e-bulletin or it will bounce back. Don't miss out on important information straight from UPC.

LINC Leadership Ideas Networking Community

United Parent Council is pleased to host a LINC Parent Group Training Event. On September 24, 2007 LINC has developed a series of workshops intended to provide training to parent group leaders throughout the District. This is a perfect event for all parent group leaders but will benefit new leaders in particular. Parent group presidents and their boards are invited to attend.

Workshop topics will include parent involvement, fundraising, best practices in finance, booster clubs, and president's discussion group. This will be an opportunity to connect with other parent group leaders, to share ideas, and develop relationships with other parent groups in the district. We have also organized a Vendor Showcase so that parent groups can meet with a variety of fundraising organizations.

The LINC Parent Group Training Event will be held at District Administrative Offices 15002 E. 32nd St. on September 24th from 6:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Any questions regarding the Training Event can be directed to Julie Bacon at juliebacon@msn.com and questions regarding the Vendor Showcase can be directed to Renee Weiss at renee.weiss@cox.net.

UPC Program

Wednesday
September 19, 2007

"Technology in Paradise"

Technology is imbedded at school sites throughout the district.

Come to our next meeting and find out:

- How decisions about technology implementation are made and how technology dollars are spent.
- How technology is used to track student progress.
- What the GENYES program is and how it is used in our schools.

Featuring

**Mr. Jeff Billings
Director, Information
Technology**

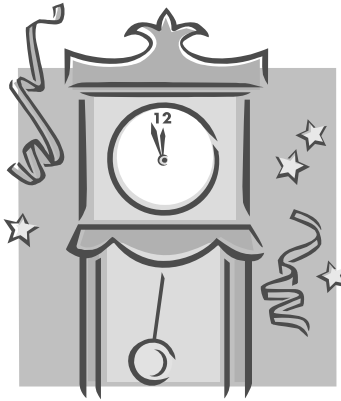
8:45 a.m. Meet & Greet
9:00 a.m. Superintendent's
Remarks
9:30 a.m. Business
10:15 a.m. Program

PVUSD Administrative
Center
East/West Conference Room
15002 N. 32nd Street
Phoenix, AZ



Happy New Year

A friend greeted me with a “**Happy New Year**” last month when we bumped into each other at a back-to-school event. It’s nice to know that others share the feeling that the calendar year starts in August and ends in May.



United Parent Council has been at work preparing for the new school year lining up programming, starting up a new School Council committee, and getting ready for the September 24th LINC event for parent leaders. Others involved in education throughout the district have made their preparations as well and are ready to go.

Last month in this column I shared data that caught my attention as a parent and UPC member. The information dealt with the percentage of students who successfully make it through the school system and worse, the percentage of those who do not.

I brought up this data in August specifically because it was the beginning of a new school year. It helped put into focus the importance of what lies ahead—opportunities to give students what they need to move on to the next stage. Teachers, administrators, support staff, governing board members, parents and students ALL want this year to count.

Everyone has a hand in making this happen. Parents help by providing lots of support for kids at home, by keeping in touch with what is happening in the schools, and

volunteering time there. And what of the children who don’t have much in the way of home support?

Fortunately, great learning environments at school can make a big impact on achievement. The findings of researchers like Catherine Snow (Unfilled Promise, 1991) are an example of this. Her study compared children with ‘low home support’ and those with ‘high home support’. As you would expect, those with more home support fared better in school. However, two years of strong instruction leveled the playing field enabling students from the first category to achieve as much as those who have more support at home.

I propose we take “learning environments” as our theme this year. How do educators maximize the learning environment in the classroom? How can we make our homes, after-school programs, school projects, and facilities like libraries effective learning environments for kids? Which strategies promote learning and student success?

This year, I hope parents will tap into UPC gatherings, communications, and our website to learn about this topic and more. Since the year has just started, why not make a resolution to contribute to the efforts already underway so that 2007-08 truly is a great year for PVUSD students.

That said, “Happy New Year”!

* For a summary of Catherine Snow’s work, see “Classroom Instruction” by Sebastian Wren Ph.D. at: <http://www.balancedreading.com/instruction.html>



The Doctor Is In

Sue Skidmore has a doctorate from ASU in educational leadership, and has been on the PVUSD governing board for the past six years. This year she'll be making periodic contributions to this column. The opinions expressed are her own. Email her at: skidaz@cox.net

The final round of *Jeopardy's* category is Quotations; here's the answer:

The children now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority, they show disrespect to adults, and love to talk rather than work or exercise. They no longer rise when adults enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter in front of company, gobble down food at the table, and intimidate their teachers.

The correct response is who was Socrates? Socrates made this observation some 2,300 years ago! And those folk who rant and wail about the state of today's youth need to be reminded of that.

As aspersions are cast about children and the state of our society, it is easy to blame the school. Why? Because that's the only place all children are compelled to go. They're not compelled to go to Girl Scouts, or Little League, or church. They must go to school.

Since the launching of Sputnik in 1957, schools have become the scapegoat for all of our societal ills. If the curriculum was more rigorous, the Russians would not have beaten America into space. Students needed to take more math, science, and foreign language, and the space race could be dominated by Americans. (Hence the passage of federal legislation and money to accomplish that feat.)

Then in the early 1980's, people preferred foreign-made cars to American-built. Japanese autos were fuel-efficient and more reliable than those of Ford and Chevrolet. The US economy tanked, and whose fault was that? The schools, of course. Had they had high standards and expectations for children, Americans could win the global economy race. But the schools had not demanded excellence from their students. In fact, Ronald Reagan's secretary of education issued a damning view of the lack of school rigor in *A Nation at Risk* in 1983. This report forecasted that America was doomed unless its schools dramatically improved. (Hence standards, AIMS, high-stakes testing, No Child Left Behind, et al)

And now, almost twenty-five years later, school bashing still sells newspapers and garners television coverage. It makes politicians pontificate. It drives voters to the polls. It sends parents in search of the perfect education for their children.

The 2007-08 school year has commenced. What can we say about American public schools?

Are they better now than 25 years ago? Or are they mediocre at best? The correct answer is both no and yes.

No. They are not better in crime-ridden, poverty-stricken, inner cities where class-size in an elementary school can easily rise to 40 students to one teacher. But can schools be blamed for crime, poverty, inadequate prenatal care and health services? Can schools be blamed for lack of inadequate financial resources to provide before school, after school, summer school classes for these children?

Yes. They are better than twenty-five years ago. America has the most inclusive public school systems in the world. Our colleges and universities produce stellar graduates that are the envy of most countries. Our standard of living is unparalleled when compared to other nations. Students today are afforded unlimited opportunities to search voluminous internet libraries, speak directly via satellite to Space Station crew members, and touch marine inhabitants at Catalina Island. They are taught by those who have garnered extensive training in the latest teaching methodologies—a far cry from teachers of yesteryear who received eight to ten weeks of instruction before appearing before a class.

Granted there is still much work to do. Schools must confront the issue of English language learners to ensure they have equal access to learning. Schools must continue to provide rigorous course work to meet the technological demands of society. Schools must work diligently to keep disengaged high school students in school. But United States citizens should be proud of their public schools, and they only need to look at schools in China, Afghanistan, Germany, or India to verify their pride.

And as long as there are children on earth, adults, like Socrates, will find fault with the younger generation. And the faults will be linked to schooling.

Please note: If you have a specific question that you would like this columnist to address in a future article, send your question(s) to: skidaz@cox.net

United Parent Council Committee Briefs

ATTENTION ALL UNITED PARENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES



Do you know?

Every UPC school representative will receive an electronic monthly copy of the **SNAPSHOT**. The **SNAPSHOT** is our "e-mail" communication tool that summarizes the key events of our UPC general meetings.

We include information from Dr. Kriekard's monthly update, calls for parent participation on district committees, other time-sensitive announcements, and a brief summary of the educational program.

Included with the snapshot is a Program Flyer, which describes the upcoming UPC program.

We know that there are parents throughout the district who want to be informed about the education issues that affect their families, but are unable to attend daytime meetings. In addition, parents may be unable to attend their school PTO, PTA or Parent Group meetings due to work and family conflicts.

We can help! Please give us the names and emails of interested parents at your site. We will gladly add their names to **SNAPSHOT**.

Email renee.weiss@cox.net for additional information.

K-6 Literacy Adoption Committee

I once heard one of my son's teachers say that from kindergarten through 3rd grade students are learning to read and for the rest of their lives they will read to learn. Learning to read is the keystone of education.

In May PVUSD formed a committee tasked with selecting the district wide Literacy program that will be implemented in the 2008-09 school year. This is a large committee made up of

Reading Specialists, one teacher per Elementary School, two Elementary School Principals, a Master Teacher (K-2 Mentor), Curriculum Specialist, several District Administrators and two parents. This fall the committee will study presentations from publishers, coordinate 2 or 3 programs for teachers to review and recommend one for the governing board to approve in November.



Students learn in many different ways and finding a district-wide literacy program that will meet all of their needs (while being affordable) is an extremely difficult and time consuming decision. Updates on the progress of the D-6 Literacy Adoption Committee will continue throughout the year.

Submitted by Tamra Addison.

MEMBERSHIP

By now everyone should be back in the "swing" of things. We would like to remind the school's UPC representatives and alternates to complete the membership registration form found in this newsletter by our September 19th UPC meeting. We only need one form per school. Registered UPC members are privileged to be a parent representative for their school, are given voting rights on UPC issues, are invited to serve on district committees and are therefore involved with the decision making process at the district level. Members also receive the UPC directory.



Individuals in our school communities, including past representatives or alternates, who would like to stay connected with UPC can show their support by joining as a general member. Please fill out the bottom portion of the registration form and submit by Sept. 19th. General members will receive the monthly newsletter, the e-bulletin, and a directory which is a valuable tool for parents to share information.

For information, contact upcmail@hotmail.com.





Membership Registration for 2007-2008

Complete information and return with a check to: United Parent Council c/o Community Resource Center, 15032 N. 32nd Street, Phoenix, AZ 85032. To maintain voting privileges, please respond by September 26, 2006. Submission of this form grants permission to include this information in the UPC Directory.

School Membership: \$75.00

School Name: _____

Parent Group President: _____

E-Mail: _____ Phone: _____ - _____ - _____

Day/Time/Location of parent group meetings: _____

School Council Parent Representatives (Names & E-Mail addresses):

UPC Representative #1: _____

E-Mail: _____ Phone: _____ - _____ - _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

UPC Representative #2: _____

E-Mail: _____ Phone: _____ - _____ - _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

UPC Alternate #1: _____ UPC Alternate #1: _____

Name: _____ Name: _____

E-Mail: _____ E-Mail: _____

Phone: _____ - _____ - _____ Phone: _____ - _____ - _____

Address: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

General Membership: \$15.00

Name: _____

E-Mail: _____ Phone: _____ - _____ - _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

UNITED PARENT COUNCIL YELLOW PAGES

Please support our PVUSD Parent Organization!!

Placing an ad in the United Parent Council Directory will support our organization of parent groups in the Paradise Valley School District. Your ad has the potential to reach over 1500 families who live, work and attend the local schools in the community. If you, your company, or someone you know would be interested in placing an ad in our directory, please mail or drop off this form, your ad, and check to the address below.

Questions: call Pam Kogan 602-996-8017 or e-mail to pkogan122@hotmail.com

Deadline for the 2007-2008 United Parent Council Yellow Pages is September 26, 2007.

COMPANY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, ZIP CODE: _____

PHONE # : (____) _____

EMAIL OR WEB ADDRESS: _____

CONTACT NAME: _____

PLEASE NOTE: WE CANNOT ENLARGE, REDUCE, OR IMPROVE TEXT.

AD MUST BE THE SIZE YOU'RE PURCHASING AND BE COPY (Xerox) READY - CHOOSE YOUR SIZE:

_____ \$25 Business Card (approx. 1/8 paper size)

_____ \$50 Quarter Page

_____ \$75 Half Page

_____ \$100 Full Page

Please send this completed **ad form**, copy (Xerox) ready **ad**, and **check** payable to **UPC** :

United Parent Council

Attn: UPC Directory

15032 N. 32nd St.

Phoenix, Az. 85032

2007-2008 Governing Board Meeting Dates

Meetings are at the District's Administrative Center, 15032 N. 32nd Street, and begin at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

September 6
September 20
October 4
October 18
November 1
November 15
December 6
December 20
January 10
January 24
February 7
February 21
March 6
April 3
April 17
May 1
May 15
June 12 (6 p.m.)

Governing Board Briefs

August 2, 2007

Dr. Skidmore welcomed back Mrs. Case and Mrs. Hoogendyk. Oh behalf of the district, Dr. Skidmore expressed sympathy to the Channel 3 and Channel 15 television stations in their loss. Mr. Ohmart is absent this evening because his fire station is the honor guard at Officer George Cortez's viewing. Please remember the Cortez family as well.

Dr. Skidmore also mentioned a newspaper article written by Shadow Mountain High School student Jessica Brooks regarding her late coach Eric Vogeding. Mrs. Greenberg shared her experience at the recent NSPRA awards ceremony for Dr. Kriekard and congratulated him on his success.

Dr. Kriekard announced that CNN is reporting the district's Wide Area Network project.

PVUSD currently has one of the best high-speed WAN's in K-12 systems in the country. Thanks to the support of our community and voters, the project enables us to establish our own network for increased bandwidth, improve reliability, and faster return on our investment. He also reported that Gifted Coordinator Dina Brulles and staff members coordinated the recent SENG (Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted) National Conference in Kansas.

Dr. Lillian Baribault, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support h Elementary, introduced Dr. Rob Allen, Director of Assessment, who updated the Governing Board on the District's latest assessment results.

Mrs. Greenberg moved the Governing Board approve proposed revisions to Governing Board Policy 7.2.4, Advertising on School Busses, and Procedure 7.2.4.1, Policy for Advertising on School Busses, as presented for a second reading. The motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

August 16, 2007

Governing Board members commented about opening day successes and activities throughout the district within the past two weeks. Congratulations were extended to everyone for a smooth opening again this year.

Dr. Kriekard welcomed everyone to the newly remodeled Governing Board Room and thanked the technology and support services staff for their assistance throughout the pro-

ject. At Dr. Kriekard's request, Dr. Lee updated Governing Board members on construction throughout the district during the summer, as well as the timeline for the new Boys and Girls Club at Palomino.

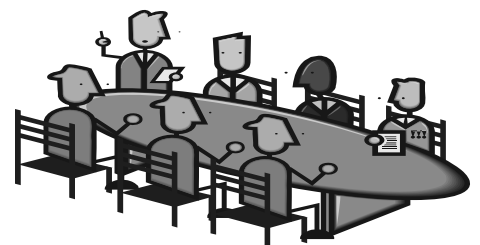
Dr. Kriekard also announced that our district has entered into a partnership with iTunes, introducing K-12 audio and video over the Internet for Arizona and the world. Using iTunes U, district teachers will deliver digitized lesson plans and explanation of concepts, offering K-12 educational resources of grade-level and content-specific topics. Audio and video podcasting, through pTunes, will be expanded this fall, with approximately 100 teachers participating. Students and parents can access the instructional tools using iTunes on the Internet.

Mr. Elliott presented updated information regarding the 2007-08 property tax rates.

Mr. Ohmart moved the Governing Board call for an Executive Session in accordance with Arizona Revised Statutes § 38-431.03.A(1) to discuss the Superintendent's goals for 2007-08. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was recessed at 7:30 p.m.

The regular meeting reconvened at 9:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. on August 16, 2007.



15032 N. 32nd Street, Phoenix, AZ 85032
c/o Community Resource Center
"Standing for Children"



UNITED PARENT COUNCIL

The UPC Newsletter is published monthly, August to May, by the United Parent Council of PVUSD

2007-2008 UPC Officers

President	Julia Zandler
1st VP:	Pam Kogan
2nd VP:	Julie Bacon
Secretary:	Kathy Weiner
Treasurer:	Mark Lane

Email:
upcmail@hotmail.com

Editor	Mark Lane
mlane19@cox.net	623-516-1278

Legislative Reporter	Laurie Smith
jlsmith7017@aol.com	480-922-9548

Helpful Web Sites

United Parent Council: www.pvupc.org

PV School District: <http://cmweb.pvschools.net/siteweb/>

Arizona Department of Education: www.ade.az.gov/