



Superintendent's Dispatch

**Highlights
of the
March 26, 2002
Board Meeting**

RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT:

Crestwood Principal, Bea Aksland, shared information with the Board and audience about the Crestwood Knights Chess Team. She acknowledged the many hours that fifth grade teacher, Ted Mason, has spent providing this opportunity for the students at Crestwood for the past five years and the help that he has received from sixth grade teacher, Cathy Smith. Mrs. Aksland introduced the Knights team of Aaron Fong, Cameron Hare, Katie Sotelo, Natasha Gabel, Tanisha Reynolds, Allan Sung, Taylor Dinkins and Chris Warmerdam, who will participate in the California Chess Tournament on April 6-7. The team will be competing against one thousand other participants. An invitation was also extended for those present to witness a live chess tournament on May 28 at 11:30 A.M. Sixth grade chess players will be moving second graders dressed as chess pieces on the outdoor chess board located in the center of the Crestwood campus.

Linda Barwick, Mountain View School principal, recognized a group of "shining stars" that have participated in two recent events. The activities showcased included the Lions' Club Flag Day Essay Contest and the Cyberquest 2001 competition sponsored by the Tulare County Department of Education. Danielle Moreno, a fifth grader in Mr. Spredemann's fifth grade class, was introduced as the top essay writer in the "What the American Flag Means to Me" contest. Cyberquest participants, Zach Rainey, Joey Bolinger, Shelby Martin, Micah Lauck, Josh Laird, Chelsa Claiborn, and their coaches, Martin Medeiros and Eric Glispey, were recognized by the Board and audience. Mrs. Barwick also took the opportunity to thank the 83 students and physical education teacher, Kasey Lesley, for collectively raising over \$3,000 in the "Jump Rope for Heart" and the "Hoops for Heart" event that benefits the American Heart Association.

APRIL 2002 DESIGNATED AS NATIONAL SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA MONTH:

Board Clerk, Larry Jones, read a proclamation supporting the American Library Association's designation of April as National School Library Media Month. The proclamation stressed that library media centers provide materials which meet the individual needs, abilities, and interests of the students served and that they are an integral part of the instructional program of the school. Board President, Rob Stevenson, extended the appreciation of the Board to those staff members providing library media services throughout our district.

APRIL IS PUBLIC SCHOOLS MONTH:

Superintendent, Stan Carrizosa, announced that April is Public Schools Month throughout the State of California. He shared that the Free and Accepted Masons of California have sponsored and promoted this annual event since 1920. The purpose of Public Schools Month is to encourage communities and schools to enlist the support of the general public to the cause of public education.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Board members expressed their appreciation to the Visalia PTA Council and the Masons for sponsoring the Hall of Fame and school staff recognition awards and publicly congratulated the recipients. A special thank you was extended to George Pilling for organizing the many authors that have been visiting our schools and the Visalia Learning Center. Members continued to praise the work of the high school staffs on their respective WASC reports. Several Board members shared their appreciation to Proteus for sponsoring the premier showing of a documentary on the history and challenges of farm workers that was shown at the Fox Theater Tuesday, March 19. Golden West's Chris Schwinden and the Trailblazer defense were congratulated for a perfect game during the opening day of the Visalia-Tulare Invitational Baseball Tournament. The Board also thanked the staff for their thoroughness of their reports and the effectiveness of study sessions such as the one held this past week on the District's growth in enrollment and the affect on facilities and programs. A recent Fresno Bee feature article on Green Acres Teacher, Lou Saephan, was mentioned for covering one of our excellent classroom teachers. Board members and Superintendent Carrizosa thoughtfully acknowledged the loss of two members of our Visalia Unified School District family this week. Services were held in the past few days for groundskeeper, John Roger Roberts,

a twenty-three year employee who was well known for his friendly smile and hearty laugh as he worked throughout the district and Mary Alice Jahn for her ten and one-half years of dedication as a classroom teacher at Packwood and Linwood Schools where she was teaching first grade.

2000-2001 CALIFORNIA SAFE SCHOOLS ASSESSMENT DATA REPORTED:

Ralph Lomeli, Coordinator for Child Welfare and Attendance for the Visalia Unified School District, shared statistics for the 2000-2001 school year that were recently released by the State of California. The report is a result of legislation passed six years ago by the California Legislature to provide a method of measuring crime and violence in public schools. The results shared indicated a sharp decline from the previous year in six of the seven categories that are collected and reported for our District. In comparison, there was an increase in six of the seven categories throughout the State of California. Mr. Lomeli concluded his report by stating that we should celebrate that crime is down in Visalia Unified most likely as a result of the cooperative efforts between governmental agencies to provide support to our schools

STAFF PRESENTS UPDATE ON EL DIAMANTE:

El Diamante Principal, Drew Sorensen, Associate Principal, Nancy Powell, and Athletic Director, Greg Flenory, updated the Board and audience on their progress and preparation for the opening of El Diamante High School next fall. This past week most of the staffing decisions were finalized for both on-staff and walk-on coaches. Principal Sorensen shared that the block schedule adopted for the school would provide the equivalent of four additional days of instruction over the course of a year as a result of the reduction of passing time between periods. The new "home" and "away" uniforms for the football team were displayed to show the new school's colors. The three stressed that they are committed to try new and different approaches to in short "make all students a success story". Those present were invited to attend the April 15 "Meet the Coaches" night at the school scheduled to begin at 7 P.M.

BOARD POLICIES APPROVED FOLLOWING SECOND READING:

Superintendent Carrizosa briefly summarized several board policies that were read and discussed at the previous Board meeting. These included a policy and regulations on the management of District assets and accounts, including property and equipment inventory control; the use of video surveillance equipment in *public* areas of school campuses to monitor student behavior, unauthorized persons on campus, and property burglary/vandalism activity; employee use of technology; public disclosure of the major provisions and costs of personnel negotiations as required by Government Code Section 3547.5; management personnel evaluation forms and procedures; revision of the definitions of what constitutes a weapon and a dangerous instrument; a new policy on the recognition of religious beliefs and customs; a policy establishing eligibility requirements for student participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities in grades 7-12; and High School Graduation Requirements Committee revisions to high school graduation requirements and standards of proficiency. The Board approved these policies following the summary.

DISTRICT-WIDE GOAL STATEMENTS FOR 2002-2003 APPROVED:

The Board adopted new goals for the coming year following the culmination of a district-wide self-review and input accumulated at community forums throughout the district. The goals, which will be published and shared with all staff, are also to be included in the monthly Visalia Unified School District publication that is inserted in the Visalia Times-Delta. The same goals will be shared through other avenues of the local media and also incorporated into all appropriate district and site publications for students and parents.

These district-wide goals will be the basis for the Superintendent's and School Board's Performance Evaluation for the coming year. Each Assistant Superintendent and Area Administrator will be asked to set annual performance goals to align and support these board-adopted goals. They, in turn, will require their respective Directors, Supervisors and Principals to set annual performance goals for their departments and school sites that align with the district-wide goals.

In January 2003, the Board will receive a midyear progress report on the status of each goal. In June of 2003, the Board will receive a summary report of the district's annual achievements and an explanation of ongoing efforts and the transition to the 2003-2004 goals.

The six major goals follow an introduction that states, "We hold high expectations and standards for the academic and social development of all students and the performance of adults." They include: (1) Require content and instruction that ensures student achievement of agreed-upon academic standards; (2) Improve comprehensive student support systems; (3) Actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student success; (4) Continue analysis of the district budget and program priorities for the purpose of strengthening our fiscal foundation; (5) Facilities planning and development will be driven by the educational priorities of the district; and (6) Improve efficiency and effectiveness of internal systems.