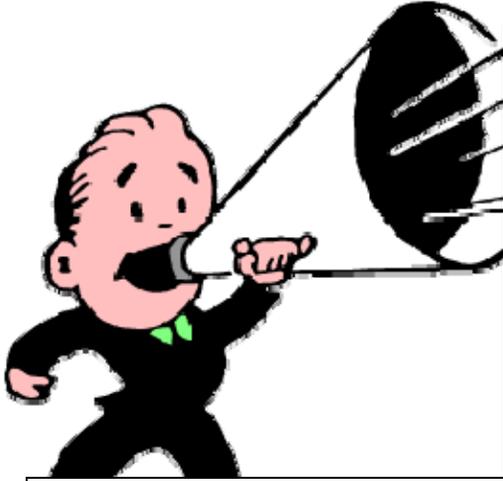


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**From Spring of 2011 -----
to Spring of 2012 -----
PVFA Members
DO NOT HAVE A CALENDAR!**

Focus on Primary Writing

by Christine Borders

At Montemalaga, the first grade and kindergarten teachers are working together on the writing program, *The Primary Units of Study* by Lucy Calkins and Leah Mermelstein. Calkins is the founding director of the *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project* at Columbia University's Teachers College, and Mermelstein is a literacy consultant with the Reading and Writing Project. Together, they are the authors of several books and guides for the Primary Units of Study. Last year, the first grade team was awarded the Montemalaga Eagle Grant for the program, and the now on board, the kindergarten team was awarded the grant this year.

The Primary Units of Study program provides a focused framework and allows the teachers to collaborate, develop, and expand the depth of instruction. The professional development and training DVDs provide both modeling and training for teachers, as well as classroom volunteers who will play an important role in the consistent implementation of the program.

Primary Writing Cont. P. 5

From the President:

Since the beginning of the school-year the PVPUSD has focused on a new parcel tax and benefited from PEF fund-raising activities. The district is now talking about opening a new building, purchasing computer technology, and smart boards for classrooms.

Even though your PVFA bargaining team has met with the district several times since the Spring of 2011, we *still* do not have a final calendar for the 2011-2012 school year; a calendar for the 2012-2013 school year; or 180 days of classroom instruction.

A little frustrating? YES! I want you to know however that the education you provide to more students with fewer days is extraordinary. The district is a bit distracted now and not focused on students in the classroom or the need for educational days. We'll continue to help and to encourage the district to refocus its priorities.

Our students deserve the best and most instruction possible on their calendar.

Kathy

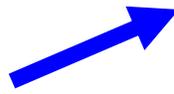
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THIS



OR

This



High-Tech VS Teachers continued

Anything other than time with the student is the old adage of “putting the cart before the horse,” or in 21st Century vernacular, “putting the iPad before the student and teacher.”

Recently I, along with many faculty and administrators, and even a PVPUSD Board member, have been excited to think of having iPads in the classroom. Who doesn't like the latest, greatest gizmo for instruction? But at what expense?

I am not just considering the expense of purchasing, maintaining and replacing broken iPads, but the expense to the students and teachers of PVPUSD. For three years now our students and teachers are being asked to perform in 176 days what we previously did with 180 days and three staff development days (that's 183 days total). Like all caring professionals, we have done and continue to do our very best with what we have.

Yet, there are some questions that I just can't get out of my mind. Why is PVPUSD now, for the first time in my teaching career, looking to Manhattan Beach as the “leader”? Could it be that they have the important instructional time with their students and the equally important staff development time? **Yet, if I must be forced to state which of the two benefits students the most, it must be time with the teacher**, more than time for the teacher to grow as a professional. Anything other than time with the student is the old adage of “putting the cart before the horse,” or in 21st Century vernacular, “putting the iPad before the student and teacher. “ This shouldn't be in PV! High-Tech VS Teachers cont. Pg. 4

High-Tech Verses: Teachers & Students

By Bonnie Mae Barnard

The question:

Why is it either or in PVPUSD? It shouldn't be!

Why is it days of instruction with teachers directly impacting the instruction and life of our students . . .

OR staff development . . .

OR technology?

This should not be in PV! Our students deserve the time with their teachers!

This year my eighth grade students are in their third year of 176 days of instruction, instead of the 180 days of instruction received by our nearest and most comparable school, Manhattan Beach Middle School. That means that the eighth grader in Manhattan Beach Middle School this year will have had nine more days of instruction than my PVPUSD eighth grader. If this continues by the time my current eighth grade student graduates from high school she/he will have **21** fewer days of instruction than the same student completing high school at Manhattan Beach Middle School! **Twenty-one less days of instruction!! That's huge! It's four weeks and a day of less learning opportunities; it's an entire unit in my class and in most classes. This just should NOT be in PVPUSD!**

High-Tech VS Teachers cont. next column

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Mark your Calendar

Thursday, March 22nd 6:30 PM

PVPUSD Board Meeting

Do you believe your students deserve 180 days of instruction?

Do you deserve to have the 3% that has been cut from your salary restored?

It takes you, and you, and you, and you, and me to convince the board with our presence.

Attend March 22nd! Wear you 180 button and red.

Pennies for Patients

The Miraleste Intermediate School Leadership class recently held a fund raiser for *Pennies for Patients*, and raised over \$3,500 in just a few weeks. The money, which will benefit the *Leukemia and Lymphoma Society*, was collected class by class in small boxes filled to the brim with coins.

Ms. Annie Alvarez's class put up posters to raise awareness, collected and counted the coins and donations during the fundraiser which ran from Jan. 30th until Feb. 17th. Some students dug very deep to bring in all of their coins from home, one seventh grader Ryan Steybe, brought in more than one hundred dollars himself all in coins. It was exciting to watch students getting inspired and make the most of this admirable fundraiser.

PVFA Outreach

PVFA collects new clothes & toiletries for women and children for a local Women's Shelter. Each of us doing a little equals much! Send items to South Bay United Teachers (SBUT) through school mail or your PVFA site representative.

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High-Tech VS continued from P. 2

Servility to technology for its own sake, . . . on behalf of self-interested companies like Apple, will make things worse, not better. That's because *it distracts from and sucks money away from the most important goal, which is maintaining good teaching practices and employing good teachers in the classroom.*

Michael Hiltzik *L.A. Times*

Visiting Manhattan Beach Middle School was fun. It is always fun to see what other teachers are doing, and it is always fun to have the latest, greatest, aid to instruction. Yes, I even asked for a Sea King grant to familiarize myself with iPad to see what benefit it might be for me and my students. Are MB's test scores beginning to raise above those of PVPUSD? Is there correlation between the nine days of instruction that our current eighth graders have lost? It's puzzling to me to guess with all of the wonderful fund raising done by the amazing parents in this community and the passing of Measure M that we still think the place to cut is time in the classroom.

Manhattan Beach Middle School is beautiful, very clean, every classroom equipped with speakers to ensure that the sound coming from every teacher's microphone would be heard the same by every student in the classroom. Class size ratio 31:1, 180 days of instruction and three staff development days.

Another question: Did you know that of the entire community of South Bay United Teachers, PVPUSD teachers and students are expected to the most with the least? Centinela Valley has 180 days of teacher and student days and 4 staff development days; Manhattan Beach has 180 teacher/student instructional days and 3 staff development days, as does Redondo Beach, but PVPUSD students and teachers only have 176 days and 2 staff development days.

High-Tech VS continued next column

High-Tech VS Teachers & Students

It feels a lot like the "iPad before the students and teachers" in the 21st Century at PVPUSD. I don't understand this dichotomy. And yet, we'll most likely see the pink slips again this year, and our students and teachers will be expected to perform at record high levels with **less time to learn, less time for creativity in the classroom, less time for interaction, less time for teachers to learn new things and to recharge, but we may have the latest technology available.**

According to Michael Hiltzik's *article*, "Who really benefits from putting high-tech gadgets in classrooms?" *LATimes.com (Feb. 2, 2012)*,

There's certainly an important role for technology in the classroom. But . . . servility to technology for its own sake, . . . on behalf of self-interested companies like Apple, will make things worse, not better. That's because ***it distracts from and sucks money away from the most important goal, which is maintaining good teaching practices and employing good teachers in the classroom.*** (italics mine)

Without 180 instructional days—it feels like high-tech gadgets verses teachers and students. It shouldn't be so in PVPUSD.

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Calizar: Preserving the past, building the future.

PVFA Representative Jason Calizar, math teacher at Palos Verdes High School claims his 13th year both the most challenging and the most rewarding career he has ever experienced. Initially, Calizar taught in Torrance and was active as a union member, but for the last six years he has become an instrumental site representative in the *Palos Verdes Faculty Association*. When asked why being a part of PVFA is so important, Calizar responds that it is not only good for current teachers, but for the teachers (and students) of tomorrow. “Our professional associations at all three levels (local, state and national) help grow our profession and ensure that a new generation of teachers is drawn to the profession” responds Calizar.

He reflects upon being actively involved:

I am thankful to have an avenue by which my voice can be heard on issues close to our profession. Whether it is on issues involving our classroom or retirement, it is a wonderful thing to have our collective voices heard on such matters. But the fight never ends; oddly we are still fighting for things that our predecessors were fighting for decades ago, such as a decent wage, healthcare, a modest pension and classroom autonomy.

Yet, he reminds each teacher and counselor that the responsibility does not lie with just those elected to serve as representatives, but falls on each of us to do our part. **“It is our responsibility as professionals to continue the fight to preserve what we have gained and to build for the future.”**

Primary Writing continued from P. 1

Several high quality literature books are recommended to model exemplary writing strategies for the students such as *A Chair For My Mother* by Vera B. Williams, *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen and *Snow Is Falling* by Franklin M. Branley.

The goal is to strengthen Montemalaga’s current writing program by providing focus, effective materials and cohesion across the grade levels. The dedicated kindergarten and first grade teachers of Montemalaga continue to work closely together to develop and implement lessons that provide a strong foundation in primary writing skills and promote a love for writing.

Editor’s note: In spite of the wonderful efforts of these teachers, these students and teachers are still denied the 180 days of face to face instruction and interaction once held by the students and teachers of Montemalaga.

180 Button On – Be at Board Meeting March 22nd – 6:30 PM

375 Via Almar—Wear red

To teach is to touch
a life forever



Wear Red & 180 Button

to March 22nd Board Meeting

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Miraleste and the Whole Child

by Geoff Guerrero

Miraleste Intermediate School proudly presented its annual talent show, February 10th in the Theater Arts Building, an ideal setting for an exciting and entertaining showcase of talented students. Parents, families and friends filled the building to enjoy the hour and half long show.

Faculty sponsors, Geoff Guerrero and Liz Godbold once again were the producers, holding auditions and choosing a wide range of acts. There were male and female pop singers; dancers in many styles; classical musicians; tumblers, and even a group Taekondo demonstration. *Miraleste's* own Jazz band and flag troupe provided additional entertainment.

Miraleste teachers and staff recognize that education involves the whole child, and were proud to support and promote all of its young performing artists by hosting a special schedule enabling all students the opportunity to enjoy at least half of the acts during their school day,

Editor's note: Everyone agrees that these are important experiences, but isn't 180 days of instruction? PVPUSD students deserve both.



Friday, March 2nd of each year National Education Association promotes *Read Across America*. This year NEA Shines in the Spotlight with Read Across America

From [USA Today](#) to the [Huffington Post](#), [Time for Kids](#) to the [Washington Post](#) and [NASDAQ](#), NEA's Read Across America captured the media spotlight with a Seussational national kickoff in New York with NEA President Dennis Van Roekel and Lorax stars Danny DeVito and Zac Efron, and attention-getting Read Across America events around the country, including the Read Across America reading tour driven by Mazda. [CNN](#) and [Edweek](#) featured President Van Roekel in their blogs. Not to be outdone, Access Hollywood, [E! Entertainment Television](#), and Media Mikes showcased the reading celebrations and local and state print and broadcast media featured local events. PVIS hosted a Seuss-style poetry contest, and the winners won two ticket to *The Lorax*!

A Conversation

Q: Going to the board meeting March 22nd?

A: Yes! I know that without me and you, the board will think that we are not united in the return of the 180 days of instruction our student deserve; we deserve. See you there!

With your 180 button on, attend the PVPUSD Board Meeting March 22, 2012 6:30 P.M.

Bring your entire department; Bring your family; your colleagues—Strength in numbers

Your attendance matters