

# Renewal



An update on the modernizations at El Rancho Unified School District

## Rivera Middle School Begins Modernization Program

### Progress Report

In 1994, the District embarked on a campaign to modernize its school facilities when the community approved a measure to issue \$13.3 million of general obligation bonds. Most of the District's buildings were built in the 1950s, and hadn't ever had any major renovations done. A District-wide assessment was made of the facilities, and a prioritized list of needs was developed.

Below is a status review of the District's modernization program.

#### Group I Schools:

El Rancho High School  
Selby Grove Elementary  
South Ranchito Elementary  
North Park Middle School

This summer, work continued on El Rancho High School, and South Ranchito Elementary. All work on Selby Grove has been completed. North Park Middle School is complete, with the exception of the elevator, which will be finished later this year.

#### Group II Schools:

Rivera Middle  
Rivera Elementary  
North Ranchito Elementary  
Valencia Elementary

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*Left and Center (Top): Phase I of the modernizations includes rooms 1-5, and 24, 25 A & B.  
Center (Bottom): The new permanent modular classrooms are well-liked by teachers.  
Right: Interior view of one of the new modular units.*

This summer, the quiet didn't last long at Rivera Middle School. In late July, the campus was brought back to life with the sound of heavy machinery: Rivera's modernization program was underway.

Scheduled to take 14 months to complete, the scope of work at Rivera Middle School is similar to other District schools, and includes the following:

1. New HVAC (heating/ventilation/air conditioning) in most classrooms
2. Installation of high-efficiency lighting
3. New electrical service
4. New R-30 batt insulation on the roof underside
5. New suspended ceilings
6. Partial restroom upgrade

The District began the modernizations with the underground work. Heavy machinery was brought in to upgrade the electrical infrastructure, including the installation of new transformers, and switch gears. The new infrastructure is more energy-efficient, and represents a potential long-term cost-savings for the District.

The scope of work at Rivera Middle School also includes the installation of seven new permanent

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#### Board of Education

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## District Expands State Preschool Program

The District is expanding its State Preschool Program this fall by adding six new facilities. Earlier this year, the District was awarded an expansion grant from the state, which provided additional funding to expand the program to meet increased community demand.

In late August, and early September, six new permanent modular units were installed to accommodate 288 children at the following elementary schools: Birney, Durfee, Magee, Rio Vista, Rivera, and Selby Grove.

Prior to the expansion, there were seven State Preschool Programs offered throughout the District, at the following schools: Maizeland Child Development Center, Meller, North Ranchito, South Ranchito, Obregon, Pio Pico and Valencia. With the addition of the new modular units, the District will be able to offer pre-K education to more than 525 children.



*Top: Kathy Salcido, State Preschool teacher at Meller, leads her students in a circle group exercise. Left: The new modular unit at Rivera Elementary School will be ready for use in October.*



The modernization bonds that were approved by the community in 1994 are not used to support these facilities, instead funding comes entirely from the state. This year the District was awarded a \$1,457,955 grant to cover the expansion and operating costs of all 13 centers. The grant is ongoing, and is based on child enrollment.

The State Preschool Program is three hours per day, and children can

attend either a morning or afternoon session. Enrollment is restricted to three and four year olds, with low income requirements. Space permitting, students may be enrolled at any time; however, children are usually enrolled by June for the following year.

Maizeland Child Development Center offers the only full day Child Development

Program in the District. To qualify for this program, parents must meet low income requirements, and also be working. The full day program serves 128 children aged 18 months to five years. Maizeland also offers a State Preschool Program, with morning and afternoon options.

The State Preschool Program and the general Child Care Program support California state standards for kindergarten readiness. The programs provide children with instruction in language arts, art, mathematics, and science.

*For more information on the State Preschool Program call (562) 801-2634.*

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### Progress Report

In early August, modernizations began on the Group II schools. The work at these schools is scheduled to be complete by fall 2002.

**Group III Schools:**  
Rio Vista Elementary  
Magee Elementary  
Durfee Elementary  
Burke Middle School

These schools are in the early phase of modernization. General contractors have recently been selected, and work

is scheduled to begin in late September. The projects will take approximately 15 months to complete.

**Group IV Schools:**  
Pio Pico Elementary  
Birney Elementary  
Meller Elementary  
Obregon Elementary

All plans have been approved by the Division of the State Architect (DSA). Pio Pico, Birney, and Meller have received "unfunded approval" from the

Office of Public School Construction (OPSC), and are pending the availability of state funds. Obregon is currently under review.

This summer Birney and Obregon had some equipment replaced due to failure of the existing systems: Obregon had heating, ventilating, and air conditioning equipment replaced in one classroom in building B, and Birney had heating equipment replaced in the multipurpose building.

# Enhancing Education With Technology

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Educators agree that there are many potential benefits—for both students and teachers—when technology is effectively implemented into the classroom. As a result, El Rancho High School has worked consistently to incorporate an effective technological component into the curriculum. In early 2001, with the assistance of the state's Digital High School (DHS) Grant Program, the high school was awarded funds that allowed them to even further enhance their technological capabilities.



*Top: From left; Victor Parral, Jessica Mejia, Jeff Chang and Mark Urquidi working in the computer lab on an AP Calculus course. Left: Diane Rivas (left) and Vanessa Velasco surfing the Internet at lunch.*

The DHS program is designed to enhance traditional learning with appropriate technology. It allocates funds to high schools across the state so that these schools may install and support technology, as well as provide staff training. The leadership at El Rancho High School has placed a priority on implementing relevant technology into the curriculum, and ensuring that teachers are educated on the most effective ways to use these high-tech tools. "The bottom line is we are out to improve student learning," explains Felicity Swerdlow, Assistant Principal of El Rancho High School. "We're expanding what you can offer a student, and that's the beauty of the technology. In itself, the computer doesn't count, it's what it can access for you."

Computers in the classrooms have opened doors to new learning experiences that were previously unavailable. The Internet is an unparalleled resource for up-to-the-minute information: science classes can go

directly to the NASA web site to learn more about space; geography classes can participate in Internet quests, which allow students to follow a scientific expedition in another part of the world, such as Africa; and upper level students can take college level courses through AP Online, where they can earn college credit. "And look how small the world can become," says Swerdlow. "You're sitting here in Pico Rivera, and you're part of what's going on in Africa."

The school is striving towards a seamless integration of technology in the classroom. Teachers are using computers just like they would use chalk, the blackboard, a laserdisc, or a DVD player: they are yet another tool to help create richer, stronger experiences for students. With assistance from state grants, including the Digital High School Program, El Rancho High School has secured supplemental funding that makes implementing and maintaining advanced technology possible. 📌

## Rivera Middle School Begins Modernization Program

modular units, and one new modular restroom facility. Four of these units were installed earlier this year, and have been in use, while the remaining three units will be installed by the end of September. The new portables are an efficient way to add new classrooms immediately to accommodate the increase in student population.

The modular units are made off-site and delivered to the campus ready for installation. These units are equipped with the same amenities as existing classrooms, including Internet access, security alarms, and a telephone. The teachers who moved into the new permanent portables earlier this year have been extremely happy with their rooms. According to Principal Dwight Jones, "They're the only air conditioned rooms on this campus, and they love them!"

The modernizations at Rivera Middle School will be conducted in three phases, with each phase lasting approximately four to five months. During each phase, a different part of the campus will be worked on, and students will relocate to interim classrooms, as needed.

Principal Jones has been preparing teachers and parents for the upcoming modernizations since last June. He has taken a candid approach, detailing the scope of work, and what teachers could expect. "Our staff will be fine," says Jones. "We're ready."

Students and parents should expect everything to continue normally at Rivera Middle School, despite the extra activity on campus. "We're looking forward to another positive year at Rivera Middle School," says Jones. 📌

# The Digital High School



Left to Right: Ramon Ruiz, Marisela Gonzalez and Ashley Gonzales in the VISTA lab during class. (VISTA is a ninth/tenth grade elective course, designed to help students find career goals through computer-based research.)

The Digital High School (DHS) Education Technology Grant Program was established in 1997 to provide technological assistance, and staff training to schools serving students in grades nine to 12. The program consists of two phases: The Technology Installation Grant, and the Technology Support and Staff Training Grant.

The installation support, provided through the Technology Installation Grant, is a one-time, \$300 per student amount. After the Technology Installation Grant is received, schools must submit a final report and complete a Certification of Completion of the Installation Grant, which then makes these schools eligible to receive the second phase of the grant: The Technology Support and Staff Training Grant.

Phase two is an on-going \$45 per student per year grant program to be used for continuing staff training, pupil and faculty support, and maintenance and upgrade of systems. Both grants must be matched locally by the District.

## Cash Flow Analysis

### The Digital High School

The diagram below details the breakdown of funds for the Technology Installation Grant at El Rancho High School and Salazar.

Note: The mandatory local match required by the state must be equal to or greater than the amount of the DHS grant. El Rancho High School met the requirement through prior technology purchases.

#### CASH IN:



#### CASH OUT: (Digital High School Funds):

Teacher Training & Staff Development	<u>\$ 44,400</u>
Software & Courseware Materials	<u>\$ 35,000</u>
Services & Other Operating Expenditures	<u>\$ 95,000</u>
Additional Operating Costs	<u>\$ 11,370</u>
Capital Outlay & Equipment	<u>\$ 759,230</u>
-- School Site Power & Wiring Upgrades	
-- Library Computer Upgrades and Furniture	
-- PE Area -Internet Connections-	
-- Laptops / IMacs for Teacher Training Programs	
-- Classroom Presentation Stations	
-- Printers	
-- Digital Cameras, Scanners, Assistive Devices, Video Cameras, Graphing Calculators, VCR Units	
-- LCD Players	

#### TOTAL, DIGITAL HIGH SCHOOL FUNDS \$ 945,000

#### DISTRICT'S LOCAL MATCH:

Books & Supplies	<u>\$ 1,714</u>
Capital Outlay (For Equipment Previously Purchased by the District)	<u>\$ 994,952</u>

#### TOTAL FUNDS \$1,941,666