



## NEWS FLASH

### Wiseburn's New Report Card

During the last few years, there have been discussions about the grading practices of teachers in relation to student promotion/retention, standards-based education, multiple measures of assessment and the *No Child Left Behind Act* - a Federal law trying to improve the number of students who are proficient, or above, in knowing their grade level content. While Wiseburn takes pride in the accomplishments of our students we realize the need to align our grading and reporting practices with these issues.

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### Dana's Math Program: Striving for Excellence

New textbooks, excellent teachers and an updated curriculum are adding up to good things for the math program at Dana Middle School. With standardized tests (SAT 9 & CAT 6) shifting from general mathematics to Algebra and Geometry, Dana decided to restructure the math program to better suit student needs.



*The Dana Math teachers are working to prepare students for higher standards. Clockwise Ms. Irvin, Ms. Adkins, Ms. Fennel, Ms. Spriggs, Mr. Bull, Ms. Laszacs, Ms. Ottoboni, Ms. Gray and Ms. McLain*

Last year, Wiseburn's School Board authorized the purchase of new Pre-Algebra and

Algebra textbooks. The new Prentice Hall textbooks are now being used, as recommended by the math department. "This textbook allows more of our students to be exposed to higher mathematics concepts," says teacher Gabrielle Irvin. In addition to the new textbook, a new class placement process emphasizing the use of concrete data in addition to the use of teacher and parent feedback has been implemented.

Future changes include a new structure that will phase out a one semester Pre-Algebra class (Pre-Algebra A), place those students in a full year of Pre-Algebra, and add Geometry (pending approval from the Superintendent and School Board). Summer school and Academic Improvement classes will also be offered to assist students of all levels who need extra help.

These improvements will help 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders prepare to meet the state standards as well as boost participation in the Golden State Examination. "This new structure will allow students the opportunity to take higher level mathematics in high school," says Principal Dr. Robert Bruce. "As math scores continue to improve, Dana students are preparing for success in their future endeavors."



*Dr. Don Brann,  
Superintendent*

As you review the articles in this newsletter, you will note a theme — continuous improvement. Whether it's development of a new report card, adoption of a better textbook, addition of a pre-school class, or construction of new schools, we're moving forward together to build a better Wiseburn for the children and for the future.

We've come a long way this past decade, but there is still much to do. The truth is you never reach perfection, you just keep striving to attain it. The road to excellence is always under construction. Sometimes you have delays, detours or bumps along the way, on the journey. But you always try your best to keep headed toward the goal. We, in Wiseburn, united in our team effort can do a better job; every program or service can be enhanced, communication can be clearer and more frequent, test scores can be increased, etc.

The "Areas of Emphasis" items adopted by the Board of Trustees annually direct the staff where to focus their energy. The expectation is that the majority of the items will be completed and found the following year on the "List of Accomplishments." That list, developed over the past ten years, has reached 12 pages in length. While considerable progress has been realized, the commitment is to forge ahead. As I wrote before, you don't have to be bad to get better.

The famous cowboy humorist, Will Rogers, is credited with saying, "Even if you're on the right track, you need to move forward or you'll get run over." We, in Wiseburn, understand that and we have no intention of standing still. After 107 years of providing excellence in education, Wiseburn will not stop now. Our quality reputation has been earned and we plan to maintain it through hard work.

## 2003 Wiseburn Areas of Emphasis

Each year Superintendent Don Brann and the Board of Trustees compile a list of priorities, the District's "areas of emphasis" for the calendar year. Among the priorities this year are:

- Adopt new language arts textbooks/instructional materials.
- Conduct a District-wide assessment program in language arts, math and writing.
- Use and implement Power School, a new student information system.
- Establish building committees for Cabrillo and Dana to develop education specifications and provide recommendations to the Board for configuration and footprint of each site, while staying within budget.
- Develop a long-term succession plan for the Superintendent.
- Develop an updated Growth Management Plan/Facilities Master Plan.
- Designate someone to be the District's internal point of contact for web site materials. Update the District web site to reflect current events, accomplishments and notices. Assure each school has a web site to post information specific to that school.
- Develop a plan to increase productivity of District support services with identification of professional staff development activities.
- Develop long-term program/service objectives for students with identification of sustained funding sources for such programs and services.
- Update technology infrastructure at Burnett, along with acquisition of appropriate hardware and software, under the direction of the Technology Committee.
- Review technology support services for the District, with development of appropriate funding and staffing models for such services as District Technology investment increases.

Other issues discussed in the 2003 areas of emphasis include: selection of architect and construction management firm (see page 3), explore and develop a standards-based report card (see page 1), improve school accountability reports and plan and implement an after school "drop in center" program at Dana.

## Architect/ Construction

### Management Firms Selected for New Schools

On February 25, Wiseburn's Board of Trustees selected Flewelling & Moody as the architects for the new construction of Dana Middle School and Cabrillo Elementary School. Flewelling & Moody has a long history with the Wiseburn School District, and they know the District well—they designed the original Anza School in 1946. The firm most recently designed the new state-of-the-art Anza Elementary School that opened last June.

C.W. Driver, a firm with 84 years of experience, has been chosen as the construction management (CM) firm to guide the building of the new "south side" schools. C.W. Driver is one of Los Angeles' oldest general contractors and came highly recommended by El Segundo Unified School District. Flewelling & Moody and C.W. Driver were selected from several firms that were considered. Both firms have a long history in school design and construction.

Thanks to community support, funds from Measure E (approved in 2000) will be used to construct the two new schools. Like the recently completed Anza School, these buildings will incorporate the latest technology and serve as community centers. The new schools will be constructed on their current sites, although the exact footprint of the schools has yet to be decided. Both schools will be constructed simultaneously and are scheduled to be complete during the 2006/07 school year.

**Rainbow River Summer Camps**

**Rainbow River**  
 June 26-Sept. 9, 2003  
 M-F 6:30 am to 6:00 pm  
 Ages 5-12 years  
 Weekly Rates  
 310.379.4912



**The Friendship Connection**  
**Our 24th year**

- Safety, supervision and fun
- Sports, special events, field trips to Disneyland,
- Knotts Berry Farm, Adventure City, bowling, the Beach, camp outs and more
- 5 day sleep away camp to Star Farms

### 2002 Areas of Emphasis Review: Mission Accomplished!

In response to last year's areas of emphasis many tasks were completed:

- The new Anza was opened and a Facilities Master Plan was adopted for construction at Dana and Cabrillo.
- New opportunities were developed to expand dialogue between the Superintendent and the community. These include:
  - "Supt's. On": open house evenings hosted by Dr. Brann in the District office.
  - Door-to-Door Canvassing: "house calls" made by Dr. Brann to neighborhood homes. The Daily Breeze wrote an article and several community leaders spoke with Dr. Brann about this unique method.
- The interdistrict attendance permit process was improved resulting in increased enrollment. Our enrollment was 120 students higher in October 2002 over 2001. Incoming permit students (currently more than 575) bring more than \$3 million to the District.
- Matt Wunder and Captain Dale Lincoln of the Los Angeles County Fire Department developed a *Disaster Preparedness Handbook* outlining the District's emergency plan.
- New math textbooks were chosen (see Dana's Math Program: Striving for Excellence page 1)
- A revised technology Master Plan was completed and a Master Plan for curriculum and instruction, standards and assessment was initiated.

# Pre-K at Anza

A pre-k program, operated by Rainbow River, will soon be offered at Anza. Also available at Cabrillo, the program offers a daily schedule with time dedicated to learning numbers, letters, colors and shapes. Other activities include outside play, story time, arts and science projects. The curriculum has been developed in conjunction with California State Department of Education guidelines and the National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation Project.

The benefits of participating in a pre-k program are widely recognized. Over the past four years, Cabrillo pre-k parents have seen improvement in social and learning skills, allowing children to thrive in kindergarten and the Wiseburn school environment. Wiseburn teachers, who are regularly consulted to assure compatibility with the curriculum, have expressed that students who participate in the program are better prepared to get the most out of their kindergarten experience.

The Anza pre-k program will open as soon as licenses and permits have been issued. Call Kory Higgins: 310.643.8511 or 310.643.8512 for more information.

# Wiseburn's New Report Card

*continued from page 1*

On February 27, teacher representatives from each school and each grade level (K-5) met to review information from the California Department of Education and samples of report cards used throughout California. Discussions included aligning a new report card with existing state and federal guidelines and identifying components deemed critical to the reporting of student achievement. Since parents receive state test (STAR, API) information that identifies mastery levels of Advanced (A), Proficient (P), Basic (B), Below Basic (BB), and Far Below Basic (FBB) our reporting system should provide similar information so parents can easily make comparisons.

Parent input is critical to make this project a success. We need to know what makes the reporting system valuable to parents in understanding how your child is doing in school. We will be seeking your input through participation on our committee or through a survey. If you are interested in serving on this committee please let your principal know. Otherwise when the survey comes out, please take the time to fill it out and help us DESIGN A NEW REPORT CARD FOR WISEBURN!



**WISEBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
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<u>Calendar Highlights</u>	
<b>April</b>	
18-25	Spring Break
22	Board Meeting
30	Anza Open House
<b>May</b>	
13	Board Meeting
15-17	Dana Drama Production
21	Cabrillo Open House
22	Burnett Open House
26	Memorial Day, No School
27	Board Meeting
29	Dana Open House