Phoebe Hearst Expands with Three New Kinder Classes

Phoebe Hearst Elementary expanded its student roster by 96 children this week when it opened three new kindergarten classes – the first time kinder has been offered at the school since 1976. The first week went smoothly with parents embracing the new grade level. Phoebe’s first day of school drew hundreds of people to the East Sacramento campus, where they enjoyed food from Selland’s and an appearance by the school’s dragon mascot. Kindergarten parents could be seen lined up by the classroom windows peering in at their kids. More than 250 people joined the school’s Parent Teacher Organization on the first day. (For more information on changes at Phoebe Hearst, see both Operations and Community Engagement below.)

Students, Staff Transition to New John Still K-8

The new John Still K-8 School opened to 922 students this week. The students are divided between the “West Campus” (K-5) and the “East Campus” (6-8). To help ease the transition for all students, including those from recently closed Freeport Elementary, the school held a Resource Fair on August 15. Families were treated to a lasagna dinner and game night and met with community partners. Also this summer, the school’s Design Team established a theme/vision for the new campus: “Oh, the Places You’ll Go!” The theme is based on the inspirational Dr. Seuss book of the same title.

A.M. Winn Opens Waldorf-Inspired Kinder

A.M. Winn’s new Waldorf-inspired kindergarten classes (one morning, one afternoon) opened to a warm reception by families. Kids enjoyed the refurbished wooden play kitchen and sandbox and the new wooden desks. To prepare, Winn teachers (and others from around the district) participated in the SCUSD-sponsored Waldorf Education Seminar for Teachers (WEST) for two weeks this summer – one week at Alice Birney and one at George Washington Carver. Winn teachers also worked this summer with Lauren Hickman, Early Childhood Department Chair at Rudolf Steiner College and Peggy Alessandri, a mentor for educators learning Waldorf methods.
Rosemont Launches New LEAD Academy for Advanced Learners

Rosemont High School has launched its new LEAD (Leadership and Enrichment through Academic Development) academy, a challenging and rigorous program for advanced learners that follows a model similar to that of C.K. McClatchy’s successful Humanities and International Studies Program (HISP). Rosemont staff worked over the summer with CKM’s HISP team to create this new program for high-achieving students.

LEAD classes in English and Social Science will focus on developing students’ capacity for analysis, creativity, innovation and university-level literacy through four years of an Honors and Advanced Placement curriculum. Graduates of the LEAD program will be expected to gain acceptance to a university of their choice, fully prepared to tackle the rigors of college coursework. Additionally, students will be asked to commit their time to community service - tutoring elementary and middle school students, organizing and facilitating clothes and food drives for those less fortunate and completing beautification projects in Sacramento - as a way to gain authentic experience as leaders.

New Seventh Grade Starts at Father Keith B. Kenny

Students are hard at work in Father Keith B. Kenny Elementary School’s newly added seventh grade classroom. The self-contained class will be focusing on leadership and civics this year. Students wear the school’s required uniform but with certain perks like more free dress days in acknowledgement of their age.

Facilities Remodeled, Expanded to Accommodate Changes

SCUSD’s Capital Asset Management Services division was busy this summer working to complete construction and renovation projects necessary to open schools this year, including:

- The addition of bathrooms to the three new kindergarten classrooms at Phoebe Hearst.
- The addition of a kindergarten play structure and fencing at Phoebe Hearst.
- The reconfiguration of three existing primary classrooms into two larger classrooms at Phoebe Hearst (needed to provide adequate square footage for increased class sizes).
- The repurposing and “greening” of four portables from Fruit Ridge Elementary to Phoebe Hearst.
- New native-plant, low-water landscaping at Phoebe Hearst and a new “outdoor classroom.”
The addition of “green” classrooms at Alice Birney and Hubert Bancroft.
A kitchen remodel at C.K. McClatchy High School that includes new refrigerators, ranges and serving lines.
Asphalt and parking lot improvements throughout the district.
The addition of air conditioning to classrooms at John Morse Therapeutic Center.
The remodeling of the office at John Morse.
The addition of a new fire alarm system at John Morse.
The conversion of one large former shop classroom at Leonardo da Vinci to two smaller classrooms.
The conversion of two smaller rooms to one larger middle school classroom at Father Keith B. Kenny.

Transportation Reports Smooth First Week Despite Reductions

With few exceptions, Special Education and Program Improvement Choice buses were on time for the first week of school. Last year, there were 99 Special Education routes. That has grown to 106 routes this school year. Last year, there were 29 home-to-school and Program Improvement Choice routes. This year, with the elimination of home-to-school transportation except for some safety routes, there are 10 routes remaining. Overall, this is a reduction of 12 routes. The transportation department continues efforts to maximize bus routes as much as possible.

Nutrition Services and Youth Engagement Expand Supper Service

The supper service for students who participate in after-school programs is being expanded from 24 to 65 sites on a staggered schedule. By Monday, September 24, 4,500 students will be served with suppers. Previously, these students received a small snack.

District Nears Tdap Compliancy

As the first week of school wraps up, 92 percent of SCUSD middle and high school students are now compliant with the state’s Tdap (whooping cough, or pertussis) immunization requirement. Currently only 324 students are not compliant. To bring these remaining students into compliance, a free vaccination clinic will be held from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday, September 13 at the Enrollment Center’s Immunization Clinic.

Community Engagement

Summit Helps Partners, Providers Gear Up

SCUSD Youth Development’s Youth Engagement Services hosted a first annual “Get Ready Summit” at C.K. McClatchy High School on August 21-23. More than 300 people representing after-school programs, Youth Engagement Services, Foster Youth Services,
Nutrition Services and juvenile justice services participated. The Summit offered more than 50 workshops equipping participants with the tools to:

- Promote positive and constructive student behaviors;
- Expand family and community engagement efforts;
- More effectively manage staff and school resources;
- Strengthen the quality of recreation and enrichment offerings;
- Incorporate meaningful Student Leadership opportunities;
- Establish a strong alignment with the school day;

This summit was the first of its kind in SCUSD and the Sacramento region. The evaluation showed that our support workers were "ready" for the start of the school!

‘Sacramento Goes Back to School’

All district schools participated this year in “Sacramento Goes Back to School,” a coordinated effort to welcome families on the first day of school. Schools were provided with “Welcome” banners and stickers for the occasion and many provided coffee and snacks for parents. SCUSD’s “Sacramento Goes Back to School” press event was held Tuesday morning at Phoebe Hearst to highlight the opening of new “green” classrooms funded by Measure I, a facilities bond approved by voters in 2002. Senate pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, Sacramento County Supervisor Phil Serna, Kula Koenig, District Director for Assemblyman Roger Dickinson, SCUSD Board President Diana Rodriguez, SCUSD Superintendent Jonathan Raymond, SCUSD Board Second Vice President Jeff Cuneo and Sacramento Council of PTAs representative Curry Mayer spoke to parents and news crews at the event. SCUSD Vice President Darrel Woo and Trustee Patrick Kennedy also attended.