

PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST

the

McKenna Memo

LAUSD District 1 Board Member Dr. George J. McKenna III Newsletter | v. 14-01



The First 100 Days

The start of the school year and my tenure as the District 1 board member has been an exciting time. To capture the accomplishments of our children, support our teachers, staff and administrators, and provide important updates to our school communities, I look forward to regularly engaging with you through our newsletter. I hope you enjoy our highlighted news and take an opportunity to sign-up to receive more regular updates electronically and through social media. – *Dr. George J. McKenna III*

Key Upcoming Dates!

Winter Recess:

December 22 – January 9

LAUSD District 1 schools will be closed.

FAFSA Available:

January 1, 2015

Seniors and parents can begin filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

Receive Updates!

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BoardDistrict1@lausd.net



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Historic Action: School Board Votes to Add Ethnic Studies to Curriculum

On November 18th, I was delighted to join with Board Members Bennett Kayser and Steven Zimmer in co-sponsoring a historic resolution that will improve the educational experience and outcomes of our children. By passing the “Supporting Ethnic Studies in the Los Angeles Unified School District” resolution, the school board added ethnic studies to the LAUSD curriculum, and established it as a graduation requirement for the class of 2019.

The value of ethnic studies is well documented. According to the National Education Association, ethnic studies benefited students of color in observable ways: they became more academically engaged, increased educational

outcomes on academic tests, improved graduation rates, and developed a sense of self-efficacy and personal empowerment (NEA’s 2010 “The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies”). This endeavor is critical to closing the achievement gap and increasing graduation rates.

Interim Superintendent Cortines has been directed to produce a plan and budget for integrating ethnic studies into the district’s curriculum. A committee of stakeholders is being formed to advise him and the board.

Praise goes to Ethnic Studies Now, the teacher-student-parent-community coalition that came together to push the resolution.



LAUSD Celebrates the Naming of Marguerite Poindexter LaMotte Elementary School

Dr. McKenna celebrated the official naming of a new school after the late, distinguished District 1 School Board Member Marguerite Poindexter LaMotte with Interim Superintendent Ramon Cortines, staff, parents and community leaders. The new school, which opened in 2012, is located at 4410 Orchard Ave., L.A., CA 90037, and is led by Principal Dormanda Higuichi.

Crenshaw H.S. Wellness Center Opens

Dr. McKenna celebrated the opening of The Wellness Center at Crenshaw High School. The wellness centers are part of a school district-wide wellness initiative intended to utilize joint use bond funds to construct new or renovate existing health facilities on school sites in high need communities. The facilities are designed to meet the unique needs of the communities they serve, including: primary health care services; mental health and behavioral health services; oral health services; coordination of family support services; health insurance enrollment and renewal; and student and parent engagement for health and wellness career pathways.



College Prep: Complete the College Financial Aid Application Over Winter Recess

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) will be made available for completion on January 1. The form, which is available online, is a requirement for determining a college student's financial aid eligibility in the 2015-2016 school year. Let us ensure the pathway to college remains open for our youth. Seniors and their parents should use the winter recess to begin the application. For more information and to start the process go to www.fafsa.ed.gov



Giving Thanks by Giving Back

Dr. McKenna joined other volunteers, including television Judge Mablean Ephriam, in serving Thanksgiving meals to seniors at the Ward Villa Senior Complex. Mothers in Action, which was led by the late Brenda Marsh-Mitchell, facilitated the annual event.





New Emergency Mobile App Available for LAUSD Employees

All LAUSD employees and first responders now have access to the new LAUSD Employee Emergency Plan app from In Case of Crisis. The mobile application offers step-by-step actions administered by school personnel in case of fire, severe weather and earthquakes, among other possible situations. Accessible on Apple or Android smartphones, tablets and Kindle (including Kindle Fire), the crisis app content includes 21 categories of emergency response procedures, all taken from the LAUSD Safe School Plan, along with emergency response procedures, phone numbers and links to District documents and other resources. Download it today at <http://achieve.lausd.net/emergencyapps>

Eye on Washington, D.C.: Rep. Bobby Scott to Lead Democrats on House Education Committee

Congratulations to Virginia Congressman Bobby Scott for being selected the ranking member of the House of Representatives Education & Workforce Committee. Rep. Scott will lead the Democrats on the committee in the incoming Congress. He will succeed George Miller of California, who is retiring from the House in January after 40 years of service. The committee will continue to be chaired by Republican John Kline of Wisconsin.



Eye on Sacramento: Dr. McKenna & State Superintendent Torlakson

Dr. McKenna discusses improving student educational performance with State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson.

Dr. McKenna Inspires & Challenges Young Men of Color

Dr. McKenna addressed an auditorium full of bright-eyed LAUSD students at the Young Men of Color Conference held at Loyola Marymount University on November 15. Young men from 18 schools throughout the LAUSD participated in a dynamic day of learning that included strategies designed to motivate, encourage and challenge young men to succeed academically, breakout sessions, peer-to-peer sharing, mentoring, entertainment and inspirational speeches headlined by LA Clippers' head coach Doc Rivers. The conference was part of a five-part series culminating into the creation of a "village" of male leaders participating beyond the conference as mentors to the young men from 25-30 community-based organizations and local agencies.



Hamilton High Yankees & L.A. High Romans Finish on Top in Football

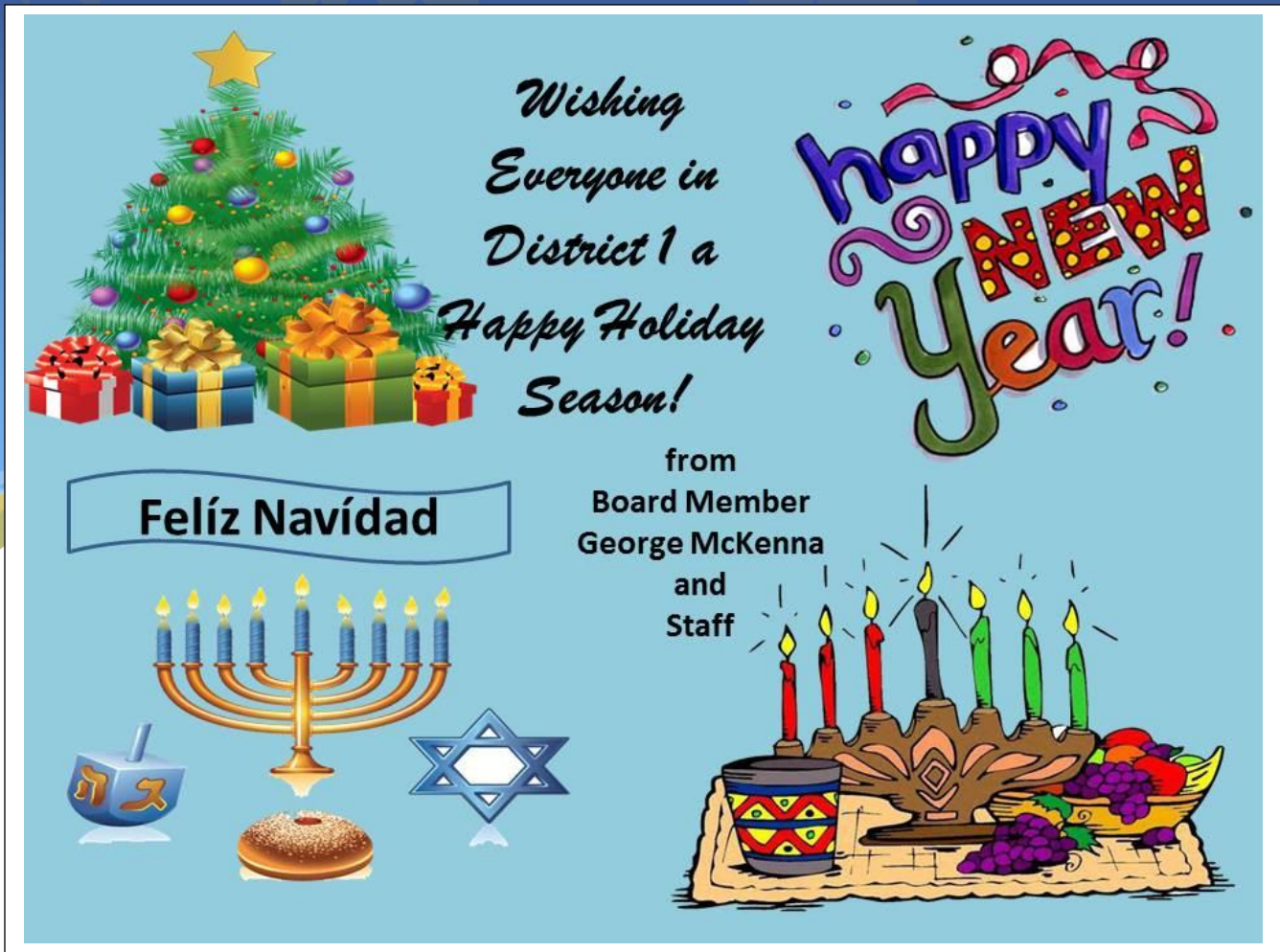
All hail to District 1's Hamilton H.S. Yankees and Los Angeles H.S. Romans for capturing 2014 City Section football championships! Hamilton capped off their season with a win in the Division II title game, while L.A. High won the Division III final, the school's first football championship since 1965. Thank you to all the student-athletes and coaches who made the fall athletic season a great experience for our school communities.



Help us Celebrate District 1 Academic Excellence

We want to know all of the great things that are taking place on District 1 campuses. Send news/notice of your activities/events involving students, teachers, administrators and the community to BoardDistrict1@lausd.net





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