



# TROJAN TRACKS



## BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Petaluma High School  
201 Fair Street  
Petaluma, CA 94952

Vol. 6 Issue 2  
Sept./Oct. 2009

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### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

**BRIAN HOWARD**

September 9, 2009

Dear Petaluma High School Parents and Community Members,

Welcome back from your summer break! I hope you had a relaxing summer vacation with your family and friends. Now that school has begun again, I thought it would be an important time to share with new and returning members of our community the Trojan Tracks bi-monthly newsletter. In this newsletter, you will find information about academic and extracurricular activities that are designed to support and engage your student in school and prepare your student for success beyond the classroom.

In this newsletter, we will share with you student events, opportunities to support your child, and ways for you and your child to get involved at Petaluma High School. You will also find a wealth of information included in this newsletter that is designed to keep you informed about many different aspects of high school life. It is our hope that, in having this information, you will be able to work closely with us in supporting your student's progress and success here. Moreover, we will share with you staff development activities that are designed to directly support your child in the classroom.

You may have noticed over the summer we had many construction projects underway that were completed just before the opening of school. Over the summer, our new Arts Media and Entertainment building was completed which was paid for through bond money earmarked specifically for this project. Our new building hosts six classrooms including a photo lab, two art rooms, an English classroom, a history classroom and a classroom with cooking appliances. We hope to have an official opening of the building on September 29, 2009 where we will be inviting community members to join us for the ceremony.

Other upgrades that occurred over the summer through the bond monies include: new roofing, painting, paving and landscaping. All of our portables were removed to make way for the improvements mentioned above.

Moreover, the return of all your students to our campus contributed to the pleasant opening of the 2009-10 school year. We look forward to the year(s) ahead working with your student to prepare them for their future.

This year we will be having a three year review from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, WASC. The visiting team from WASC is responsible for reviewing school programs and practices to make sure they meet the standards to be accredited. During our last visitation we received a 6-year accreditation based on our programs, practices and performance. A 6-year accreditation is the most you can receive from the WASC organization. We look forward to our three year review and are optimistic that we are addressing goals outlined in our last review. That said, our staff development activities this year will continue to be designed to address student achievement in the areas of literacy and numeracy while enhancing school climate and culture.

We continue to build upon the teams and career clusters this year by enhancing the successes achieved previously and implementing strategies planned throughout the school year in our shortened Wednesday meetings, principal advisory committee meetings, department meetings, professional learning community meetings, team meetings, and cluster meetings. The teams have been integral in helping manage the needs of students and prepare them academically for success as they are supported by their common core teachers. This year in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade career clusters we will continue to work on

If you have questions about PHS, please visit the **PHS website**. It is a great place to get information. And it looks TERRIFIC!! Please visit us at [petalumahighschool.org](http://petalumahighschool.org).

We would like to thank Mark Mooney, parent of PHS alumni, who does such a wonderful job of keeping the PHS website up to date and easily accessible.

**Thank You Mark Mooney!!**

integrating our curriculum where we find connections that are beneficial to student learning and expand the opportunities for our students by adding more job shadows and internships, to what we are offering already. If you or someone you know has a business in the community and would like to contribute to the job shadows or internships we offer our students, then please contact our Career Center at 778-4857 to help make future arrangements.

The tutorial policy we began last year will be expanded from the freshmen class of students to include the sophomores this year. The tutorial policy is designed to support students who have not been successful in their studies as determined by grades they have earned in the prior year and on-going throughout the year. The policy requires any freshman or sophomore student who received a "D" or an "F" grade in the prior year, or any freshman or sophomore student who receives a "D" or an "F" on a 6-week progress report in (Freshman: math, science or English) and (Sophomores: World History, English, or Biology) to attend tutorial 1-3 times per week. Our small learning community teams will hand out agreements for students to attend tutorial and focus on the learning areas noted that must be signed by their parents. The agreement includes opportunities for parents to participate in offering rewards and/or consequences to assist students who are working on improving their performance.

Our goal is to strive toward helping students earn a "C" grade or better in their core subjects. We look forward to receiving agreements back from parents as soon as possible. Agreements will be sent home during the second and third weeks of September. We believe that through partnering with you we will be able to better support your child.

There have been a number of student and parent events as the year began. The sports season has started with practices and games scheduled. Please check [www.highschoolsports.net](http://www.highschoolsports.net) for specific dates. The students and staff enjoy your support and look forward to having you attend their events. Please come by and see our teams in action.

The Petaluma High School educational community looks forward to engaging your students in interesting learning experiences and extracurricular activities throughout the year. Any support you are able to give to the Petaluma High School community is always welcomed.

Please contact the front office if you are able to lend your support in any fashion so that we can make the necessary arrangements. I look forward to meeting new and returning parents and your students this year.

Sincerely,

Brian Howard

**PICTURE MAKE-UPS** will be taken Monday, September 28th. School pictures are available for families to purchase and these photos are also put in the yearbook.



Students who did not have their picture taken or students who are not happy with the pictures they have ordered may have a make-up picture taken.

If students did not have a picture taken for the yearbook, they should have their picture taken. Students who want a retake should bring their pictures to the photographer on September 28 and have another picture taken. If students have not ordered pictures, they may pick up an order form in the main office or the student assistance center.

**SENIORS (Grade 12)**

Teri Schmidt, Lead Counselor

**Important Dates for Seniors**

- Sept. 12:** ACT test
- Sept. 25:** End of 1<sup>st</sup> grading period
- Oct. 1 – Nov. 30:** CSU Applications
- Oct. 5:** SAT and Subject Tests
- Oct. 6:** 4-Year College Night for seniors & Parents; 7:00 p.m.
- Oct. 24:** ACT test
- Nov. 7:** SAT and Subject Tests
- Nov. 1 – 30:** UC Applications

- Dec. 7:** Financial Aid Night for college-bound Seniors & parents at SVHS
- Dec. 5:** SAT and Subject tests
- Dec. 12:** ACT test

**Senior Year:** Welcome to this final year in high school! For some students, this year was slow in coming. For many parents, the time has passed too quickly. This will be a year packed with activities, AP exams, college and scholarship applications and career planning. The time to get organized is NOW. Please check the calendar for important dates for the class of 2010. Counselors plan to visit classrooms during the last weeks of September to inform students of key dates and deadlines and making the most of their last year in high school.

**College-Bound Students:** Please check dates on the calendar in the previous column.

**Testing Information:** If you plan to apply to any University of California (UC) campus, you must take two SAT Subject tests, as well as the SAT or ACT. Math, level 2 is the required math subject test. The SAT subject test areas are English literature, foreign language, science, math or social studies. Private colleges vary in their requirements of these tests. Some have specific recommendations of which test to take. As a reference, go to a particular college's website for more information. Many campuses recommend that you take college entrance exams by November in order that they receive the test scores in January.

**California State University (CSU) Update:** Many of the CSU's will now be using an eligibility index in their decision for admissions. This index calculates grade point average (GPA) and SAT or ACT score. For more information, check [csumentor.edu](http://csumentor.edu). Students who have a GPA of 3.0 or higher in A-G subjects are typically considered eligible for admissions at CSU campuses. In past years, as SAT or ACT score was not required. College entrance exam scores will now be used to determine admission at many CSU campuses.

**Transcripts:** Transcripts were reviewed with students last spring to assist with planning classes for senior year and to determine credit deficits. Additionally, transcripts will be given to each senior as a means of reporting grades on college applications and as a guide to ensure that all requirements are being met for graduation. At the time of this writing, Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) summer grades have not yet been recorded on the transcripts. If your student completed a class at SRJC this summer, please have them download the grade report and bring it to Ms Yeager in Counseling.

I recommend that you keep a copy of your transcript in a binder that also has your copies of any online application verification form. You do not need to send a transcript with your application. Once a college has given a conditional acceptance of admission, that college will request that you send a final transcript of your grades. Private colleges may request additional reports. The registrar (Ms. Yeager) has a clipboard at her desk for requests for "official" transcripts.

**Credits:** Students with fewer than 160 credits are at risk for **not graduating**. Counselors will meet with students to develop a plan to meet graduation requirements and we welcome parents to participate in this conference to develop a written plan. Two hundred twenty credits in specific subject areas are required for graduation.

**Grades count!** Counselors continue to encourage students to do well in this final year of high school. Grades in this first semester will contribute to eligibility for scholarships and college admission. Private colleges will also be requesting mid-year grades and progress reports. Seniors, please take advantage of all the services at Petaluma High, including tutorial, after school math help and tutoring by your fellow CSF students.

Make the most of this last year at Petaluma High!

<b>Student's last name begins . . .</b>	<b>Counselor</b>	<b>Counselor's email</b>
A-De	Ms. Selhorst	<a href="mailto:cselhorst@pet.k12.ca.us">cselhorst@pet.k12.ca.us</a>
Di-K	Ms. Schmidt	<a href="mailto:tschmidt@pet.k12.ca.us">tschmidt@pet.k12.ca.us</a>
L-Ra	Ms. Rietveld-Nolden	<a href="mailto:frietveld@pet.k12.ca.us">frietveld@pet.k12.ca.us</a>
Re-Z	Ms. Walsh	<a href="mailto:jwalsh@pet.k12.ca.us">jwalsh@pet.k12.ca.us</a>

**JUNIORS (11<sup>th</sup> Grade)**  
*Fran Rietveld-Nolden, Counselor*

**Are you a Junior????** If you think so, how many credits do you have? 100 credits are required for junior standing. If

you are behind in credits, see your counselor to set up a plan to get back on track.

**PSAT:** The PSAT will be given on Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>. Sign ups will not start until Sept. 21st and morning announcements will have more information about the test before then.

**CAHSEE:** If you have not passed The California High School Exit Exam, there are classes here at PHS during the school day that you can take to help you pass. Please see your counselor if she has not talked with you yet about this opportunity. Counselors will be meeting with students who have not yet passed, talking about options and offering strategies for success in taking this exam required for the high school diploma.

**Important Date for Juniors: Nov. 4, 2009 @ 7:00 p.m.** in the multi-purpose room. Mark your calendars for the first informational night for parents and students who plan to attend a 4 year college. Counselors will present an agenda that includes college admissions criteria of CSU, UC and private colleges as well as things to think about when making decisions for college. Bring your questions and join us in discussing what it will take to make the road trip to college.

**Grades:** The first grading period ends Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>. It's important to stay on top of your assignments and **get help** when you need it.

<b>Student's last name begins . . .</b>	<b>Counselor</b>	<b>Counselor's email</b>
A-De	Ms. Selhorst	<a href="mailto:cselhorst@pet.k12.ca.us">cselhorst@pet.k12.ca.us</a>
Di-K	Ms. Schmidt	<a href="mailto:tschmidt@pet.k12.ca.us">tschmidt@pet.k12.ca.us</a>
L-Ra	Ms. Rietveld-Nolden	<a href="mailto:frietveld@pet.k12.ca.us">frietveld@pet.k12.ca.us</a>
Re-Z	Ms. Walsh	<a href="mailto:jwalsh@pet.k12.ca.us">jwalsh@pet.k12.ca.us</a>

**SOPHOMORES (10<sup>th</sup> Grade)**  
*Fran Rietveld-Nolden, Counselor*

**Are you a sophomore?** Most students begin their tenth grade year with 60 credits. You must have 40 credits to be considered a sophomore or tenth grader. If you have less than 60 credits, it would be a good idea to see your counselor to find out what you can do to get caught up. Your counselor is assigned according to the first initial of your last name. See the list below.

**Tutorial** It is very important that you use your tutorial time to get extra help and do homework or complete assignments. Your first grades will be posted as of Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Teams** Sophomore students are organized into curricular teams. English, Biology, and World History teachers have approximately 90 students in common so they can increase personalization and connectedness to school.

**PSAT** Would you like to know how you would do on an SAT test? Do you plan on going to a university? Then the PSAT is for you. For tenth grade students it is the best practice. It will be given on Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>. Sign ups will begin Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> with Ms. Rietveld in the Counseling office. More information will be given in the morning announcements.

## **FRESHMAN (9<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

*Joan Walsh, Counselor*

### **Welcome to Petaluma High, Class of 2013!**

The Counseling Department looks forward to working with students and parents of this dynamic class of 315 students! It was so nice to see all the new faces at our Freshman Orientation prior to the start of school.

Our plans are to present information to parents on the evening of September 3rd at Petaluma High's Open House and then to visit all Freshman classes to introduce ourselves and let students know of our role in relation to supporting them throughout their time in high school. One of our goals is for every 9th grade student to have a four-year plan that outlines high school graduation requirements, college admissions criteria and how to be successful in this first year of high school and the years beyond. We plan to make this an activity with the freshman in one of their core classes. Getting off to a good start is important for a student's success and we strongly recommend that students attend tutorial, which is a 30-minute session following the first class of the day. All teachers are available in the classroom during tutorial to assist students and counselors maintain an open-door policy for any student to drop-in with questions or concerns. Now that school is well under way, tutorial is a good time to get a jump start on homework, clarify any assignments or just ask questions.

Please check the school calendar for activities, dates that outline the end of the grading period and winter and spring breaks. We encourage parent and student involvement at Petaluma High School. Thank you for getting your students here on time and ready to start their day!

### **CASHEE (High School EXIT Exam) Testing**

*David Stirrat, Assistant Principal*

Testing for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Graders who have not yet passed:

The first testing days are **November 3rd (English)** and **November 4th (Math)**.

Please check in with your counselor to sign up to take this test if you have not yet passed Math and/or English. You will receive a reminder two weeks prior to the test if you have not yet passed on or both CAHSEE sections.

10<sup>th</sup> graders will take the High School Exit Exam in February.

### **TROY's Student Store**

**Visit** . . .

New Sweatshirts Coming  
Smoothies \$3.00  
Spirit Items . . . School Supplies . . . Snacks . . .  
Gift Cards Available  
Get Ready for the Holidays!  
Open Every Day at Tutorial and Lunch

email: [dfitch@pet.k12.ca.us](mailto:dfitch@pet.k12.ca.us)

## **FLBA NEWS**

*Karen Wilson*

PHS Future Business Leaders of America welcome you back to school. We are dedicated to Education, Service and Progress. We attend conferences for competition, leadership development and to further our business skills. We also strive to give back to the community through volunteer service. We enjoy visiting businesses in order to learn from our local leaders. If you would be interested in hosting our club members please contact Ms. Wilson at 778-4807. To make this possible we need your help and support; we do extensive fund raising and are asking you to contribute by having dinner or buying a gift card at Mary's Pizza Shack in Petaluma on Monday, September 14. You will need to take a flyer with you please pick this up at PHS or contact Ms. Wilson. Please mark your calendars and tell all of your friends, we really need you. Thank you from the students of FBLA.

### **CSF (CALIFORNIA SCHOLARSHIP FEDERATION)**

*Stephanie Dietrich, Adviser*

It's that time of the year again when students (grades 10-12) can apply to become a member of CSF. To qualify, students must have earned 10 points based upon their last semester report card (June 2009). Announcements and flyers around campus have advertised that our membership drive ends September 11<sup>th</sup>. Being a member of CSF is an academic achievement that a student may include on his/her college applications. There is a small fee to help offset the costs. Freshmen may apply as associate members in January.

Students who elect to participate in our Standard-Plus! membership are offered opportunities for community service to Petaluma High and its feeder schools. Tentative service projects this fall include the fall campus workday, and peer tutoring. Peer tutors will be available at the beginning of October on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays during tutorial in many of the classrooms.

#### **PEER TUTORING** by CSF students

Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays

During tutorial (10:15-10:45)

See flyers around school for specific rooms & subjects

#### **THE SATs ARE COMING! ARE YOU READY?**

Two of our staff members, Mr. McHugh and Mr. Cox, team teach a math workshop that is designed to prepare college-bound students for taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Their goal is to help students attain the highest score they can from the math sections. Each four-hour workshop includes the latest test-taking strategies from the test makers, plus detailed descriptions and solid practice for every type of problem using real questions from recent SAT exams. Additional topics that will be addressed include goal setting, reducing anxiety, time-saving approaches, and enhancing familiarity with the test. The workshop is offered from 8:30 AM to 12:45 PM on **Saturday, September 26,**

**2009 or Saturday, October 24, 2009.** If you would like to register or get more information, please visit their website at <http://teacherweb.com/CA/PetalumaHigh/Cox-Math> .

### **ROP/CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

*Roger Francaville, Teacher*

ROP/Career Technical Education continues to offer a wide variety of classes at Petaluma High School in such industry sectors as: Agriculture, Business, Construction Technology and Digital Media. Our classes teach students career specific skills and understanding as well as teaching and reinforcing the core academic standards. Every ROP course also emphasizes workplace readiness skill and career exploration.

ROP/Career Technical Education classes are not just another elective course. These classes give practical meaning to a students' education and rounds out their high school learning experience helping to better prepare them for a career and college.

### **SCIENCE DEPARTMENT**

*Lee Boyes, Chair*

We hope that everyone has had a successful start to the new school year. Please encourage your student to use the tutorial time to get help or to make up assignments due to an absence. Science is very cumulative and it is easy to get behind! You can also ask your student to get a progress report from the counselors. Your student will then ask each teacher to sign it to let you know how the first few weeks are progressing. Our first grading period ends on **Sept 25.**

The science department has 9 members this year. We welcome two new teachers to our dept this year. Ms Dennen joins us from the math dept to teach physical science on B days. Our newest member was actually with us last year, Ms Camacho taught physical science for Ms Deaths second semester! We are happy to welcome her on board to teach physical science and one period of biology. Other physical science teachers this year are Ms. Boyes, Mr. Gilmore, and Ms Smith. The start of our year will be physics with an extension of the topics your students had last year in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, not a repeat! Then we will move to earth science and chemistry.

Our biology teachers are Ms Blakeslee, Mr. Pawlan and Mr Troth. They are starting the year observing the balance of nature with nutrient cycles and energy flow of the microscopic world in the PHS pond. While using microscopes and writing lab reports there will be lots of oohs and ahhs as they observe the tiny living things not usually seen by the naked eye. All the lab work corresponds to the biology text and will be followed by units on "Chemistry of Living things", and "How the cell functions."

In our elective classes, juniors and seniors will either be in Mr. Troth's anatomy physiology classes starting with body regions and anatomical terminology while Mr. Pawlan's marine science will be working toward their trip to Monterey Bay aquarium in the spring by looking at how the ocean

works. They are also part of an NSF grant with UC Davis called CAMEO that will be collecting and analyzing data with the help of university mentors. Chemistry classes with Ms. Boyes, and Mr. Brazil are measuring things with a new twist – significant figures, while Mr. Gilmore's AP physics and Mr. Brazil's physics classes are beginning the year with kinematics and force.

We would like to thank the Petaluma Education Foundation for their grant money that allowed Mr. Brazil to purchase photogates to use in physics to measure movement in the lab more accurately than a stopwatch.

PEF also allowed us to purchase a Classroom response System (Clickers) that allows students to give teachers immediate feedback about their understanding of the current lab or lecture. THANK YOU.

The dates are set for our career fair on **MARCH 18 and 19.** If your job has anything to do with science, we invite you or your colleagues to participate by speaking with our students on one or both of those days. If you are interested, please contact dept chair Lee Boyes at [chemphs@aol.com](mailto:chemphs@aol.com) or by cell phone at 707-495-0092

### **VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS**

*Allison Miller, Chair*

We are excited to be back and in our new building this year. It is a beautiful two-story building in the center of campus containing eight classrooms. Four of the classrooms are for academics and the other four are specially designed for art, photography, and filmmaking.

We would like to thank those of you who took the time to help us transition to the new building. Special thanks go out to: Dayna and Conor Estes, Laura Stevick, Virginia and Ray Johnson, Mrs. White (Nicole's Mom), Raven Conley, Michael Velasquez, Bella Perez, Maddie and Mrs. Pope, Marilyn Burkholder, Linda Postenrieden (Pelican Gallery), Garren and Mrs. Langford, Kaitlin and Mrs. DeCoite, James and Mr. and Mrs. Jensen, Rachel Cooley, and Dave Zaro. We look forward to working with you to create a successful year.

Upcoming events: Drama Club is working on an original variety show production and is looking for any and all students who would like to showcase their talents in writing, dance, acting, or music. Photo Club starts after Club Rush on September 18th, all are welcome.

### **PROJECT GRAD**

*Andrea Christensen, President*  
[andrealynn7@comcast.net](mailto:andrealynn7@comcast.net)

Welcome to a new school year! Project Graduation is planning another fun filled night for the class of 2010 to be held June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010. We hold a party every year for the entire class to attend filled with fun entertainment, food, music and a fabulous party atmosphere designed to keep our graduates off the roads on their graduation night. PLEASE plan now to help us out. We need over 300 volunteers and \$30,000 dollars to hold this event!!! The year your student is a senior is very busy; so help now before they are a senior.

We are selling Christmas wreaths right now as our first fundraiser. If you did not order yours, please contact our chairperson: Diane Proteau [chefdi5@comcast.net](mailto:chefdi5@comcast.net). They are fresh green wreaths topped with a beautiful bow for only \$20.

How can you help? Buy a wreath, make a donation and, to find out more, please attend one of our meetings this year. They are held at 7 p.m. in the staff lounge at PHS on the following dates:

- September 16, 2009
- October 21, 2009
- November 18, 2009
- January 20, 2010
- February 17, 2010
- March 17, 2010
- April 21, 2010
- May 19, 2010
- June 1, 2010
- Party June 5, 2010

I hope YOU will help us this year!

### **STUDENT PARKING**

Because of the removal of the portables in the main parking lot on Fair Street, there is now some limited parking for students. During the second week of school, juniors and seniors had the opportunity to enter a drawing for a parking spot. Those chosen were assigned a spot for the semester. Students in assigned spots are asked for a \$40 donation per semester payable to the Petaluma High ASB. Proceeds from parking donations are earmarked for a LCD board to be mounted on the new arts building (E Wing).

Students should not park on any other area of campus. A student vehicle parked in an unassigned spot is subject to tow. We will enforce towing this year.

Please contact Mr. Stirrat at [dstirrat@pet.k12.ca.us](mailto:dstirrat@pet.k12.ca.us) with any questions regarding parking.



### **PTSA**

*Bonnie Koagedal, President*

Our first meeting will be September 2<sup>nd</sup>. We meet the first Wednesday of the month at 7pm in the teachers lounge. We need some parents to step up this year and help us by being on our board. We need a Treasurer and all other positions are available.

Thank you so much to those of you who are already steady PTSA volunteers. Teachers and Staff really appreciate all you do to keep spirits high in our high school. If we work together and each do "a little" for your PHS PTSA...we can keep all the good we do paying off.

Please call Bonnie Koagedal @ 480-6224 or email me @ [alohabk@comcast.net](mailto:alohabk@comcast.net) with any suggestions or assistance with our PTSA fun functions....

Here's to a great school year.



### **A BIG THANK YOU!!**

A BIG thank you to all the volunteers who helped with registration!! It was a big job and we could not have done it without the help of the following:

Lisa Baddeley, Eldean Baggenstos, Heather Dolcini, Gladys Domergue, Nancy Hromalik, Joan Hunisker, Heather Hupp, Leslie Ihrig, Bonnie Koagedal, Amanda Kvalheim, Jana Lewis, Yvonne, Mackwood, Theresa O'Connor, Candace Parks, David Reese, Ladonna Thompson, Tina Wolf and Vera Zinkl.

Also thank you to our Cheerleaders who showed up everyday and filled in wherever they were needed. Their help and cheery attitude were greatly appreciated. Go Cheerleaders!!

If I missed anyone, I apologize. Everyone was an invaluable part of the registration process....you are all AWESOME!!

### **PHS DIRECTORY**

<b>Administration</b>	<b>778-4652</b>
<b>Admin/Students</b>	<b>778-4671</b>
<b>Athletic Director</b>	<b>778-5074</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>778-4670</b>
<b>Bilingual</b>	<b>778-4646</b>
<b>Cafeteria</b>	<b>778-4660</b>
<b>Career Center</b>	<b>778-4857</b>
<b>Counseling</b>	<b>778-4779</b>
<b>Discipline</b>	<b>778-4671</b>
<b>Facilities Manager</b>	<b>778-4938</b>
<b>Fax</b>	<b>778-4767</b>
<b>Information</b>	<b>778-4651</b>
<b>Library</b>	<b>778-4662</b>
<b>Museum</b>	<b>778-4787</b>
<b>Nurses</b>	<b>778-4651</b>
<b>Registration</b>	<b>778-4650</b>
<b>Student Center</b>	<b>778-4651</b>
<b>Transcripts</b>	<b>778-4650</b>
<b>Voice Mail</b>	<b>778-4926</b>

## WELCOME TO THE 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR

### By Superintendent Greta Viguie

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year. The school and district staffs are looking forward to supporting students to experience a meaningful and productive school year. Parents/guardians and community members play a critical role in supporting school success. As the school year begins, please consider making time to get involved with one or more of the districts' schools through volunteering in the classroom, mentor programs, being a guest speaker, or providing internships through local businesses. Students benefit greatly from parent and community involvement. Research has proven that parent and community involvement in students' education does increase student achievement at school. So, call a principal and ask how you can get involved today!

As you have read, school districts have been significantly impacted by the state fiscal crisis. Reduced revenue from the state to Petaluma City Schools has resulted in the elimination of summer school, reductions in teachers, administration and support staff at the site and district levels, elimination of the three staff development days that has resulted in a 1.62% decrease in salary for all district employees, reductions in counselors and classified staff, and increased class size. The District budget projections matched the budget that was passed by our state legislature and approved by the Governor so, for now we will not need to make more cuts. Because the State Budget that was approved still has a significant deficit, there is the likelihood that the State will again make mid-year cuts this winter.

The State's standards and expectations for our students are among the highest in the nation yet California is near last in the nation in the amount that it spends per student. This simply is not acceptable. Now more than ever is the time for citizens to be advocates for public education and to let your voice be heard in Sacramento.

Petaluma High School was determined to be the campus of greatest need and over the summer the school had a number of deferred maintenance projects completed including painting, roofing and paving. These projects were done through a combination of state and district funds that are restricted to construction projects.

Two major projects were completed on the two comprehensive high school campuses. On the Petaluma High School Campus, an eight classroom Art, Media and Entertainment (AME) facility is complete. The facility is being paid for with a combination of State Career Tech Education Funds and District Developer Fees. This facility replaces the leased portables that have been located in the parking lot and the old E-Wing portables. On the Casa Grande campus, a new drama classroom and expansion to the music building and an addition of a computer lab to the library have been completed. The drama class will replace a leased portable in the front of the campus and is being funded through a combination of District Developer Fees and State Bond and District Bond Funds.

I am pleased to introduce Jason Sutter, the new Principal at McNear Elementary School. Jason has been in education for the past 12 years, beginning in Napa as a fifth grade teacher and finishing as a K/1 teacher. From the classroom he moved to work for the County Offices of Education in Alameda, Napa, and Solano with an organization called the California Technology Assistance Project, where he worked with teachers to integrate technology in the classroom and with districts to plan and write grants for getting technology into classrooms.

To support greater success of all of our students, teachers and administrators across the district are working collaboratively to identify students' learning needs and design learning opportunities to meet these identified diverse needs. Teacher collaboration is essential for supporting this work. In Petaluma, we are very fortunate that our Board and parent community support early release Wednesdays for the purposes of teacher collaboration.

With the support of the K-12 Curriculum Council, teachers and administrators will continue to meet in professional learning communities and use the inquiry process and student data to identify effective practice and guide instruction.

Also under the direction of the K-12 Curriculum Committee, as the new school year begins, we will use of our common Power Standards. Those standards have been posted on the district website. Plans for elementary and secondary activities are described below.

At the elementary level, District committee work will include: pilot of a standards-based reporting form, and the Elementary Writing Assessment. In addition professional development related to the newly adopted math and science materials will be provided for elementary teachers.

At the secondary level, the K-12 Committee has plans to continue the identification and approval of common departmental assessments that reflect the priorities of the Power Standards. From each 7-12 site, department representatives will collaborate to refine or develop rubrics for use in measuring student progress. The district writing assessment rubrics are some of the first products from the collaboration. Also, teachers and administrators will continue to use software called Edusoft as a tool to develop assessments and monitor results by analyzing individual student work and progress.

Casa Grande High and Petaluma High are continuing to focus on the community and school staffs' identified goals of (1) Family & School Connections, (2) Personalization, and (3) Authentic Curriculum. You can help strengthen the family and school connections by becoming involved in activities such as mentoring students, being a guest speaker in classrooms, and providing opportunities for students to apply what they are learning in schools through internships in local business and industry. Please call your principal or Ellen Lewis, Community Entrepreneur, 778-4702, and ask how you can become involved.

**To learn more about the District, checkout the District web site at [www.petalumacityschools.org](http://www.petalumacityschools.org). An**

**informative booklet about our schools is on our web site under the heading, *About our Schools*.**

Thank you for your support and involvement in our schools. We know that we cannot do it alone. By working together sharing resources, knowledge, and skills we will better educate our students. I look forward to seeing you at school site events and meetings throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Greta Viguie, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

