



The Latest Buzz in Curriculum & Educational Services



Volume II, Issue II

Achieving Student Success & Excellence Together

December 17, 2010

**Department Notes—
Ryan Holman**

The holiday season is upon us. As I reflect on the past year, I cannot help but be reminded of the good fortune that comes to me from being associated with the staff members of Snowline. I am thankful to have had the opportunity to interact with so many of you, listening to what you have to say about learning and increasing student success. I have seen firsthand the wonderful work being done in classrooms throughout the district. The time and energy that is directed toward our students by all of you is immense and must be commended. This effort is key to their educational success; it translates to their success in life.

As I look forward to working with all of you in 2011, arguably the most challenging period in California's educational history persists. This makes the learning accomplishments of our students, schools, and district that much more impressive. It also makes me hopeful for our future learning outcomes. I am excited to continue the process of tapping into your important knowledge and ideas that can and will benefit our students. I look forward to more opportunities to work with all of you as we develop educational excellence for all students.

Thank you for your outstanding efforts. Please enjoy the much deserved time with your family and friends over the holidays.

**Testing Information—
Denise Foster**

- The California Department of Education (CDE) has a website available to help parents and teachers gain a better understanding of the California Standards Tests (CSTs) and other aspects of the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program. The website address is www.starsamplequestions.org.
- The STAR CST and California Modified Assessment (CMA) writing assessment for 4th grade has been reinstated for 2010-2011.

- The STAR CMA multiple-choice tests are now available for grades 10 & 11 for English Language Arts (ELA) and grades 8-11 for Geometry.

Projects Update—Kathy Abbott

GATE screening begins in January. Parents can get the forms from the school office or on the district website.

Testing dates at school sites are:

- Baldy Mesa Elementary—**February 1 & 2**
- Heritage School—**January 25 & 26**
- Phelan Elementary— **February 16**
- Pinon Hills Elementary— **March 3**
- Vista Verde Elementary—**February 10**
- Wrightwood Elementary—**February 9**
- Pinon Mesa Middle School—**February 23**
- Quail Valley Middle School—**February 3**

School Plans are now done and, after Board Approval, will be posted to the website in **January**.

Ongoing Professional Development and Support - Pam Buchanan

We are excited to announce a wide range of professional development opportunities being offered this winter. Please check out the staff development section on our district website to view the details and to register for the trainings.

Training opportunities include:

- Classroom Technology
- Spelling Instruction
- Accelerated Reader
- Ruby Payne & Understanding Poverty
- PowerPoint
- Differentiated Instruction
- Vocabulary Building
- Reading Comprehension
- RtI for EL Students

EL Connection—Linda McInerney

Sites and teachers have given warm welcomes during the on-site demonstration lessons in vocabulary, GLAD, and ELD instruction. If you would like a demonstration done in your classroom, please feel free to contact Linda McInerney.

The English class for parents of middle and high school students should begin in the middle of **January on Thursday afternoons at 4:30 -5:30 p.m.**

A district-wide leadership group recently completed the English Learner Subgroup Self Assessment (ELSSA). Completing the ELSSA is a requirement for districts in Title III Program Improvement. There was some lively discussion and the group came to agreement on some key areas in which we can improve EL student achievement.

A plan is currently being written to address these areas. The main focus will be consistent, high quality English Language Development (ELD) instruction. We are already in the planning stages for intensive professional development over the next two years to ensure this goal. The first step will be to train every teacher responsible for ELD in the ELD standards and how they align to ELA standards. This training will begin in the spring. Look for details about the next steps with ELD professional development in this newsletter or feel free to contact Linda McInerney for assistance.

Technology Tidbits

Assistance with Illuminate and Intel-Assess is ongoing with teachers and staff, with usage growing daily.



Assessment requests from teachers are being created and processed by Debbie Webb.

Dave Winward continues to work on CALPADS in preparation for certification.