

Wiseburn School Board Views Reading Intervention Presentation

By Duane Plank

With Thanksgiving break currently in progress, the Wiseburn School Board members met twice in the past two weeks to discuss key issues as they focus on the final month of instruction for 2018. On Nov. 8, in closed session, the Board and administration met for nearly four hours. Wiseburn Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Blake Silvers said that the meeting was productive. "This was a really good opportunity for the Board to talk about evaluations, our goals, and share visions moving forward," he said. "It is all interrelated because I get evaluated on my goals. Great chance for folks to see the areas that are targets for us. We have heard a lot from the greater community, in areas that they want us to 'touch,' in areas such as communication, curriculum evaluation and learning.

Regarding the aquatics center, Silvers said, "[It] looks beautiful. We are continuing to solidify our joint-use-agreement with the City of El Segundo." Said agreement was initially listed for approval on the Thursday agenda, but got pulled by the Board as the document continues to be fine-tuned. "I welcome the partnership with El Segundo," Silvers said. He called the partnership arrangement with the City of El Segundo and El Segundo Unified School District unprecedented, saying that "it is only going to make the relationships stronger, setting the foundation for what is to come. This is a great opportunity to expand our sports programs."

The only special presentation on Thursday evening was made by Wiseburn Intervention Coordinator Sarah Nitsos. Entitled "Reading is the Gateway to Success," Nitsos pulled together research-based data that the District is utilizing to support students in the classroom at all levels.

Nitsos' presentation noted, "As a district, we have prided ourselves on helping all our students succeed. However, despite the best instruction, some students continue to struggle in specific academic areas. The WUSD reading intervention program is based on three guiding practices: Use of research-based resources and teaching practices; alignment of intervention practices to student skill gaps as identified in both the classroom and via intervention screening skills; and the engaging of qualified staff in teaching intervention lessons using research-based practices."

Nitsos pointed out that the components of the Strategic Intervention Program include use of universal screening tools to help identify at-risk students in conjunction with teacher input; and use of a secondary screening tool to determine student skill gaps and match services accordingly. It also provides classroom teachers access to screening data related to their students outcomes; works with grade-level teacher teams to review student data and leverage District-adopted language

arts materials; provides an intervention cycle to coincide with the learning circles at each site; and increases Wiseburn's strategic intervention personnel to work with students within the school day, equitably supporting those in need of intervention. In 2017/18, the Cabrillo and Anza elementary schools saw the number of students rise.

Since implementation of the secondary screeners, the District is now able to group students according to their needs and thoughtfully target specific reading foundational skills, Nitsos reported. "We can now identify student growth and ongoing challenges with precision and ensure that every child succeeds," she emailed.

The last day on the job for Director of Facilities Planning Vince Madsen was on Nov. 15. Silvers called losing Madsen, who had been with the District since 2013 and spearheaded the construction of the new Wiseburn High School, "such a huge loss." In his final thoughts to the community, Madsen emailed, "I am extremely proud of the accomplishments in the development of the Wiseburn High School: Home of the Da Vinci Schools, as it is. The 13-acre site was really the only property available after more than a two-year search for a high school in the South Bay. The site came with a lot of unique challenges that we needed to work through and mitigate (with different regulatory entities), as well as local considerations with the City of El Segundo. I am very proud of my almost 18-year career working in the South Bay."

Meanwhile, the pool and gymnasium opening ceremony is now slated for Dec. 20, with the pool hopefully becoming operational in January.

In Board member reports, President JoAnne Kaneda spoke of the "productive session" on Nov. 8, as well as the need to ensure and control traffic safety around area schools. "We will continue to monitor that," she said.

Action items included the approval of the "Apparent Best Value" for architectural consulting services with LPA Architects for the continued planning and preparation of the District's long-range facilities master plan; and approval of new school construction projects, including additional hardwood gym flooring.

During his comments Thursday evening, Silvers highlighted the work accomplished by Kevin Corrinet, ex-US Army Ranger, who has developed the very popular CrossFit program at Dana Middle School. He also mentioned that the new District websites debuted online on Thursday. "We have had a phenomenal start to the school year...Everyone deserves a little rest," Silvers said.

After the Board passed multiple action items, mainly regarding construction and personnel, Kaneda closed the one-hour meeting around 8 p.m. •

Calendar of Events

Deadline for Calendar items is the prior Thursday by noon. Calendar items are \$1 per word. Email listings to marketing@heraldpublications.com. We accept Visa and MasterCard.

** A Notice this Holiday Season: Please be EXTRA careful around crosswalks and watch out for children crossing, please slow down & enjoy this holiday time of year!! **

THURSDAY, NOV. 22

- HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!
- El Segundo Certified Farmer's Market CLOSED for Thanksgiving
- Spark of Love Toy Drive: from Nov. 12 – Dec. 20. Drop off toys and food to ES Fire Station 1, to help families and children in need this holiday, Contact 310-524-2395.
- Thanksgiving Break – NO SCHOOL FOR ESUSD STUDENTS!!
- El Segundo Public Library is CLOSED for Thanksgiving

FRIDAY, NOV. 23

- Thanksgiving Break – NO SCHOOL FOR ESUSD STUDENTS!!
- Bingo, 1:00 PM. - 3:00 PM., 50 Plus, \$3.00 minimum, Senior Club of El Segundo, 339 Sheldon St., Call Diane: 310-640-9577.

SATURDAY, NOV. 24

- Saturday Night Dance, 7:00 PM. – 9:45 PM., Cost: \$3.00 Per Person, Adults of all Ages Welcome, Senior Club of El Segundo, 339 Sheldon St., Call: 310-524-2705.

SUNDAY, NOV. 25

- Bridge & Pinochle Groups, 11:30 AM. – 3:45 PM, Senior Club of El Segundo, 339 Sheldon St., Call Pam at: 310-318-2856.

MONDAY, NOV. 26

- Canasta Group, 12:00 PM. – 3:00 PM., 50 Plus, Free, Senior Club of El Segundo, 339 Sheldon St., Call Pam at: 310-318-2856.
- Genealogy Club, 11:00 AM. – 12:00 PM., See *Calendar of Events*, page 9

Community Briefs

El Segundo to Host Inaugural World Urban Games LA in 2019

The Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF) has selected El Segundo to host the inaugural World Urban Games in September 2019 and second edition in 2021. The five-day outdoor festival will combine sports, music, food, art and digital entertainment, including e-sports. Up to 700 athletes will compete in various urban sports and Olympic disciplines, including 3x3 basketball, BMX freestyle, bouldering, break dancing, freestyle flying disc, skateboarding, roller skating and parkour. An urban sports showcase will feature up to 100 athletes in at least four other disciplines. The sporting events will be held in El Segundo.

Thousands of spectators are expected to visit El Segundo for the Games. The city plans to close streets for the five-day event. Indoor and outdoor venues in a compact Games Hub will be utilized for the events and an urban park is planned to be constructed before September. El Segundo is

the ideal location to host the Games as the city is already home to professional sports teams the Los Angeles Lakers and the Los Angeles Kings.

Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong, chairman and CEO of NantWorks and owner and executive chairman of the Los Angeles Times, will chair the World Urban Games Organizing Committee. He was an advocate for the World Urban Games to be held in El Segundo. Soon-Shiong was El Segundo's 2017 Champion of Business award recipient and owns several buildings in the city. He is currently building the L.A. Times Center next to the paper's headquarters on a 10-acre campus in El Segundo. The Times Center will be a state-of-the-art, multi-media event space, including an e-sports arena. The World Urban Games events will be centered around these venues.

– Source: Abridged from City of El Segundo Press Release

SBWIB Awarded Grant for Laid-Off Workers and Recently Separated Veterans

The South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) has been awarded a \$995,500 grant by the California Employment Development Department (EDD) to provide career retraining and employment services to workers within the South Bay region who were laid off in recent months.

Working in concert with its workforce network of local community colleges, employers, trade unions and other training providers, the SBWIB will provide a variety of services to displaced workers and recently separated veterans that will include job and resource fairs, on-the-job training, career transition workshops, apprenticeships, and pre-apprenticeship programs, that will prepare individuals to reenter the workforce.

"Many of these laid-off workers already

have experience, but need additional training to gain new skills required by employers, allowing them to return to the workforce and compete for those jobs", noted SBWIB Executive Director Jan Vogel. "Our plan is to match them with employment programs and services within the regional in-demand industries," he concluded. Those industries include construction, utilities, manufacturing, transportation, logistics, hospitality and tourism, and healthcare.

Funding for the grant was provided through the discretionary funds made available to Governor Brown in accordance the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act administered by EDD and California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.

– Source: SBWIB

Aquatics Center Update

The City of El Segundo hopes to begin accessing the new, state-of-the-art aquatics center pool as of Monday, Nov. 26. Aquatic Recreation Supervisor Jeanette Gant noted that a couple of weeks will be needed for staff training, building equipment and other particulars before an anticipated mid-December soft opening date. The tentative grand opening celebration is scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 5

from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Meanwhile, the non-profit South Bay Sports Health and Recreation seeks additional funding contributions for the facility, with close to \$4 million raised as of press time but an overall goal of \$6 million sought. The organization is still taking orders for pavers and donor wall plaques (more information at esaquatics.org). •

"We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives."
– JOHN F. KENNEDY



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