

Modesto City Schools

Missive



"A Diploma in Every Hand!"

426 Locust Street, Modesto, CA 95351
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Modesto City Schools supports the county-wide "Choose Civility" initiative and pledges to encourage and model civil behavior.

La Loma Junior High: Looking Backward/Looking Forward

Ronna Rutishauser, Principal, La Loma Junior High

What do the Ukraine, Stars and Bars, Community Service, Extra-Credit Saturday, Disneyland, 3:00-6:00, and the number 34 all have in common? Why, they are all part of La Loma Jr. High, of course! The 730 La Loma students have experienced a very busy year at 1800 Encina Avenue and look forward to a memorable celebratory ending for our graduating eighth-grade students while welcoming our incoming seventh-grade students in August.

Welcome to Modesto! La Loma hosted 10 Ukrainian students ages 12-14 and two teachers the first two weeks of November. Students attended classes, educated our students about their home, visited landmark sites in California, and performed a joint assembly with our students. They stayed in the homes of some of our students, and have now extended an open invitation to La Loma Lancers to visit them in the Ukraine. What a fun and educational opportunity that would be for our Lancers!

Community Counts! A giant thank you to teacher Dawn Pitcock, many parent volunteers and nearly 100 students from our CJSF (California Junior Scholastic Federation) and WEB (Where Everybody Belongs) Clubs! On December 4, this dedicated group collected 1539 cans and other food goods, \$100 in cash, and numerous coats and blankets as a donation to the Modesto Gospel Mission. Workers said it was one of the largest single donations they had received in recent memory.

Stars and Bars? Also known as "The Patch Program," La Loma is the only school in Modesto City Schools to maintain a program that recognizes fitness achievements consistent with the National Presidential Fitness Program. Students can earn gold or silver stars in cardio endurance, flexibility, upper-body strength, and abdominal strength. Stars are pressed onto the students' PE shorts via a "Mighty Thermal Press" located in the locker rooms. Colorful character stars are pressed onto students' shirts recognizing the following character traits: Consistency (black), Hustle (green), Helpfulness (yellow), and Improvement (orange). Locker Leaders and Stretch Leaders earn leadership bars. La Loma Jr. High is proud to recognize and reward positive character in addition to academic and physical achievement.

Extra Credit, Anyone? La Loma conducted its second annual "Extra-Credit Saturday" on February 28. It is a 4-hour opportunity for students to make up missing assignments or earn some extra-credit (following MCS district requirements, of course) in their core and PE classes. This year 351 students showed up – nearly half the student body! Students had fun working with their friends, improving grades, and winning raffle prizes throughout the morning.

Musical Notes: La Loma's music department, under the direction of Ulices Chavez and Rick Haire, is widely known and respected in California. We

boast a beginning band of 29 students, an advanced band of 51 students, an orchestra of 29 students, and our choir numbers 80 members. Just think of it: One-quarter of our students is active in our music programs! While all of our musician groups perform and travel every year, our choir raised \$22,000 this year and traveled to Disneyland to perform March 11-13. La Loma musicians are well received wherever they perform.

What is "34" all about? Last spring, La Loma students raised our API 34 big points to 786! All of our subgroups met their goals too. That's a lot to celebrate! This year students rigorously prepared for their California Standards Tests again as we have a friendly wager with Roosevelt. The principals will dye their hair the school colors of whichever

school has the highest API. La Loma, of course, is hoping we both will be sporting green!

Hello to our After-School Program! La Loma is the recipient of an after-school program grant, and we are open from 3-6 p.m. each school day. Next fall we hope to enroll at least 100 students to be part of this exciting opportunity. Students have a snack, join clubs, play intramural sports, do their homework, and more.

Good-bye and Hello. As our 8th graders prepare to leave us and go on to high school, we wish them well and look forward to welcoming our incoming 7th graders from El Vista, Lakewood, John Muir, Orville Wright, Rose Avenue, Wilson, and Sonoma. Mrs. Marcelino and I have taken our WEB ambassadors to every one of those campuses, and we are eager to have those students join us as Lancers.



Students take a sit-up test to improve their score.

Got Tdap?

Get your child vaccinated now to avoid delays at the start of the new school year!

No Tdap =

- No Sports
- No Schedule
- No School

A new school immunization law requires all students entering 7th through 12th grades in the 2011-2012 school year in California to be immunized with a pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine booster called Tdap, or have a "Tdap Waiver" on file.

Pertussis is a very contagious respiratory disease that can be severe and last for months. The immunity received from either early childhood immunization or pertussis disease wears off over time, leaving older students and adults susceptible again to pertussis. Immunization with Tdap can protect students, schools and communities against pertussis.

The new requirement affects all students – current, new, and transfers – in public and private schools. The law has two phases:

- For the 2011-2012 school year, all students entering into 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th or 12th grades will need proof of a Tdap shot before starting school.
- For 2012-2013 and future school years, all students entering into 7th grade will need proof of a Tdap shot before starting school.

Students who do not turn in proof of immunization before the last day of the 2010-2011 school year may be turned away at the start of the 2011-2012 school year, or have to wait in long lines while they are cleared to pick up their schedules.

Where to go to get vaccinated:

Please take your student to your current health care provider to get vaccinated. If you do not have insurance, or are under-insured, visit the Health Services Agency Immunization Department at 820 Scenic Drive, Modesto. The Immunization Department provides immunizations Mondays-Wednesdays, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Thursdays, 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m. and Fridays, 8-11 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. No appointment is necessary. A fee of \$10 per immunization is requested. No one will be denied immunizations due to inability to pay. Bring a copy of your student's most recent immunization record.

For more information, contact your school or visit www.shotsforschool.org/.

Source: www.shotsforschool.org

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Upcoming Board Meetings

May 31, 2011
June 20, 2011

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Changes to Summer School

This year, the summer school provided to our students will look very different than it has in the past.

K-6 - Each elementary school site will provide extra help for students who are at risk of being retained. Interventions will be provided to students who require remediation in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. Sessions will be determined by each elementary school individually.

7-8 - Students in grades 7-8 will have access to the four core classes; ELA, math, science and social science. Instruction will be provided in a traditional classroom setting. All junior high classes will meet at Downey High School.

9-12 - Summer school for students in grades 9-12 will consist of on-line class settings at each high school. Unlike last year, there will be no traditional class setting. All curriculum will be delivered on-line.

For more information regarding summer school, please contact your child/children's school.

Teens Run Modesto

Congratulations to the 68 Modesto City Schools students that participated in the Teens Run Modesto Program. These students and their mentors* trained for five months to tackle a half-marathon (13.1 miles) or a full-marathon (26.2 miles) at the Modesto Marathon on March 20.

Beyer: Niel Bieseimeier • Alyssa Lara • Alex Le • Ashley Jennings • Jessica Machado • Jocelyn Salto • Ed Jackson* • Joshua Ramos*

Davis: Jose Barriga • Bilal Bhatti • Cynthia Cheng • Destiny Cisneros • Jessie Colunga • Amanda Costa • Michael Eng-Dacanay • Samuel Garcia • Jose Hernandez • Louie Lara • Alan Laolagi • Vanessa Maravilla • Araeli Morales • Estefania Munoz • Alyssa Myers • Mariela Pena • Sileap Proeung • Taylor Robison • Juan Ruiz • Melody Sanders • Frankie Segura • Jose Torres • Jose Yanez • John Souza* • Bridgit Asuncion*

Downey: Adelaida Casas • Aurora Casillas • Jesus Diaz • Elizabeth Fernandez • Margarita Fernandez • Natalie Franco • Jessica Garcia • Dane Harringer • Ernesto Limon • Danny Mauricio • Esperanza Meza • Jennifer Mojica • Yaneli Oritz • Araceli Perez • Alison Reynolds • Kenji Soares • Alex Thomas • Mike Henderson* • Teresa Gonzales* • Minerva Valderrama*
Elliott: Marcus Bazan • Fred Johnston*

Enochs: Mikayla Benson • Megan Breshears • Jim Chacko • Ryli Davis • Camille DeGarcia • Karen Garcia • Maurice Jackson • Monique Newell • Harvey Pabla • Solonica Pabla • Jasmine Rosario • Grant Tigrett • Jessica Trollinger • Matt Werner • Stephanie Edwards* • Jennifer Brogan* • Andrew Johnson* • Keith Chun*

Gregori: Erick Ruiz Velasco • Morgan Lewis • Kimberly Cloud*

Mark Twain: Karen Ocequeda • Janelle Beckman*

Modesto: Lisa Mills • Maria Perez • Juan Sanchez • Jamasen Rodriguez* • Kris Lewis*

Important Dates! Mark Your Calendars

Last day of school for the 2010-2011 school year:

Thursday, May 26, 2011

First day of school for the 2011-2012 school year:

Wednesday, August 10, 2011

2011 Junior High Graduation Dates and Locations:

Hanshaw - Hanshaw Courtyard
1725 Las Vegas Street, Modesto
Thursday, May 26, 5:30 p.m.

La Loma - Johansen High School Gym
641 Norseman Drive, Modesto
Thursday, May 26, 5:30 p.m.

Mark Twain - Modesto Junior College Stadium
500 Tully Road, Modesto
Tuesday, May 24, 5:30 p.m.

Roosevelt - Downey High School Stadium
1000 Coffee Road, Modesto
Wednesday, May 25, 5:30 p.m.

2011 High School Graduation Dates and Locations:

Beyer - Modesto Junior College Stadium
500 Tully Road, Modesto
Wednesday, May 25, 6:30 p.m.

Davis - Johansen High School Stadium
641 Norseman Drive, Modesto
Thursday, May 26, 6:30 p.m.

Downey - Downey High School Stadium
1000 Coffee Road, Modesto
Thursday, May 26, 7:30 p.m.

Elliott - Johansen High School Stadium
641 Norseman Drive, Modesto
Wednesday, May 25, 7 p.m.

Enochs - Enochs Quad
3201 Sylvan Avenue, Modesto
Friday, May 27, 6 p.m.

Johansen - Johansen High School Stadium
641 Norseman Drive, Modesto
Friday, May 27, 6 p.m.

Modesto - Modesto Junior College Stadium
500 Tully Road, Modesto
Thursday, May 26, 6:30 p.m.

Elementary Education and Response to Intervention

Pam Able, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services, Pre K-6

Response to Intervention (RTI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs. The RTI Process begins with high quality instruction and screening of students in the general education classroom. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning. Progress is closely monitored to assess both the learning rate and level of performance of individual students. Educational decisions about the intensity and duration of intervention are based on individual student's response to instruction.

For RTI implementation to be successful, the following essential components must be implemented with fidelity and rigor:

- High quality, scientifically-based classroom instruction.
- All students receive research-based instruction in the regular classroom.
- Ongoing student assessment to determine progress or the need to enhance the intervention.
- Tiered Instruction – A multi-tiered approach is used to effectively differentiate instruction for all students.
- Parent Involvement – Schools implementing RTI provide parents information about their child's progress, the instruction and interventions used and the academic or behavioral goals for their child.

Generally, the RTI model is a three tier model of support:

Tier 1: High Quality Classroom Instruction, Screening and Interventions

All students are screened to establish baseline academic and behavioral needs and aptitude. This identifies struggling learners requiring additional support. These students would then receive supplemental instruction during the day in their regular classroom. Generally, this intervention does not exceed eight weeks. At the end of this period, students showing appropriate progress return to their regular grade level program. Students not progressing would be moved to Tier 2.

Tier 2: Targeted Interventions

Students not making adequate progress in the regular classroom in Tier 1 are provided with increasingly intensive instruction matched to their needs. These interventions are provided in small-group settings in

addition to instruction in the regular curriculum. More time may be required in this tier, but generally it should not exceed a semester. Students who continue to show too little progress at this level are then considered for more extensive interventions in Tier 3.

Tier 3: Intensive Interventions and Comprehensive Evaluation(s)

At this level, students will receive intensive, individualized interventions that target specific skill deficits. Students who do not make adequate progress in this level may then be referred to, and considered for, special education services.

While RTI began as a response to addressing student goals for special education students, it has

Bret Harte Principal Ruth Flores says: "We are fortunate to be part of the District's six RTI pilot schools. This year our focus is on RTI's Tier 1 intervention (within the classroom). Our goal is not only to provide great instruction and intervention, but to make students 'WINners'. In order to do this we need to give them 'What I (they) Need'."

emerged as a general education initiative to close achievement gaps. This is because getting results for students requires an integrated system, not necessarily keeping regular education and special education separate entities. Currently, RTI is being piloted, in collaboration with Ginger Johnson, Director of Special Education, at six Modesto City Elementary Schools (Bret Harte, El Vista, Marshall, Robertson Road, Rose Avenue, and Sonoma). Our goal is to use those schools as models as we implement the RTI Process at our other K-6 sites.

With the assistance of the Modesto Teachers Association, this past fall we were in-serviced on RTI by California Teachers Association RTI expert Stacy Begin. Dr. Begin's message was simple: The main objective of RTI is not to identify students for special education, but rather to help all students achieve at a proficient level, with schools ultimately making adequate yearly progress.

Benefits of Response to Intervention include:

- Reduce time students wait before receiving additional instructional assistance.
- Reduce the overall numbers of students referred for special educational services and increase number of students succeeding within general education.
- Provide critical information about instructional needs of students which can be used to create effective educational interventions.
- Limit the amount of unnecessary testing that has little or no instructional relevance.
- Ensure that students receive appropriate instruction prior to a placement in special education.

Adopting an RTI model is about adopting best practices, and insisting that we work collaboratively to do what is best for all students. It is about equity in education and academic success.

For more information about RTI, contact your child's school.

MTA Executive Director, Megan Gowans says "MTA (Modesto Teachers Association) and the District had the pleasure of joining together to sponsor a CTA (California Teachers Association) training in RTI last fall. The presentation was very well received, and RTI continues to gather support at the elementary sites which are implementing the model."

International Baccalaureate Program

Susan Elliott, IB Program Coordinator



The International Baccalaureate (IB) program at Modesto High School continues to offer a rigorous curriculum with almost one-fifth of the school, or 481 students, taking one or more IB courses. In February, staff completed IB presentations to interested 8th grade students and their parents. Approximately 140 students may be accepted into the program as freshmen next year.

Currently, there are 68 full IB Diploma senior candidates ready to graduate this month. These students have taken four years of English, foreign language, history, math, and science, and one or two years of an IB elective such as Psychology, Anthropology, Chemistry, Physics, Visual Arts, or Theater Arts. Students have also written a 4,000 word research essay, taken a unique class called the Theory of Knowledge, and have completed over 150 hours of community service. In order for these students to receive the IB Diploma, they must complete all the above requirements and pass all six IB exams with a total score of at least 24 points. For a student in high school, this is a tremendous accomplishment. Usually between 75 to 80% of the senior candidates earn the IB Diploma in addition to their high school diploma. Since the first IB graduating class in 1998, a total of 578 students have received the IB Diploma.

The IB seniors are just beginning to hear from colleges, but early decisions show IB Diploma seniors have been accepted to Brown University, London University School of Economics, Babson College, and the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. Other seniors are still anxiously awaiting acceptances to other schools.

It is also worth noting that three of the 68 IB Diploma seniors were named National Merit finalists: Derek Davis, Michael Lee, and Hannah Neher. The National Merit® Scholarship Program honors individual students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. We certainly congratulate those students for their efforts and dedication.

The IB program is very challenging and demanding. It requires a great deal of motivation and hard work. The students who choose to participate in the program will be extremely well prepared for college. For more information on the IB program at Modesto High, contact Cindy Wagoner at (209) 569-2705 or Susan Elliott at (209) 576-4406 or elliott.s@monet.k12.ca.us.

Bright Beginnings

Arturo M. Flores, Superintendent

After four wonderful years, June 30, 2011, marks my last day with Modesto City Schools. It has been an honor to serve as your Superintendent. I will always remember what a great city and school district I was so fortunate to have served. I hope I fulfilled my commitment to contribute to the legacy of Modesto City Schools

On July 1, 2011, Pam Able will begin her new role as Superintendent of Modesto City Schools. She will step in as Superintendent at a very challenging time. A questionable state budget and the responsibility of responding to two academic accountability systems at the state and federal levels add difficulty to an already challenging position.

It is imperative for the parents, community and Modesto City Schools staff to support Ms. Able in every way possible; whether by sending her some creative solutions, calling to offer support, or giving her a "pat on the back."

What everyone should ponder is that even in these challenging times students are attending school daily at a high rate, test scores are on the rise and parents are happy about the support continually offered to each and every Modesto City Schools student.

I am confident Pam Able is the right person for the job as she knows the community. She attended Modesto City Schools and has lead Administration in the Human Resources Division and the Elementary Education Division. I have observed the positive relationships

she has built with both employees and unions, and the respect they have for her calm, yet commanding, presence.

I appreciate the support I have received over the past four years. I respect the hard work demonstrated by teachers, administrators, parents and students in maintaining the stellar reputation of Modesto City Schools. I salute the Board of Education for their selection of Pam Able as your Superintendent and look forward to reading about all the good things happening in the District as well as the city.

Thank you again for four great years! Modesto City Schools continues to support our students and gives them every opportunity for a fine education and a diploma in every hand.

