



SANTA MARIA JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Signal

Volume 2

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Inside this issue:

Sup't Message	1
Taco Tuesday	1
PV Teacher/SMHS	2
Retirees	2
Merrie the Artist	3
Dr. Mark Richardson	4
Substitute Pay	5
Trustee Areas/RHS	5

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear colleagues,

Unbelievably, we are half-way through the school year! I hope this message finds you and your loved ones doing well, and poised for a holiday break.

Maria and I are anxiously awaiting the arrival of our two daughters from college so we can spend some time enjoying the Christmas spirit together. Our plan is to make some tamales and champurrado at home, go on some local hikes, visit with family in Riverside, and spend time in Los Angeles to experience some art and indulge in our favorite Koreatown eateries. Of course, we'll need to make sure we do this as safely as possible since we are STILL in a pandemic.

As we head into the new calendar year, Dr. Karamitsos will serve as the new Board President and Ms. Perez as the new Clerk. A big thanks to Dr. Garvin as the outgoing President, and to all the board members for their steadfast governance during this past calendar year.

On Tuesday, the Board proudly took action on the new name for our newest district facility, the Mark Richardson Career Technical Education Center and Agricultural Farm, named after our former Superintendent who was instrumental in the creation of the amazing new Center, and who passed away shortly after he joined us for its grand opening in November.

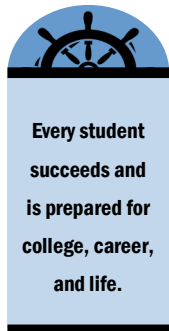
During the winter break, school and district offices will be closed to the public. We will reopen the district office on January 4, with schools reopening on January 10, and classes starting on the 13th.

I wish for each of you a peaceful holiday season and memorable new year. Let us all take a step back, reflect on the people who are special in our lives, put things into a good place, and take stock of our blessings. This is a busy travel time, so be safe and take care of yourselves.

Thank you for your continued perseverance and service to our students. We will see each other in 2022!

With much gratitude,

Antonio Garcia
Superintendent



DATE	SITE
12/17/2021	DISTRICT OFFICE
2/15/2022	PVHS
3/15/2022	RHS
4/5/2022	SMHS
5/17/2022	DELTA
6/7/2022	DISTRICT OFFICE

PVHS TEACHER RICCARDO MAGNI



Pioneer Valley High School Science Teacher, Riccardo Magni, was recently honored as a Salute to Teachers 2021-22 Distinguished Mentor during an event hosted by Cox Communications, the Santa Barbara County Education Office and the Music Academy of the West.

“It feels great to be recognized,” Magni said. “I would mentor new teachers anyway, without getting honored, but it is nice for someone to realize that I try to go above and beyond the call of duty every day. Without new teachers, there wouldn’t be anyone to replace us when we retire.”

Magni’s mentor is his former track and field coach at Haverford College in Philadelphia, Tom Donnelly.

“I learned a lot from him; I learned more than just track from him.” Magni added. “I can never repay him for all of the lessons, but I can take what I learned from him and help others.”

SMHS NEW 50-CLASSROOM BUILDING

The new Santa Maria High School 50-classroom/administration building is taking shape.

It’s projected to be completed in April 2023 and it’s about 40 percent completed, according to Marybeth T. Gallas, SMJUHS Facilities Planner. Presently, concrete work and steel framing are being completed.

The new building will help ease the congestion on Camino Colegio, near the front entrance. The three-story, 88,774 square-foot structure, will face Morrison Avenue and feature visitor parking and a bell tower. The structure’s architectural design will complement the older buildings and incorporate energy-savings measures such as LED lighting and modern climate control systems.



Classrooms will include moveable whiteboard walls, mounted big screen monitors with the capacity to display from the teacher’s tablet, desks and chairs on wheels that separate easily into different arrangements and other learning aids.

The project is funded through Measure H, which was passed by voters in 2016. The projected estimated cost is roughly \$59.5 million, though there will be others costs such as architects, testing, etc., according to SMJUHS Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Yolanda Ortiz.

MID-YEAR RETIREES - THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE. CONGRATULATIONS!

Lori Cook : Administrative Assistant II at SSC - 32 years, 7 months

Rosie Gauna : Attendance Technician at RHS - 50 years, 1 month

Andy Gutierrez : Lead Warehouse Worker / Delivery Driver at SSC - 10 years, 7 months

Gregory Matthews : Maintenance Worker I at SMHS - 10 years, 2 months

Bernie Rayner : Maintenance Worker II at RHS - 28 years, 11 months

Tammy Rhine : Executive Assistant to Superintendent - 33 years, 5 months

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

The amazing work of local artist and PVHS Dean of Students Merrie Okie-Goldin was recently featured in a statewide virtual auction to raise money for ocean conservation and wildlife protection in California.

The painted mixed media piece, inspired by the blue-ringed octopus, is titled "Wish You Were Here." It was featured in the KEEP IT WILD Virtual ART Auction, organized by the ocean change and climate change nonprofit WILD COAST. Okie-Goldin was one of nearly 40 artists from throughout the United States and Mexico that participated.

The paintings sold for \$2,100 to a private collector in Mexico.

"The title, Wish You Were Here, refers to my wish about people taking the time to experience the beauty of our coral reefs and marine animals like the blue-ringed octopus, which is threatened in certain areas," Okie-Goldin said. "I chose the endangered octopus because of its amazing colors and patterns. And while this octopus is relatively docile, it's dangerous if provoked – similar to Mother Nature and Global Warming."

Okie-Goldin was formally a longtime Santa Maria High School Art and Drama Teacher before she became an administrator this year. Her husband, Glenn, a Special Education Teacher at SMHS, also taught drama classes with her. Together, they also put on numerous student-driven community events.

"I loved teaching art to students because you can teach sociology, psychology and cultural identities all related to art history," she added. "It's the perfect subject to build self-confidence while helping students understand empathy for one another especially if we're different from one another."



THE “MARK RICHARDSON CTE CENTER/AG FARM”

The Santa Maria Joint Union High School District Board of Education named the newest high school campus the “Mark Richardson Career Technical Education Center & Agricultural Farm” during a school board meeting on Tuesday night.

Former Superintendent Dr. Richardson, who was instrumental and the driving force behind the institution, unexpectedly passed away at 59-years old on Nov. 15. He began his career at the SMJUHSD in September of 2012 and retired in June of 2019.



“On November 10, 2021, we dedicated the CTE Center and Ag Farm,” said School Board President Dr. Jack Garvin. “Staff, community leaders, former superintendents, our school board, and students were present. Mark Richardson was also in attendance, spoke to the crowd, and visited classrooms. His vision had become a reality. He saw his dream come true. Sadly, he passed away several days later. Tonight, we honor his memory by naming the Center the Mark Richardson Career Technical Education Center and Agricultural Farm. His vision, leadership, and pioneering spirit, leave a legacy for future generations of students to discover for themselves through the pathways offered at the center, what could very well be their life's profession.”

A committee to name the institution was recently formed with members representing agriculture, industry sector programs and the District Administration. Earlier this month, they enthusiastically supported the proposal to name it after Dr. Richardson. The center opened in Fall of 2021.

The 25-acre property, which is north of the Elks Rodeo Grounds and east of Highway 101, will eventually accommodate about 800 students and staff. Presently, students are engaged in construction and machine shops. Diesel mechanics and culinary arts are coming soon. Students are also busy with a variety of student projects involving animal pens, livestock corrals, a barn and farming land.

The institution was paid for through C-2004 Bond Funds and Measure H of 2016 as well as state funding. Students are transported to the facility from SMHS, PVHS, ERHS and DHS for two-hour blocks.

Dr. Richardson’s thirty-plus years in education included time as a classroom teacher, administrator, high school principal and Superintendent of the Taft Union High School District for five years prior to coming to the SMJUHSD. In addition, he held a variety of administrative, teaching and coaching positions in the Kern High School District.

Born in 1961, he grew up outside Bakersfield in the small farming community of Shafter. He had the idea of a career in public service instilled at an early age by his father, Steve, an industrial arts teacher, and his mother, Pat, a nurse.

Dr. Richardson is survived by his wife, Kelly, and two sons, Vaughn and Val, and a daughter, Sherah.



SUBSTITUTE PAY

At the November 9, 2021 Regular Board Meeting, a temporary increase in the substitute teacher pay rate was approved.

The following new rate changes are effective 11/09/2021 – 06/09/2022:

Daily Rate: From \$125/day to \$150/day

Long Term Rate:

1 -10 Days from \$125/day to \$150/day

11-20 Days from \$150/day to \$175/day

21+ Days from \$175 to \$200/day

TRUSTEE AREAS

The Santa Maria Joint Union High School District Board of Education once again sought public input on proposed redistricting area maps to determine how the district's boundaries and neighborhoods should be represented during a public hearing at a school board meeting on December 14.

The board considered three new draft maps and three existing draft maps as part of the process of changing how voters elect school board members by transitioning from at-large elections to by-trustee area elections. For more information, visit <http://www.smjuhsd.k12.ca.us/>

All of the proposed maps have been reviewed by the District's legal team and demographer. Those reviews ensure adherence to legal requirements and are based on the 2020 Census data.

The existing at-large election system gives voters the ability to vote for all of the board members. The new by-trustee area system will allow voters to only vote for a candidate who lives in their district of residence.

The board will also discuss the redistricting at a newly scheduled public hearing during a special school board meeting on January 18. That will be the fifth of five public hearings.

RHS SCHOOL COUNSELORS/DAY OF THE DEAD DANCE-OFF



JOBS: The Human Resources Department is still recruiting for multiple positions . Please check our website for vacancies and send the link to others you know that may have the skills we are seeking.

<https://www.applitrack.com/smjuhsd/onlineapp/>