

NEWSLETTER

Community Partnerships Academy

Berkeley High School



October, 2006

web site: <http://www.bhscpa.org>

Parent Meetings

September 21st was the first parent meeting of the year. We took a look at what we've done so far, made plans for what we want to do this year, and solicited volunteers to carry out our plans. For details, read the meeting minutes on the CP Academy web site. **A note for ninth grade parents:** You were missed. Other parents were hoping to continue the work we started at the orientation in August. If you enjoyed the orientation, you will enjoy the parent meetings. By the way:

The next parent meeting is Thursday, October 19th from 7 pm to 9 pm in the College and Career Center on the 2nd floor of the D building.

Help Wanted

We need a chair person or co-chairs for the Community Building Committee. At the September 21st parent meeting, we agreed that we want to continue last year's winter get together and the end-of-year student presentation event. Parents also suggested organizing some student dances. However, no one volunteered to chair the Community Building Committee that we need to launch these events. So we're

asking again and this time, you don't have to do it alone. Two or more parents can work together as co-chairs and you would have lots of help from other parents, staff, and administration. Your efforts would be very much appreciated and very meaningful. Research shows that creating a sense of community by fostering connections between staff, parents, and students gives everyone a sense that they contribute to and influence the daily life of the school and produces students who are academically motivated, have high educational aspirations, are ethical, caring and socially adept. Interested? Call or email Marty (Peterd1143@aol.com, 644-1219) or Rich (admin@bhscpa.org) soon, or better yet, come to the next parent meeting and volunteer in person.

Meet Susannah Bell

CP Academy teacher, Susannah Bell, teaches World Literature



and Composition/Writing, as well as AP English Language and Composition, a class that enables students to earn college credit in high school and in some cases, skip freshman English in college.

Susannah earned her undergraduate degree in English Education from Florida State University and then a

graduate degree in English Literature from San Francisco State University. She has been at BHS for eight years. Before that she taught at a high school in Gainesville, Florida and ran a dropout retrieval program.

Susannah's philosophy of education is that every child has something to bring to the educational experience to make it meaningful for him or her and to enrich it for all the rest of us.

Susannah puts a high priority on student organization and gets really excited when students demonstrate their maturity. Right now, she is very proud to be able to say that there is no "senioritis" in her classes. The CP Academy seniors remain focused on their work, even though there are only seven more months of high school for them.

Vote November 7th

Remember, to vote on November 7th 2006. One of our CPA parents, Karen Hemphill, is running for Berkeley School Board. Also, Measure A, a source of some major funds for our District (CPA included) is up for renewal. Please vote! The last day to register to vote is October 23rd.

Vote for Measure A

Without Measure A, we would lose a fifth or more of the school district's budget. We would lose a third of our classroom teachers. We would lose all of the 4th-8th grade music and art program, and almost all funding for libraries.

Measure A is not a new or increased tax. It is a continuation of what we already provide in local funding for our public schools. The previous BSEP and Measure B school funding measures will sunset after this school year. If Measure A does not pass, our public schools will have no local funding to supplement the monies that are received from the state and federal governments. Our local school tax makes up about 20-25% of the entire School District budget and funds 30% of all classroom teachers in our schools (for class size reduction), the entire art and music program in our elementary and middle schools, and virtually all of our school library services as well as family outreach, teacher training, and program evaluation--all critical to student achievement.

In addition, each of our schools

receives funds that can be used for school priorities as determined by school site committees. All of these funds are independently audited as well as overseen by a District-wide planning and oversight committee which also provides another layer of public oversight for the individual school site committees.

CP Academy receives West Berkeley Foundation Grant

CP Academy is the proud recipient of a grant from the West Berkeley Foundation. The grant will pay four parent advocates, one from each grade level in the Academy, to make weekly calls to the West Berkeley homes of ten students in each grade who are identified as struggling in school. In order to strengthen the home-school connection for those students, parent advocates will facilitate home-school communication, inform families of students' homework and upcoming assignments using the CP Academy website, solicit and communicate family concerns and make referrals when appropriate to school or community-based resources. Parent advocates will be trained and their work will be coordinated by Irma Parker who is the Parent Resource Center Coordinator at BHS and a CPA parent. Berkeley Youth Alternatives will provide support for parent advocates regarding referrals for community services.

The Internship Program

At the September 21st parent meeting, parents were eager to help find internships for CP Academy students, which lead to a number of questions about the Internship Program. The Internship Program is key to the CP Academy aim of preparing students to take the lead in their own lives and to contribute to the life of their communities. All CPA students take an Introduction to Community Service Professions class in their junior year. The class helps students to choose an internship and integrate the project-based service and experiential learning of their internship with their academic curriculum at BHS.

CP Academy interns have worked with Children's Hospital, the City of Berkeley, the Berkeley Unified School District, the McCullum Youth Court, and MPR Associates, Inc. If you would like to help in developing contacts for the internship or if you simply want to recommend a contact, send an email to Flora Russ (fruss@berkeley.k12.ca.us). When recommending contacts, keep in mind that the CP Academy is looking for organizations that emphasize community service.

To learn more about the Internship Program, click Internships on the CP Academy website.

Newsletter Inquiries:

Submit questions, ideas, or stories for the CP Academy Newsletter to Marty Downey at Peterd1143@aol.com or call 644-1219.

