

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Parents,

It's so encouraging to see our students learning and preparing for successful, rewarding lives. The latest results are in. Our schools are making strong gains despite unprecedented state budget cuts. Student achievement continues to grow because of the dedication, creativity and tenacity of teachers, staff, parents and others in the community who put kids first.

For the second year in a row Long Beach Unified School District was chosen by independent evaluators as one of the top five urban school systems in the nation. The Eli Broad Foundation's team of national experts said our schools are "beating the odds, developing systems that work, defying nay-sayers, and using innovative approaches to increase achievement for all children." Our schools and teachers do this by setting clear academic goals, monitoring school and student performance, and rewarding results.

Each year, more of our students become the first in their families to earn admissions and scholarships to prestigious colleges and universities. Each year, our schools score higher on the state's Academic Performance Index. Each year, we receive honors from independent evaluators who know that a good public school system can be a beacon of hope for the nation.

Thank you for helping our schools and students to succeed. We appreciate your support and the opportunity to serve your children.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Steinhauser

Christopher J. Steinhauser
Superintendent of Schools

P.S. It's all about achievement.



Long Beach Unified School District • 1515 Hughes Way, Long Beach, CA 90810 • (562) 997-8000



Most Schools Here Meet, Exceed State Growth Targets

The Long Beach Unified School District has achieved strong academic performance growth – among the best of California's large school districts. Test results released by the California Department of Education show that the district has a far higher percentage of its schools meeting or exceeding their Academic Performance Index goals than schools statewide. Ninety-three percent of all schools in the district increased their overall index scores.

Compared to schools statewide, a much higher proportion of local schools meet or exceed their Academic Performance Index growth targets – 69 percent of LBUSD schools versus 53 percent of California's public schools. Some schools even achieved double or triple their growth targets.

These latest improvements provide more evidence that school reforms and higher standards are raising student achievement. Reforms include intensive reading and math instruction, and a series of academic checkpoints or performance standards that make sure students are ready to move from one grade to the next.

"Our teachers, staff and students deserve our gratitude for doing a good job," said Christopher Steinhauser, superintendent of schools. "Their hard work is getting better results. We're on the way up."

In comparison with the state's 10 largest districts, LBUSD had greater Academic Performance Index growth than all but one district. LBUSD has continued to reduce the number of low achieving schools while increasing the number of high achieving schools.

Local First Graders Excel on Reading, Math Tests

First graders in the Long Beach Unified School District turned in their highest test scores in a decade, according to the most recent numbers. Nationally-normed state achievement tests show first graders scoring at the 67th percentile in reading and math, both increasing over the previous year. The average student nationwide scores at the 50th percentile.

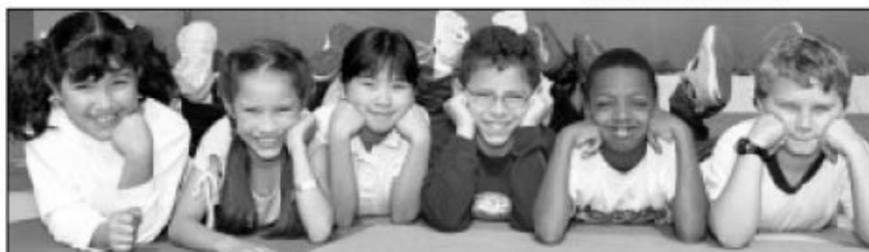
The national grade percentile ranks on specific subtests confirm local students' strong showing in word study skills, reading comprehension, word reading, math problem solving, and math procedures. These skills are preparing children to excel as they move up through the grades.

Studies show that reading ability in the primary grades is one of the best predictors of success in high school, college and beyond.

"Our first graders now rank in the top third and are approaching the top fourth of students in the U.S.," said Lynn Winters, director of research for the school district. "That's exciting."

It's All About Achievement

Long Beach Unified School District • Student Performance Update



SUCCESS: Ninety-three percent of schools have raised test scores, often by leaps and bounds. See details inside.

School District Named Among America's Best

Long Beach Unified School District is one of the top five urban school systems in the nation and is competing to be named the best in America this September. For the second year in a row, the school district was chosen recently from more than 16,000 U.S. school districts as one of the top five contenders to win the annual Broad Prize for Urban Education. The prize, considered education's equivalent to the Nobel Prize, includes \$1 million in scholarships for the most outstanding urban school districts.

Each of the five finalists receives at least \$125,000 in scholarships. As a two-time finalist, Long Beach has already earned at least \$250,000. The top winner receives \$500,000 for students. The other finalists this year are Boston Public Schools, Garden Grove Unified School District, Jefferson County Public Schools in Kentucky, and Norfolk Public Schools in Virginia.

"These school systems are models of educational innovation, resourcefulness and dedication," said Eli Broad, founder of The Broad Foundation. "It is critical that we recognize their success and share their strategies with educators and the public across the country."

An exhaustive, independent study of the finalists showed they have done the best job raising achievement for students from all

walks of life, breaking through language and income barriers to give all children their best chance at success.

The Broad Foundation established the prize to build confidence in public schools by spotlighting districts that achieve solid results. The foundation hopes that other school systems can learn from the winners.

A review board of 20 prominent education leaders from throughout the nation analyzed extensive data to determine the finalists. The Long Beach Unified School District provided more than 20,000 pieces of information on student achievement. A team of researchers will visit each finalist district before announcing the top prize.

What Others Say

"The residential real estate market is exceedingly hot right now," said John Gooding, Century 21 Sparrow-Shoreline partner. "About 10 years ago, there was a fairly large exodus from Long Beach, driven by the perception that the schools were not competitive. In the last five years, we've seen many of those people move back due to the wonderful job the school district has done in enhancing education."

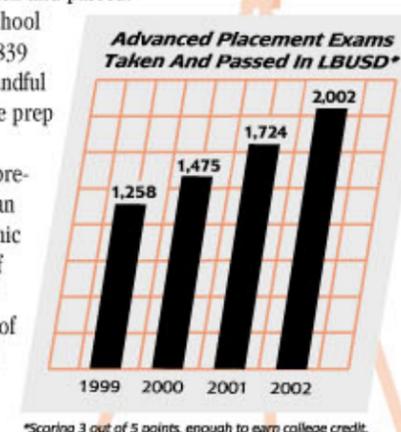
Students Pass More AP Exams, Save Millions in Tuition

Students in the Long Beach Unified School District passed more than 2,000 Advanced Placement tests for college credit last year, an increase of 59 percent since 1999. One local high school, Poly, now ranks among the very best of the best public and private high schools in the U.S. on the number of Advanced Placement tests taken and passed.

The latest national ranking places Poly High School 36th among 22,991 high schools—higher than 99.839 percent of the high schools in the nation. Only a handful of the best public schools and expensive elite private prep schools have comparable records.

Districtwide, rigorous academic courses now prepare high school students to take and pass more than 20 different exams to earn advanced college academic credit while still in high school. Each year dozens of local high school graduates enter college as sophomores because they have already earned a full year of AP college credits. To earn college credit, students must achieve a test score of at least a three on a five-point scale.

Students who take Advanced Placement courses have a far greater chance of success in college. Eighty-five percent of AP students continue their education beyond high school. More than 60 percent of AP students graduate from college in four years or less. Nationally, only 38 percent of students graduate from college in four years or less. The faster college completion rate for local AP scholars saves their families millions of dollars every year.



High Schools Help Students Prepare for State Exit Exam

High schools in the Long Beach Unified School District have moved quickly to help students prepare for the California High School Exit Exam. Students must pass the exam to earn a diploma. The state legislature made the exam a requirement for the class of 2004 but recently began to consider postponing it. Whether or not the exam is postponed as a graduation requirement, local high schools will continue to prepare students. Preparation efforts have proven effective here, with pass rates rising significantly.

To learn more about the exam, go to www.lbusd.k12.ca.us and click on High School Exit Exam in the alphabetical index.



Local Schools and Students Win More State, National Honors

Schools here in California's third largest school system have added to an impressive collection of local, state and national honors and achievements this year.

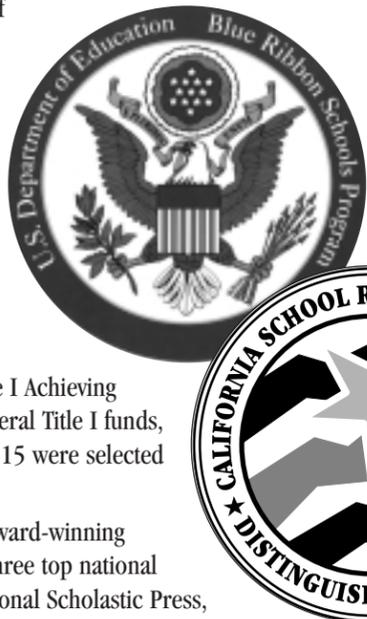
Distinguished and Blue Ribbon Schools. Avalon High School, Stanford Middle School, and California Academy of Mathematics and Science all were recently named 2003 California Distinguished Schools by the California Department of Education. These local schools were among only 132 of California's 2,228 public middle and high schools picked for this top state honor. Past winners include: Barton, Cleveland, Fremont, Gant, International, Kettering, Los Cerritos, Lowell, Madison, Prisk, Signal Hill and Twain elementary schools; Cubberley, Hudson and Newcomb K-8 schools; Hughes, Rogers and Stanford middle schools; and Polytechnic High School. Winners of this award apply for the National Blue Ribbon award. National Blue Ribbon winners include Cubberley K-8 School, Prisk and Twain elementary schools, and Hughes and Rogers middle schools.

Golden State Seal Merit Diplomas. More than 300 high school students in the Class of 2003 earned Golden State Seal Merit Diplomas. These students achieved high scores on rigorous tests in U.S. History, written composition, math, science and other subjects. Academically, these scholars represent the top one percent of students in the state.

Governor's Scholars and Cal Grants. A total of 1,683 Long Beach Unified School District high school students have received high qualifying scores to earn a Governor's Scholars Award of \$1,000 each. Hundreds of Cal Grant awards were also announced recently for local seniors who are model applicants for the state financial aid award.

Achieving Schools. Seven schools – Addams, Emerson, Gompers, MacArthur, Mann, Signal Hill and Robinson elementary schools – were recently named outstanding 2003 No Child Left Behind Title I Achieving Schools. Of 4,936 California schools receiving federal Title I funds, only the top schools qualified to apply. Of those, 115 were selected as winners.

Top Student Magazine. Jordan High School's award-winning literary-art magazine, Stylus, this spring received three top national ratings: the All American designation from the National Scholastic Press, First Place from the American Scholastic Press, and an Excellent rating from the National Council of Teachers of English. Stylus is produced by Jordan students who design, write, illustrate and photograph the contents of the four-color publication.



WAITING LIST: Popular schools like Hill Classical Middle School have hundreds of students waiting to enroll.

Nationally Certified Teachers. Eighteen more Long Beach Unified School District teachers earned their National Board Certification this year, more than doubling the number of nationally certified teachers in the school district. To earn this prestigious certification, teachers develop an extensive professional portfolio over eight months, and then they are tested with written exercises for a day. The Long Beach Unified School District has made a commitment to support teachers who are interested in applying for National Board Certification. Teachers who are accepted and successfully complete the precandidacy program are eligible for district payment of National Board application fees, a \$2,300 savings. These teachers also receive a 10 percent salary increase, good for the life of the certification, or 10 years. It's just one example of the many incentives and professional development efforts recently implemented to attract and keep the best teachers.

Students Returning From Private Schools. Hundreds of students from private schools and other school districts continue to line up on waiting lists to enroll in the Long Beach Unified School District. Hill Classical Middle School, for example, has 860 applicants for 350 spots for sixth graders in September 2003. Popular schools like Wilson Classical High School have attracted several hundred students from private schools and Orange County schools in recent years.

Head Start in Long Beach Unified Declared 'A Model for Nation'

Long Beach Unified School District Head Start has earned the highest of U.S. honors by meeting or exceeding all 700 federal requirements during an independent, exhaustive, evaluation and week-long review. A national expert called Long Beach Head Start "the best I've ever seen."

"This is the very first review I've experienced where there were absolutely no findings of non-compliance," said Maria Fort, the federal team leader who began working in 1966 for the federal Head Start administration. "Our visit was superb and so very exciting. It was such a pleasurable week for the review team."

Fort led a team of 12 reviewers from throughout the nation as they visited nine Head Start centers here. They were impressed by the excellence and dedication of the staff.

"There were many, many strengths," said Fort, who has evaluated hundreds of Head Start programs. "Nowhere have I seen the kind of respect for and understanding of Head Start by a whole school district. There were lots of 'oohs' and 'ahs' during our visit. The team member from Florida said she was ready to move to Long Beach."

In the Long Beach area, Head Start assists 2,232 children and their families with 23 preschools, two Early Head Start centers and home-based services. Assistance includes education, health, nutrition, social services, and parental involvement activities for families with children five years old and younger.

Members of Fort's review team praised the school district's top leadership for their strong support of Head Start. They commended Head Start's parent outreach and numerous community partnerships. Head Start recruited 32 new business partners this year, more than any school or site in the district.

"Your community partners are an incredible asset," Fort said. "People from the community happily give up their time to make this program better. These are doctors and nurses – people who are really busy – yet they are willing to help."

Also singled out for recognition were Head Start's curriculum and instruction, staff's devotion to children, nurturing care for parents, services for pregnant women, effective staff training, health programs including services for overweight children, seamless transition of



students to kindergarten, and a "thorough and unique self assessment."

These strengths and local Head Start's total compliance with all U.S. requirements set an example for others, said Jerry Gomez, associate director for Head Start in California.

"Certainly any program that has no items of non-compliance is a model for the nation," he said.

The U.S. government launched Head Start in 1965 to overcome the effects of poverty on preschool children and their families.

Higher Achievement Pays Off For Broad Foundation Scholars

The Broad Foundation recently announced 14 local high school seniors are recipients of scholarships worth a total of \$125,000. Each student was selected for remarkable improvement in academic achievement.

The scholarships are the result of Broad's selection of the Long Beach Unified School District as one of the top five large urban school districts in the nation. Scholarship winners are Jordan's Virhel Barrera, Saul Melgarejo, Alba Menjivar, Lisette Sepulveda and Tristan Stewart; Cabrillo's Adisa Anderson; Lakewood's Monica Bordenave, Yolanda Caballero and Laura Operchuck; Millikan's Cynthia Durand and Rebeca Trinidad; and Wilson's Anner Alvarado, Ashlye Perez and Harmanjot Singh.

"These students' successes are terrific examples of what strong school systems can accomplish with educational innovation, resourcefulness and dedication," said Eli Broad, founder of The Broad Foundation and The Broad Prize. "It is critical that we not only recognize the success of the school district, but that students reap the rewards of their hard work and commitment."



The Broad Prize for Urban Education.

For up-to-date information about your schools, visit www.lbusd.k12.ca.us.