



YOUR SOURCE FOR WUSD NEWS

JANUARY 2012

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

### BEST: ESTABLISHING POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATES

The Office of Student and Family Support Services in WUSD has been hard at work implementing the BEST Program...  
Page 1

### FREE TAX PREPARATION EVENT

IRS Staff and volunteers certified by the IRS in tax preparation will be present to help West Sacramento families...  
Page 1

### SCHOOL FOCUS: ELKHORN VILLAGE

Elkhorn Village is an elementary school serving students from preschool age through eighth grade...  
Page 2

### UPCOMING EVENTS

RGHS Back to School Night, Cash for College Workshop, Elementary School Parent Conferences...  
Page 2

## BEST: Establishing Positive School Climate Through Teaching Positive Behaviors

The Office of Student and Family Support Services in WUSD has been hard at work implementing the BEST Program, (Building Effective Schools Together) in all of our schools.

The BEST Program is an integrated approach to teaching positive behaviors and building positive climate in our schools. BEST is built around teaching behaviors school-wide and in the classroom by setting clear and positive expectations for students. It provides support for teachers and staff to build consistency in the teaching of positive replacement behaviors and application of discipline practices. BEST is also integral to the development of individual student intervention plans as it focuses on the function of behavior in our schools.

BEST offers behavior support for all at the school-wide level, for some at the strategic level and for a few at the intensive level. In our first implementation year, its influence can already be seen at our school campuses in more positive relationships among teachers, staff, parents and students, stronger sense of school community and in the case of some schools, significantly fewer suspensions.

BEST training for WUSD staff began in May 2011 for the school-wide and classroom levels. Additional training for the development of individual student supports was held in September 2011.

Phase three of training for sites was held December 2011 and centered on data collection strategies for ongoing BEST planning. Sites were trained in teams of 10 per site; the teams trained are now the ambassadors of BEST practices throughout WUSD.

Once trained, sites enthusiastically committed to full implementation of the BEST Program and its practices and ultimately improving school climate. Examples of such commitment are:

- The production of student produced video entitled "Rephrase", which aims to raise awareness about and reduce the use of profanity among our high school students
- Invitations to well attended "Fantastic Fridays" for students with perfect attendance, no behavior referrals and multiple "Paws-i-tive" referrals
- Students working hard to earn WOW tickets for behavior that shows safety, respect and responsibility, earning chances at the "Big Spin!" and cool rewards

With the ongoing teaching of BEST practices, site administrators and teachers are able to take a preventative approach to behavior. As we refine implementation, we look forward to strengthening the positive relationships already being developed and continuing to improve our school communities.



### FREE TAX PREPARATION EVENT

Sponsored by Assemblymember Yamada, Yolo County Children's Alliance (YCCA) and WUSD  
February 4, 2012 - 9:00a.m.-3:00p.m - River City High School Library

IRS Staff and volunteers certified by the IRS in tax preparation will be present to help West Sacramento families making up to \$50,000 complete their 2011 tax returns for FREE.

For appointments and more info, call YCCA at (916) 572-0560 or visit, <http://www.asmdc.org/members/a08/>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT RIVER CITY HIGH SCHOOL

February 1st | 6 – 8 p.m.

### FREE TAX PREPARATION EVENT

River City High School Library  
February 4th | 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

### CASH FOR COLLEGE WORKSHOP

River City High School Library  
February 8th | 6 – 8 p.m.

### PARENT CONFERENCES/MINIMUM DAYS: ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

February 6– 10 | Dismissal at 12:45 p.m.

### RIVER CITY HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL (ROUND 1)

Sacramento County Courthouse  
February 16th | 6-9 p.m.

### SOUTHPORT TALENT SHOW SOUTHPORT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

February 16 | 6-7 p.m.

### NO SCHOOL

February 17th – Lincoln's Birthday  
February 20th – President's Day

### WESTMORE OAKS PTA MOVIE NIGHT: GRADES K – 5

February 24th | 7:30 – 9 p.m.

## Stay Connected With WUSD!

Online: [www.wusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.wusd.k12.ca.us)

#### In Person:

930 Westacre Road, West Sacramento, CA

#### By Phone:

916.375.7600

#### By Email:

[info@wusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:info@wusd.k12.ca.us)

*Connections* is published by the Washington Unified School District as a service to district staff, parents, community members and partners.

#### Translation Services

*In Spanish:* Contact Maria Enriquez, 916-375-7604 ext. 1040 or [menriquez@wusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:menriquez@wusd.k12.ca.us)

*In Russian:* Contact Pavel Litovka, 916-375-7700 or [plitovka@wusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:plitovka@wusd.k12.ca.us)

## School Focus: Elkhorn Village Elementary School

**Elkhorn Village is an elementary school serving students from preschool age through eighth grade. It is a Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) school, which creates a lower class size in all grades, taught by experienced, highly-qualified teachers.**

QEIA also promotes on-going professional development for teachers in a variety of areas – from Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies to “Real Colors” and beyond.

We are proud of our students, who continue to increase their achievement on the California Standards Tests (CSTs). Our teachers are dedicated to providing a variety of activities designed to help each child successfully complete the learning goals and meet the educational targets in each subject area. Dedicated to working with the whole child, teachers collaborate on lessons to increase student health and safety.

Our AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program serves sixth through eighth grade students. It is designed to teach students how to organize, study, and prepare for the challenging courses required to secure admission into four year colleges after high school graduation. Our program is offered as an elective during the school day, and is an important element in continuing to promote college as a focus for our students. AVID strategies—such as Cornell notes—are infused into a variety of classes, helping all students learn how to learn.

Elkhorn offers a variety of after school activities, including tutoring in core subjects, sports, and extended day activities that feature art, physical activities, and homework assistance. Our MESA (Math Engineering and Science Achievement) program started last year. MESA's goal is to develop academic and leadership skills, raise educational expectations, and instill confidence in students.

Through local and state competitions, MESA demonstrates how math, science, and engineering activities are both fun and exciting. Elkhorn students have already won local competitions.

Our after school program will be adding a nutrition and physical activity component this spring. Through the district partnership with YMCA's Healthy Kids program, 3rd-6th grade students enrolled in the after school program will also receive nutrition classes and counseling on healthy life choices.



Student safety is a primary concern in all of our schools. We have seen a successful beginning to the BEST (Building Effective Schools Together) program at Elkhorn, through which we identify key student behaviors to promote a safe and supportive atmosphere for all students. Teachers create lessons and model for students

“The Elkhorn Way” for doing a variety of activities, including lining up for lunch, entering and exiting student assemblies, and returning to the classroom after recess. Students earn Tiger Tokens through their appropriate behavior, and spend their tokens in our student store. Students have also earned—individually and collectively—rewards that include lunch with music, pizza parties, popsicles, and free dress days.

By teaching students our expectations, and rewarding positive behaviors, Elkhorn has been able to reduce the number of administrative referrals and school suspensions. We believe the best place for all students is in the classroom, prepared to learn. As students are taught to self-manage their behavior and their learning they develop the skills to be successful throughout their lives.

## Quick Connections | News Briefs



*WUSD Director of Student and Family Services Lisa Guillen (right) leads meeting participants in developing intervention and support services to help families and students be successful.*

### SAVING THE SAFETY NET: PARTNERING TO SUPPORT KIDS AND FAMILIES

In this time of diminishing resources and program cutbacks, WUSD and a number of social service and law enforcement agencies are strengthening partnerships to better support students and families at risk. Meeting monthly as a collaborative team with Director of Student and Family Services Lisa Guillen, agencies such as, Yolo Family Service Agency, People Reaching Out, Victor Community Support Services, Communicare and Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Center (SADVC) are working with WUSD to provide intervention and counseling services to students and families in need to help kids get back on track. “We are here to help families so students can be successful.” For more information on the development of the safety net or to access services, contact Lisa Guillen at (916)375-7404 Ext. 1371.