

Academic Anchor

*Addressing educational issues that affect military children
in Navy Region Southwest.*



Issue 8, September 2009

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President Obama to Address Children on The Importance of Education

In a recent interview with student reporter, Damon Weaver, President Obama announced that on September 8 — the first day of school for many children across America — he will deliver a national address directly to students on the importance of education. The President will challenge students to work hard, set educational goals, and take responsibility for their learning. He will also call for a shared responsibility and commitment on the part of students, parents and educators to ensure that every child in every school receives the best education possible so they can compete in the global economy for good jobs and live rewarding and productive lives as American citizens.

Since taking office, the President has repeatedly focused on education, even as the country faces two wars, the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression and major challenges on issues like energy and health care. The President believes that education is a critical part of building a new foundation for the American economy. Educated people are more active civically and better informed on issues affecting their lives, their families and their futures.

This is the first time an American president has spoken directly to the nation's school children about persisting and succeeding in school. We encourage you to use this historic moment to help your students get focused and begin the school year strong. I encourage parents, teachers, and students to watch the President deliver this address on **Tuesday, September 8, 2009**. It will be broadcast live on the White House website www.whitehouse.gov 12:00 noon eastern standard time.

Source: ed.gov

Visit us on the web!

<http://www.cnrsw.navy.mil/fsc/schools.htm>

DoDEA Grants Support Local Education

The Department of Defense Education Activity Awards 44 grants to Public schools.

There were two categories of grants -- competitive and invitational. More than \$41 million was awarded to 35 school districts in the competitive category and nearly \$15 million was awarded to an additional nine school districts in the invitational category. A total of 284 schools within the 44 districts will receive grant funds and those schools serve over 77,000 military students. The amount of the awards is based on military student enrollment and range from \$300,000 to \$2,500,000, depending on the number of military students at the target schools.

"This is the first year DoDEA has been able to execute our grant program and it's very gratifying to be able to offer assistance to the schools that are educating our military's children." said Dr. Shirley Miles, Director of DoDEA. "We are looking forward to seeing how the districts implement the programs they've developed. We know that all children in the grant recipient districts will benefit from these awards."

DoDEA's FY 2009 grant program focused on enhancing student learning opportunities, student achievement, and educator professional development at military-connected public schools.

Coronado Unified School District was the recipient of a \$1,254,000 competitive grant. With the goal of closing achievement gaps, the district will implement a number of

computer-based programs: 1) Destination Reading and Destination Math, a comprehensive curriculum that includes multiple assessments; 2) Skills Tutor, which provides remediation and enrichment for students; 3)

Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces, an artificial intelligence engine that assesses each student individually and continuously; 4) Novanet, a web-based program that analyzes credit deficiency in middle and high school students; 5) SOAR, and; 6) SAS on Demand for K-12, a data analysis program.



San Diego Unified School District was the recipient of a \$2,500,000 invitational grant. "Operation School Success" initiative targets Serra High Cluster of eight schools, which has 3,200 military students, over 26 percent of the district total. Two elementary schools have nearly 100 percent military student enrollment. Focusing on a cluster (K-12) will provide military student data for patterns of achievement across the K-12 spectrum, afford opportunity to seek out effective interventions currently in practice in the higher performing schools in the cluster, and ensure the ability to impact schools with an especially high number of military students. For a full list of grant recipients visit:

http://militaryk12partners.dodea.edu/2009_grantawards.html#list

Source: <http://militaryk12partners.dodea.edu/index.html>

This Month's Featured Web Resource

Navy Knowledge Online (NKO)

NKO offers children, teens and anyone seeking knowledge and entertainment a variety of resources at no cost!

What's Available:

- Downloadable IPOD, Kindle and Sony Reader audio books
- Study with grade appropriate content in Math, Reading, Science and Writing
- Student reference center (periodicals, journals, dictionary, encyclopedia, etc.)
- College Prep: CLEP practice tests, AP and GED prep, Family College Planning, Resume for College Applications
- Learn a Foreign Language! Arabic, French, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese
- International Children's Library: A collection of world literature
- Children's Menu (ages 3 and up) Tumble Talking books, Tumble Readables,



<http://www.nko.navy.mil>



Ten Reasons to Attend Back to School Night

If Back-to-School Night, that evening early in the school year when you're invited to walk through your child's schedule and meet the teachers, doesn't draw you in, you're not alone -- fewer and fewer parents are making attending a priority. But that's actually a pretty good reason why you *should* get yourself there; if all those other slacker parents stay home, you may be treated to a one-on-one meeting with your child's teacher. Here are 10 more reasons why BTS Night is where it's at:

1. You can walk in your child's footsteps.

Seeing firsthand whether your child's classrooms are as spread out and strenuous to get to as all of that can help you deal appropriately with your child's complaints -- devising shortcuts and strategies if transit really is a problem, and withholding sympathy if it's not.

2. You can meet the teachers, all at once.

What might take a series of afternoon conferences can be accomplished in one snappy evening, as you proceed from classroom to classroom, homeroom to special, gym to cafeteria, and get a good look at the people who will be teaching your child this year.

3. You'll get a look at the support staff, too.

If your child is supposed to have an inclusion teacher, instructional aide, or one-on-one aide, look for those folks in the classroom at Back-to-School Night. This may be your best chance to learn their names and their functions, and make sure they're on the job.

4. It's your first chance to spot problems.

The teacher who makes a big point of saying he doesn't put up with any nonsense. The instructor who admits she doesn't hear so well. The aide who's constantly chattering during the presentation. The inclusion teacher who speaks so forthrightly the regular education teacher looks daggers at her. You know what sorts of situations are going to cause problems for your child, and even though Back-to-School Night is a best-foot-forward endeavor, you can see the seams showing if you look hard enough.

5. Someone will make big promises about your child's education.

When all you go to is special-ed meetings, you're used to hearing "We're not promising what's best, just what's appropriate." So it can be instructive to hear what's said at a regular-ed event like BTS Night. Do administrators stand before this assemblage of parents and taxpayers and promise to do the bare minimum of what's appropriate, or to provide a superlative education for every student who puts in the effort? If it's the latter, take note. Your kid's a member of that student body, too.

6. You can keep an eye out for allies.

You're not likely to get a class list home -- at least not one with full names and phone numbers -- so this is your best chance to glance around the room, see if there are any familiar parents, and take down some contact information for

emergency homework situations.

7. The teacher wants to know how to reach you.

You're not the only one looking for contact information. Teachers may take this opportunity to get your e-mail address for easier communication, or to hand out theirs. Don't miss the opportunity to give and get that information.

8. Supplies are on sale.

Schools often sell things like gym clothes, school T-shirts, and other goodies at Back-to-School Nights. Which do you suppose is easier, picking this stuff up yourself or trusting your child to bring the order forms home and get your check in the right hands?

9. Parent Involvement Opportunities.

Often, parent groups are on hand at back to school night to recruit volunteers. Take this opportunity to look for ways to volunteer and be involved in your child's school.

10. Show your dedication to your child's education.

You may be amazed at how few people actually show up for this night of nights. And how many parents and teachers cluck at how few parents actually show up at these things, and how very dedicated the ones who do must be. Get yourself a piece of that!

When is Back to School Night?

Schools will advertise Back to School Nights in many ways. Look for information and flyers in your child's take home folders. Most schools also list the dates on their websites, include them in community newspapers and school/classroom newsletters. If all else fails, call the school and ask!



Excellence in Education

Highlighting Military Friendly Schools in the Southwest Region

Educational Fair Increases Family Readiness in San Diego

By Maile Y. Baca, Naval Base San Diego Public Affairs

SAN DIEGO (NNS) -- The Navy School Liaison Program in association with the San Diego Unified School District held their first Back-2-School Resource Fair and Enrollment Event Aug. 20 at Jean Farb Middle School, located in the Murphy Canyon military housing area in San Diego. The event showcased a variety of educational and military resources for military families. Families new to San Diego were able to register their children in the San Diego Unified School District for the upcoming school year and gather resources for a variety of programs offered by the Navy and school district. Some of the booths at the fair included information on the Navy's Exceptional Family Member Program; Fleet and Family Service Center; school employment for spouses; transportation; before and after school programs; daycare; choice programs for charter; magnet and virtual schools and home schooling. The event was developed by Kirsten Webb, regional school liaison officer, Navy Region Southwest and Pamela Hosmer, Children in Transition administrator for San Diego Unified.

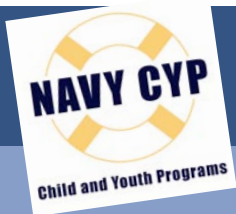
"With all the budget cuts, what happens in the summer is that all the schools are closed. Military families have high transfer rates over the summer, and when they get here, they can't go to a school and enroll because they are closed. In the end, the parents get anxious," said Webb. At the fair, parents were able to

register for specific schools. Parents could also enroll them in additional programs and ask any questions about the educational resources offered. "We have people processing immunizations, transportation and before and after school programs today. We originally focused on enrollment, and then we thought, people in the area need to learn about district



resources, and they need to understand the resources the military offers as well," remarked Hosmer. Dr. Arun Ramanathan, chief student services officer for San Diego Unified, agreed with the combined efforts for the fair. "We are going to do whatever we can to ensure a smooth transition for our military families, and it starts with events like this. We want the least of the worries of a military family to be the transition into school, and if we can make that happen, we're going to do it." Capt. Rick Williamson, commanding officer, Naval Base San Diego, attended the event to show his support for the military family. "This program is a demonstration of how the Navy cares about our

military families. We need to assure those Sailors out there who are going forward to fight the fight that their families are being taken care of - and through events like these, we are getting that job done." School liaison officers (SLOs) are in place to serve as the central point of contact between Navy Region Southwest commands and the school systems in the area. SLOs specialize in serving military students and parents and offer a wide spectrum of services enabling families to become more involved in their child's educational experience while supporting the school systems that educate military children.



Military base kids enjoy coaxing food from ground By Marjorie Hernandez

Randall Smalls smiled as he carefully cut slits in a small packet of potable soil and inserted a handful of seeds.

"It's going to be a Chinese garden," Randall, 9, said as he gently pushed the seeds of Chinese chives jiu cai and gau choy into the soil. "When they grow, you will get to see how pretty they get. I'm excited."

On a recent Thursday at the Port Hueneme Youth Center at Naval Base Ventura County, about 20 second- and third-graders learned some basic skills to start their own vegetable gardens during a visit by Susan Gloeckler, the Ventura County 4-H youth development supervisor.

The workshop was part of a new initiative to create 4-H programs at U.S. military bases across the world, Gloeckler said.

"The whole idea to put 4-H in the military bases is so that when parents get transferred to another base, there will be another program the children can feel at home with," she said.

In Ventura County, children who attended summer camps at the base's Port Hueneme and Point Mugu youth centers participated in various 4-H exercises and visited local farms.

Stacey Tamai, youth program leader at Point Mugu, said the children have already finished several 4-H projects, including a "pizza and salsa garden" filled with vegetables and fruits used to make those two dishes.

"It's a good mix of hands-on projects as well as discussion in a classroom setting," Tamai said. The kids get hands-on experience and are taught by Gloeckler and volunteers from local 4-H clubs.

"It makes the children think about the process and where their food comes from," said Amber Melendez, the base's Port Hueneme youth director. "This gives them a complete experience."

Glen Sanders, a graduate of the UC Cooperative Extension's master gardener program, visited the children at Port Hueneme and talked about the "hamburger plant." In this exercise, Sanders led the young gardeners as they explored the agricultural roots of the contents of a burger— buns, meat and vegetables.

Gloeckler showed the kids a long piece of celery and described how each part can be consumed.

The children were then treated to their own small cup of salad and ranch dressing.

"They even asked for seconds ... when do you see that?" Gloeckler said.

The children also lit up when they received some special visitors — Remy, a gray and white mini-lop rabbit, and Hogan, a tricolored mini-rex rabbit.

Jenean Bass and daughter Brenda, volunteers for the Conejo Valley 4-H, brought the rabbits to the camp and taught the children about differences between the two.

"It's important that kids interact with animals, and 4-H provides kids that opportunity," said Brenda Bass, now a student at UC Davis. "It gives city kids a different perspective."

Youth Activities



- Back to School Party
September 3, 4-7 pm
FREE
Gateway
- End of Summer BBQ
September 4, 11-4pm
12-18 yrs old
FREE
Bayview, Chesterton, Village at Serra Mesa
- Teen Back to School Dance
September 11, 7-9pm
k-5th graders
\$4.00
Silver Strand
- Teen Back to School Dance
September 11, 9-10pm
6-12th graders
\$3.00
Silver Strand
- America's Day for Kids
September 16, 2-4pm
FREE
All ages
Harman
- Day for Kids
September 16, 1:00pm
k-12 grade
Chesterton, Village at Serra Mesa
- Kids Night Out
September 25, 6:30-10
6-10 years
Chesteron



The College Corner

Resources for your high school students

Extracurricular Activities: Life Outside the

Sure, life in school is pretty interesting. You've got algebraic equations, Bunsen burners, sentence diagrams... but chances are, you've got commitments outside of school, too. Maybe you have a part time job, play in a band, are on a sports team, or do volunteer work.

Colleges Care

The good news is that colleges pay attention to your life both inside and outside the classroom. Yes, your academics probably come first, but your activities reveal a great deal about you, such as:

How you've made a meaningful contribution to something

What your non-academic interests are

Whether you can maintain a long-term commitment

Whether you can manage your time and priorities

What diversity you'd bring to the student body

Maintaining a Balance

Keep in mind, colleges are not interested in seeing you "do it all."

"We're looking for a commitment to and a passion

for an activity outside of the academic setting—we're looking for depth rather than breadth," explains Nanci Tessier, a college admissions director.

Colleges don't have a checklist of requirements when it comes to extracurriculars—they want to see your individuality—and your consistent commitment.

Haven't Gotten Involved Yet?

Lots of school, community, and religious organizations give you chances to explore your interests and talents. If you haven't felt drawn into something yet, there's no shortage of opportunities for you to explore.

School Activities

It's pretty easy to find out about activities available at school. Once you start exploring, sometimes the challenge is figuring out how much to do. Here are some quick tips:

Most importantly, when you find something you like to do, stick with it.

If you're interested and have extra time, try to excel in more than one area. For example, write for the paper and volunteer. But make sure you're giving your

all to each activity, and, most importantly, to your school work.

Don't worry about being president, or captain. The key is whether you've done something significant, center stage or behind the scenes.

Work Experience

Work experience—paid or volunteer, year-round or summer—can help you identify career interests and goals, gain work experience, and apply classroom learning to the real world. It's also a great way to earn money for college, of course. Consider arranging for an internship or to shadow someone at his or her job.

Community Service

You can also gain skills and experience through volunteer work, such as by tutoring elementary school kids or spending time at a local hospital. Some schools even offer academic credit for volunteer work.

Bottom line—get involved!

Source: www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/high-school/113.html

In Honor of our Ombudsmen,

As the Regional School Liaison for Navy Region Southwest, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of the Ombudsmen who are serving, or have served. Navy families are stronger and more prepared for the challenges that they often encounter as a military family due to your determination, commitment, compassion, and most importantly, time. You are instrumental in proactively addressing and resolving family concerns, including education related concerns and challenges. The Ombudsman network has been instrumental in providing military families with the support and resources necessary to ensure their children are afforded all of the educational opportunities available so that they may achieve academic success. You have also provided an avenue for parents to become empowered and knowledgeable so that they may become the best educational advocates for their children. It is important to me, and all of the San Diego Metro School Liaisons, that you know how much we appreciate your contributions and support of our program. In the end, the success of the School Liaison Program means that military children and families benefit.



Thank you for all that you continue to do to help those who are most at need and who deserve the greatest level of support...our military children. The time you devote and the sacrifices you make daily to support our Navy families are a key factor in helping the Navy achieve its mission. Never underestimate the positive impact you have on our families, our Navy, and our Country.

Respectfully,

Kirsten E. Webb

Students Can Reach New Heights ... We Can Help! *Contact Your School Liaison*



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