

The Superintendent's Update

November 20, 2014



NEWS FROM KELLY

CUSD Board Member Andrea Lerner Thompson Honored at Board Meeting: Dr. Andrea Lerner Thompson attended her last CUSD Board meeting as a Board member on November 19, 2014. Both at the Board meeting and at a reception following, she was recognized for her outstanding contributions to the district.

I thank Dr. Andrea Lerner Thompson for her eight (8) years of dedicated service to our students, our District, and our community. She is a true leader who seeks to understand all sides of the issues that come before her—and she puts in tremendous time and energy in doing so. She listens to all, but never forgets that she is here—first and foremost—for the students. As Dr. Lerner Thompson has long advocated for a strong parent voice in our local schools, it is fitting that as she prepares to leave the Board, she is leaving at a time that Local Control, via the Local Control Accountability Plan, fully arrives, ensuring that parent voice.

Please join me in thanking Dr. Andrea Lerner Thompson for the positive impact she has made in CUSD as a result of her time serving on the Board of Education.



Superintendent's Award for November: This award is given to staff members who have made outstanding contributions to Chico Unified School District. These contributions are recognized and commented upon by their site or department colleagues at a televised CUSD Board meeting each month. Congratulations and THANK YOU to the following CUSD Employees who were honored with the Superintendent's Award at the November 19, 2014, CUSD Board of Education meeting:

- **Certificated:** **Taryn Blizman** has worked in the district for eleven years as a Special Education Teacher at Marsh Junior High School. Taryn's teaching assignment is serving students in the Special Day Classroom. Prior to Taryn receiving her teaching credential, she was employed as a paraprofessional aide in the district. Taryn is an outstanding Special Education teacher, most noted for serving students with Autism and related disabilities. She has demonstrated outstanding instructional leadership over the years as a BTSA mentor, supervisor of student teachers, presenting at in-service trainings, social skills training, volunteering for Special Olympics, and providing training in vocational life skills for her students throughout the campus and community. The SDC program at Marsh Junior High School, under Taryn's leadership, received the Golden Bell Award in 2011-12 as a model program serving students with Autism. Taryn was presented the award by **Eric Snedeker**, Director, Special Education, and **Jay Marchant**, MJHS Principal.



- **Classified:** **Lori Sullivan** has worked as a Computer Tech in our district for over 12 years. She is an innovator when it comes to technology being used in the classroom, the office, and the school. She is always willing to provide support and training to all school personnel, always doing so with a smile and a positive and cheerful demeanor. She strives to improve student learning through using technology and data to create interventions for students who are in need of support. In addition, she was the brainchild behind the Emergency Management System (EMS) Code Red application that is currently being implemented across the district. Lori was presented the award by **Pedro A. Caldera**, CJHS Principal.



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR EMPLOYEES

CHS Teacher Honored by Butte County Coordinating Council: Congratulations to CHS Health Teacher **Vallarie Jensen** who was recently recognized at the 19th Annual Butte County Coordinating Council (BCCC) dinner! Vallarie was recognized as one of the "People Who Make a Difference" in our community. BCCC honors people in our community that have a positive influence in the lives of people who have developmental disabilities. These individuals have

shown concern, compassion, and respect for all people. The honorees were nominated by their colleagues, supervisors, consumers, families and community partners. Congratulations Vallarie!

Former Teacher, Coach and Administrator, Stan Hensley, passed away on October 28. Stan and his family moved to Chico from Kansas in 1964 when Stan began teaching at Pleasant Valley High School. He was appointed principal of Chico Junior High School in 1971 and later was assigned to the District Office where he served as Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Support. In this role, Stan was involved in the construction of three new schools in the district: Emma Wilson Elementary (1993), Forest Ranch Elementary (1991), and Little Chico Creek Elementary (1991). Stan served as Interim Superintendent of the District during the 1994-95 school year. He retired from the District in 1996. Stan was a passionate supporter of youth athletics. Donations to support Pleasant Valley High School Girls Athletics can be sent to Pleasant Valley High School or to the Chico Unified School District Office, Attn: **Marsha McLean**.



NEWS FROM EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Board Update on CUSD Programs for Students: A panel of CUSD staff members provided information to the School Board at its November 5 Workshop regarding programs providing social and emotional support to students and their families. Director **Janet Brinson** and Coordinator **Scott Lindstrom** initiated the discussion by noting these various programs provide services to students from birth through age 24. Psychologist **Terry Quinto** and Targeted Case Manager **Mai Xiong** addressed the Board about the *Parents As Teachers* Program (PAT) which is funded by a grant through the Butte County Children and Families Commission (First 5). PAT is designed to provide the parents of young children (birth through 5) with information regarding parenting, child development, school readiness and early literacy. Targeted Case Manager **Francis Stallman** and Teacher on Special Assignment **Sheri Zeno** informed the Board about the *Transitional Kindergarten* program and the *Bridge to Kindergarten* program (funded through a grant from the Butte County Children and Families Commission - First 5) both of which are designed to help children learn important foundational standards and get a head start in school. Teacher **Mauricio Jamie** presented information about the important services *Targeted Case Managers* provide to students and their families for the purpose of helping students have a successful school experience. Director **Joanne Parsley** and Principal **Ted Sullivan** informed the Board about the *Reset Program* (at McManus), the *Opportunity Program* (at Chapman) and the *Teach-To* program. The *Reset* and *Elementary Opportunity* Programs teach students prosocial, self-regulatory skills in addition to academic skills with the goal of returning to the regular classroom setting as quickly as possible. The *Teach-To* program is designed to teach students classroom routines linked to learning academics as well as to the efficient use of instructional time. Psychologist **Matt McLaughlin** and Principal **David McKay** informed the Board about their efforts in the areas of *Trauma-Informed Practices* for addressing behavioral/emotional issues and the *Nurtured Heart* approach to student support. Principal **Jay Marchant** informed the Board about the *Counseling Intern Program* at Marsh Junior High School. Through the use of approximately 12 Chico State University students majoring in psychology, the school counselors and administrators are able to link the interns with students who need individual support and guidance. **David McKay** also informed the Board about the *YouthBuild Chico* program which is funded by a Federal grant and serves young adults between the ages of 18 to 24. The program provides training in vocational skills which is coupled with high school classes that can lead to a high school diploma or GED. The *Youth Build* team has been involved in the construction of two Habitat for Humanity homes in the Chico area. Thanks to all of the presenters for their participation in this informative workshop.

Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP): School districts are now funded using the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) which requires districts to develop a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). The LCAP is a three-year plan with required annual review. Last year, with the help of our school community, CUSD developed our three-year plan. It is now time to review this plan and make sure our spending is in alignment with our stated goals and objectives. We have scheduled five meetings for the review of the CUSD LCAP. Our first meeting is Thursday, December 4. Refreshments, childcare and interpreters will be at each meeting.

Our LCAP meetings this year will be held in Chico High School's Lincoln Hall at 6:30 p.m. on the following dates:

- December 4, 2014
- January 14, 2015
- February 11, 2015
- March 11, 2015
- April 1, 2015

Please feel free to call or email Bonnie McCarthy at 891-3000 x 110 or bmccarthy@chicousd.org if you have any other questions, needs or concerns.

Math Acceleration: A group of Secondary Math teachers met on October 28 to finalize how our current 8th graders will be accelerated in order to reach Calculus their senior year. The teachers who attended this meeting planned out what the course would look like. With a little adjustment of curriculum for this year's Math C students and a few adjustments to the Integrated Math (IM) IM1 and IM2 curriculum our current 8th graders will be able to take a course as 9th graders that will have them ready to take IM3 their 10th grade year. This would then mean Trig/Pre-Calculus their 11th grade year and AP-Calculus their 12th grade year. The 9th grade acceleration plan (IM1/IM2) was shared with all secondary math teachers prior to the district wide meeting that was held November 18, 2014. At the district wide meeting criteria was discussed for placement into IM1/IM2. At this meeting all secondary teachers were also introduced to a math course that would help some of our students reach their 3rd year requirement for math. The course is called Integrated Math Essentials (IME), it would be non-college prep and could fall in a few different places depending on the needs of the student. The final topic for the November 18 meeting was junior high acceleration. Most teachers in the room agree that acceleration needs to happen in the junior high. The junior high teachers and administrators are invited to a meeting on December 3 at 7:45 to 8:30 in order to discuss this topic further.

Forest Ranch Charter Renewal Petition: The Charter for Forest Ranch Charter School expires June 30, 2015. The school submitted a renewal petition at the October CUSD board meeting. As required by California Education Code, a public hearing for the charter petition was held at the CUSD board meeting on November 19. The CUSD charter committee will make a recommendation to the CUSD Board at the December 17 meeting. If a charter renewal petition is renewed, it gives the charter school a new five-year term.



NEWS FROM BUSINESS SERVICES

Facilities Quick Start - ADA Barrier Removal Projects: Quick Start ADA barrier removal projects are completed at Chapman Elementary, Pleasant Valley High, and Fair View High Schools and are nearing completion at Neal Dow and Parkview Elementary Schools. The ADA parking stalls and path of travel to the front office were upgraded to meet current ADA code. The improvements included asphalt overlays or replacements that made the asphalt level, restriping of parking stalls and path of travel, new signage, new ADA curb ramp and concrete

sidewalks, where needed, to meet requirements. Neal Dow received a new ADA compliant drinking fountain and Pleasant Valley High School received new ADA handrails along the steep ramp to the front office.

Facilities Department work on Safety and Security: Work has been underway for Safety and Security improvements at many school sites. At Chapman Elementary we restriped the crosswalk and loading zone area, installed speed bumps, installed a new perimeter fence enclosing the kindergarten area, replaced the broken fence along the neighboring property, provided new window blinds for Code Red Lockdowns, and replaced the fence along the park side with a new privacy slat fence. Parkview Elementary received new perimeter fencing around the bike rack at the frontage of the school, a latch on the back gate, and a new privacy slat fence along the play area that neighbors the park. Asphalt sealcoat and new striping is scheduled at Parkview this weekend to improve the traffic flow and pedestrian visibility. New signage and striping to warn incoming and outgoing motorists that they are crossing a bike path will also be added. Additional traffic signage and striping was added at Fair View and a school identification sign is currently being constructed along the school frontage.



PG&E Savings By Design for Energy-Efficient New Construction: At the November 19 Board of Education meeting, **Tino Nava**, a PG&E representative awarded the District with Savings By Design grants in excess of \$44,000 for the Pleasant Valley High School New Classroom Building, Chico High School Lincoln Center and Fitness Laboratory projects. The total amount granted by PG&E's Savings By Design program is nearly \$130,000 on projects that also included the Center for the Arts and the Chico High New Classroom Building. Savings By Design is a statewide program offered by PG&E to encourage high-performance new building design and construction for commercial buildings. The program offers building owners and their design teams a wide range of services, such as Design Assistance, Design Team Incentives, Owner Incentives, and educational resources. The money granted from these projects will be used for future Facilities Master Plan projects. Thank you Tino Nava and PG&E for your ongoing support of CUSD!



New Employee on M&O Team:



We would like to introduce our newest team member, **Tommy Combs**. He will be one of our general maintenance workers. Tommy lives in Orland with his wife Jamie (a 2nd grade teacher at Parkview Elementary), and their two children, Danny 13 and Allie 11.

Tommy has been a General Contractor since 2000. He has built several homes, including the one his family currently lives in, and has done many remodels. Tommy is very talented and we are extremely lucky to have him as part of our M&O team.

Thanksgiving Break: Here are a few things that all teachers and staff need to be aware of during our week off:

- Please remove all food, drinks, and pets from the classroom before leaving on Friday, November 21.
- Open student desks and make sure there is no food stored inside - this will help with the ant/roach problems we face this time of year.
- For energy conservation, except for those rooms that have put in a facilities request for heat, all heaters will be turned off. If you have a wall thermostat in your room, please turn it to off.
- Unplug any nonessential appliances to eliminate phantom power draw.

Now that the cold rainy winter weather is starting to settle in, here are some tips and precautions:

- Use care when opening doors. The wind can catch them and fling them open unexpectedly.
- Keep your rooms closed up as much as possible to allow the heaters to work properly.
- Be aware of slippery sidewalks and ramps. If they are icy, please avoid and report.
- Drive carefully. Roads may be wet and slippery.

Your help with this is much appreciated!

~ M&O would like to wish everyone and their families a great Thanksgiving! ~



NEWS FROM HUMAN RESOURCES

Negotiations Update for CSEA, Chapter 110: The District and CSEA, Chapter 110 negotiating teams last met on October 14. The District provided a proposal to increase its contribution to medical insurance premiums to \$985/month from the \$950/month paid last year. Kevin Bultema shared the status of the budget based on the unaudited actuals for the 2013/14 year. CSEA and CUSD are planning a session in which CSEA can determine whether or not they want to accept the District's 2% ongoing salary increase offer.

Negotiations Update for Chico Unified Management Association (CUMA): A meeting is scheduled with CUMA to discuss the same offer.

Negotiations Update for Chico Unified Teachers Association (CUTA): The District and CUTA bargaining teams last met on October 31. The District provided CUTA with a counter proposal on Article 8 (wages) and CUTA provided the District with a counter proposal on Article 9 (health and welfare benefits). While CUSD requested to present the 2013-14 unaudited

actuals to help clarify the budget parameters faced by the District, CUTA declined to view the budget presentation.

Summary of Current Proposals (wages):

- District: 2% ongoing salary increase and \$145,410 in one time monies to be distributed how CUTA determines. The one time monies represents about a .35% of a salary increase.
- CUTA: 8% ongoing salary increase at step 1 with an increase between steps and collapsing the salary schedule such that it tops out at 30 years as opposed to 35. This represents an increase to the District of approximately 12.5%.

Summary of Current Proposals (health and welfare benefits):

- District: Increase District's payment for medical insurance premiums from \$950/month (last year) to \$985/month. The cost of the current medical plan provided to CUTA members is \$1,030/month and maintain the District's contribution for retiree medical insurance premiums at \$759/month for an individual and \$1,083.50/month for member and spouse.
- CUTA: Fully pay for the medical plan chosen by CUTA for its members (\$1,030/month) and fully fund retiree medical benefits at \$865/month for an individual and \$1,236/month for a family.

The teams are scheduled to meet with a mediator on Friday, December 19.

CUSD/CUTA Negotiations Information:

- The District has offered a 2% ongoing increase to the salary schedule for **all** CUSD employees. This offer was made to CUTA on March 27, 2014.
- In negotiations with CUTA, the District has offered a \$35/month increase in the amount it pays for employee medical premiums from \$950/month in 2013/14 to \$985/month in the 2014/15 school year.
- The CUSD school board has indicated on several occasions that new funds coming to the district this year will be divided into 3 priority areas with approximately 1/3 going to each of the following:
 - *Employee Compensation*
 - *Deficit Reduction*
 - *Student Programs as Mandated by State Law (LCFF and LCAP)*

The current increases offered to employee groups during negotiations represents approximately 1/3 of the new money received.

- Over the last seven years, the State has cut funding to CUSD by over 20%. CUSD is receiving approximately 10% more in the 2014-2015 school year than it did in the 2013-2014 school year from the State. Even with this increase in funding from last year to this year, we are still just approaching the funding received in the 2007/08 school year.
- CUTA has requested an 8% salary increase and full payment of medical insurance premiums. This amounts to the following costs:
 - 8% Salary Increase = Actually costs 12.5% (or over \$5 million per year) as a result of: a) the requested salary increase; b) increasing the percentage between the steps; and c) collapsing the salary schedule from 35 to 30 steps.
 - Full Medical Insurance Premium = approximately \$600,000 per year or almost a 1.25% increase in compensation.

- Not all districts are treated equally by the State. Under the new LCFF funding model, schools with high levels of “targeted” students -- students identified as *English Learners*, *Foster youth*, and/or qualifying for *Free and Reduced Lunch* – get significantly higher levels of funding, or concentration dollars. CUSD receives *none* of the concentration dollars for our targeted students. This is a major change from previous state funding where all school districts received the same Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) each year.
- Few school districts in Butte County have settled negotiations for the 2014/15 school year. In fact, many have not yet begun negotiations for the current year:

District	Date 2014/2015 Negotiations Began	Status
Thermalito	May 2014	4 sessions, no agreement
Biggs Unified	September 30, 2014	2 sessions, no agreement
Palermo	October 2, 2014	2 sessions, no agreement
Paradise Unified	December 2, 2014 (not yet started)	No sessions, no agreement
Oroville High	December 3, 2014 (not yet started)	No sessions, no agreement
Gridley Unified	Have not begun; no dates scheduled	No sessions, no agreement.
Durham Unified	Have not begun; no dates scheduled; 2013/2014 not settled.	No sessions, no agreement.

CUSD has met 11 times with CUTA. The 2% ongoing salary increase was offered March 27, 2014, almost eight (8) months ago.

Absence Reporting for CUTA Members: On October 31, the District advised all employees that a new absence/attendance report form had been developed. CSEA was involved in the development of the form because clerical employees in that unit are responsible for processing absence/attendance report forms.

CUTA has demanded to negotiate the “effects” of the new absence/attendance report form. While the District does not feel that there are any effects associated with use of the new form, the District contacted CUTA and asked that CUTA identify any effects of implementing the new form. To date, CUTA has yet to identify any effects associated with utilizing the new form.

The District will suspend utilization of the new absence/attendance report form for CUTA members only to give CUTA another opportunity to clarify its demand and identify the effects of the form. As a result, until further notice, please utilize the old absence/attendance report form. CSEA and CUMA members will continue to use the new absence/attendance reporting form.

The District’s intent, long term, is that all employees (CUTA, CSEA and CUMA) will use the same absence reporting form.

It continues to be every employee’s legal responsibility to report absences to his or her supervisor.

De-Escalation Training: On October 21 and 29 **Andrew Duch**, Captain, Jail and Court Security Commander for Butte County Sheriff's Office, provided an excellent presentation to Classified staff, consisting primarily of Campus Supervisors and School Aides. Mr. Duch focused on de-escalation skills and the importance of treating everyone you come into contact with respect. Mr. Duch used humor, active engagement, and heartwarming stories to create an atmosphere that was very conducive to learning. The training took place at the Williams Theater at Chico High School and was well received by the participants. Mr. Duch has agreed to present further trainings to the Maintenance and Operations and Transportation department with a focus on bus transportation drivers. Additionally, training will be presented in the clerical area and to Teachers. Below are pictures from the training that was provided on October 21 and 29.



Classified Human Resources: We continue to fill open positions and expect further openings in the near future. Employees will continue to receive Job Site Transfer/Seniority notices from the District mailed to the home for classifications in which the employee currently holds a position. However, if you are interested in a position in a classification to which you are not currently assigned, you will need to make sure that you consistently check our web page at <http://www.chicousd.org/Departments/Human-Resources/Classified-Non-Teaching/index.html> for job opportunities. This link will take you to the web page that shows our current "Internal Notices" and will link you to open and promotional recruitments. The two easiest locations to find information about current recruitments are on the link above or through Edjoin.org. Be sure to check the websites on a weekly basis to ensure that you do not miss an opportunity. Job listings can be found on the CUSD website, which is frequently updated:

<http://www.chicousd.org/Departments/Human-Resources/Classified-Non-Teaching/index.html>
<http://www.edjoin.org/searchResults.aspx?countyID=4&districtID=68&catID=3>

Internal openings are only open to current CUSD permanent classified employees. If you are a current CUSD permanent classified employee and are interested in any internal openings, please submit a Letter of Interest form.

If you do not currently hold a permanent classified position with CUSD you are not eligible to submit a letter of interest.



NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

The Chico High Choirs have been busy giving concerts, holding dinners, and writing letters in fundraising attempts to get to Carnegie Hall in March. Through the generous donations of the community, businesses, and individuals, they have raised over half of the \$100,000 needed to make this trip come true for 50 students. If you forgot, or have not donated to this worthy cause yet, you can send your checks, made out to CHS-ASB, to 901 Esplanade, Chico, CA 95926, Attn. **Sue Delgado**.

Do not miss the Chico High Choir during this winter season! Below are the dates, times, and locations they will be performing:

Date	Time	Location
November 23		Downtown Christmas Preview
December 3		Butte Creek Country Club - Private Party
December 4	7:00 p.m.	Creche Ceremony, LDS Church
	8:15 p.m.	Crystal Room - Private Party
December 5	6:00 p.m.	Stansbury House
December 6	8:00-11:30 a.m.	CARD Center - Breakfast with Santa
	12:30 p.m.	Marie Callenders - Private Party
	3:00 p.m.	Stansbury House
December 9	7:00 p.m.	WINTER CONCERT - Center For the Arts
December 10		6th Concert – Center For Arts
December 11	5:00 p.m.	Olive Garden - Private Party
December 14	3:00 p.m.	Bidwell Mansion
December 16	6:00 p.m.	Elks Lodge - Rotary Dinner
December 17	9:00 a.m.	Oakmont

For more information, contact: [Sue Delgado](mailto:sdelgado@chicousd.org), 530-891-3026-322 or sdelgado@chicousd.org.

PVHS International Baccalaureate (IB) Makes an Impact: PVHS IB has been very busy. In an effort to communicate some of the exciting things happening with their students, PVHS IB teacher, [Amy Besnard](#), has provided an update at the end of this Update. Way to go Ms. Besnard and PVHS IB!!

Chico Police Department Supports Bidwell's Science Department in a BIG way! The Science Department at Bidwell is thankful to be the recipients of the Chico Police Officers Association's generosity. The CPOA is graciously donating \$1,000 toward the Math, Science, Physics day field trip that all 8th graders will attend in May. They also donated \$300 toward the culminating astronomy art project in which each student will produce a fitting souvenir of an unforgettable adventure through the astronomy unit. The final product will be a painting with the qualities of a commercially designed poster depicting various aspects related to what they learned. It is with support from the community that these events are made possible. We are extremely grateful to the Chico Police Officers Association for giving so generously to our school.

TK Program Success: [Sheri Zeno](#) and [Shawneese Heath](#) pulled together their team to brag about CUSD's wonderful success with the Transitional Kindergarten (TK) program. The First5 commission really enjoyed the display and working/speaking with the team.





NEWS FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Discovery Shoppe Donation to BJHS: Mr. **Ryan Heimlich**, music teacher at Bidwell Junior High School and Pleasant Valley High School, announced that due to the efforts of Mrs. **Ann Castle**, attendance clerk at BJHS, the Discovery Shoppe of Chico has donated \$10,000 to the Bidwell Foundation to purchase new materials for the Bidwell Jr. High Music Department. We are thankful to both the Discovery Shoppe, the BJHS Foundation, and Mrs. Castle for their efforts to help build our music program! The school is in need of new instruments, supplies, and music, and this amazing donation will help greatly in that endeavor. Thank you Ann Castle and the Discovery Shoppe!



CUSD IN THE NEWS

[Contracts take center stage for Chico school board](#)
[Kindergarten faire Thursday, signups in December](#)
[Chico school board to consider raising substitutes' daily pay](#)

International Baccalaureate Program Highlight

One of the cornerstones of the IB Program is CAS (Creativity, Action, Service). All IB candidates are required to fulfill 150 CAS hours over the span of their junior and senior years. CAS requires students to use their knowledge of ethics to engage with issues of global importance and reflect and grow to achieve an international perspective from these meaningful experiences.



Aside from endless individual efforts in athletics, music, theatre, and various volunteer work, the IB students have been busy this school year making a difference with group CAS projects. As students flooded the Yale building on the first day of school, they were pleasantly surprised to see an incredible mural celebrating Pleasant Valley's 50 year anniversary. Seniors Drew Minkler and Noah Gosselin organized IB and art students this summer to create an impressive tribute to the educational foundation PV provides for its students.

In September, IB students organized the 3rd Annual Music Benefit. Under the leadership of seniors Gabby Pero and Madeleine Sahagian, the event, which highlighted the many musical talents of CUSD students, raised over \$2,000 for Arts for All.



October was a very busy month! Seniors Miranda Bello and Kaitlyn McGivern led the Toms Club to a hugely successful event for World Sight Day. The interactive and educational booths provided students with great fun. Not long after, senior Sacha de Jong organized a Community Garden project to help beautify our campus near the student store. IB students also volunteered in large numbers at the Shasta Farmer's Dinner, Jesse Kohen Memorial Run, and the Almond Bowl Run.



IB students, staff, and parents had a unique opportunity to work with Odyssey Teams to build prosthetic hands which will be donated to people in need all around the world. This incredible team building activity challenged students in new ways and although we successfully completed over 300 prosthetic hands; students are eager to schedule another day to create even more.



November brings even more tremendous work by these great young people. Seniors Lily Rider, Kade Vantine, and Manvir Heer are leading Project Child, an effort to collect educational materials, small toys, hygiene products, and simple essentials to pack in shoe boxes and send to children in impoverished countries around the world. [If you would like to donate to the cause, please leave any small items in the main office for Amy Besnard.]

Finally, thanks to winning a contest based on service learning from the organization Bright Light Volunteers, IB Coordinators Amy Besnard and Christine Callas will be taking eight IB students on a service trip to Cambodia later this month. Our group will be working in schools, collaborating with monks to beautify pagodas, improving conditions for local animals, and working on a water well and biodigester for a local community.

The International Baccalaureate students continue to make a tremendous difference in the world!