



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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PUSD Science Students Let Imaginations Soar While Designing Airplane Wing Prototypes

Paramount, CA – Using only four common household items, Paramount Unified sixth-graders let their imaginations soar, designing and constructing airplane wing prototypes under the guidance of Boeing engineers, who visited all five PUSD middle school campuses on Feb. 6 in celebration of National Engineer’s Week.

As Paramount Unified looks to expand its Project Lead the Way (PLTW) engineering curriculum to include middle schools, Boeing engineers made in-classroom presentations and prepared activities to spur interest in the program and acquaint students to the wide range of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses available to them.

Over 100 Hollydale School science students undertook the design challenge with little input from the engineers, who preferred to let the students collaborate and experience a process of trial and error through their shared knowledge, while exhibiting critical thinking.

“Boeing engineers came to our classrooms and explained to the students that scientific advances don’t come with instructions attached, that engineers must come up with solutions on their own,” Hollydale science teacher Christine Bakkers said. “This really resonated with the kids, who appreciated the opportunity to channel what they have already learned and match that with their own creative contributions.”

During two separate 50-minute presentations, Boeing engineers provided science students with index cards, string, tape and scissors, then stepped back to allow the students the space they needed to experiment and trouble-shoot their designs, consulting the engineers only when they had difficulty in implementing their design.

Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, PLTW will be available at all five District middle schools, with five engineering and one photography elective courses. PLTW is already available for all students in grades 9-12 and is being piloted for Alondra Middle School sixth-graders this year.

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“Project Lead the Way has been a tremendous success at the high school level and we want to expand the opportunities for our younger students who want to pursue STEM subjects,” PUSD Director for Secondary Education Dr. Greg Francois said. “Thanks to our dedicated faculty and staff, as well as strong community partnerships with Boeing and Cerritos College, we are providing our students with the high-quality instruction necessary to prepare them for the careers of the future.”

In 2016, PUSD began an articulation agreement with Cerritos College, where students earning a “B” grade or higher in PLTW courses receive college credits. Additionally, PUSD students have the option of taking summer school courses at Cerritos, and can receive a certification from the school by the time they graduate from high school.

“Paramount Unified students are extraordinary thinkers who are eager to tackle the challenges and share the rewards provided by 21st-century technology,” PUSD Superintendent Dr. Ruth Perez said. “To ensure our students are able to pursue their dreams, we are committed to making all resources available to each and every student, to prepare them for college and career.”

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

022817_PARAMOUNT_ENGINEERWEEK1: Paramount Park Middle School sixth-graders display their airplane wing prototypes after working with Boeing engineers to construct the project.

022817_PARAMOUNT_ENGINEERWEEK2: Students across the Paramount Unified School District designed and constructed airplane wing prototypes in observance of February’s National Engineer’s Week.

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