



PARAMOUNT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

ENSURE LEARNING AND SUCCESS FOR EACH STUDENT BY PROVIDING A QUALITY EDUCATION

15110 CALIFORNIA AVE. | PARAMOUNT, CA 90723 | TEL: (562) 602-6000 | www.paramount.k12.ca.us

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Paramount March Madness Competition Raises Over \$95,000 for PEP Scholarship Fund

Paramount, CA – Paramount Unified schools ran a full-court press during the District’s inaugural March Madness fundraiser, generating more than \$95,000 for student scholarships.

Modeled after the popular college basketball tournament, 18 Paramount schools participated in the fundraiser. Jackson Middle School scored a slam dunk, collecting more than \$31,000 in donations for the Paramount Education Partnership (PEP) and outdistancing rival Paramount West High School to win the championship.

“Paramount Unified is dedicated to providing a college-going culture for all students, and supporting PEP scholarships with fundraising events such as March Madness really helps to bring the community together,” PUSD Superintendent Dr. Ruth Pérez said. “The schools had a lot of fun with the competition and every campus found distinctive ways to raise money for their future.”

In 2016, Jackson Middle School held its own March Madness competition, with individual classrooms vying against each other, and the school raised more than \$10,000 for PEP. This fundraising format proved so successful that Dr. Perez encouraged all District schools to participate in 2017.

“At Jackson, we are continually looking for novel ways to raise money for PEP, and turning it into a friendly competition motivated our teachers and students to raise their game further,” Jackson Principal Kelly Anderson said. “Once it became a district-wide competition, we knew that all the other schools would want to knock us out so we had to raise our game even further!”

Jackson set a fundraising goal of \$20,000, and offered fun incentives for its students such as an afternoon of Bubble Soccer or Gaga Ball for classrooms that raised the most money. Faculty and staff effectively employed online resources like GoFundMe to reach beyond the Paramount city limits, raising nearly \$5,000.

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Mokler Elementary School raised over \$2,000 through a variety of events aimed at raising awareness of college and career – raffles for teachers, a silent auction for parents during Mokler’s Open House on March 24, and a two-week Penny Wars competition for the students.

“We used the March Madness fundraiser to help the students conceptualize higher education,” Mokler Principal Linh Roberts said. “We wanted to emphasize that they were helping their older brothers and sisters realize their dreams, and that one day when they are in high school, an elementary school student will be raising money to help pay for their college.”

Paramount Unified partners with the City of Paramount and the Paramount Chamber of Commerce to provide scholarship money for PUSD graduates as a way to make college education financially accessible for all students. Fundraisers such as Pennies for PEP have helped fund the organization for more than a dozen years, while educating students on the benefits of pursuing college education.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

040617_MARCH_MADNESS1: Jackson Middle School Principal Kelly Anderson celebrates with Jackson faculty and staff after being declared the winner in Paramount Unified School District’s inaugural March Madness fundraiser, which raised over \$95,000 for the Paramount Educational Partnership. Jackson’s donations totaled over \$31,000.

040617_MARCH_MADNESS2: Jackson Middle School students compete in a game of Bubble Soccer, one of the fundraising incentives for students during Paramount Unified School District’s inaugural March Madness fundraiser, which raised over \$95,000 for the Paramount Educational Partnership. All 18 PUSD schools participated in the fundraiser.

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