

MAKING NEWCOMERS COMPETENT TEACHERS

The district has found a way to turn green newcomers such as Andrew Gin into competent instructors. Gin arrived at Payne Elementary School two years ago, after fleeing an unhappy career as a stock analyst for investment firms in Los Angeles. He brought enthusiasm, energy and a desire to work with children—but zero job skills. “I didn’t know where to begin,” he recalled.

At Payne, Gin was handed the Open Court reading program and a thick teacher’s manual that told him what skills to teach every day, even when to praise his second-graders. “It was a godsend,” he said, “like a huge outline.”

Meanwhile, Gin became a student in this own school. Payne’s teachers became his mentors.

Principal Georgia Leynaert began visiting Gin’s classroom regularly to teach him techniques for engaging students. Two senior teachers met with Gin at lunch and after school, showing him how to design lesson plans and giving him tips on games that encourage learning, such as math bingo. A reading coach helped demonstrate Open Court.

“Whenever I need something clarified or explained, I know where to go,” said Gin, 33, who is working toward his credential at Cal State L.A.

More than half of Payne’s teachers have emergency credentials. Still, in a school where 87% of the students qualify for subsidized lunches and 72% speak limited English, Payne earned a rank of 7 on the state’s new accountability index, placing it among the top third of elementary schools in California.

“If you hire right, then inexperience doesn’t have to be a negative,” Leynaert said. “You hire people who are going to be good. Then you give them structure so that no teacher is left out there alone.”

DRIVEN BY HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Payne and the other schools also are driven by high expectations, an intangible quality that shapes the culture of their campuses.

Teachers reject the idea that their students are destined for mediocrity because they are poor or speak limited English. Instead, they demand that students meet the state’s academic standards.

“If you set high expectations for children, they generally rise to the occasion,” said Norma Baker, principal of Hudnall Elementary School, which earned a state rank of 8 with nearly half the students still learning to speak English. “You get what you expect.”

That message literally surrounds the students in Barbra Williams’ fourth-grade classroom at Hudnall.

Mock graduation caps with black tassels hang from the ceiling. Each has the name of an elite university scrawled in white letters on the back: Stanford, Harvard, Yale, Princeton.

The walls carry similar messages. A sign on one wall ways, “ENGLISH MAJORS EXCEL,” in big black letters, with student reports stapled to the wall. A sign on another wall ways, “MATH MASTERS”; the wall features colored pictures of sliced pizzas that the students created to demonstrate fractions. The banner on a third wall ways, “SOCIAL STUDIES SCHOLARS.”

Williams requires all of her students to write essays at the end of the year about universities they will attend, and to select majors they plan to study. Students are encouraged to collect admissions packets in the course of their research.

“I tell them. ‘You have to go to a really good college. You have to get good grades,

good test scores. You have to get in the habit of taking it seriously,’” said Williams, 25, a graduate of UC Irvine. “I want to instill in them that these universities are out there. Some of these students don’t hear that or haven’t thought about it. When I ask them about colleges, they mention El Camino or Southwest two local community colleges.”

Nine-year-old La Tijera Avery has already picked her university. It’s Stanford.

“I want to grow up to be a great doctor who helps people who get sick,” said La Tijera, who earns mostly as an impressive Standard 9 test scores—the 62nd percentile in reading and the 85 percentile in math.

La Tijera’s mothers, La Tasha Holden, is thrilled with her daughter’s progress. When the family moved across Inglewood a few years ago, Holden purposely kept La Tijera at Hudnall. The philosophy of the school, she believed, reflected the values she teaches at home.

“My kids are going to college if I have to give every penny I have or sell my house,” Holden said.

STRONG LEADERSHIP SEEN AS CRUCIAL

When educators speak about school reform, they inevitably seize on the issue of leadership. High-performing campuses, the experts say, are led by able principals who firmly manage, show a keen ability to motivate teachers, set unambiguous goals and establish a serious academic tone.

Two of the lowest-performing elementary schools in Inglewood have faced regular turnover among top administrators. Lane, a kindergarten through eighth-grade school that earned a 3 on the state’s accountability index, has had eight principals in 10 years, said the latest administrator to hold that position.

Since taking over at Lane 2½ years ago, Principal Adrienne Jackson has replaced about half her staff and opened a school library for the first time in years. Lane’s reading test scores have improved an average of eight point during her tenure.

None of the administrators has done the job as successfully as Ichinaga and Thompson, the longtime principals of Bennett-Kew and Kelso, respectively.

Both have made careers of bucking the educational establishment.

Ichinaga and Thompson began using Open Court in the mid-1980s, and stuck with it even as phonics was being phased out in California. They hewed to scripted math programs that stressed basic computational skills, even as the state moved to more experimental approaches.

Both also required their teachers to give regular student assessments, and they personally analyzed the results, a previously unheard-of practice that is only now gaining currency in schools.

In addition, both long ago said no to social promotion, holding back failing kindergartners in “junior first” classes that provide an extra year of phonics practice.

And both rejected bilingual education two decades before California voters officially ended the practice in 1997.

“I didn’t believe in bilingual education, and my parents were dead set against it,” said Thompson, a former first-grade teacher in Inglewood. “I didn’t need a job bad enough to violate my ethics.”

For Ichinaga, the decision grew out of personal experience: She was reared in a Japanese-speaking home on a Hawaiian sugar cane plantation but attended schools that taught in English. “My kids come to school much like I was, with very little English,” she said.

These principals’ methods, and the stability they brought, are reflected in test scores.

The average Kelso second-grader reached the 71st percentile in reading and the 79th percentile in math on last year’s Stanford 9. The scores are comparable to the district average for second-grader in Irvine and Beverly Hills, which have two of the region’s most affluent school systems. Bennett-Kew’s scores also were high: The average third-grader was in the 58th percentile in reading and the 84th in math.

The scores mean that the students were in the top echelons of test-takers nationwide.

Thompson and Ichinaga are a contrast in styles. While she was principal, Thompson was a quiet force on campus, personally training her teachers and parents while keeping a low public profile. Ichinaga is an outspoken advocate for her methods and a master at delegating authority to her best teachers.

“I’m dismayed that so many people still believe if you’re a minority by color or language, you’re at a disadvantage,” Ichinaga said. “I don’t believe that for a minute. We have to get rid of that mentality.”

Ichinaga’s campus has drawn more attention in recent years because of the visible role she has taken in education reform. She sat on the task force that helped draft Gov. Gray Davis’ education agenda shortly after he was elected two years ago, and she is regularly invited to speak at education conferences. Davis appointed her this year to the State Board of Education.

Although Bennett-Kew has received more acclaim, Kelso, a year-around school, has quietly assumed the top rank in the district. One reason, Thompson and Kelso’s teachers say, is that all students are invited to take classes during their vacation breaks for a few hours a day. Up to two-thirds of her students return, meaning they literally attend school all year long.

“We’re committed to overturning perception in education—that so-called low socioeconomic children can’t learn,” said Linda Stevenson, a longtime Kelso teacher who was the first to use Open Court at school. “Of course, they can learn. We’re here to prove it.”

MAIN STREET POOCH

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the people of Martinez, California, lost a great friend and a fixture in the community with the death of Charlie, the beloved golden retriever and member of the Ross family. Mr. Speaker, the relationship between Gene Ross and his dog, Charlie, was wonderful to behold. They went everywhere together. Whether Gene was running in the hills of Alhambra Valley or the trails of the Sierra Mountains above the Tahoe Basin, Charlie was always at his side. And if you walked or ran with them, you could listen to their constant conversation.

During summer vacations at Donner Lake, Charlie would dive into the chilly water where others were timid. He especially loved it when the kids were in the water, so he could look after them and swim with them. As friends and family gather for the upcoming traditional Fourth of July festivities at the Ross cabin, this year will be different. This year just before the fireworks start, we will not kid Gene as he talks to Charlie to calm him down about the

fireworks and then puts him in the bedroom with the radio on so he won't be frightened at the explosions. In all those years together Gene could never convince Charlie not to be afraid of the fireworks.

Mr. Speaker, downtown Martinez and all the friends of Gene and Marge Ross are going to miss both Charlie and the special relationship that they enjoyed. Following is a letter that Gene wrote that was published in our local paper:

[From the Contra Costa Times, May 2000]

MAIN STREET POOCH WON'T BE FORGOTTEN

DEAR GARY: On Monday we suffered the loss of our beloved golden retriever, Charlie.

Charlie was a fixture on Main Street in Martinez. He went to work with me every day for 14 years and had so many people that loved him. This is our way of letting them know about him.

Last Friday, Dr. Ruth Adams, our veterinarian, diagnosed Charlie with a fast-growing bone cancer. There was no hope of saving him, only of keeping him happy for the few remaining days.

Charlie loved greeting visitors to our office, visiting with clients (as long as they didn't try to sit in "his" chair) and going down Main Street with me to take care of business. He brought a smile to everyone's face.

He ran in Briones Park with our running group, Rob, Peter, Paul and myself, for 14 years. His excitement over our long runs never altered. If we ran 10 miles, he ran at least 15, always checking back to make sure we weren't lost.

He loved hiking in the Sierra, swimming in Donner Lake and cheering on our bocce team. His energy was boundless.

He talked, really "talked" to my wife, Margie, every night to let her know how our day at the office went. And always with two or three tennis balls in his mouth.

He let our two little grand-daughters cuddle and climb on him with such patience.

On Monday he went to the office with me for the last time. By noon I could see that he was not doing well. I took him home to my wife who "talked" to him. He told her he was in pain and that it was time. She gave him medication to ease his pain.

As he wagged his tail and held his tennis ball in his mouth, we held him close, and Dr. Adams eased him into the world where his puppyhood friends, RJ and Morgan, waited for him at the Rainbow Bridge.

His tennis balls are still scattered around the house. Not to tell us he is coming back, but to tell us he will always be with us.

Thanks to all of Charlie's friends who have been so supportive and kind. And to you, for letting us share our loss.

GENE ROSS, *Martinez.*

RECOGNITION OF THE SALT RIVER PROJECT AS A LOCAL LEGACY

HON. JOHN B. SHADEGG

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the inclusion of the Salt River Project in the Local Legacies Program of the Library of Congress. I nominated the Salt River Project for this honor because of the pivotal role which it has played in the growth of the City of Phoenix and Central Arizona. This nomination was a natural decision for me: my father Stephen Shadegg wrote several books

on the Salt River Project, including its first narrative history in 1942, and subsequent works on the importance of the Project to Arizona's development. These books include: *Arizona: An Adventure in Irrigation* (1949), *The Phoenix Story: An Adventure in Reclamation* (1958), and *Century One: One Hundred Years of Water Development* (1969).

In 1868, Phoenix had a population of 100 people; it is now the sixth largest metropolitan area in the United States. All of this growth was made possible by the development of water storage and irrigation facilities and, since 1903, the Salt River Project has played a central role in this development.

In a desert state like Arizona, access to a reliable supply of water is literally a matter of life and death. The early settlers recognized this fact and constructed the first of many water supply canals in Phoenix in 1868. These early canals relied on diverting water from the rivers but did not include the construction of dams to create water storage reservoirs. This failure to store water proved to be a fatal flaw when drought hit in the 1890's. For three years, there was no rain and the rivers ceased to run. The population of Phoenix plummeted and conflicts, some of them deadly, erupted over the limited water available.

This devastating drought forced the citizens of Phoenix to band together and create an organization capable of financing, constructing, and operating a water storage and delivery system. It required the highest degree of personal commitment: each property owner in the Phoenix area pledged his or her property as collateral to finance the construction of the system. In 1903, this organization took shape as the Salt River Water Users' Association, now a part of the Salt River Project, and became the first water storage system organized under the Federal Reclamation Act.

Today, it is easy to take the necessities of life for granted, including the ability to get water by simply turning on a faucet. However, the laws of nature still apply and, in a desert, a reliable supply of water will always be a matter of life and death. Life in Arizona, Southern California, and other desert regions is only possible because a guaranteed, permanent supply of water is available.

While the laws of nature should be self-evident, there are some individuals and organizations who refuse to accept them and instead advocate the destruction of the water supply reservoirs which make life in the desert possible. We are currently locked in a struggle against the willful ignorance of these groups and individuals and, while we are supported by the facts, we must not underestimate the zealous dedication of the other side. We must not allow such destructive proposals as the draining of Lake Powell to lead to a repeat of the devastation inflicted on Phoenix by the drought of the 1890's.

As long as people live in the desert, there will be a need for organizations like the Salt River Project to supply them with the most basic substance needed for life. I salute the Salt River Project for its historic role in the development of Phoenix and its continued importance, and welcome its inclusion in the Local Legacies Program.

COLORADO STATE SENATE
PRESIDENT RAY POWERS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 24, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this moment to recognize the career of one of Colorado's leading statesmen, President of the Senate, Ray Powers. In doing so, I would like to honor this individual who, for so many years, has exemplified the notion of public service and civic duty. It is clear that Senator Powers' dynamic leadership will be greatly missed and difficult to replace.

Elected to the State Senate in 1980, he sponsored many bills addressing, for example, death penalty, highway funding and more judicial requirements for judges. In 1983, Ray served as the Majority Caucus Chairman and then moved to the position of the Assistant Majority Leader.

Senator Powers also received many honors. He has received the United States Veterans Committee Distinguished Service Award and was named by the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce and the Colorado Public Affairs Council as Legislator of the Year.

This year marked the end of Senator Powers' tenure in elected office. His career embodied the citizen-legislator ideal and was a model that every official in elected office should seek to emulate. The citizens of Colorado owe Senator Powers a debt of gratitude and I wish him well.

MUHAMMED ALI BOXING REFORM ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2000

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, four years ago, the Congress passed the Professional Boxing Safety Act, an Act within the primary jurisdiction of the Committee on Education and the Workforce. This Act created comprehensive nationwide regulations for the sport of boxing. It was a first step establishing a uniform system of licensing and minimum health and safety standards for boxers.

Because of the Professional Boxing Safety Act, for the first time, states could keep track of and protect professional boxers with appropriate oversight and supervision.

Corruption continues to taint the sport of boxing. A major international sanctioning body has been charged with bribery, racketeering and money laundering. And, the sport continues to endure allegations of fixed fights. The Miami Herald has reported that over 30 prizefights in the last 12 years have been fixed. Tragically, the boxers themselves suffer the most from the exploitation and anti-competitive business practices seemingly endemic to the sport.

The Muhammed Ali Boxing Reform Act would help to put an end to this corruption. It requires the establishment of objective and consistent criteria for the ratings of professional boxers. It requires the disclosure of compensation received in connection with a