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THE COUNSELING INSIDER

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Counseling Department Mission Statement

The mission of John Muir Middle School Counseling Department is to encourage the academic success and personal growth of ALL students. Through a collaborative and team approach, the counseling staff will provide opportunities for the academic, social, and emotional development of students by creating a warm, inviting, safe environment where students are always welcomed and made to feel important.

Introducing The PLE Counselors...

John Muir Middle School's Counseling department is widely recognized as one of the best in Local District 7. The department consists of four Academic Counselors (each assigned to a PLE), a Drop Out Prevention Counselor, and an Attendance Counselor. All counselors have offices on the first floor of the Main Building.



Ms. McDuffie is the Counselor for PLE 1. She is beginning her 7th year of service at John Muir Middle School.

Ms. McDuffie began her career in Education as an 8th Grade English teacher. She taught a total of four years before moving into the Counseling office. After her second year, Ms. McDuffie appointed herself as the "Head Counselor." The other counselors are nice enough to humor her by going along with her self appointed title.



Ms. Usher, the counselor for PLE 2, graduated from John Muir in 1990, and returned in 1994 as a

Teaching Assistant. In 1999, she began teaching Special Education at Muir. Ms. Usher's most notable classroom accomplishment was the creation of "The Division Dance." (If you see her in the hallway, ask for a demonstration.) Ms. Usher eventually left John Muir to pursue a career in counseling. After working at two different middle schools, she realized she couldn't stay away and returned to John Muir in 2007.



Hailing from Michigan, Ms. Shippy is the only blonde in the Main Counseling Office (besides Ms.

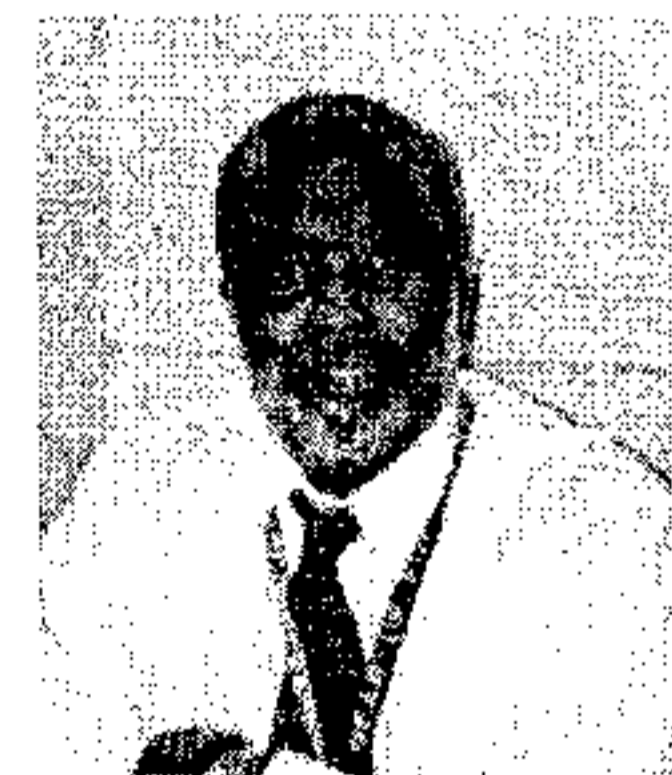
Patterson). She is also the counselor for PLE 3. Ms. Shippy, or "Ship," as her fellow counselors affectionately refer to her, began her career as a Social Worker. She also worked as an Academic Counselor at Locke High School for one year before moving onto middle school.

Ms. Shippy recently completed her MFT (Masters in Marriage & Family Therapy).



The Peruvian spice of the counseling office is none other than Mr. Vera. Mr. Vera coun-

sels the wonderful children of PLE 4. Prior to becoming a counselor, Mr. Vera taught Math for nine years. Before that, he was a Merchant Marine Officer for 15 years. This year marks his fifth year as an academic counselor.



The glue that holds the counseling office to-

gether is none other than Mr. Raymond Williams. Mr. Williams has worked at John Muir for 26 years. He is the Assistant Principal of Counseling Services. Mr. Williams also as PE Teacher, Dean, Counselor, and Testing Coordinator throughout his career in education.



WHAT'S NEXT!!! ON CAMPUS

RESOURCES FOR TROUBLED KIDS



You've made the phone call home. You've met with

the parent. You've talked to the dean and the PLE counselor. Yet none of these measures seem to be effective. Not to worry, there is additional support.

Listed below are services and resources available to our students during and after school.

- *Diploma Project Advisor (DPA)*

Ms. Orozco, the Diploma Project Advisor (DPA), counsels students with three or more fails.

- *PSA Counselor*

Ms. Harrison is the Attendance Counselor, and works primarily with students that are habitually tardy and/or absent.

Both the PSA Counselor and DPA have offices in the Attendance office.

- *Kedren Mental Health*

Outside counselors meet with

students once a week for a one hour individual counseling session. This service is free to students that are eligible for Medi-Cal. Speak with your PLE counselor if you would like to make a referral.

- *Occupational Therapy Training Program (OTTP)*

OTTP provides life skills training, work readiness training, and group and individual therapy to students to promote self-esteem, positive social behaviors and attention skills. Students must have Medi-Cal in order to qualify for these services.

- *Grief Counseling Group*

The counseling department is partnering with Our House (a grief counseling program) to provide grief counseling to students who have lost a loved one. Contact Ms. Shippy to refer students to this group.

- *Peer Mediation*

Peer mediation is run by our very own Ms. Hamilton, and offered during third and sixth

period. Peer mediators utilize problem solving skills to assist their school mates in conflict resolution.

- *Student Success Team Meeting (SST)*

A meeting with the parent, child, core teachers, school psychologist, and counselor is held, and the child's cumulative record is reviewed. Speak with your PLE counselor to initiate an SST.

- *Girl Talk*

"Girl Talk" is group counseling for female students in grades 7 and 8 run by Ms. Usher and Ms. McDuffie. The group meets once a week for one period and engages female students in activities that teach social skills and improved decision making.

After School Programs

- *Boys To Men Enrichment Program—Mr. Rector/Mr. Norwood*

- *New ADAGE—Mr. Cabil*

- *YWCA*



Counseling Department Vision Statement

John Muir Middle School Counseling Services envisions a department that supports student success. The department will accomplish this by providing students equitable access to opportunities and services, empowering them to embrace their full potential, and motivating them to strive for their personal and academic aspirations, while facilitating an atmosphere of mutual respect.

CAMPUS CALENDER

Oct 03, '09—Parent meeting in the school auditorium with Ms. Orozco (DPA) for At Risk students and their parents. Meeting will be held from 9-11am.

Oct 03, '09— The Dream Project Teacher training. Teachers will learn strategies to encourage students to become responsible, socially-aware role models in the classroom, school and surrounding communities.

Oct 16, '09—Deadline for students to turn in Free Tutoring Applications.

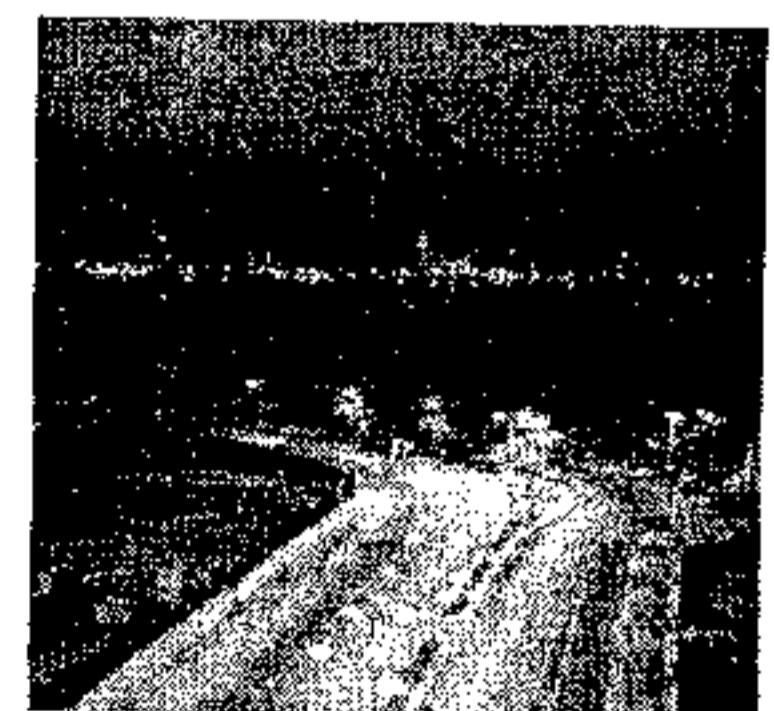
Under *No Child Left Behind* legislation, students who qualify for free/reduced lunch, and attend a program improvement school in 2009-2010 have the opportunity to choose a state approved Tutoring Provider of their choice.

Each PLE counselor has applications in Spanish and English along with a list of providers.

Oct 29, '09— PLE Counselors will be taking 50 kids on a field trip to the LA Convention Center for the

Annual "Cash for College" event. Students will learn about A-G requirements in high school, financial aid for college, and career choices.

Nov 6, '09—Final Deadline for Education Consortium of Central Los Angeles (ECCLA) essay contest. Two \$500 scholarships are available. Students must be in the 8th Grade and have a minimum 3.0 GPA. See Ms. McDuffie for further information.



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