

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- 3/1 - 2. Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Training
- 3/9 - Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Training at High School
- 3/20 - Element Working Group Meeting
- 3/22 - Open House - Rio Vista Elementary
- 3/26 - School Site Coordinator Meeting
- 3/28 - Open Hour - North Ranchito Elementary

ANONYMOUS TIPSTERS UTILIZE THE NET IN A NEW WAY

Ask anyone who uses a cell phone what the most convenient way to communicate is and chances are the answer will be "Texting." Administration officials at El Rancho Unified School District are finding that because students are constantly texting anyway, they are in a unique position to immediately report suspicious activity, illegal acts, or dangerous behavior using tip lines they can reach by text. Like school districts across the country, ERUSD is discovering that links to school administrators, police departments and other enforcement entities using hyper-secure lines are the most effective tool for receiving tips and emergency calls in total anonymity. It's a new way of assuring kids that they will remain nameless if they want to report suspicious activity or immediate crisis situations. Schools report that tipsters are using this form of communication more frequently than ever before.

At ERUSD, we're calling it **C.L.A.S.S. – Crime Line Assisting School Safety**, and in our case, it is used solely through social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Yahoo. These popular networks may seem like strange avenues for anonymous crime reporting, but district police Officer Luis Gomez says it works through the district's completely private Facebook account employing the highest possible security settings linked directly to law enforcement smart phones. Officer Gomez says once a message is sent, it goes to him, Chief Jeff Fitchett, Officer Flores, or Deputy Peralta with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. According to Gomez no "friend" requests are allowed and no one can access the "wall" where messages would normally be sent.

This is how the ERUSD system works: The user name for the Facebook account, facebook.com/elranchoclass, is currently being posted throughout every school in the district and shortly this information will be available in prominent city locations. Once someone enters the user name, they will be directed to click "send message", type in the tip information, then press "send". School authorities will get an alert that there is a message on Facebook via the smart phones. No one else other than the officers named will see the message and there will be no way the person sending the message can be identified. The district Twitter account, twitter.com/erspd, can be used for emergency and non-emergency matters and safety tips to "followers" and the Yahoo account is a simple email account: elranchoclass@yahoo.com. All accounts are highly secure and offer complete anonymity.

Witnesses to any type of crime need not fear their identity will be revealed. Retaliation by suspects or perpetrators is no longer a threat to an informant, and because of the tight security and anonymity, school kids and citizens can confidently and quickly alert law enforcement using the communication methods they are most comfortable with.

The district is eager to employ this new, safe and secure method of informing for the safety and well-being of its school children and neighborhoods throughout Pico Rivera. For more complete information, please contact Officer Luis Gomez at (562) 455-8754 or by email at ldgomez@erud.k12.ca.us

Raymond Chavez

It was a lucky day when Ray Chavez became part of the Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant's Core Management Team! This is a man who recently was honored by El Rancho Unified School District as a recipient of the 2012 Community Service Award. Ray has always been an integral part of El Rancho through his support of young people with their educational pursuits and employment opportunities following graduation. He has dedicated himself to being a vital link between the city and its school system.



Mr. Chavez was born and raised in Irwindale, graduated from USC with a degree in Public Administration, and found himself immersed in civic affairs upon his return to Irwindale. He became a city council member, and at the age of 28, took over the Mayor's office. Pico Rivera now has the honor of having employed this amazing community builder for 16 years; he currently serves as a management analyst for the city.

The city's first Administrative Internship Program was conceived of and started by Ray Chavez. It was a career preparation and opportunity program, which brought about employment for hundreds of the district's graduating seniors. In fact, Lorraine Jimenez – Element Leader for such outstanding programs as *Character Counts!*, *Olweus Bullying Prevention*, *Too Good for Drugs*, and other evidence-based programs under the grant initiative – has a son who was an intern under Mr. Chavez. Thomas Jimenez says Ray Chavez was a "phenomenal mentor" who furthered his understanding of local government. He says he "learned key communication and advertising skills from Ray personally...he was a great boss that took the time to help each intern..."

Furthermore, Mr. Chavez became involved with the "I'm Going to College" scholarship program. This program took selected middle school kids through four years of high school and upon graduation guaranteed them a scholarship for their first year of college. Over \$100,000 in scholarships were awarded to El Rancho students. Talk about being invested in a community's children!

As this vital partnership between city and schools continues, Ray Chavez has been instrumental in providing environmental awareness and energy efficient programs to educate students in middle and high school. He's a presence at our annual Career Fairs, encouraging and promoting public service as a career choice to young people. His enthusiasm and desire to lead students to college and beyond is a gift to the district and city of Pico Rivera, and we are so grateful that Ray has agreed to take on an important role in the administration of El Rancho's Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant program.

Ray enjoys the pleasure of gardening as a way to connect with the environment, and has his camera at the ready for taking landscape photos wherever he goes. Ray is one of the good guys and we're proud to have him on board.

Thanks, Ray, for all you do!!

