



Montebello Unified School District Safe Schools/Healthy Students Grant Initiative

Newsletter

Upcoming Activities

- 6/1-5/09 CHKS Surveys Administered
- 6/2-3/09 Every 15 Minutes, Schurr High School
- 6/8-10/09 Olweus Bullying Prevention Training
- 6/11/09 Mental Health Database Training
- 6/26/09 Mental Health Service Providers Meeting

June 2009

MUSD Expands Mental Health Services

The District's grant initiative is called *Safe Schools/Healthy Students* because children can more readily learn and succeed if they possess feelings of safety and well being. Kids-at-risk often face challenging mental health issues and it is the vision and focus of MUSD to step up its mental health services. The grant will increase the number of mental health providers by 5 for a total of 9. This is a huge leap for us to continue bringing quality treatment programs to students, parents and staff training.

The grant also provides for increasing the number of students in need of treatment, thus ensuring that more of our young people who are at-risk and emotionally disturbed will find themselves in the compassionate and caring hands of our providing partners. All of the new service providers have met with their respective principal, psychologist, and in some cases, the entire school staff. Discussions regarding the extent of services (i.e., school-based, after-school, home-based, including individual, group and family) have begun with educators and support staff. The district is now looking into providing services throughout the summer.

As agencies are becoming more aware of the vast mental health needs at our school sites, they also are becoming more committed to bringing in additional resources and that's good news that indeed MUSD students can be safe and they can be healthy. There is no doubt that with all these added support services, the Montebello Unified School district will be in a better place to eliminate some of the most challenging barriers to school success.

MUSD will be implementing the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in all District schools!

It's pronounced OL-VE-us and is a vehicle to prevent bullying. This comprehensive, school-wide program designed for use in elementary, middle or high schools will be coming to MUSD campuses in the 09-10 school year.

The program seeks to restructure existing school environments to reduce opportunities for bullying through the effort of school staff that will work to improve peer relations and create safer and more positive places for learning and growth. It will address victims' suffering and, at the same time, counteract bullying tendencies from aggressive students, mitigating the potential to expand antisocial behavior. The Olweus Program works with interventions on three levels:

School-wide Interventions

- Formation of a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee
- Staff training
- Development and implementation of school-wide rules against bullying
- Development of coordinated supervision during break periods.

Classroom Interventions

- Regular and ongoing classroom dialogue about bullying and peer relations
- Class parent meetings

Individual Interventions

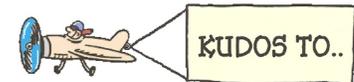
- One-on-one interaction with children who bully
- Individual meetings with children who are targets of bullying
- Involvement with the parents of victims and perpetrators

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is recognized as a model program (evidence-based) by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention through the auspices of the U.S. Department of Justice.

For additional information

Contact Michael Cobarrubias, Grant Director
Cobarrubias_mike@montebello.k12.ca.us

www.spsg-software.com/montebello



George Lewis Muriel

MUSD Mental Health Services Coordinator

Being a mental health advocate and coordinator of such services requires a lot of gritty frontline interaction with students who face mental health challenges. Working with parents of students who live with various mental health issues requires the balance of compassion with aggressive programs to bring at-risk kids into a state of well-being, and those who do this work deserve a standing ovation for their efforts, and none is more deserving of our accolades than George Muriel.

George Muriel is a counselor, lawyer, educator, parent liaison, troubleshooter, peacemaker, and conflict resolution expert. Quite a plateful for a man who's been in mental health educational programs since 1981! George has a BA in Political Science from UCLA, a Masters in Education from same, got his Juris Doctor in Law from Brigham Young University, and finally received his Masters in School Counseling from California State University, LA in 2000.

George has been a school principal, a bilingual teacher and currently works as District Coordinator for Pupil and Community Services. He has also taught the Individual Counseling Practicum for Cal State in collaboration with the Montebello Family Support Center, and is very involved in the 40 Developmental Assets program throughout the District. George also will be responsible for implementing and managing a social marketing campaign aimed at changing attitudes and stereotypes relating to mental health.

As any good mental health professional knows, it's key to take leisure time. To this end, George says he loves travel and has extensively through Mexico, Europe and Eastern Europe. His love of language led him to a course in conversational Mandarin in recent years, believing that language is the way to connect with peoples and cultures. He greatly enjoys his work with the youth in his church, particularly summer youth camps in the exploration of nature. He's an art buff, enjoys poetry and music and says just hanging with his friends is a great pleasure.

