CALI CALMÉCAC LANGUAGE ACADEMY

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Maria Peña

Rotary Teacher of the Year for Cali Calmécac Language Academy!

Maria Peña was honored as Cali's Teacher of the Year for 2010-2011 at a special breakfast last week by our Windsor Rotarians. Ms. Peña has taught at Cali for the last 14 years in the second grade. Never being one to draw attention to herself or her accomplishments, one only has to peek in her classroom or speak to one of her students to find that there are truly special things going on with her kids! She has a keen eye for integrating art and subject matter. Her students are fascinated with the creative, kid –friendly approach she takes to teaching all subjects. I have never in 14 years heard her raise her voice and yet her students are well behaved and respectful. Students from this year's class tell me she is "Kind', "Beautiful" "Good at math and teaching us" and that she had them work very quietly one day "so that a dinosaur couldn't sneak up on them" We are very fortunate to have Maria Peña as one of our cherished staff members! Congratulations, Maria!

Cali says, "Hasta Luego" to Two Staff Members as They Retire

Cali will not be the same as we start next year without two dear people who have made the decision to embark on a new chapter of their lives and retire!

Mary Mares

Mary Mares, our school secretary, has worked at Cali since 1988! She was originally a classroom aide and later moved into the main office as our secretary. She undoubtedly knows the inner workings of our office better than just about anyone! I know we will miss her dearly as we begin next year without her expertise in the office! She is looking forward to more free time and I am sure, enjoying the company of her grandchildren!

Carla Musik

Maestra Carla Musik came to Cali after having taught for several years in Ukiah, in 1998. She has been a part of the third grade team ever since! She has shared her love of music and passion for art and creative expression with not only her students, but her colleagues as well. Thanks to her, our entire third grade staff has learned to play and to teach recorders to their students, getting a much appreciated introduction to music. Her students have attended the symphony, created a farmers market and visited museums. With her retirement, we will say good-bye to a dear friend and wonderful teacher! She looks forward to traveling, spending time with friends and family and teaching Spanish to adults!

What "Lay-offs' mean to Cali

In this impossible time of budget reductions and inadequate funding of California's Public schools, we are very saddened to be forced to lay-off some of Cali's finest staff members. We have heard that the state has opted to provide education with 3 billion dollars, a very small portion of the 13 billion that we are currently owed. In the past several years, funding for pupils in Windsor has been reduced by $1,000 per child. This year we have been forced to further reduce that funding by an additional 350 per student. This money will reinstate approximately $74.00 per student. As you can see, it is indeed more money, but hardly enough to undo the damage that has been done. As it stands, we still stand to lose the following staff members due to drastic reductions in funding:

Shannon Pellman

Mr. Pellman has been teaching at Cali for the last 4 years. He began as a long term sub for Mrs. Castillo and since has taught 6th grade English Language Arts, World History and P.E. His students have been inspired to great heights of achievement by his message of personal excellence and honorable behavior.

Patricia Mendoza

Ms. Mendoza has been with us for 3 years. She has taught 3rd grade and is currently teaching science to all 4th and 5th grade classes. Her students enjoy many hands-on activities and exciting lessons in life, earth and physical science.

Paola Ramirez

Ms Ramirez began her teaching career at Cali 5 years ago, teaching Reading Intervention to 7th and 8th grade students as a part time beginning teacher. We were so impressed with her ability to connect with kids that we brought her back full time! Since then she has taught 2nd and 3rd grade and is currently teaching Spanish Language Arts to all of our 7-8 grade students, as well as a Computer Skills elective.

Alma Garcia

Mrs. Garcia will be sorely missed as well. She has taught Reading Intervention, Science, 2nd grade and currently teaches 3rd grade. She is loved by all of her students and highly thought of by her colleagues. She has a gentle but firm way with students that inspires them to learn and love coming to school.

Of Budget Cuts, Lay-offs and Plans for Next Year

Of Budget Cuts, Lay-offs and Plans for Next YearDue to so many unknowns with budget cuts and increased class sizes, we are in the process of reworking our class and staff configurations for the coming year. I have asked grade levels to create a certain number of classes at each grade level based on the projected number of sections I have currently been allowed to staff by the school district. With larger classes, the necessity of creating strategically balanced classes becomes even more important. The increase in the number of students per class requires a significant reduction of sections at several grade levels, particularly in the K-3 levels. These changes necessitate the movement of several teachers to different grade levels. With so much "up in the air", it is highly probable that **we will be unable to honor parent requests for specific teachers for the coming school year.** These are difficult decisions to make, but rest assured, they will be made with the best interests of the students in mind.As we begin the new school year, **we will not consider any schedule or class changes until after the first 2 weeks of school or Back-to School Night** for your student's grade level whichever comes first. We ask for your understanding in these difficult, unsettling times and that you encourage your students to do make the most of their experience here.

Cesar Salas

Mr. Salas has been with us since this winter. He has taught Spanish Intervention for 8th grade and ELD for the 6th grade. He has been a wonderful addition to our staff and we will miss him next year!

Jessica Olvera

Maestra Olvera stepped in as a long-term substitute for Mrs. Castillo when she left on medical leave. Third graders were fortunate to have such a capable teacher take over and keep them on track! We will miss her positive influence on our students.