

# Student's forum

## Student to Student

**This Week's Question:** *What is your favorite sports team and why?*

**Last Week's Question:** *What is your favorite sports team and why?*

**ANSWERS:**

I deplore sports, with the exception T-Ball... now THAT I will watch. Any other sport bores me to tears. JS

My favorite sports "team" would be any and all Olympic Teams, even from other countries.

I get so into watching the Olympics, Summer and Winter, because these athletes are driven by a love of the sport and perfection of skill, not big paychecks.

Those competitions cross racial/ethnic/socioeconomic boundaries in a way that really nothing else can.

I also really enjoy watching it because I also learn about sports that I do not get to see any other time. J.G.

My favorite sports team is the Green Bay Packers because they are owned by their fans, not some big corporation.

Send all submissions to: [students@heraldpublications.com](mailto:students@heraldpublications.com)

## School Board Recap: From the Eagles Nest to the Hilltop Aquatic

**By Ryan Doolittle**

The El Segundo Unified School District Board of Education meeting was punctually reconvened to regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 22, leading with a summary of its closed session agenda items. Items one through six passed without any apparent problems.

After the formality of agenda approval, Board President Ann Coles happily swore Student Representative Alicia Maples into her unique role on the Board of Education. And in viewing her first official presentation, Maples witnessed the El Segundo Educational Foundation present the Board with a check for \$450,000. Foundation Chairman Richard C. Lundquist of Continental Development Corporation presided over the presentation. "On behalf of the Foundation, I'd like to thank the community residents, businesses, our Superintendent's Roundtable members, booster school contributors, and all the individual donors for making this possible." Lundquist went on to recognize "...that there are many challenges facing our state and all school districts...and we encourage everybody to continue to partner with us in this coming school year so that we can continue the great support for a very wonderful school district, even during these difficult times..." Lundquist was flanked by Councilmember Bill Fisher and Computer Sciences Corporation Senior Manager, Corporate Communications Linda Johnson.

Next up was the aquatics presentation, given by Recreation and Parks Director Bob Cummings and Rossetti Architects in association with swimming pool design firm Counsilman-Hunsaker. Three multi-faceted plans were laid out as potential locations for a new swimming pool and aquatics center. The first possible is the Hilltop site, which would be located at 817 E. Grand Avenue. The second option is the Imperial site at 530 E. Imperial Avenue, and the third falls to a renovation and addition to the Urho Saari site at 219 W. Mariposa. Board Vice President Robin Funk stated that she would be disinclined to vote for the Urho Saari location because of its encroachment upon the Richmond Street School, which is already housed upon less land than any other school in town. Several other Board members voiced similar apprehensions, with Dr. Bill Watkins opining that the Hilltop site was the most logical because it already possessed a parking area. Board member Lisa Wilkin passed along concern she had received from the El Segundo High School Class of 1959 in regard to maintaining a strong aquatic presence in town.

After the aquatics presentation Mary Jo Nicolino, a teacher and the director of the Eagles Nest Preschool, gave her State of the Schools Address. "This is my ninth year..." Nicolino said, "And I'm proud to still be there. We've got a great group of kids and a lot of wonderful parents; very supportive." She went on to explain the various times and programs perched within the Eagles Nest. Staff members are currently adopting the creative curriculum, adding assessment tools, and even creating a job assignment section, which Nicolino said was very popular amongst the children. The hope is that it will promote responsibility, self-esteem, and a sense of classroom community. Self-expression seemed to be a trait richly present with the kids, for Nicolino offered up a happy chuckle while saying, "There's a lot of individuality in the classroom." There are 160 students enrolled in the Eagles Nest, 20 to 30 percent of whom are from outside the district. For those interested, space is still available. Also mentioned was the fact that the Eagles Nest Learning Garden was a gift from Chevron and a local Eagle Scout project.

After the preschool presentation, Arena High School teachers Ron Roebuck and Gene Williams took the approach of showing the Board "Where We've Been, Where We Are, and Where We're Going." They explained that Arena used to be seen as an undesirable place people went when they weren't succeeding elsewhere. Now, they said, it has become more of an alternative to the standard course of education, and a place for self-paced, computer-based instruction where motivated, engaged 21st Century learners come. Arena is heading towards becoming a virtual academy of students embedded with Arena instructors. The graduation rates have risen each of the last three years: 2007--25 graduates; 2008--28 graduates; and 2009--34 graduates.

In addition to these encouraging numbers, more can perhaps be read into the story as some kids come to Arena and then return to El Segundo High School to graduate before matriculating to college. Wilkin, whose niece

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## College Admissions Guide for Panicked Students (and Parents!)

**By Michelle Lanphere Green**

It's September. Those long summer days are already becoming a distant memory, and school is back in session. If you are a high school student, you have a lot of things you should be working on right now, and planning for college often takes a backseat to homework and projects, extracurricular activities and part time jobs, family, and of course, texting your friends and updating Facebook too many times a day to count.

If you are a Junior or Senior in high school, your college to-do list is even longer. Do you know what to do first? Have you signed up for SAT or ACT? Do you know which test is better for you to take? Have you taken a practice or Mock ACT or SAT? Do you know what you are looking for in a college? Have you started creating your college dream list, yet? Have you researched schools on the web or read those pamphlets that have filled your mailbox, from colleges you didn't even know existed? Who should you ask to be a recommendation for your college application? Do you know what a FAFSA is, and why you should apply...and when? Have you talked to your parents about paying for college, and what schools actually cost? Where can you find listings of college scholarships? Does it make sense to begin at a community college and transfer after two years?

These are just some of the questions about the college admissions process that I hope

to help you answer in the coming months.

College admission has become more complicated in the last few years. Record numbers of high school seniors are applying to more colleges and attending in greater numbers than at any time in US history. Budget cutbacks in public colleges and endowment losses in public and private losses have created an even scarier problem in the last year, with the economic downturn. With competition rising, and students trying to figure out how to gain an edge over other applicants, it is more critical than ever for college bound students to create a realistic college list, based on their interests, needs and academic qualifications. There are 3000 colleges and universities in the United States. There isn't one "right" school out there for you. There are several. The key is to figure out what you are looking for in a college, and imagine yourself there. What would happen if you went to a college with one major and then changed your mind after a semester or two? Would that college still be one you would be comfortable in attending? College may be one of the most expensive investments you will ever make in your life, so take the time to answer these questions.

**My College Admissions Coach** offers personalized help for students and their parents as they navigate the college search and admissions process. Follow my new blog at: <http://collegeoptions.blogspot.com/>

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**Dates:** Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday  
October 6th, 7th, & 8th, 2009

**Place:** The Comedy & Magic Club  
1018 Hermosa Ave., Hermosa Beach

**Time:** 5:30 PM Bar opens, silent auction starts & seating begins\*  
6:45 PM DINNER  
8:00 PM Comedy Show, featuring a world class line-up of top comedians

**Cost:** \$75.00 Per person in advance (includes dinner and show)

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