Greetings from Dr. Jacqueline Elliot, President & CEO

As we come to the close of 2017, it’s a perfect time to reflect on and appreciate all of the tremendous people who comprise our PUC family. I am humbled by the opportunity to serve such amazing students, families, and communities with a group of such tremendous professionals. This past year was once again characterized by a network of teachers, staff, parents, and students dedicated to achieving PUC’s 3 Commitments. From alumni working in our schools honoring their commitment to uplift our communities, to teachers working tirelessly to ensure that students are proficient, to students working hard so they can attend their dream universities, to parents working in partnership with their school administrators and staff, the hum of the vibrant PUC culture was once again evident throughout the year. The fall of 2017 brought horrific fires to the San Fernando Valley. I sincerely thank all staff in the valley region for their professionalism and dedication to the welfare of our students and families during that extremely challenging time. Please enjoy the photos below reflecting some of the accomplishments of 2017. I wish all of you a successful, healthy, and fulfilling 2018!

PUC champions
Launch of Valley Parent Center
PUC iPrep launch
Celebrating success
Raising the flag despite the fires
Working hard at PUC Achieve
On November 1, 2017 PUC eCALS celebrated our 6th Annual Dia de los Muertos Event on the Sotomayor Learning Academies Campus in Glassell Park. This year’s event featured art, altars, performances, class projects, and festivities for families and community members as well as fundraisers including t-shirts designed by Ms. Cueva and delicious food sales from our clubs. The event drew close to a thousand people, despite being on the same night as Dodgers’ World Series Game 7!

A central feature of the event was an amazing art gallery and altar display by students from Ms. Cueva’s visual art classes featuring work from the Beginning Art, Advanced Art, and 3D Art classes ranging from paper-mache skulls, altar inspired Nichos, Jose Guadalupe inspired satirical skeletons, and three dimensional sculptures inspired by the essence of the Day of the Dead. Ms. Cueva, who put on the first eCALS Dia de los Muertos Event six years ago, works incredibly hard to transform her classroom into a real art gallery with lighting, music, and layout that truly creates a magical space to display the visual arts student’s hard work.

This year’s main stage area featured stellar performances from Mr. Smith’s and Mr. Jorgensen’s music students including the eCALS Advanced Ensemble, Sotomayor Spirit Band/Drumline, and Sotomayor Choir. Students performed traditional music along side rock n’ roll classics. The main stage also featured incredible guest artists such as Danza Azteca Iztacuauhtli and Mariachi Zapopan. The guest artists brought the house down with their performances and were of great source of inspiration to our younger performers.

eCALS ASB with the help of Mr. Lopez and Mr. Chary put together a haunted house on the 2nd and 3rd floor of the building which provided some extra fun (and fright) to patrons who attended the event. It featured scary characters from all of the student’s favorite films and stories. Students especially enjoyed the opportunity scare their friends and teachers, including new Assistant Principal Mr. Markovics!

The event was a true collaboration between our teachers and staff, whether it was Ms. Ramos’ Spanish class alters, Mr. Creery’s class art installation of found objects on the trials and struggles of children in modern day slavery, or members of Mr. Manzanero’s soccer team singing corridos on the main stage, everyone pitched in to help out with the event. We also couldn’t have done the event with the support of our amazing admin. and office staff, especially Principal Dr. Villagomez, Mr. Chavez, and Ms. Montanez. All in all, the event was a huge success and continues to be a staple of culture and art on our campus and in our community.
By James B. Golden
Walking into PUC Inspire Charter Academy the morning of December 5, 2017 was akin to stepping momentarily into a battle zone, or perhaps the aftermath of the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and fires. The slate gray and amber colored sky seemed to sit in the parking lot, married with enough ash to recall a snowy Chicago December day. Yet, we weren’t in Chicago, or any place snow falls, we were in the great San Fernando Valley—home of my alma mater, Cal State Northridge, rock icon Ritchie Valens, the hottest summers around, and now the devastating 2017 Los Angeles County fires.

As teachers, staff, and administrators covered their mouths with scarves, paper towels, jackets, masks, and any other cloth-like material around, we said goodbye to each child waiting for their parents to arrive. We made jokes about not having homework and assured each of them that we all would be okay. These words, while consoling, were too easily spoken from many of us who would return to our homes in neighboring communities only to be merely bothered by the ash on our cars.

For many of our staff and students, panic ensued in neighborhoods forced to evacuate, communities were asked to leave their precious mementos and childhood homes behind for safe cover as homes and iconic structures were demolished in the anger of fire. The tears, screams, panic, anxiety, restlessness, altered breathing, and fear were certainly real in the fire this time. In all of that, parents and students still found refuge at the place our students spend more time throughout the week than anywhere else—school. They brought their children to one of the safest places they know, but had to turn around.

It is in times like these that we need to reflect most...times so rocky that we need a heavy anchor to remain safe during an ever-growing Moby Dick-level storm.

My favorite poet, the incomparable Langston Hughes, wrote in 1943, “When a man starts to build a world, He starts first with himself.” Here is where we ask ourselves:

1. **Am I okay?** - Remember to identify and own your personal feelings without judgment.

2. **What does this disaster bring to mind?** - Does this event trigger you based on the past events?

3. **What do I need to feel genuinely at peace?** - How can you show yourself compassion in order to stabilize?
Immediately after reflecting on these questions, I thought about Allen Ginsberg who said, “The weight of the world is love.” This is where we begin to think of our students, through the process of inquiry, as we carry much of their weight when stepping into our classrooms:

1. **Are you okay?** - Our students may have conscious and/or unseen challenges they have experienced at the hands of this disaster.

2. **How were you affected by the fires?** - Many of our students may have a lack of access to their basic needs like food, shelter, and clean clothing. They may be staying with relatives or in hotels. They may be in a state of shock. They may even appear to be fine, without realizing that they are anxious, depressed, or scared.

3. **How can I be of service to you?** - We must think of ourselves as champions for our students—as we truly, truly are. Can we show them a little more love and affection? Can we allow them to sit in our classrooms and just relax during free time or nutrition/lunch periods? Can we get them a snack to eat?

Champions, this is what we do. Even in the middle of terror and destruction, we champion. We do as Spartans did on battlefields, sword fighting for the lives we have been entrusted with. Our students always, whether spoken or not, see us as champions for life. They see us as survivors and thrivers. Our students see us as their inspirations to go to college, to be productive citizens, and to give back to their communities. Most importantly, they see us as champions.

Now is the time for us to give them something that we do not always have to give, which is our unrelenting best, to show them that we will make it through everything. This is the time to reassure them that they are our extended family members, that we care deeply for their mental, physical and educational growth, and that we deeply love them as they are.

Finally, my all-time favorite writer, the great James Baldwin wrote in his critically acclaimed essay *The Fire Next Time*, “Life is tragic simply because the earth turns...” While this existential thought haunted me for many years after reading it, I have found the greatest comfort in knowing that our time spent here is important. This, for me, translates directly to our time spent with each of our students, in any capacity. Because, the best that we can do is to live intentionally, and without chains, and always.

In the words of an old Negro Spiritual, “*God gave Noah the rainbow sign. He said it won’t be water, but fire next time.*”

That’s fine and all, yet, regarding the fire this time, we will return to Inspire Charter Academy with no more snowy ash on the grounds. We will look for every possible rainbow, even if rainbows are not supposed to come after fires. In some cases, we will create our own rainbows. Either way, we will be champions for our students. We will be champions for ourselves.

We will be champions. **We will be champions.** We will be champions.

We are champions.
PUC CCES Scholars are Out of this World!

During the months of October and November, 5th grade PUC CCES scholars learned about the stars, planets, and the solar system in their astronomy unit. Using Mystery Science curriculum, students engaged in inquiry based lessons and explored questions such as “Why does the sun rise and set?” “Why does the moon change shape?” and “How can the sun tell you the season?” Each lesson included interactive videos, hands-on experiences, and rigorous questions to debate and discuss.

Over fall break, scholars engaged in a space project as a way to wrap up their unit. As part of the project, students selected one of the unit’s essential questions to explore further. They had the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge by creating a 3D model, short story, informational report, poster board, poem, or rap.

In order to showcase their great work, the 5th graders invited both second grade and kindergarten classes into their classrooms and presented their projects to them. The fifth graders were excited to share their knowledge with the younger grades and really took ownership and pride in their work as they presented to the younger grades. The following week, 5th grade scholars went to visit the kindergarten classes to see and learn more about their Native American projects. We hope to continue this tradition and collaboration in the future!
Glassdoor and Indeed

PUC is on the Glassdoor and Indeed job site where you can leave a review about your experience here at PUC!

In case you're not familiar with the job sites they are similar to Yelp!

See our links below:

http://www.glassdoor.com/Overview/Working-at-PUC-Schools-EI_IE465918.11,22.htm
http://www.indeed.com/cmp/Puc-Schools

Leave us a review!
Social Media

PUC Schools Recruitment  @pucschools_recruitment  @PUC_Recruitment

We’re here! Follow the Recruitment Team on social media to stay updated on events, new openings, and much more!
Discounted Software Available For Home Use

Exclusive for your company, get the completely NEW Microsoft Office Professional Plus 2016 suite for your home. Or if you use a Mac, get Office Home and Business 2016 for Mac for the same low price, $9.95.

The link below provides the details as well as the new program code necessary to purchase Office.

Human Resources Employee Perks Program

Human Resources is pleased to announce a new employee benefit. All employees now have exclusive access to the Working Advantage discount network which allows you to save up 60% on ticketed events and online shopping. Through Working Advantage you can save on: Movie Tickets, Theme Parks, Ski Tickets, Broadway Shows, Sporting Events, Hotels and Travel, Health and Fitness, Museums and City Passes, Merchant Gift Certificates, Online Shopping...and much more! To subscribe, you may access the Working Advantage website by clicking here: www.workingadvantage.com. When opening an individual account you will need the PUC Schools ID #413401740.

Working Advantage offers 24-hour online shopping and customer support Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 6:30 PM Eastern time. If you have specific questions regarding the site, please contact Working Advantage at 800-565-3712.

Human Resources has AMC tickets available for sale. As of August 1, 2016, AMC will no longer sell Silver, Gold or Green Tickets; they have decided to move to one ticket going forward which will be the Black Ticket. PLEASE NOTE: May be subject to surcharge. All restrictions are listed in back of ticket.

AMC tickets have no expiration date. The price for a black ticket is $10.25 per ticket.

PAYMENT METHOD: ONLY CASHIER’S CHECK, PERSONAL CHECK OR MONEY ORDER. NO CASH! Please make check or money order to: PUC Schools. If you are interested in purchasing AMC Black tickets, please contact hr@pucschools.org.

T-Mobile offers exclusive discounts for PUC Schools Employees. Click on the T-Mobile logo above to visit T-Mobile’s promo website. To enroll by phone, contact Advantage Direct at 866-464-8662 and use promotional code 20356TMOFAV.

Sprint is pleased to offer monthly service discounts to eligible employees, students and organization members.

Click on the Sprint logo above to visit Sprint's promo website or visit the PUC Intranet, Employee Perks under the Team Member Tools tab.

Any questions regarding our employee perks program, please contact hr@pucschools.org or (818) 559-7699
PUC Polo Shirts and Laptop Bags for Sale

You can now purchase PUC Polo Shirts and PUC Laptop bags! Items can be purchased throughout the year. Please contact HR at hr@pucschools.org to place an order. Please be sure to indicate your shirt size. We have men’s and women’s sizes.

PUC Polo: $20 for either the male or female cut.

PUC Laptop Bag: $40