

***Castro Valley Student-Costs Are Lower, But Test Scores Beat San Leandro's***

Editor:

□ According to statistics compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Dept of Education, and California Department of Education, San Leandro School District spending per pupil is at the median range for California, yet our children's test scores rank in the bottom 20% statewide.

□ Meanwhile, next door in Castro Valley, public school students rank in the top 15% despite the fact that their cost per pupil is significantly lower than San Leandro's.

□ Unless you are ready to concede (which I am not) that Castro Valley kids are brighter than our kids, it is clear that there is not necessarily a direct correlation between spending per student and results.

□ I urge San Leandro voters to take a long hard look at the facts before they approve a parcel tax which would only serve to pour more of our resources into a under-performing system which is already well funded.

□ Our neighbors in Castro Valley are clearly getting an excellent return on their investment. We San Leandro taxpayers need to hold our public officials equally accountable.

—**Rob Banks**, *San Leandro*

***City Fixes Traffic-Pedestrian ‘Nightmare’ on Bancroft***

Editor:

□ As a resident of the San Leandro, I am aware of the daily chaos at the intersection of 136th and Bancroft Avenue.

□ During peak times of the day, this intersection is a nightmare. Between the large crowds of students crossing the street, and businesses at Palma Plaza flooded with vehicles, this intersection is dangerous for both motorists and students.

□ Recently, I noticed a lot of construction, and was pleased to see a state-of-the-art four way stop light and cross walk being designed for both pedestrian and vehicle safety.

□ I took a walk through the finished intersection and experienced firsthand how well designed the system is. It allows traffic to flow uninterrupted, then permits pedestrians to cross on all four corners once the light turns red.

□ When you push the button to activate the cross walk, it instructs you to “wait”, then tells you “it is now safe to cross all sides”, making it a great tool for the blind community as well. I am impressed and believe it is an excellent system. I am happy to see the people’s tax dollars at work to maintain safety and order for everyone.

□ I encourage all students at San Leandro High to take this system seriously and respectfully. From what I’ve witnessed,

they are both appreciative and grateful.

□ Thank you, City of San Leandro for providing a solution to a problem that needed immediate attention.

—**Melissa Hudson**, *San Leandro*

***School District Thankful for Those New Traffic Lights***

Editor:

□ On behalf of San Leandro Unified School District Board of Education, our students, families, staff and neighbors, I want to thank the City of San Leandro for their ongoing partnership as demonstrated most recently with the installation of a traffic light at the intersection of Bancroft and 136th Avenues – just in time for the first day of school!

□ Located at a critical intersection on the route between the Fred T. Korematsu (9th grade) campus and the main campus at San Leandro High School, this traffic light will help ensure that our students, staff and school visitors can cross safely.

□ I would like to thank Mayor Cassidy, the City Council, City Manager Chris Zapata, the Engineering and Transportation Department – notably Uche Udemezue, Reh-Lin Chen and Keith Cooke – and all involved in seeing that this light was fully operational by the start of the 2012-2013 school year.

□ Our schools are fortunate to have the strong support of the City of San Leandro and our community, making the safety and well-being of our youth a top priority.

—**Superintendent Cindy M. Cathey**

*San Leandro School District*

***West Says Burton Should Be 'First in Line' for Sanity Test***

Editor:

□ Vernon S. Burton (“A Sanity Test for Letters To the Editor?” *Letters*, Aug. 16) should be ordered to stand first in line for the “sanity test.”

□ Then again, maybe Burton was upset that I only mentioned Homosexuality and Lesbianism, for LGBTQS also stands for Bisexuality, Transexuality, Queerness and Sadomasochism. So, sorry about that.

□ Now, Mr. Burton and Levy, sounds like a law firm, let me remind you that we, the workers of this state, voted and passed: *Yes on 8!*

—**Leo T. West**, *San Leandro*

***Reader Glad to Have West's Views Aired in Public***

Editor:

□ Recently Vernon Burton wrote to suggest that you censor letters from readers to exclude writers like Leo West *(see above)*.

□ I write to implore that you not follow Mr. Burton's advice. I do not agree with Mr. West's parochial, bigoted, and homophobic viewpoints. But I do like to know that he has them, and when you publish his letters, I and everyone else in this community knows.



□ This is not to say that I am pleased in any way that he has these irrational, unwarranted and unfair beliefs. I am only pleased that Mr. West is willing to let the community know that he has them. By doing so he proves that bigotry and bias continue to exist in our community.

□ Leo West is a one-man justification for the Safe Schools program, sensitivity training in city employment, and the continued fight for civil rights and fairness in our government and community.

□ Let all of the city's bigots write in and sign their names so that we can know who they are, so that they can dispel the notion that bias and discrimination don't happen, and that programs like Safe Schools are superfluous or unnecessary.

□ Better yet, maybe you can get Mr. West to wear a t-shirt that expresses his intolerant views, so that I can recognize him in public and make sure he has no contact with my kids.

—**Andrew Kopp**, *San Leandro*

