

# NEWSLETTER

Community Partnerships Academy  
Berkeley High School



February 2008

website: <http://www.bhscpa.org>

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## Special Parent Meeting—Free Pizza

The next parent meeting will be Thursday, February 28th from 7 pm to 9 pm in the College and Career Center on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the “D” Building. (Note that the meeting was moved from the 21<sup>st</sup> due to a schedule conflict with the Berkeley High School Open House.) Don’t miss this meeting! There will be Cheeseboard pizza and beverages, but more importantly, there will be announcements and discussions that affect your student. We want at least 100 parents to attend. Please be one of them.

Another upcoming Parent Council event is the College Information Session on Saturday March 15<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 12 noon in the College and Career Center. Read the enclosed flyer and plan to attend with your student.

According to our estimates, one-third of CP Academy families do not have email. Are we wrong? If you have an email address and you haven’t let us know, you could be missing out on important announcements. Go to our website (<http://www.bhscpa.org>) right away, click Forms, click Stay in Touch Form for Parents, fill in the form online, and send it in. If you don’t have an email address, you can go to any branch of the Berkeley Public Library and get one. Ask a librarian to help you. You can also get email on some cell phones. Ask your cell phone provider and make sure let us know your new email address.

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## On the Need for a Third Science

The growth of CPA during its three-and-a-half year tenure as a small school has been impressive. There is now a three-year minimum requirement to take IMP math to satisfy the UC “c” admission requirement. As a result, there are now enough qualified students who are taking AP Calculus for the first time in-house. AP English was introduced partially as an answer to losing students who go outside of CPA to take the course. Further, in order to ensure a steady flow of CP Academy students into the course, the Writers Coach Connection is now part of the freshman and sophomore English course structure to teach superior writing skills. There has even been a subtle forging of the connections between the English, History, and Math components with the Leadership Council decision to choose IMP math, with its

emphasis on problem solving skills, as the sole math course sequence.

One question that remains to be solved is the integration of the lab science offerings with the rest of the core components. In particular, in the last four years we’ve had three different science teachers, so there has been a discontinuity in teaching direction. Further, we only offer two lab science courses in-house, Advanced Biology and Chemistry. These courses have yet to be integrated with the CP Academy English, History, and Math components. Most importantly though, the UC requirement strongly recommends three lab science courses, and as already mentioned, we offer only two. As a result, most students go outside of CPA to take the third lab science course. This is where our problem becomes acute.

According to the results of an informal survey of last and this year’s CP Academy students taking their third lab science course outside the Academy, the main course they take is AP Environmental Science. Seniors from last year felt the course content had very little connectivity, being disjointed in nature. They also felt that the course had no integration with in-house CPA core courses, so there was no reinforcement of understanding. Further, last year’s seniors pointed out that almost all colleges they applied to did not know what the course was and that their application was downgraded a bit. The results for another significant course, Physics 1D/2D are even direr. This year’s students complained that the course is mostly monotonous lecture with numerical manipulation being the main factor in determining your grade.

So given that UC college admissions strongly suggest three lab courses, and the structure of present lab science courses outside of our small school does not fit the level of our students, we need to create a third in-house lab science course that conforms to the goals of CPA and can be integrated with the CPA English, History and Math components. What should it be? This is a job for all of us—staff, parents and students—to decide. However, the sooner we implement the third lab science course in our core sequence, the sooner we increase our students’ competitiveness with respect to UC admission requirements, which is an accepted undergraduate admission benchmark at almost all colleges and universities in the US.

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## Counselor's Corner

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**Dear CPA Families, I'm trying something different this time. Call or email me (644-8987 or [cohlson@berkeley.k12.ca.us](mailto:cohlson@berkeley.k12.ca.us)) with your feedback!**  
**Ms. Ohlson**

### Topic of the Day: Stress Management

Stress is defined as the way our bodies and minds react to life changes. Since adolescence is a period of significant change, including physical, emotional, social, and academic changes, many teens are under more stress than at any other time.

#### Teenage Stress Factors:

- academic pressure and career decisions
- pressure to wear certain types of clothing
- pressure to try drugs, alcohol or sex
- pressure to fit in and measure up to others
- adaptation to bodily changes
- family and peer conflicts
- taking on too many activities at one time

It is very important for teens to learn to handle stress, as long-term buildup of unmanaged stress may lead to problems, including physical illness, anxiety or depression, which call for professional help.

#### Teenage "Stress Overload" Signs:

- increased physical illness (headaches, stomachaches, muscle pains, chronic fatigue)
- *shutting down* and withdrawing from people and activities
- increased anger or irritable lashing out at others
- increased tearfulness and feelings of hopelessness
- chronic feelings of worry and nervousness
- difficulty sleeping and eating
- difficulty concentrating

Our body's natural reaction to events that we perceive as overwhelming is the *fight or flight* response, which may produce a faster heart rate, increased blood flow, shallow breathing, a sense of dread, and a desire to escape. However, teens can teach themselves to perceive life challenges as being within their control and can even change their body's reactions to such events, promoting a lower heart rate, deeper breathing, clearer thinking and feelings of calmness and control. There are many stress management skills that promote the relaxation response.

#### Stress Management Skills for Teens:

- Taking deep breaths accompanied by thoughts of being in control ("I can handle this")
- Progressive muscle relaxation, (repeatedly tensing and relaxing large muscles of the body)
- Setting small goals and breaking tasks into smaller manageable chunks
- Exercising, eating regular meals, and avoiding excess caffeine
- Focusing on things you can control and letting go of things

you cannot control

- Rehearsing and practicing feared situations (for example, practicing public speaking or asking someone out on a date)
- Talking about problems with others, including parents, older adults and friends
- Lowering unrealistic expectations
- Scheduling breaks and enjoyable activities, such as music, art, sports, socializing
- Accepting yourself as you are and identifying unique strengths and building on them, but realizing no one is perfect!

*This article "Helping Teens Cope with Stress" was written by Jennifer Dyl, PhD and adapted from the website [www.lifespan.org](http://www.lifespan.org). It was originally published in *Rhode Island Family Guide*.*

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## Honor Roll (3.0 and Above)

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Arafat Al-Ariemy	Alicia Altamirano	Ali Alwasim
Danielle Armstrong	Adam Berson	Briana Bostic
Tyler Bremer	Yasmeen Brew	Noah Brozosky
Alicia Campos	Robyn Canady	Cydnee Clomon
Breanna Dawson	Iliana DeJesus	Itzel Duran-Verdin
Samuel Elizondo	Sandra Garcia Velazquez	Chelsa Greene
Diego Guerrero	Ben Hamilton	Adrienne Hardee
Adam Hartwell-Mejia	Elijah Hemphill	Loretha Henry
Kalin Ibrahim-Bartley	Shiela Johnson	Ethan Jones
Gianna Jones	Yared Kiflai	Kiran Logan
Yelitza Lua	Alicia Maciel	Maria Marquez
Aron Martinez-Shipp	William McAdoo	Cleveland Mitchell
Courtney Moore	Kimberly Moreno	Tori Nichols
Eden Ogbai	Chinyere Okereke	Christopher Onu
Lily Owens	Kailen Palmer	Jessica Perrin
Nichelle Pete	Shyloe Pollard	Gala Qualls
Elizabeth Queen	Kenji Quides	Ilse Rueda
Noel Russell	Salma Salem	Kimberly Scott
Christian Sheppard	Tobias Smith	Nick Suess
Orly Suveda	Mick Tan	David Tecle
Jordan Thull	Rukiya Tutashinda	Victoria Veitch
Selma Verdin	Jennifer Walker	DeVonte Wallace
Taylor Wallace	Tabitha Wong	Zoe Wotton

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## Announcements

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- ⇒ An African American Education Summit will be held Saturday, March 1st at the California State University, East Bay at 25800 Carlos Bee Blvd. in Hayward. Registration starts at 8a.m and workshops and sessions are from 9a.m.-3p.m. The summit will include empowering workshops for students and parents, college information, on-the-spot admissions for CSU eligible high school seniors, and financial aid and scholarship information. Lunch and transportation are provided. For more information, contact the BHS Parent Resource Center at (510) 644-8524.
- ⇒ The People's Test Preparation Service will be offering free SAT prep classes for sophomores and juniors in H207 (Ms. Bell's room) on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:30 beginning on Wednesday, February 13 through April 30th. Take advantage of this opportunity!
- ⇒ February 7 was the late registration deadline for the March 1 SAT tests. March 7 is the regular registration deadline for the April 12 ACT test. Subject tests are not offered on this test date. Fee waivers for low-income students are available in D221.