

PASO PROUD

An Inside Look at Paso Schools • Issue 9 • Fall 2026

A Beautiful **FUTURE**

PRHS Opens Doors to New Careers with the Bearcat Institute of Cosmetology

THE NAMES BEHIND WAR MEMORIAL STADIUM

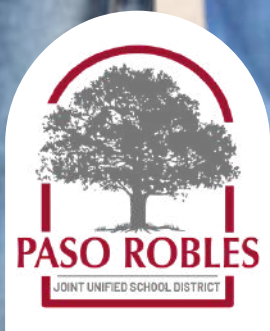
PARTNERS IN POSSIBILITY

SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK!

A FRESH TAKE ON SCHOOL FOOD

BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

A REMARKABLE TURNAROUND



Cover Photo by Jesus Ursulo Echevarria



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Superintendent's Message

Dear Paso Schools Families and Community,

One of the responsibilities we have as educators is to look beyond the school year in front of us. The students entering kindergarten today will graduate into a world that looks very different from the one we know now. Our job is to anticipate that future as best we can and make thoughtful decisions today that will prepare them for it.

That perspective has guided much of our work this fall.

With the opening of our Bearcat Institute of Cosmetology and the continued growth of Career Technical Education, we're expanding opportunities for students to graduate with practical skills and a clearer sense of what's possible after high school. Our partnerships with local industry professionals help us keep those programs connected to the changing needs of the workforce.

The Board's recent approval of our 2030 Vision Facilities Master Plan represents another important step. As new industries emerge in Paso Robles, we have an opportunity to prepare our students for rewarding careers right here in the community where they're growing up. That requires us to think carefully about the classrooms, equipment, and learning environments they'll need.

We're also doing this work from a stronger financial position. The District's recent credit rating upgrades reflect nearly eight years of disciplined financial management and the progress we've made in rebuilding our fiscal foundation.

Of course, looking forward also means remembering what matters. This fall's dedication of the War Memorial Stadium monument was a moving reminder of the history we inherit and our responsibility to preserve it.

I hope this issue gives you a sense of both the progress we've made and the direction we're headed. We have important work ahead of us, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to do it alongside the people of Paso Robles.

With appreciation,
Jennifer Loftus
Superintendent, Paso Robles Joint Unified School District

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SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK

FROM CREATIVE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES TO LIVE MUSIC, ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS ACROSS PRJUSD TURNED UP THE FUN FOR ROCK YOUR SCHOOL DAY.

Who says learning can't rock?

On October 2, every elementary school in Paso Robles Joint Unified School District joined in the fun for the annual Rock Your School Day, transforming an ordinary Friday into a celebration of creativity, school spirit, and the joy of learning.

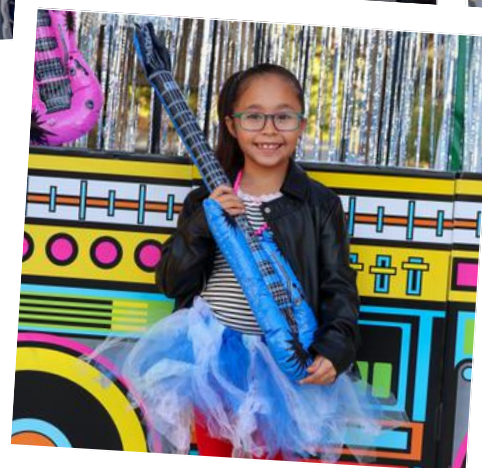
Across the District, teachers and staff found imaginative ways to surprise and engage students, bringing fresh energy to familiar lessons and routines.

At **Winifred Pifer Elementary**, staff took the rock-and-roll theme to heart, treating students to live music and bringing a little

concert energy to campus.

While the activities varied from campus to campus, the goal was the same: to inspire enthusiasm, and shake up a typical school day in playful and unexpected ways.

And if there's one thing Rock Your School Day proves, it's that Paso Schools know how to rock! 🎸



A Beautiful FUTURE

BEARCAT INSTITUTE OF COSMETOLOGY CELEBRATES RIBBON CUTTING

Paso Robles High School celebrated an exciting new chapter in career technical education (CTE) on September 18 with the official ribbon cutting for the Bearcat Institute of Cosmetology, a new program giving students the opportunity to turn their creativity and passion into career-ready skills.

The institute welcomes its inaugural cohort of 28 students, who will spend the next three years developing their skills in a professional salon learning environment. Under the guidance of instructor Natalie McKaughan, students will gain hands-on experience in cosmetology while working toward completing 1,000 hours of training before graduation.

The program offers students a head start on a potential career in the beauty industry, combining classroom instruction with practical experience and opportunities to develop the technical skills, professionalism and confidence needed to succeed beyond high school.

The Bearcat Institute of Cosmetology is the newest addition to PRHS's growing Career Technical Education offerings. With 18 CTE pathways available at the high school, students can explore their interests and gain valuable experience in fields ranging from health sciences and agriculture to skilled trades and the arts.

More than half of PRHS students participate in CTE programs, reflecting the District's

commitment to providing meaningful, hands-on learning opportunities that connect classroom education with real-world possibilities.

For the inaugural class of Bearcat cosmetologists, the ribbon cutting marked more than the opening of a new learning space. It was the beginning of an opportunity to discover their talents, build confidence and take their first steps toward a future filled with beautiful possibilities. 🌱





28
INAUGURAL
STUDENTS



1,000
HOURS
OF TRAINING
BEFORE
GRADUATION



18
CTE PATHWAYS
AT PRHS



Photos by Jesus Ursulo Echevarria



Remembering the Bearcats

WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

New monument honors 12 Paso Robles High School alumni who lost their lives while serving in World War II.

For generations, War Memorial Stadium has been a gathering place for the Paso Robles community. But behind its familiar name is a history that deserves to be remembered.

Dedicated on November 8, 1946, the stadium was named in honor of 12 Bearcats who lost their lives during World War II. Although a memorial plaque was installed two years later, their individual names were never displayed.

Nearly 80 years later, that has changed. On October 2, 2026,

the community gathered before the Bearcats' home football game to dedicate a new monument honoring the 12 men.

The project was the work of a dedicated community committee formed in 2025 to preserve the Bearcats' stories and create a lasting tribute. Members researched historical records, military service, and family histories to ensure future generations could know more than their names alone.

With help from architect Gary

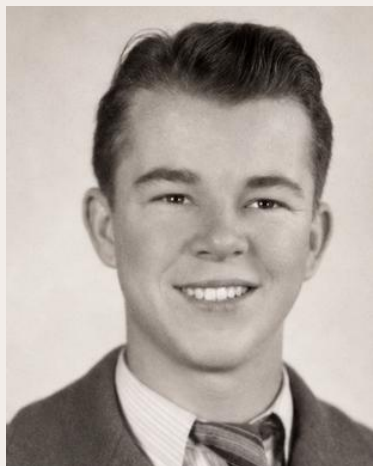
WAR MEMORIAL PROJECT COMMITTEE

Ray Dauth
Dr. Curt Dubost
Thomas Harrington
Dave Lambert
Dr. Gene Miller
Mark Perry
Kelly Stainbrook

Gery, who generously donated his time and expertise, the project added a new monument, flagpole, and flag to War Memorial Stadium—creating a lasting tribute to the 12 Bearcats whose service and sacrifice gave the stadium its name. 🌲

Learn More About Our Heroes

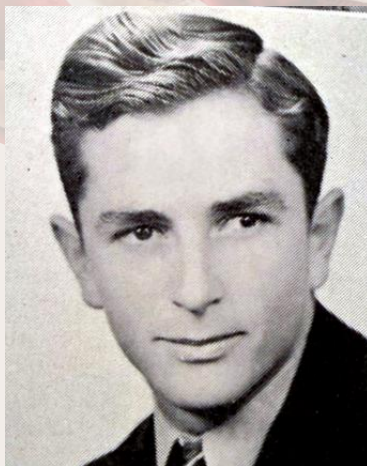
On November 8, 1946, War Memorial Stadium was dedicated in honor of twelve Paso Robles High School Bearcats who lost their lives while serving in World War II:



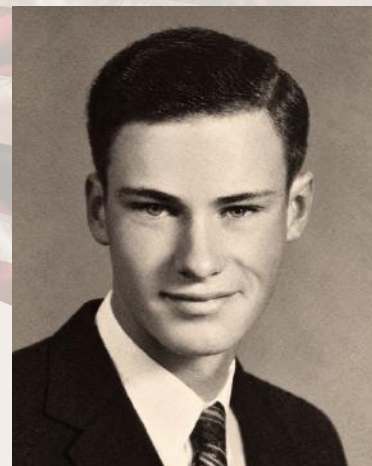
Joseph G. Crettol
USCG



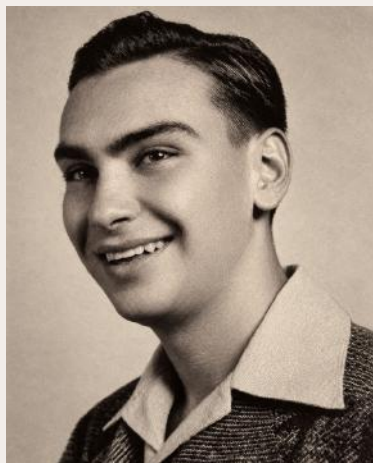
Raymond O. Dauth
USAAC



Raymond J. Farnell
USAAC



Edward R. Johnson
USA



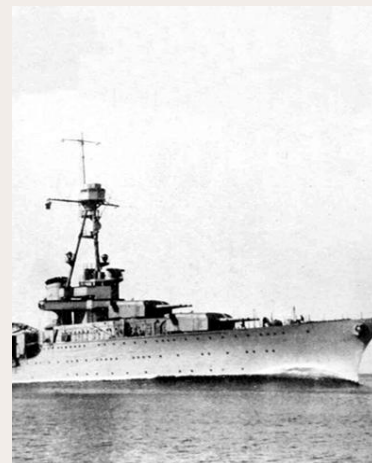
George M. Quintana
USA



Louis F. Patriquin
USAAC



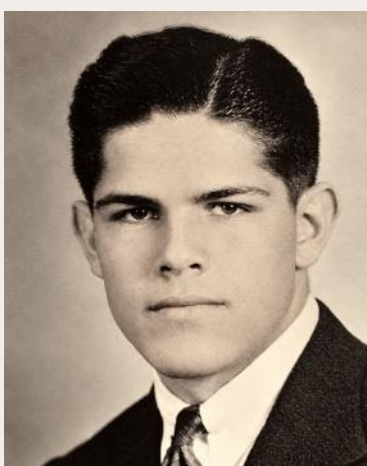
James L. Pearson
USAAC



Robert L. Rogers
USN



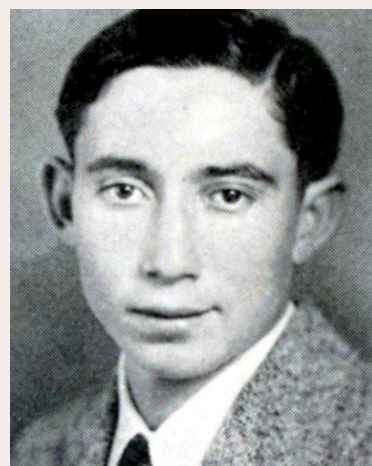
Benjamin F. Sauret
USA



Donald Smith
USN



Donald S. Steiner
USMC



Abraham Van Horn
USN

A note from the War Memorial Committee: Research into the lives of Don Smith and Robert L. Rogers is ongoing. As additional records, photographs, or family information become available, their biographies will be updated.

Scan or click the QR code to learn more about our fallen heroes at pasoschools.org/warmemorial





Partners in Possibility

LOCAL INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS AND PASO ROBLES EDUCATORS ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO CONNECT CLASSROOM LEARNING WITH REAL-WORLD CAREERS.

Some of the most valuable lessons students learn come from people who work in the fields they hope to enter.

On October 5, Paso Robles Joint Unified School District brought together approximately 30 industry partners, 20 teachers, and five administrators for its fall Career Technical Education (CTE) Industry Partner Dinner.

The evening provided an opportunity for educators and local professionals to strengthen relationships, share industry knowledge, and discuss how classroom instruction can reflect the skills employers need.

These partnerships help connect PRJUSD's CTE programs with the industries they represent. By learning directly from professionals in their fields, educators can better prepare students for the expectations, technologies, and opportunities they may encounter after graduation.

For students, those connections can open doors to career exploration, hands-on experiences, professional mentorship, and a clearer understanding of what it takes to succeed in the workplace. 🌱

“*Whatever path they choose, the goal is to help Paso students graduate with the skills, confidence, and connections to take their next step.*”





A Fresh Take on School Food

FROM LOCAL APPLES TO NEW FLAVORS, PASO SCHOOLS' FOOD SERVICES TEAM IS FINDING CREATIVE WAYS TO MAKE HEALTHY EATING FUN.

How do you like them apples? At **Virginia Peterson Elementary**, students recently had the chance to find out!

As part of a special tasting activity organized by PRJUSD Food Services, students sampled more than 15 varieties of apples from local Fair Hill Farms, exploring new flavors, textures, and perhaps discovering a new favorite along the way.

The tasting is one example of how the District's Food Services team is working to make school meals more than just a daily routine. By introducing students to different foods and creating opportunities to explore fresh ingredients, the team is helping students develop curiosity about what they eat.

Experiences like these also offer a chance to connect students with the agricultural community around them, showing how locally grown food can make its way from farm to cafeteria.

Whether it's trying an unfamiliar fruit or discovering a new favorite food, a little curiosity can go a long way. And sometimes, a fresh perspective starts with a single bite! 🍏



Granny Smith was the student favorite!



Blueprint for the Future

PRJUSD'S 2030 VISION FACILITIES MASTER PLAN LOOKS BEYOND THE CLASSROOMS OF TODAY TO THE CAREERS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND COMMUNITY OUR STUDENTS WILL INHERIT TOMORROW.

Today's Paso Robles elementary students may one day work in industries that are only beginning to take shape in their hometown.

With plans underway for the Paso Robles Spaceport and Technology Corridor, our community is looking toward a future that will bring new opportunities in aerospace, advanced manufacturing, engineering, and other high-paying technical fields.

But preparing students for those careers begins long before they enter the workforce. It requires access to specialized classrooms, modern equipment, and hands-on training that reflects the technologies and expectations of today's industries.

On September 22, the PRJUSD Board of Trustees approved the District's 2030 Vision Facilities Master Plan, a long-term roadmap developed with 19six Architects and informed by a year of research and extensive community input.

Beyond addressing aging infrastructure and campus needs, the plan identifies opportunities to modernize and expand Career Technical Education facilities, helping align student learning with emerging workforce demands.

These investments are about more than buildings. They're about giving students the skills and preparation to pursue rewarding careers, support their families, and build their futures in the community where they grew up.

The Facilities Master Plan establishes a roadmap for the future of Paso Schools, but approving the plan does not provide funding to carry out its recommendations. Whether and when individual projects move forward will depend on available resources, including state funding, District funds, and potential local bond proceeds. 🌳

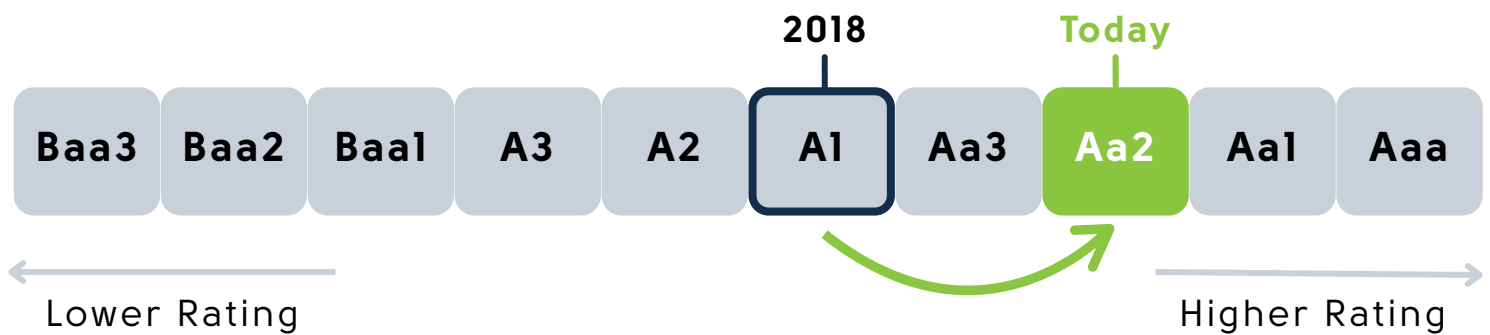
SEE THE VISION

Scan or click the QR code to explore the 2030 Vision Facilities Master Plan and discover what's envisioned for each Paso Schools campus.



A Remarkable Turnaround

EIGHT YEARS OF DISCIPLINED FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT UNDER NEW LEADERSHIP
EARN PASO SCHOOLS MAJOR CREDIT RATING UPGRADES FROM MOODY'S.



In 2018, Paso Robles Joint Unified School District faced a deteriorating financial position, dwindling reserves, and a credit rating downgrade from Moody's, an independent credit rating agency that evaluates the financial strength and ability of organizations to repay their debts.

Eight years later, the District's financial outlook tells a very different story.

In June 2026, Moody's upgraded PRJUSD's overall issuer rating from A1 to Aa3 and its general obligation bond rating from Aa3 to Aa2, recognizing nearly eight years of careful budgeting, strong financial oversight, and responsible stewardship of public funds.

Since joining the District in 2018, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Brad Pawlowski has helped guide that recovery, with Superintendent Jennifer Loftus continuing the emphasis on fiscal responsibility since joining the District in 2024—and the results are significant.

Available operating reserves grew from less than 5% in 2018 to 37% in 2025, strengthening the District's financial foundation.

Furthermore, the operating reserves have been carefully apportioned across restricted and unrestricted funds, allowing the District to prepare for the future while also equipping itself to weather the often unpredictable nature of State funding.

In addition to putting the District on secure financial footing,

higher credit ratings can also help reduce borrowing costs for school facility improvements, allowing more taxpayer dollars to support projects rather than interest payments.

For Paso Schools, upgraded credit ratings demonstrate not just comprehensive improvement in the District's financial position, but confidence in the leadership that has led the turnaround, and is guiding the District toward its future. 🌱

BEHIND THE BUDGET

Scan or click the QR code to explore the 2026-27 Parent & Partner Guide to the Budget, and the Budget Decoder.



A Community for New Teachers

PRJUSD'S NEW TEACHER LEARNING COMMUNITY HELPS EDUCATORS BUILD CONNECTIONS, SHARE EXPERIENCES, AND FIND SUPPORT AS THEY BEGIN THEIR TEACHING CAREERS.



The first years of teaching bring plenty of excitement, along with challenges that even the most prepared educators can't always anticipate. That's why PRJUSD's New Teacher Learning Community is bringing early-career teachers together to learn from one another, share experiences, and build lasting connections.

The group kicked off the school

year on September 30 at Four Sisters in San Miguel, which generously donated its space for the gathering.

Over refreshments and conversation, teachers reflected on their first weeks in the classroom and participated in an interactive activity featuring familiar teaching mishaps, from last-minute copier breakdowns to unexpected classroom

interruptions. The shared laughter was a reminder that every educator encounters challenges, and no one has to navigate them alone.

By creating a welcoming space for honest conversation and mutual encouragement, the New Teacher Learning Community is helping new educators find their footing—and a community of colleagues ready to support them along the way. 🌱



Ask a Question

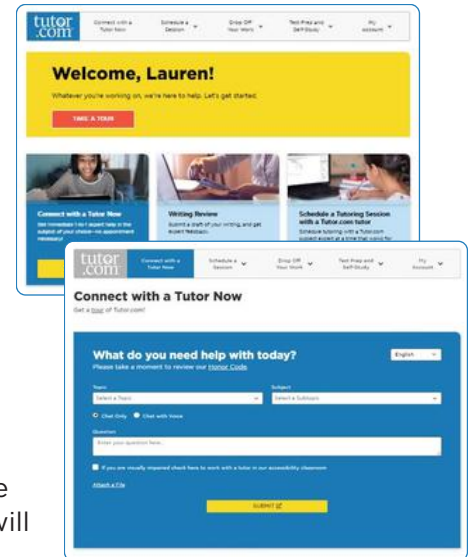
To log into Tutor.com:

Open Clever on your student's Chromebook, located in the PRJUSD Bookmarks folder. Log in to Clever using Google. Once logged in to Clever, click on Tutor.com.

Select your language, topic, subject, and grade level and ask your question. You can share a specific problem or let the tutor know what concept you need help with. Here are some examples of questions you might ask:

- *I'm stuck on my Geometry homework.*
- *I need help with my assignment on gas laws.*
- *Can you help me format my paper in MLA?*

When you're in our online classroom, you can use text- and/or voice-chat to communicate with your tutor. You can also share files or assignments you'd like to discuss. You and your tutor will be able to look at your work together in the classroom.



Get Connected with a Tutor



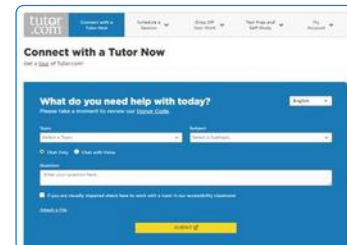
Click on the SUBMIT button to quickly connect with an expert tutor. The tutoring classroom will pop up in a new window.

When you are using the whiteboard, you can draw, erase, add shapes, and change colors to help your tutor see what you're working on. The classroom also includes a graphing calculator and text editor that you can use if you are working on complex math or writing assignments. Use these tools by clicking the buttons above the whiteboard.



Get Writing Support

Our drop-off review service allows you to get help from a tutor without having a live session. Upload any writing assignment you need help with, and a tutor will send you helpful feedback within a day. **Remember to remove your name from any assignment you share!**



Connect with a tutor anytime. We are here to help!



WITCHES!?! IN SALEM?!!

(A BRIEF & TRUE NARRATIVE EDITION)



WRITTEN BY MATT COX

DIRECTED BY MARCY KEYSER-GOODNOW

PASO HIGH
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20-21 | 26

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OUR PROMISE

We promise to provide a safe, supportive environment where every student feels valued and empowered to discover their strengths, build resilience, and develop the knowledge, character, and confidence to thrive in their future.

CORE VALUES

PRJUSD's Core Values describe how we do business or go about making decisions. The following values were defined by the Strategic Planning Committee as being the foundational rules of engagement for staff and the Board of Trustees of PRJUSD.

Integrity: We uphold integrity and ethical responsibility by being trustworthy in all our actions, ensuring that every decision is made with honesty, fairness, and respect for our students, families, staff, and community.

Accountability: We hold ourselves accountable and act with reliability, ensuring that every commitment we make to students, families, and one another is met with consistency, transparency, and follow-through.

Collaboration: We believe collaboration is essential to student success, and we are committed to working together—with students, families, staff, and community partners—to achieve shared goals and create a lasting, positive impact for all learners.

Innovation: We embrace innovation by encouraging creativity, responsible risk-taking, and adaptability—encouraging new ideas and forward-thinking solutions that prepare students to prosper in a rapidly changing world.

Compassion: We cultivate empathy and kindness in all our interactions, striving to understand and support one another while creating an environment where every student, family, and staff member feels valued and cared for.

Belonging: We promote inclusion and belonging by embracing differences and ensuring that every student, family, and staff member feels respected, valued, and connected to our school community.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

PASO PROUD ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Do you know a Bearcat grad doing great things in the world? We want to hear from you!

Our upcoming Paso Proud Alumni feature will celebrate former students who are thriving in their careers, trades, or community life—whether they stayed local or ventured beyond Paso Robles.

From small business owners and skilled tradespeople to community leaders, artists, and educators, we want to showcase the many paths our alumni take after graduation.

Nominate yourself or a fellow Bearcat!

Submit a short description and tell us why your nominee makes #PasoProud.

Click or scan the QR code to submit your nomination.



PASO PROUD MAGAZINE

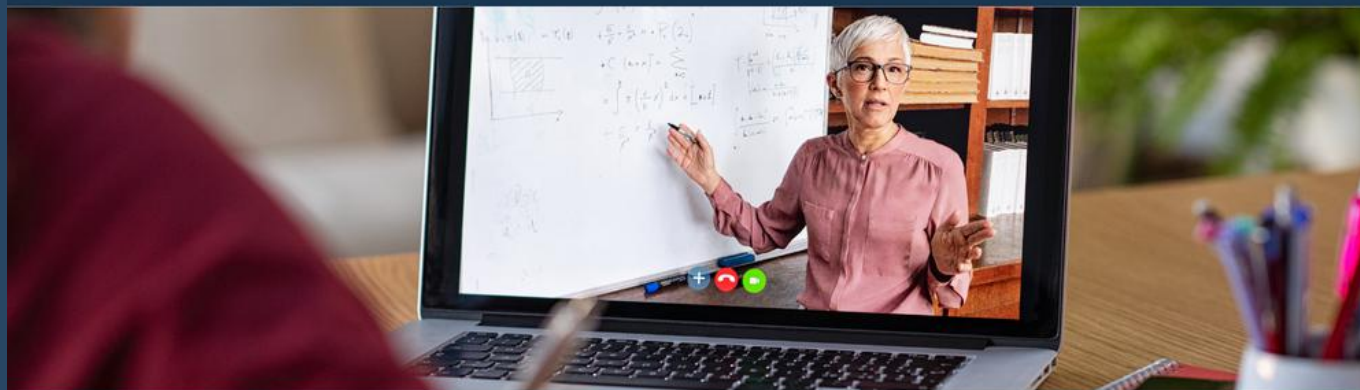
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UPCOMING DATES

10/27	Board of Trustees Meeting
10/28	Parent University: Hidden in Plain Sight
10/29	Coffee With the Superintendent
11/5	LCAP Parent Advisory Committee Meeting #1
11/6	1st Trimester Ends - Elementary
11/10	Board of Trustees Meeting
11/11	Veterans Day, NO SCHOOL
11/18	Coffee With the Superintendent

11/23 - 11/27	Thanksgiving Break, NO SCHOOL
12/5	Downtown Paso Holiday Parade
12/15	Board of Trustees Meeting

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