

### SCHOOL CALENDAR

**School Governing Board Meetings**  
**Acalanes Union**  
 High School District  
 Board Room AUHSD Office  
 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette  
 Wednesday, Jan. 21 at 7:30  
 Wednesday, Feb. 4 at 7:30  
 Monday, Feb. 9 at 6:00 -  
 Budget Study Session

**Lafayette School District**  
 LAFSD Office  
 3477 School Street, Lafayette  
 Wednesday, Feb. 18 at 7:00  
**Moraga School District**  
 Joaquin Moraga Intermediate  
 School Auditorium  
 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga  
 Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 7:30

**Orinda Union School District**  
 OUSD Office  
 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda  
 Tuesday, Feb. 3 at 10:00 -  
 Budget Study Session  
 Monday, Feb. 9 at 4:00  
 Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting



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## Troop 224 Recognizes Four New Eagle Scouts

Submitted by Leslie de Boer



New Eagle Scouts (L-R): Spencer Sheehan, Sam Ziser, Greg Cameron and Chris Wichmann

On January 4, four young men from Boy Scout Troop 224 in Lafayette were recognized for their achievement of the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in Boy Scouting. The Eagle Court was held at the Veterans Memorial

building in Lafayette and was attended by roughly 200 Scouts, family members and guests.

Greg Cameron graduated from Acalanes High School in 2008 and is now attending Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash-

ington. His parents are Sandy and Mark Cameron of Lafayette.

Spencer Sheehan is a senior at Las Lomas High School. His parents are Michele and Bob Sheehan of Walnut Creek.

Chris Wichmann graduated from Acalanes High School in 2008 and is now attending U.C. Santa Cruz. His parents are Leslie de Boer and Ron Wichmann of Lafayette.

Sam is a senior at De La Salle High School. His parents are Marie and George Ziser of Orinda.

Robert Lyman is Scoutmaster of Troop 224, which meets at Happy Valley School and runs the annual Christmas Tree lot across from the Veterans Memorial. Former Scoutmasters Kyle Blocker and Steve Zusman also spoke at the event.

## John Lennon

### Educational Tour Bus Visits Stanley Middle

By Jean Follmer



Liyana wows the crowd at Stanley Middle School

Photo Jean Follmer

When Alan Plutzik, President of the Warren W. Eukel Trust, asked Stanley Middle School Band Director Bob Athayde to find a venue for "Liyana" to perform, Athayde booked them immediately. The renowned group from Zimbabwe was only available for two performances so Athayde also managed to book them with fellow Band Director Randy Porter at Westlake Middle School in Oakland.

Liyana's music has been classified as Afro-fusion and sometimes as World-fusion or Global-music. In other words, Liyana blends many musical genres including gospel, reggae and traditional Zimbabwean music. The lead singer, Prudence

Mabhena's native tongues are Shona and Ndebele. The group performs in those languages as well as in English, Dutch, German, Hebrew and Spanish.

While at Stanley, the group performed a moving rendition of "We are the World." Liyana hails from the King George VI School for the Disabled in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The group is comprised of 8 musicians who range in age from 17-23. Each of the members was born with a significant physical handicap; many of them are in wheelchairs. In Zimbabwe, handicaps are viewed as a form of witchcraft or evil. "Music has truly changed our lives," says Mabhena.

Liyana was on tour with

the John Lennon Educational Tour Bus. According to the organization, "The John Lennon Educational Tour Bus is a non-profit state-of-the-art mobile Pro Audio and HD video recording facility that provides hands-on experiences for students of all ages."

Although Liyana has toured internationally, 2009 represents the first US tour for Liyana. When Athayde asked one of the band members if he liked the United States, he replied "America is 20,000 times better than I thought. I get bacon every morning in the hotels." "I just found those kids from Liyana were just joyful. We all need to see kids in wheelchairs trying to make something happen," said Athayde.

The Tour began with a performance with the Inspiration Gospel Ensemble at the Lafayette Presbyterian Church in Fort Green, Brooklyn in New York. They have made many stops on both coasts, including performances in Los Angeles for both Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and the Inauguration of President Obama. The final performance will be at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark. The PG Family Foundation, led by Jonathan Plutzik, served as Liyana's Executive Producer for the Tour. For more information, visit [www.lennonbus.org](http://www.lennonbus.org) or <http://liyanatour.com/>.

# Lamorinda Schools

## Lafayette School District Considers Transfer Policies

By Jean Follmer

The Lafayette School District Governing Board discussed its current policies on both inter-district and Allen Bill transfers in a recent study session. The District policy only allows for inter-district transfers for children of Lafayette School District employees. There are currently 15 students in the Lafayette School District who have transferred in from other districts. The District policy does not allow for employment-related Allen Bill transfers. The California Allen Bill, as cited in California Education Code Section 48204(b), enables students to transfer from one district to another based on "parental employment in lieu of residency in district of attendance." The District used to accept Allen Bill transfers, but did away with them in the late 1990s as a result of overcrowding. Board Member Shayne Silva was on the Board when that decision was made. "We were bulging at the seams and just plain ran out of space. We had over 900 (students) at Burton Valley and 1,300 at Stanley," said Silva.

While Districts do receive approximately \$5,800 per student from the State of California, it does not receive parcel or bond taxes for those transfer students. This also contributed to the decision to do away with Allen Bill transfers. "We had just passed a parcel tax and kids were transferring in that weren't paying (the tax)," said Silva. As a

result, there was some bad sentiment amongst some of the Lafayette parents. Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill said a neighboring district that currently allows Allen Bill transfers lets the parents of incoming transfer students know how much resident student families are paying in parcel taxes and bonds. Brill said that district has a high level of transfer families that are willing to match the amount.

Brill said Acalanes currently accepts Allen Bill transfer students of Lafayette School District employees and the Lafayette District does not reciprocate. Brill said he "feels an obligation to serve kids of Acalanes employees and kids of school (site) daycare workers." The Board discussed the possibility of "tiering" the Allen Bill requests as some districts do. But, in a subsequent Board Meeting, Brill said he'd learned that they can't tier Allen Bills; it's essentially all or nothing.

The District has not made any decisions and any changes to current policies will likely be dependent upon the outcome of the budget cuts. "We wouldn't be considering Allen Bills if we weren't financially pressed," said Board Clerk Ann Appert.

By comparison, the Moraga School District revised its inter-district transfer policy in 2008. "Our policy allows inter-district transfers if there is space available. Our first

priority is to keep sufficient opening to serve the children of residents. For 08/09, our classes are very full and we did not accept transfers. Accepting transfers could require us to add additional classes," said Moraga Superintendent Rick Shafer. When inter-district transfers are considered, preference is divided into 5 categories of priority: 1. children of Moraga School District employees, 2. children of Acalanes High School District employees, 3. children whose parent(s) are employed full-time by St. Mary's College, the Town of Moraga or the Moraga-Orinda Fire Department, 4. children of parents employed full-time within the attendance boundaries of the Moraga School District and 5. children whose grandparent is a Moraga resident.

Jerry Bucci, Director of Business Services at the Orinda Union School District said, "We do review all requests for inter-district transfers every year. We do try to accommodate employees. We consider as many others as we can." Bucci said the number of inter-district transfer students fluctuates from year to year. He noted they have 123 inter-district transfer students as of October, 2008. Bucci said the District is not considering any changes to its inter-district transfer or Allen Bill transfer policies at this time.

## In Other News...



Lafayette's new School Board, pictured from left to right are: Board Member Stephenie Teichman, Superintendent Dr. Fred Brill, Board Clerk Ann Appert, New Board Member Art Kapoor, Board Member Shayne Silva and Board President Teresa Gerringer  
 Photo by Jean Follmer



Celebrating its third year, the Orinda Christmas Tree Lot donated \$2,500 of its proceeds to the Educational Foundation of Orinda. The Tree Lot is run by EFO Board Member Mike Kang (pictured front left).  
 Photo by Terry Riggins



The OIS Lego Robotics Club's "Mission Possible" team recently competed at the San Ramon Qualifying Competition. Pictured from left to right are Trevor Wallace, Muneesvuren Jothi, John Mack, Nicholas Yan. OIS Math Teacher Yvonne Anast is the team advisor.  
 Photo by Sui Mei Yan

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