

The Preuss School Launches Campaign for Longer Learning Time

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With more learning time, Preuss can also offer art, music and physical education—subjects that are increasingly cut from other schools, yet have been shown to improve students' educational outcomes.

The Preuss School UCSD employs a variety of research-based best practices proven to help prepare low-income students to be first-time college attendees. A longer school day and school year is one of these key practices.

“We log 74,669 instructional minutes each year compared to the state requirement of 64,800,” said Scott Barton, principal of The Preuss School, a unique charter middle and high school for low income, highly motivated students who strive to become the first in their families to graduate from college. “Our students are in school longer each day and for 23 days more than the typical student in California.”

The result: After completing middle and high school, a Preuss student has accumulated almost an entire extra academic year of study.

But the cost of this extra time students spend in school is not covered by the state. To ensure that future Preuss students have the same opportunities, the school has launched a multiyear [Campaign for Longer Learning Time](#). Through the campaign, donors can support the longer school day and school year at Preuss by making a gift to the Preuss Longer Learning Time Endowment. Contributors to the endowment have two primary opportunities to make a difference: They can invest \$20,000 to fund one extra day of instruction for one school year or they can invest in a \$500,000 endowment to fund one extra day in perpetuity. Donors can also make a gift of any size.

“Each and every gift helps, especially, when pooled with the gifts of others,” said Barton. “They all add up to make a tremendous difference.”

The Parker Foundation, a San Diego nonprofit, has already helped kick start the campaign, awarding the school a three-year, \$20,000 per year grant. The grant will fund one of the 23 additional school days for each year it is awarded.

“I was really impressed with what The Preuss School does,” said Paul Mosher, emeritus board member of The Parker Foundation. “These students are receiving a kind of opportunity that will impact their lives forever.”

The Parker Foundation was established more over 40 years ago for charitable purposes leading to the betterment of life for all people of San Diego County. With a net endowment of more than \$40 million, the foundation has granted over \$42 million since its inception.

“We are extremely grateful to The Parker Foundation for their gift,” said Barton. “Their generosity will inspire others to support longer learning time, which is an integral part of the Preuss experience.”

Longer learning time is a concept that has long been employed at Preuss and is now gaining traction nationally as a vital part of the solution for our country’s educational woes. According to the Time to Succeed Coalition, a national advocacy group, students in high-poverty schools with at least 25 percent more learning time outperform their peers in schools with less time.

At Preuss, Barton sees firsthand the impact of more and better learning time.

“With the additional time, we can provide an environment where students are challenged academically and empowered to think critically,” he said. “We can also offer art, music and physical education—subjects that are increasingly cut from other schools, yet have been shown to improve students’ educational outcomes.”

The results speak for themselves. Preuss graduates are consistently accepted to four-year colleges and universities at a rate of more than 90 percent and all 96 students in the Class of 2013—Preuss’ tenth graduating class—were accepted to a four-year college or university. Many of the school’s more than 800 graduates have gone on to attend colleges and universities such as Harvard, Yale, MIT, Stanford, Columbia, Cornell and Dartmouth as well as all of the schools in the University of California system.

Preuss has also garnered numerous accolades. *Newsweek* has named Preuss the top transformative high school in the nation for three years in a row, citing the school’s ability to lead the way in getting low-income and first-generation students ready for college and beyond. The school was also ranked as one of the top five charter schools in California in a report by the University of Southern California, and has been consistently ranked as one of America’s best high schools by *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post* and *U.S. News & World Report*, among others.

These achievements are due, in no small part, to the power of expanded learning time.

“Longer learning time is absolutely fundamental to what we do here,” said Barton. “We must ensure that the transformative power of a Preuss education is available for generations to come.”

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