



home > city hall > press releases

## Taking Turns as Principal for the Day

Perris elected officials, business owners, police officers, firefighters and civic leaders have taken their turn as “Principal for a Day” at one of the City schools, gaining an insider’s perspective about the challenges and successes that take place on a daily basis.

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough recently spent a day as principal at Lakeside Middle School. He answered the telephone, observed a social studies class, talked to some young journalists in a telecommunications course, sat in on a student-discipline meeting and talked with several campus teachers, administrators and students. He also visited with students enrolled in a college-preparation class.

He and full-time principal John Parker spent most of the morning of March 3 at the campus in north Perris.

Parker said the visit by an elected official allows school staff to show off their campus, which included 1,200-students, tout their success stories and build school morale.

For Yarbrough, the visit was personal as well as professional. All four of his children are graduates of the Val Verde Unified School District, which includes Lakeside. His wife, Shelly, sits on the district’s board of education.



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough observes Lakeside Middle School students Rebekka Bogan, 12, and Alisia Cooke, 13, review their script prior to the start of the campus’ daily news report.

“Our strength in the City of Perris has always been our ability to partner, to make a difference and improve the quality of our residents’ lives,” he said. “I’ve always believed that our military, our public safety officers and our teachers make the greatest contributions to our community. My kids owe their success to the education they have received here.”

Parker said that both Mark and Shelly Yarbrough have spent more than 30 years combined in public office and that “both are heavily invested in this community.”

“We are thrilled to have him here,” Parker said.

One highlight of the day occurred when Parker and Yarbrough dropped in the classroom of William Winters, whose students in the midst of creating the school’s daily new program.

The seventh and eighth-graders research, write, video and record the program, which airs each morning. The broadcast, carried throughout the school, included campus activities, news, weather and sports. There was also a trivia element. For instance, Monday, March 3, was also “I Want to be Happy Day.”

Yarbrough came away impressed.

“This is a wonderful example of how the Val Verde district is proactive,” he said. “The district found a way to inte3ract with students who want to develop their future talents. I feel like I was talking to future broadcasters!”



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough and Lakeside Middle School Principal John Parker chat at the campus during Principal for a Day activities.

**Media Contact**  
 Joe Vargo  
 Public Information Officer  
 ☎ 951-956-2120  
 ✉ [jvargo@cityofperris.org](mailto:jvargo@cityofperris.org)



**Perris City Hall**  
 101 N. D Street  
 Perris, CA 92570

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