

In our schools

What's working in our schools: Allesandro

Who: The Allesandro Elementary chapter of the Coalition for Educational Justice, a citywide organization of parents, students, and teachers fighting for educational equity.

What: Cultural Arts Night

How: On October 19, more than 150 students, teachers, parents, and community members packed the Allesandro cafeteria for the first in a series of Cultural Arts Nights. Participants could choose from eight stations, where

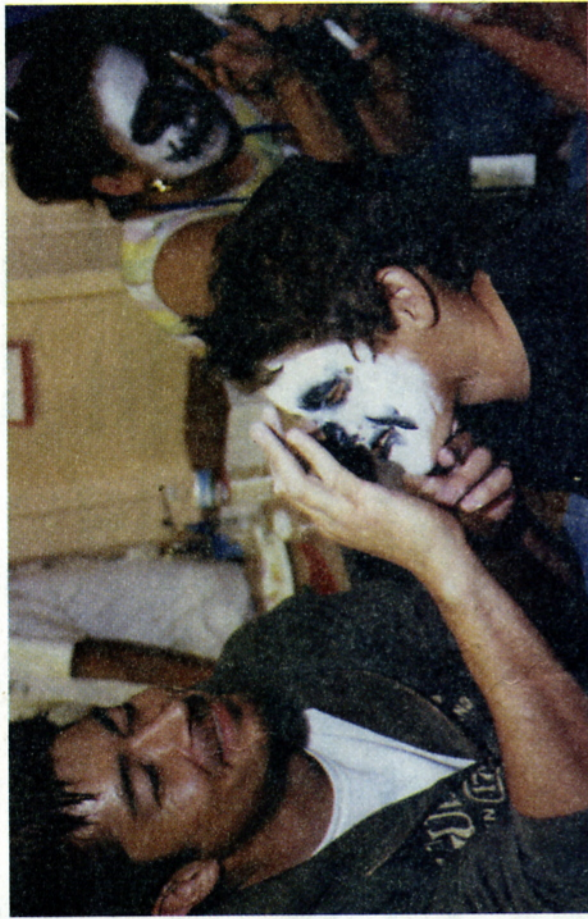
they engaged in hands-on projects like creating Ojos de Dios (God's Eyes), corn husk dolls, Egyptian hieroglyphic necklaces, and Dia de los Muertos calaveras. Some of the workshops were led by parents, some by students, and some by teachers. The event was organized by the Allesandro chapter of CEJ, which plans projects to improve the school and provide greater access and opportunity to the predominantly low-income community of color. Some of the group's other projects include bringing the Nutrition Network to Allesandro



Parent Daniela Almanza and her daughter, Daniela, paint together at Allesandro's first Cultural Arts Night.

and instituting a daily morning exercise program.

■ **What's working in your school?** Send the who, what, how, and why (and photo if available) on interesting projects or class lesson plans to UNITED TEACHER, 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90010 or email to UTnews@utla.net.



Photos by Wendy Malecki

Fifth-grade teacher Salvador Monites and parent Nereida Vasquez paint student faces with Day of the Dead-inspired designs.

The Art of Learning

The work: Original student murals at John Muir Middle School.

The inspiration: Under the direction of arts educator Lorien Eck, students from her Advanced Art class completed an ambitious schoolwide project of painting student-designed murals throughout the school.