



# school bulletin

ISSUED BI-WEEKLY SEPTEMBER THROUGH JUNE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

December 2, 2016

## All 4 Cities Decisively Approved Measure E

All four cities served by the Long Beach Unified School District approved Measure E school bonds by wide margins.

Voters districtwide approved the local bond measure Nov. 8 with a 73.37 percent yes vote, providing \$1.5 billion to upgrade classrooms and other school facilities. The approval far surpassed the 55 percent threshold required.

The City of Avalon on Catalina Island approved Measure E with a 75.7 percent yes vote, followed by Signal Hill at 74.5 percent and the City of Long Beach at 73.8 percent. Lakewood approved the measure with a 67.9 percent yes vote.

In all, Measure E garnered 84,217 yes votes and 30,569 no votes.

Proceeds from the school bonds will be used for health and safety-related repairs such as electrical upgrades to add energy-efficient air conditioning systems. Science labs, computer labs and libraries will be upgraded.

Deteriorating bathrooms and plumbing, leaky roofs and old wiring will be repaired. Outdated structures will be improved to meet handicap accessibility and earthquake standards. Fire alarms and security systems will be upgraded. Indoor and outdoor athletic facilities will be expanded and improved with features such as all-weather fields and new aquatics facilities.

Many local schools were built 60 to 70 years ago and need basic health and safety upgrades.

## Suspensions Down, Compare Well in U.S.

Suspension rates in the Long Beach Unified School District have steadily decreased over the past four years, both overall and by student subgroups. Students here also miss far less class time than their counterparts at other large school systems nationally, according to data presented recently at a public Board of Education workshop.

Among LBUSD students, 96 percent had no suspensions in 2015-16, and 99 percent had one or zero suspensions.

Additional data show that among 39 large urban school districts nationally:

- 36 of the 39 had a higher percentage of students suspended than LBUSD (only three districts had fewer students suspended), based upon total number of days of suspension for the year.

- 38 of the 39 have more instructional days missed, due to suspension, than LBUSD. Only one district had fewer instructional days missed than Long Beach, with students on average missing 0.05 days here, or 15 minutes a year.

View the full board workshop report by finding this article at [lbschools.net](http://lbschools.net).

**CELEBRATING A LEGACY –** Oropeza Elementary School fifth grader Pearla Meza recites her essay honoring the school's namesake, Jenny Oropeza, during a campus renaming ceremony. Looking on are Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia, left, and Principal Mona Cook.



## Jenny Oropeza Elementary School Dedicated

Jenny Oropeza Elementary School, formerly International Elementary, dedicated its campus in honor of the school's namesake this week with the help of students, parents, community leaders and members of the Oropeza family.

The event in the school's center courtyard included performances by Mariachi Playa Larga, a student group from Cal State Long Beach. Afterward, guests gathered in front of the campus for the unveiling of the school's new signage.

"This is a special day," Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia told the school's fifth graders, who participated in the main ceremony and will be the first class of students promoted onto middle school from the newly named K-5

campus. "You will all be going to a school named after an incredible, amazing woman," Garcia said. He described Oropeza as a role model who paved the way for people like him.

Oropeza was the first in her family to attend college when she enrolled at CSULB. She was the first Latina to be elected Associated Students President and first to be elected twice as A.S. President at CSULB. She was also the first Latina to serve on the CSU Board of Trustees.

Twice elected to the Long Beach Unified School District Board of Education, Oropeza advocated successfully to change LBUSD elections from at-large to by-district making it possible for the first Latino/a and African American to be elected to the school board.

Oropeza was the first Latino/a to be elected to the Long Beach City Council, serving two terms. She was elected three times as a State Assembly member and twice as a member of the State Senate. During her time as a community activist, Oropeza fought for affordable, quality education, a clean and healthy environment, healthcare, public transportation, cancer prevention, food for those in need, and veterans' benefits.

Among the speakers at the dedication ceremony was Congressman Alan Lowenthal.

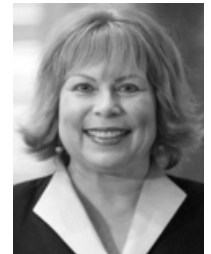
"It's a great day, a great celebration," said Lowenthal, who worked closely with Oropeza. "Jenny was always a champion for the people, for education, for kids, for Latinos, for the environment and public health. We are so proud to be able to say thank you, Jenny,"

(Continued on next page)

## Harmony Project Plans Fundraiser

The Long Beach Unified School District continues to partner with the nonprofit Harmony Project, which helps to provide classical music education for children from lower-income communities. A reception and fundraiser for the project hosted by the school district and the Long Beach Education Foundation is scheduled for 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 14 at the Terrace Theater Lobby, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach. RSVP at [harmonyproject@lbschools.net](mailto:harmonyproject@lbschools.net), or call 997-8448.

Founded in 2001 in Los Angeles, the Harmony Project has been recognized twice by the White House. Measurable results from the Harmony Project, collected through studies done in partnership with Northwestern University, have shown that the program works to keep students on track to graduation and makes them better learners.



**Oropeza**

## • Oropeza Dedication

(Continued from first page) wherever you are.”

Also speaking were the school’s principal, Mona Cook, LBUSD Deputy Superintendent Ruth Ashley (who served as principal of International when it first opened), LBUSD Board Member John McGinnis and Long Beach City Councilwoman Lena Gonzalez.

Ashley presented a photo of Oropeza attending International’s dedication ceremony in the same courtyard in 1999. Accepting the photo was Tom Mullins, who was Oropeza’s husband until Oropeza died in 2010 at the age of 53 while undergoing treatment for a blood clot in her abdomen. Oropeza also was a cancer survivor.

Fifth grader Pearlma Meza recited an essay honoring Oropeza.

“Jenny Oropeza was always willing to fight for what she believed in,” Meza said. “To her family, thank you for sharing her legacy with us and for making us a part of that legacy.”

LBUSD’s Board of Education decided in July to rename the school based upon the recommendation of a committee of community members facilitated by district Deputy Superintendent Jill Baker. The school’s new name took effect Aug. 1.

School Board Member John McGinnis, addressing the students, acknowledged the important positions of public office that Oropeza held during her career.

“I don’t believe the offices people hold bring greatness,” McGinnis said. “I believe people have to bring their own greatness to the office. Every day, Jenny found a way to make other people’s lives better, and as she got older, she got better at it.”

Oropeza friend and mentor Carmen Perez delivered closing remarks.

“What a beautiful day. Today begins a new chapter for the school,” Perez said. “I know Jenny is looking down with a big smile now and saying thank you for making this a reality.”



**HONORING VETERANS** – Nathan Hayes, a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and now a parent of a Bixby Elementary School fourth grader, was among several honorees at Bixby’s recent Veterans Day celebration. Hayes received a plaque from Bixby Principal Sam Platis as the entire student body looked on. The school raised a brand new U.S. flag on the campus to replace one that had worn out. Also among the honorees was the principal’s dad, Jim Platis, along with Mike Murray, who now serves as president of the Long Beach Education Foundation. *Photo by Bixby parent Alicia Stickley.*

## Wellness Council Information Night

Long Beach Unified School District Nutrition Services will host a Wellness Council Information Night 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 8 in the library at Henry K-5 Dual Immersion School, 3720 Canehill Ave., Long Beach.

The meeting is for those interested in supporting a healthier environment at their school by creating a wellness council. Hear from two elementary schools that have a council to support students’ health.

For more information, contact Tiffanie Bas at 427-7923, ext. 247.

## Dates to Remember

December	
2	Special Education Day
2	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— “Food For Fun,” Grades K-3, ed.tv 8
6	9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 1:00, 2:00— “Kwanzaa,” Grades K-4, ed.tv 8
7	Pearl Harbor Day
7	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00— “New Year’s Day,” Grades K-5, ed.tv 8
8	9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— “A Christmas Carol,” Grades 4-9, ed.tv 8
9	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— “December Holidays,” Grades 1-5, ed.tv 8
10	Human Rights Day
10	Emily Dickinson’s Birthday
13	9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 1:00, 2:00— “Celebrate,” Grades K-8, ed.tv 8
14	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00; 15 - 9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— “Adventures in Poetry,” Grades 3-5, ed.tv 8
15	Bill of Rights Day
16	Boston Tea Party Anniversary
16	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— “Ebenezer,” Grades 4-6, ed.tv 8
17	Anniversary of the Wright Brothers’ Flight
20	9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30, 1:00, 2:00— “I Have a Dream: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,” Grades 9-12, ed.tv 8
21	First Day of Winter
21	8:00, 10:15, 11:30, 1:00, 2:00— “Martin Luther King, Jr./Black History Month,” Grades K-5, ed.tv 8
22	9:30, 10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— “Everyday Creativity,” Grades 4-12, ed.tv 8
23	10:00, 11:30, 12:00, 12:30— “The Boyhood of Martin Luther King, Jr.,” Grades 4-6, ed.tv 8
24-Jan. 1	Hanukkah (Festival of Lights)
25	Christmas Day
25	Clara Barton’s Birthday
26-Jan. 6	LBUSD Winter Recess
26-Jan. 1	Kwanzaa

## Names in the News

Local high school students earned honors in the districtwide Soapbox Challenge, a speech contest held recently at McBride High School. Top-performing finalists among 60 local students were **Lina Banda** from Poly High School for a speech on poverty in America, **Emilio Carreon** from Poly for a speech on a path to citizenship, **Jaycie Packard** of Wilson High School for a speech on wrongful imprisonment, **Cadence Stringer** of Wilson for a speech on sexual offender punishment, **AJ Walker** of Wilson for a speech on implicit racism, and **Noah Sonnenberg** of McBride High School for a speech on mental illness. The students all are taking either Advanced Placement Research or AP Seminar classes, and the contest is one of the class activities. The Long Beach Unified School District held the competition in collaboration with the nonprofit Mikva Challenge, which promotes civic engagement among youth.

Franklin Classical Middle School teacher **Ruth Lisha** recently received a Leadership Award at the Green California Schools & Community Colleges Summit. The awards were established by the Summit’s Advisory Board to honor individuals and school districts on the leading edge of school sustainability. The awards recognize achievements in categories ranging from green building and energy efficiency to curriculum.

Several young artists earned honors recently at the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration art contest as part of NOAA Day at the Aquarium of the Pacific. The art contest raises awareness of NOAA’s mission and emphasizes ocean literacy within schools. The theme of this year’s contest was “Marine Mammals and People: A Tale of Two Species.” Winning in the 9th to 10th grade category were: first place, **Cassidy Bui**; 2nd place, **Randy Bustos**; 3rd place, **Isabella Rugeroni**; and honorable mention, **Salina Ortiz**, all from Renaissance High School for the Arts. **Selene Vargas** from Jordan High School also earned honorable mention. Winning in the 11th to 12th grade category were: first place, **Victoria Nguyen** from Poly High School; second place, **Marc Del Rosario** from Renaissance; and third place, **Jacob Alpern** from Poly. Renaissance students **Marina Khmelyuk** and **Hafsa Ahmed** both received honorable mention.

**Carol Ortega**, program administrator for High School Counseling, has earned the 2016 Excellence Award for Service in Public Education from Centro C.H.A., or the Long Beach Community Hispanic Association. The award will be presented at the Dec. 8 annual Nuestra Imagen Awards recognizing Latino leadership excellence. The awards honor outstanding contributions that enrich the quality of life for youth, families and neighborhoods.

## Apply for Job Sharing

Permanent elementary or secondary teachers are invited to apply for job sharing partnerships for the 2017-18 school year. Job share deadlines are as follows:

Jan. 13 – Submission of written request to have your name and telephone number included on a list of interested job sharing partners.

March 1 – Submission of applications for new job sharing partnerships, or for renewal of existing partnerships.

Submit the above items to Human Resource Services, Attention: Job Share. For more information, call ext. 8106.

### SCHOOL BULLETIN

Official publication of the Long Beach Unified School District issued bi-weekly during the school year from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 1515 Hughes Way, Long Beach, California 90810. (562) 997-8000. [www.lbschools.net](http://www.lbschools.net)

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Superintendent of Schools

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