

School News



Covering the Los Alamitos Unified School District

Volume 17, Issue 85

www.SchoolNewsRollCall.com

February / March 2020

Go Griffins!



**Not all students have the ability be the starting quarterback or star point-guard,
but every student can be part of the Los Al Locos student section.**

(please see Los Alamitos High School page 8)



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Students Model Service and Giving to the Community



Dr. Andrew Pulver
Superintendent

Students at Los Alamitos High School were busy making sure the holidays were a little brighter for those in the community struggling to get by. Members of the school's Interact Club organized a holiday collection of goods and cash to help about 30 families throughout the Los Alamitos Unified School District.

Ashley Herrera, a high-school senior and co-president of the club, said her fellow students in the 25-member club, "adopted" a family with an 8-year-old boy and collected money and items to support them in their Dear Santa Holiday Drive.

"It was eye opening for me," Herrera said. "We are well off in this district, so a lot of people don't know that there are families here who are suffering" from poverty, hunger, homelessness and catastrophic hardships such as job loss, illness or death.

"I know I'm lucky to have a family who can put a meal on the table and parents who can afford to give us gifts," Herrera said. "But some of these families were asking for toiletries. A typical kid would ask for toys, and these kids were asking for necessities. That was shocking to me."

She said the father in the club's adopted family wished for a story book to read to his son, and the mom wanted a bathrobe and a gift card to a grocery market.

"It's good to know that we can help families in our own district have quality time as a family and bring smiles to their faces," Herrera said.

In addition to fundraising for the club's adopted family, the Interact students coordinated a District-wide effort that benefited about 30 families and Casa Youth Shelter in Los Alamitos. Teachers, for example, recruited their students to get involved, and Herrera said the math teachers at Los Alamitos High collected over \$1000 that was used to purchase gifts for District families. Students and teachers worked with District schools to deliver donations to families.

The Interact club is affiliated with Los Alamitos/Seal Beach Rotary, an adult philanthropy and networking organization and they participate together in community events such as the annual Seal Beach Holiday Parade and Fishing Derby.

Pauline Grimshaw, a social studies teacher at LAHS, has been advisor to the Interact club for three years.

"When I was a kid, I benefited directly from others thinking of more than just themselves, and one of the key components of Rotary and Interact is service above self," Grimshaw said. "And in our world where it's all about me, me, me, it's wonderful to know that people are thinking of others, especially around the holidays but in life in general."



Interact Co-President Ashley Herrera and advisor Pauline Grimshaw consult on thank-you notes to donors for club's Dear Santa Holiday Drive.



Grimshaw with some of the donations for local families in need.

In the second semester, Grimshaw said, the Interact students will focus on their other major ongoing project: raising funds for Water for South Sudan, an organization that is bringing fresh water to communities where supplies are scarce. The Interact club has already succeeded in building one well in the drought-stricken African nation.

Grimshaw said the group is hoping to stage a silent auction later this year to benefit the water project and would welcome items or cash donations. Grimshaw can be reached pgrimshaw@losal.org by anyone wanting to donate or get more information.

I am proud that our students and staff are serving as such excellent role models and showing us how we all can truly be Better Together.

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School News

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LOS ALAMITOS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Happy New Year!

We are celebrating 20 years publishing *School News*. Meg Cutuli, Karen Russell and Dave Boyer were on the Board of Education when we began publishing LAUSD 17 years ago.

We now publish 35 publications with more scheduled. During the 20 years curriculum has changed in ways never imagined with the biggest change being technology. Gone are the blackboards, white chalk and erasers. Mentioning the 3 R's would bring a puzzled look and might be mistaken for Reduce, Recycle, Reuse. Discussing STEAM with anyone older

than 60 would conjure up images of a train or an iron, but the younger generation would instantly visualize test tubes and robotics. We have changed the format of most of our publications to glossy cover booklet, but our mission never changes: Education+Communication=A Better Nation. The one constant has been the focus on academics. It is a privilege to publish the excellence from the classrooms. Thank you for continuing to include *School News* among your reading choices.

Our next issue is April 1, 2020.

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Raising a Heart Healthy Family



David Chun, M.D.,
Pediatric
Cardiologist
MemorialCare
Miller Children's &
Women's Hospital
Long Beach

Making time to raise a heart healthy family can seem overwhelming, but a few simple lifestyle changes can help keep the entire family's hearts in the best shape. With childhood obesity rates higher than ever, it's important to encourage your children to live a heart healthy lifestyle to improve their overall health and decrease their risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and obesity later in life.

Tips to keep a healthy heart top of mind for your family:

- Encourage children to join in on planning and preparing meals to create fun, creative, heart healthy snack/meal ideas.
- Choose lean proteins such as skinless chicken, turkey or fish, and try incorporating plant sources of protein, such as beans, lentils, soy beans or tofu.

- Limit sugary sodas, juices and sports drinks.
- Keep a family calendar to plan out the week's family activities and plan for active weekends at the local park or beach and play active games.
- Encourage healthy eating and exercise habits for non-aesthetic reasons, such as overall physical, mental and emotional well-being.

When your infant, child or teenager is diagnosed with a heart condition, he or she will require specialized, cardiac care to meet his or her individual needs. The Children's Heart Institute at MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach is one of the few programs in the region that provides comprehensive cardiac care for children throughout adulthood.

For more information about the growing Children's Heart Institute, visit millerchildrens.org/GrowingHearts or call 800-MEMORIAL.

2801 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach, CA 90806
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Hudson, 5-months-old,
Children's Heart
Institute Patient

Our specialty:

**Cardiac
Intensive Care**

Hudson's specialty:

**Growing as Big
as an Elephant**

At 1-week-old, Hudson's pediatrician detected a heart murmur and referred him to MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach, where he was diagnosed with a ventricular septal defect, a hole between the heart's chambers. As Hudson grew, the hole also grew and Dr. Shaun Setty performed open-heart surgery to patch the hole. After receiving specialized care in the new Cardiothoracic Intensive Care Unit under the guidance of Dr. Constantinos Chrysostomou, Hudson is growing as big as a mighty elephant.



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Orange County Department of Education

200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa CA 92628 • 714/966-4000 • www.ocde.us



Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent

The Federal Census Bureau

In just a few months, you'll be asked to participate in one of democracy's most considerable responsibilities — and it shouldn't take more than a few minutes of your time.

As mandated by the U.S. Constitution, the federal Census Bureau conducts a nationwide population count once every 10 years. This is one of the few national activities the American public does together. It's also easy, confidential and critically important to our students and their communities.

Along with establishing the number of congressional seats and electoral votes for each state, census data serves as the basis for deciding how approximately \$900 billion in federal funds are spent annually, impacting education, housing, public safety and other vital services.

These anonymous statistics also enable local governments to make highly consequential decisions about public safety, including staffing police and fire stations, and they help school districts plan for enrollment shifts.

Meanwhile, businesses rely on census data to open stores, offices and factories that generate new jobs. Real estate developers use these figures to construct new houses and revitalize aging neighborhoods. Residents use the census to support community initiatives.

Despite all that's at stake, our state is expected to lose about \$1,950 per person in annual federal funding as a result of undercounting. But a number of organizations are working to offset those losses by generating awareness in advance of the 2020 count. OCDE is among them, offering workshops for educators along with a social media campaign to help drive home some important points.

For example, we want to spread the word that the 2020 census will be easier than ever. Orange County families will be asked to respond starting in March, and the process should take about 10 minutes. In-person visits will only be made to households that don't respond online, by phone or by mail.

Another point worth noting is that any information collected by census-takers is confidential and can only be used for anonymous statistical purposes. In fact, every census employee takes an oath to protect your personal information for life.

Completing the census is easy, it's confidential and it's mandatory. But it's more than that. It's a way for all of us to participate in our democracy, ensuring that Congressional representation and taxpayer-funded resources are distributed equitably over the next decade.

Orange County students and families count. Now let's make sure they're counted.

Seal Beach Animal Care Center

1700 Aldofo Lopez Dr., Seal Beach, CA 90740 • 562/430-4993 • www.sbacc.org

Facts About Cats

By Murlyn E. Burkes, Cat Committee Liaison

Cats are so interesting that it is hard to write a short list of things that make them lovable and unique. One fact is certain: cats are the most popular pet in the United States. But here are a few more interesting facts about cats:

Hearing is the strongest of cat's senses. They can move their ears about 180 degrees and separately, with approximately 20 muscles that control just their ears.

A cat recognizes your voice but acts too cool to care ... that's a cat! However, it may not be just attitude—it could be that your cat is sleeping. In fact, cats sleep about 70 percent of their lives.

Cats meow to communicate. When a cat purrs, it can be an expression of healing, nervousness or contentment. In addition to meowing and purring, cats make about 100 different sounds.

Did you know that a group of cats is called a clowder? Abraham Lincoln kept a clowder of four cats in the White House. His wife said they were his hobby.

The oldest breed of cat is thought to be the Egyptian Mau. It is also the fastest of pedigreed cats.

Aside from companionship, having a cat as a pet has benefits for you, too. Owning a cat can reduce the risk of strokes and heart attacks.

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Hopkinson *Elementary*

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Evelyn Garcia
Principal

Gift of Giving

As in the words of Maya Angelou, “When you learn, teach. When you get, give.” During this fun time of receiving so much, we want to ensure that our Huskies also have an understanding of the gift of giving.

There are many ways to give to our community, their Husky buddies, their friends and their families. At Hopkinson, we held a food drive, hosted buddy activities, and had our fourth annual Hopkinson Holiday Shoppe to lend the experience of giving to our children. The PTA created a Holiday Shoppe in order to allow children to buy holiday gifts for their friends and family. This shop offers a safe, educational and fun environment at school. There were many items reasonably priced that ranged from 25 cents to \$10.00, with the majority of items falling between \$1.00 and \$4.00 each.

Children had a blast with the freedom of shopping on their own! The PTA does a wonderful job ensuring that all children have an opportunity to buy, offering assistance for those needing financial support.



Lee *Elementary*

11481 Foster Rd., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4540 • www.losal.org



Amy Laughlin
Principal

STEAM Success

Lee Elementary School has been working hard to integrate Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) initiatives into our everyday learning. Recently, students engaged in captivating activities at Science Night.

We partnered with Growing Up STEM, a Los Alamitos High School student organization, to teach science experiments and build interest in science and engineering. Lee students worked with the Los Al students to design and build film-canister rockets, create lava lamps, and produce exploding chemical reactions.

Third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students also participate in Task Tuesday math activities. These students work together to solve



engaging, collaborative real-life problems and use mathematical models to demonstrate their reasoning.

Students also engage in Project Lead the Way science modules each week in our Makerspace. Students code to create mobile robots, use three-dimensional pens to create bubble wands, and engineer models to be built in our three-dimensional printer.

Students' curiosity and enthusiasm for science are at an all-time high!



Los Alamitos *Elementary*

10862 Bloomfield St., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 714/816-3300 • www.losal.org



Gary Willems
Principal

Moving Forward

Los Alamitos Elementary School (LAE) has made a lot of academic and social gains over the last two years, and we continue to look for new ways to move our school forward. This year, LAE is starting Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The PBIS program has a five-year implementation process that has been proven to create positive school climates where students can learn and grow.

The six main PBIS goals for LAE are to improve the feeling of safety on campus, to increase respect for peers, to increase engagement in learning, to increase parent involvement in school life, to have common behavioral expectations, to increase positive behaviors, and to have a shared vision to move LAE forward.

LAE has assembled a PBIS team consisting of one staff

member from each grade level, two administrators, the school psychologist, and a parent. This group will design an implementation plan for next year. The PBIS team is working closely with the Orange County Department of Education to ensure the implementation goes smoothly.

Most recently, the PBIS team surveyed staff, parents, and students to find the areas where LAE can be improved. This data was collected, analyzed, and used to develop behavioral expectations and ways to ensure students feel safe at school.

PBIS is supported by both PTA and Friends of Los Alamitos Elementary (FLAE). The LAE staff also agreed that PBIS is the best way to move our school forward. LAE will be holding meetings later this school year to highlight the changes coming next year and all the benefits we hope to achieve with this new program.

LAE is already a great school. The goal of PBIS is not to fix something that is broken; it is to enhance our programs and make LAE even better.

Los Alamitos *High School*

3591 Cerritos Ave., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4780 • www.losal.org



Christopher Vlasic
Principal

A Great Honor!

Los Alamitos High School reached another milestone during the fall sports season, and it had nothing to do with scoring touchdowns, making tackles or kicking field goals. Instead, the Griffins were named the 2019 SoCal Football Student Section of the year by the *Orange County Register*. This effort is led by the students in ASB who,

through creative genius, countless hours of preparation and intense love for all things Los Al, make every sporting event an experience to remember.

Not all students have the ability to be the starting quarterback or star point-guard, but every student can be part of the Los Al Locos student section.

“The atmosphere created by our student section is unbelievable,” said Mr. Smith, assistant principal of athletics.



With the fall sports season complete, the Los Al Locos shift their focus and support to the winter sports season. When competing against the Griffins in athletic events, not only do the opposing schools have to contend with some of the best athletes in Orange County but they also have to contend with the best student section in Southern California. Go Griffins!

McAuliffe *Middle School*

4112 Cerritos Ave., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 714/816-3320 • www.losal.org



Dr. Ryan Weiss-Wright
Principal

Congressional App Challenge

During the fall semester, a group of McAuliffe's 6th grade students participated in the Congressional App Challenge! This a national effort for students across the country to produce apps that address problems locally, nationally, and globally. Projects at McAuliffe were designed to tackle problems ranging from littering to global warming. Students in our STEM I class were visited by a representative from

District 48's Harley Rouda to congratulate them on their exemplary work with the Congressional App Challenge!

These students received special recognition from the Congressman's office for the Apps they imagined, designed, and coded to accomplish real world problems.



Representative from Congressman Harley Rouda's office presents awards to Congressional App Challenge teams at McAuliffe Middle School

McGaugh *Elementary*

1698 Bolsa Ave., Seal Beach, CA 90740 • 562/799-4560 • www.losal.org



Roni Ellis
Principal

The Spirit of Giving

McGaugh fourth-grade students Sohl Vadecha, Joanne Marki, Emma Livingston, Megan Farmer, Sienna Frank, and third-grader Elena Marki (pictured below) demonstrated true holiday spirit this year when they established a toy drive for the boys and girls who were in our local hospital during the holidays.



The fourth-grade students worked closely to develop a plan to bring joy to those less fortunate during the holiday season. They created a harmonious and beautifully articulated series of morning announcements that encouraged all of our Sea Lions to participate. They decorated boxes to collect new or gently-used toys and



books, gathered donations from our wonderful student community, and then delivered 15 large boxes of these items to the children at Miller's Children's Hospital.

When asked about how they felt about their holiday project, Megan Farmer responded, "I am hoping that this will inspire others to do something similar. There are many things that kids can do to make a difference."

Emma, whose mother is a physician at Miller's Children's Hospital, added, "I was happy to be able to help my mom's hospital." The McGaugh staff is proud of these outstanding young ladies, who were also recognized with the McGaugh "Spirit of Giving" award. Our McGaugh Sea Lions are making the world a better place one child at a time.

Oak Middle School

10821 Oak St., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4740 • www.losal.org



Erin Kominsky
Principal

It's Race Time

One of Oak Middle School's favorite events is the "Force and Motion Unit" for all eighth-grade science students in Mr. Beck's, Mrs. Moushon's, and Mrs. Shearer's classrooms. Students are given a simple block of wood, specifications for dimensions, and an array of knowledge about force and motion. Their task is to design and create a CO₂-powered car that can outrace their classmates' and teachers' cars.

Utilizing band saws, drill presses, and sanding tools, our students come up with some amazing designs. The students put their engineering skills to the test as they design, iterate, and redesign until they have their perfect car. Once the car is finished, the students then select its wheels and paint to make it unique.

This month-long project focuses on learning about distance, time, average velocity, acceleration, and force. The Oak campus is all abuzz when it is race time. Congratulations to our Oak eighth-grade engineers!



Rossmoor Elementary

3272 Shakespeare Dr., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4520 • www.losal.org



Amy Belsha
Principal

Rossmoor Gives Back

In November our Knights met together for their third House Meeting which was focused on giving back to our community.

Our Knights gathered in their houses (Percival, Galahad, Lancelot and Gawain) to decorate place mats (TK, K, & 3rd Graders), door hangers (1st & 4th), and greeting cards (2nd & 5th) for Meals on Wheels which helps supply meals for senior citizens.

This winter our students' projects were delivered to seniors for the winter holidays and the New Year. The greeting cards had positive and uplifting messages and the artwork they created was sure to bring a smile to their faces. Not only did this make the seniors start to the year more positive, but it also helped our Knights experience the magic of giving and caring for others who may need a friend!



Weaver *Elementary*

11872 Wembley Rd., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4580 • www.losal.org



Focusing Four

As we started the school year, one of our goals at Weaver was to bring together our community: teachers, staff, parents, and students, to revisit our purpose and vision and answer a driving question, “What defines the Weaver educational experience?”

Dr. Todd Schmidt
Principal

Utilizing a collaborative process known as “Focusing Four,” our community met in small groups to start the conversation on the academic and social emotional priorities for Weaver.

It was amazing to hear from our stakeholders and see the commitment and passion on display. We are excited to see where this journey takes us as we continue to dialogue in the coming months.



PEACHWAVE – Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com • Please put LAUSD in the subject line.

Entries must be received by **March 15, 2020**

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to **PEACHWAVE**

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Congratulations to Juliana Jones
winner of the December drawing.

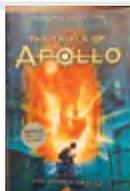
Sean's Book Review



Sean

Banned from Olympus

The Hidden Oracle Book 1 of Trials of Apollo by Rick Riordan



Some of you guys may enjoy Greek mythology, and if you do, this is the book for you. Apollo, the god of poetry, music, and the sun, was banned from Mount Olympus (the home of the Greek gods) and is now a wimpy, mortal teenager named Lester Papadopoulos. He starts his quest to show his father, Zeus, that he belongs in Mount Olympus. Apollo runs into many new and ancient encounters, such as Roman emperors and peach spirits. He works with a daughter of Demeter, Meg, who is his new master and helps him along the way his treacherous journey. I think that everyone who reads this book will enjoy the twists, jokes, and adventures that Apollo experiences. Overall, I loved reading this book and I enjoyed the way Rick writes because you can understand and imagine everything that's happening. I give this book a 10 out of 10.

Sean Cheng is a 5th grader who enjoys cubing (Rubik's Cubes), watching Rubik's Cube videos, and playing basketball. His favorite subjects at school are math and P.E. He loves his 3 guinea pigs and looks forward to summer vacations.

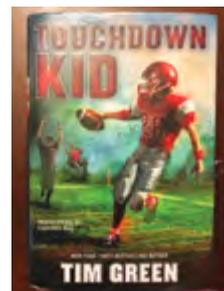
Tyson's Book Review



Tyson

Never Give Up

Touchdown Kid by Tim Green



Cory is an awesome football player from the Westside. He is 11 years old and is just moving into middle school, along with his friend, Liam. A well-known coach from HBS, an elite junior high school, is giving a scholarship to a player he thinks is good enough to play football there. If Cory gets it, he will get to live in a nice neighborhood with a host family in a cozy home, and play football, his passion. His best friend's brother isn't the nicest guy and pulls him into trouble. If he is late, he won't play. What will he do? This is his dream. Find out more about this crazy adventure and read *Touchdown Kid*. This book is great and pulls me in. I can relate a lot to this book and if you're an athlete, you'll love it. I'm not much of a bookworm and I rate it 5 out of 5 stars!

Tyson is an athletic 6th grader who loves basketball, soccer, and volleyball. His favorite subjects are P.E. and math. He is a gentle pet owner and loves taking care of his 3 guinea pigs with his brother. He looks forward to going to Lakers games with his dad.



Manhar's Book Review



Manhar M.

Doing Homework

Homework Hassles (Ready, Freddy!—Series 3) by Abby Klein



I was recently introduced to the book series of "Ready, Freddy!" and this is my favorite book so far. This book focuses on what happens when you don't do your home assignments in a timely fashion. Freddy Thresher, a first grader, goes through a big problem when his teacher wants the class to do reports on nocturnal animals. He couldn't find an animal until the last moment. He went overboard with his research and got himself into trouble. The book includes exciting twists and turns in the story. The conversation of Freddy and his friends reminds me of my own conversations in the class. I couldn't stop reading the book to find out if Freddy completed his assignment on the due date. I also learned the value of friends and family through this book.

Manhar M. is in First Grade. Manhar likes science, math, coding, traveling, hiking, reading about world news and spending time in building robots from Legos.

FREE Class for all 2nd Graders on March 23rd

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• 6th-8th.....6:15 p.m.
• 9th-12th.....8:00 p.m.

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Los Alamitos-Rossmoor Branch Library

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Semra Bilse
Branch Manager

Fun Events in February

There are lots of fun and exciting programs happening at the Los Alamitos / Rossmoor Library ranging from Valentine's Craft program to Teen volunteer training opportunities. Please feel free to come by the Library and check it out or you can just give us a call at 562-430-1048!

On Monday, February 10th from 4:00-5:00pm, drop in for a Valentine's Crafts program for kids and tweens. You can do some awesome crafts and create your own Valentine for that someone special in your life. All supplies will be provided for this program.

On Tuesday, February 11th, from 4:00-5:00pm, come by for The Craft; Teen Cake Pops Workshop where tweens and teens are invited to show off their creativity in decorating their very own cake pops. We'll have different toppings and supplies provided for a chic look as part of this program. Stop in sometime before the event to vote on the movie selection. Open to ages 12-18. Registration is not required. Stop by the teen space chalkboard to vote on the movie selection beforehand. Snacks and movie will be on hand.

On February 18th and March 17th from 4:00-5:00pm, Discovery Club will provide a STEAM program intended for 5-10 year olds to get creative with fun projects. Supplies are limited so call us to register a spot at 562-430-1048. Please call at least a week prior to each session.

On February 6th and March 5th from 5:00 to 5:30pm, come by for the Teen Volunteer Training which is offered to teens, ages 13-17, needing community service hours are welcome to attend this once a month training session to sign up for shifts. Grab an application from the Service Desk and return it completed to the training session. You must attend a training session before signing up for a shift.



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