

FREE

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Los Alamitos Unified School District



Volume 14, Issue 73

October / November 2017

YOU'RE INVITED



**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14TH, 2017
LOS ALAMITOS HIGH SCHOOL
3591 CERRITOS AVENUE, LOS ALAMITOS**

Please see inside back page for details.

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A Great Year for Los Al Schools

School is back in session, and Los Al is off to a great start! Our district theme this year is "One Team, One Vision." We had an all-staff breakfast before the start of school and shared this theme with our employees. It is just another way to say that everyone in the Los Alamitos School District is here to support student success. We want each of our students to have the best year possible, and know that working together will help us reach this goal.

We have a new assistant superintendent of business services, Dr. Nancy Nien. She is replacing our former assistant superintendent who retired. Not only is Dr. Nien highly qualified for this position, she also lives in our school district and has two daughters who attend our schools. This is what we mean by our employees being all in, all the time!

I am happy to report that our bus ridership is up from last year. Riding a school bus is still statistically the safest way for children to get to school. There are always adjustments that need to be made when we see how many students are on the bus, and we've already added an additional route to accommodate our new riders.

The Board decided to keep the cost of riding the bus to the same \$1 a ride. We want to make taking the bus convenient and reasonable for our families. If your student is interested in taking the bus, we welcome new riders all year long, and are prepared to hire additional bus drivers when needed.

I would also like to thank the Cities of Los Alamitos and Seal Beach for their help at the start of the school year. The City of Los Alamitos has been re-doing the medians on Los Alamitos Blvd, and told us they'd be able to open all lanes at the intersection of Los Al Blvd and Cerritos Ave where the high school is located. They kept their word!

The first day of school was busy, but traffic flowed! The City of Seal Beach placed their electronic sign on Seal Beach Blvd informing drivers that school was back in session and to watch for children. That reminder was greatly appreciated! The City of Seal Beach also had a police presence around the school to make sure that everyone was safe. We are so fortunate to have such great working relationships with our cities.

Football games, volleyball games, school carnivals — school is back in session! We are all looking forward to an outstanding year for our students, and hope to make this school year the best year yet!

Join us for the 50th Anniversary Celebration



Dr. Sherry Kropp
Superintendent

We will be celebrating 50 years of excellence on October 14 and hope you can join us. There will be multiple activities and events, including a field show that includes all 5th and 8th graders, a reception for alumni and retirees, a few guest speakers, such as the very first Senior Class President, food trucks, and highlights of academics, athletics, activities, and the arts. This will be a fantastic event for the entire community!

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Let's Talk.



Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Netragrednik

Happy 50th Anniversary LAUSD!

It is mind boggling to consider all of the changes/advancements in education in the past 50 years. Some of us may remember the days when cursive was considered part of the curriculum, technology meant another person got a colored television, the word core conjured up images of a delicious apple, and a travel team meant a family outing. Fast forward to today and changes are taking place at such a rapid pace new gadgets are expected not a surprise and information isn't fast enough. Fortunately, LAUSD embraces change and is preparing

students for the 21st Century. As Amy Laughlin, Principal of Lee Elementary says in her article on page 7, "We believe that if it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you." Erin Kominsky, Principal of Oak Middle School, in her article on page 11 gives you an update on the innovative furniture that adjusts to the student's desired height and wipe off tables that become presentations." This truly is an exciting time to be a student.

Thank you for continuing to include *School News* among your reading choices. Our next issue is December 6. In the meantime, Happy Halloween and Happy Thanksgiving!

School News

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Covering the

LOS ALAMITOS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Teaching Tolerance – Starting a Conversation about Craniofacial Abnormalities with your Child



Ioana Pal, PsyD.
*clinical psychologist,
Stramski Children's
Developmental
Center
Miller Children's &
Women's Hospital
Long Beach*

Each year, about 4,400 infants in the U.S. are born with a cleft lip and about 2,700 are born with a cleft palate. Together, these conditions are often referred to as craniofacial abnormalities, which are among the most common birth defects.

For children with craniofacial abnormalities, there are many visible (facial characteristics and/or speech difficulties), as well as invisible characteristics (anxiety, breathing difficulties) that may impact a child's ability to interact with others in meaningful ways.

These interactions can become even more difficult, and can affect their self-esteem, self-acceptance and communication skills, when other children tease, taunt, stare or exclude them.

Your child may know someone with a craniofacial abnormality, and it may be challenging for them to understand their peer's condition. Family members and other adults who are part of a child's life have the opportunity to educate children about respect for others and tolerance of differences.

Here are several ways to encourage tolerance:

- Model inclusive behavior. You can help your children become more compassionate, empathic and respectful by staying educated. Communicate openly with them about sensitive topics (asking and answering questions about craniofacial defects) and role play hypothetical situations or conversations.
- Curiosity is a venue for learning. Teach your child to ask questions in appropriate, thoughtful ways.
- Good communication and socialization skills lead to compassion. Encourage your child to communicate about their feelings and thoughts in age appropriate, pro-social ways.
- Ask your child's school about their anti-bullying policies in order to understand the steps taken to prevent bullying.



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Welcome to the 2017-18 School Year!

By Carrie Logue, Executive Director

The Los Alamitos Education Foundation (LAEF) is the official non-profit partner of Los Alamitos Unified School District. LAEF goes beyond the bell to enhance educational excellence in our community.

Thanks to donors like you, LAEF recently provided \$25,000 to support the mental health counselors of Los Alamitos Unified. The mental health support team includes Director of Special Education and Mental Health Dr. Heidi Olshan, Special Education and Mental Health Coordinator Grace Delk, two full-time counselors, Dr. Kirsten Jensen and Christina Park, LCSW, and one part-time counselor, Stacey Eatmon, LCSW.

Through the fundraising success of the King & Queen of Hearts campaign, LAEF is donating \$67,500 to all nine schools of Los Alamitos Unified to support Media Center/STEAM teachers and STEAM programs. LAEF continues



LAEF Board Members Michelle Boos-Stone and Tom Lent, Dr. Kirsten Jensen, Dr. Heidi Olshan, Superintendent Dr. Sherry Kropp, Assistant Superintendent Ondrea Reed and Christina Park.

to provide free STEAM instruction and fairs at all schools, plus the district-wide STEAM Showcase in the spring.

Please visit www.LAEF4Kids.org/donate today! Thank you for supporting LAEF!

Hopkinson *Elementary*

12582 Kensington Rd., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4500 • www.local.org



Evelyn Garcia
Principal

National PTA School of Excellence

Hopkinson was recently recognized as a National PTA School of Excellence for the 2017–2019 school years.

The School of Excellence program supports and celebrates partnerships between PTAs and schools to help improve the educational experience and academic environment. It offers guidance to help engage families in decision-making, and builds inclusive policies related to education, health, safety, and the arts. As part of a National PTA School of Excellence, families feel empowered to support student success.

The PTA is a key player in continuous school improvement, and the home-school partnership is the cornerstone of our success.

If you are not already involved with the school, we urge you to volunteer in a variety of ways, such as helping in the classroom and attending monthly PTA meetings.

Research links parental involvement to student achievement and success. The time and support of our PTA means so much, and it truly makes a difference!





Amy Laughlin
Principal

Embrace the Challenge

Welcome to the 2017–2018 school year!

The staff at Lee has studied and taken great pride in learning how a Growth Mindset can influence the outcome of student success. Carol Dweck, author of the book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, states that, “The best thing we can do is to teach children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort, and keep on learning.”

Having a Growth Mindset means that we have high expectations for all students.

As we look forward to the new school year, I am reminded that a child’s brain, like any muscle, gets stronger with practice. Dedication, hard work, and perseverance all contribute to a student’s talents and abilities. Our job is to allow students the opportunity to be faced with challenges which requires the development of critical thinking skills.

We believe that, “If it doesn’t challenge you, it doesn’t change you.” The students and staff at Lee are ready to embrace the challenge!



3rd grade students learning how about brain development.

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Gary Willems
Principal

Regional Autism Program

LAE is proud to introduce the R.A.P. (Regional Autism Program) that joined LAE from McGaugh Elementary School last year. The R.A.P. teachers are Mr. Rodriguez and Mr. Schreiner. Mr. Rodriguez is new to Los Alamitos Unified School District and is highly experienced in his field. Mr. Schreiner was with the R.A.P. program at McGaugh Elementary and has done an amazing job.

These classes focus on attendance, learning readiness, and foundation skills that will fully allow them to participate in the curriculum through subjects such as mathematics, reading and writing, social skill development, and music. It is these foundational skills that are taught through the systemic approach called applied behavior analysis (ABA) in order to gain the necessary skills to live an independent life and productive life. We welcome Mr. Schreiner, Mr. Rodriguez and their amazing students to LAE.



Mr. Rodriguez and Mr. Schreiner

McAuliffe *Middle School*

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



Ann Allen
Principal

Go, Eagles!

It has been a glorious start of the year for our McAuliffe School community!

The teachers worked during the month of August to make sure that the students would be welcomed into a warm and engaging learning environment. Parents eagerly volunteered during registration, at WEB day, during our textbook checkout, for PE clothes distribution, and more!

The PTA also had their first meeting on September 6, and were delighted by a surprise visit from Superintendent Dr. Sherry Kropp. Directly after the meeting everyone enjoyed Back to School Night, where hundreds of parents met teachers and learned about the content and expectations for the year.



It is our mission to help every child and parent feel welcome and connected. We strive to challenge every student to grow socially, academically, and emotionally by engaging them in a rigorous academic program, a variety of clubs, a robust athletic program, and an exceptional visual technical and performing arts program.



Erin Kominsky
Principal

We Got Flexible!

It was wonderful to welcome both new and returning students back to school in August! Teachers spent hours preparing for the first day, and students returned eager and ready to learn.

This year, we are excited to unveil our new innovative furniture in our classrooms. It promotes an environment of 4 C's (collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking). Our math classrooms now have write-on/wipe-off tables for students to conduct problem solving in real time. Eighth-grade social science has tables that go from write-on surfaces to flip-up presentation stations. Some English classrooms have flexible-height tables that allow students to have the opportunity to change their perspective by standing or sitting on high stools. This flexible furniture is provided through innovation grants from our Oak PTA.

Students are loving the opportunity to learn in classrooms that offer a different approach to traditional seating. Oak Lions are off to a great start. Hear us roar!



We are very excited about our new furniture allowing for alternative learning environments for students.



UCLA

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¡Sea parte del Estudio más grande sobre el Desarrollo Cerebral y Salud Infantil en UCLA!

The Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study will enroll 10,000+ healthy children and follow them for 10 years from ages 9 to 10 into early adulthood to understand how children's experiences affect brain development and other aspects of their lives - including academic achievement, social development, and behavioral and overall health.

Receive up to \$300 for your time participating in the study. Kids can also get a picture of their brain!

El Estudio del Desarrollo Cognitivo y Cerebral del Adolescente (ABCD) matriculará a más de 10,000+ niños sanos, a quienes se seguirán por 10 años desde los años 9 a 10 hasta la adultez temprana, con el fin de entender cómo las experiencias de la niñez afectan el desarrollo cerebral y otros aspectos de la vida - incluyendo logros académico, desarrollo social, salud conductual y la salud en general

Se pueden recibir hasta \$300 por participar en el estudio. ¡Los niños también se pueden obtener un foto de su cerebro!

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During the first year visit, you and your child will be asked to complete interviews and questionnaires, play iPad games, give saliva samples, and undergo a safe, non-invasive MRI scan.



¿Qué van a Los participantes hacer?

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If interested, contact us: Phone:(310)794-0089
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Los Alamitos *High School*

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**Dr. Brandon
Martinez**
Principal

Excellence Defined

Los Alamitos High School is off to a great school year. Our students are already engaged in rigorous academics, athletics events, and auditioning, and are rehearsing for their upcoming performing arts productions. They are also attending school activities such as our Welcome Back Dance.

Our world-class staff has created a safe and positive environment for all students.

Our parent and community support has also been tremendous, especially the PTSA, which has tirelessly volunteered, raised funds, and supported us in every endeavor.

This year we will be celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Los Alamitos High School through a range of events, starting with our Homecoming football game on October 12, our Homecoming Dance on October 13, and an on-campus celebration on Saturday, October 14.

We are also proud of the students who have come together through our Drama Club to raise funds and collect backpacks, school supplies, and letters of encouragement for the students in Houston who were affected by Hurricane Harvey. Our initiative is called "Houston We have a Solution," and it has been a great success.

As we celebrate 50 years of excellence across academics, athletics, activities, and the arts, we continue to focus on preparing our current students to become the next group of Griffin Greats who will transform the world.





Roni Ellis
Principal

9/11 Memorial Inspires Hope

Patriotism is alive and well at McGaugh! Over 1,100 students, teachers, and community members attended a 9/11 Memorial and Tribute. Dignitaries from the City of Seal Beach and the school district

took part in the ceremony. The police chief and division fire chief spoke to the students as well as Captain Nathan Welch of the U.S. Air Force and ex-McGaugh-LosAl student, made the following statement, "Yes, we all remember 9/11, but do you also remember 9/12? Do you remember the love you felt for your fellow man? How you let someone go ahead of you at the checkout line, held a door open and didn't care how long it took, or



called someone to tell them you were thinking about them just to brighten their day. For the students here, I'll simply say that I don't know why there are bad people in this world that choose to hurt others. I pray when the time comes for you to choose, that you will do whatever you can to stop the bad and give light to the good." The bad people on 9/11 did what they did to sadden us and tear us apart. But we chose love, we stood together, and we became even stronger than before.

AMERICA

*By Alden Gill, Fourth grade,
McGaugh Elementary, Ms. Duncan*

Amazing helpers who sacrificed themselves to save other people
Marines and neighbors keeping us from danger
Eagles are strong and so are we
Rise when we get pushed down
I am a strong girl and you are strong too
Canines even saved many lives when the buildings fell
America is Amazing

All McGaugh students held individual flags while singing Proud to Be an American. Students read original poetry and shared words of hope for a brighter future.



Rossmoor *Elementary*

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



Amy Belsha
Principal

Knights show P.R.I.D.E

The buzz around Rossmoor Elementary is Knight P.R.I.D.E! Last year our staff worked diligently to study and learn about Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Our team of educators thought about what we need to continue to build a successful and positive school

culture on our campus. As a result, this year we are launching PBIS at Rossmoor! Our Knights are learning the school wide expectations across our campus that will help our students and staff show P.R.I.D.E. At our opening Spirit Assembly, the PAL leadership students eagerly performed a skit to show our Knights what having PRIDE means.

Rossmoor Elementary is thrilled to launch PBIS this year as we nurture our students' citizenship skills and continue to support their academic and social development through Knight P.R.I.D.E!

Rossmoor Knights...are **P**ositive, show **R**esponsibility, act with **I**ntegrity, **D**isplay Kindness, and **E**arn and give respect!



Weaver *Elementary*

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



Dr Robert Briggerman
Principal

Preparing for the "real world"

Based on the research of Carol Dweck from Stanford University, the growth mindset assumes that all students possess abilities that can be developed given the appropriate instructional and related supports. Students who are supported by instructional practices from this mindset often thrive on challenges and learn that problem solving and learning involves struggle and failure. Students are trained to see failure as a natural part of the

learning process and use it to develop themselves even further. Much of the curriculum in the STEAM movement and Engineering Design Principles are based on this mindset. For example, testing a notion or theory and continuing to refine it for greater efficiency is consistent with the growth mindset.

This is in contrast to an alternative notion that learning and acquisition of knowledge are innate and that some possess the ability to be successful while others will

inevitably fail (Furner and Gonzalez-DeHass, 2011). Dweck (2007) refers to this as a "fixed" instructional mindset. Much research has linked this mindset with performance and testing anxiety, a lower student self-concept, math anxiety and illiteracy, and failure.

In Los Alamitos Unified and at Weaver, we approach learning from a Growth mindset. This involves ensuring that all students are provided with:

- Best-first instructional practices that support student success.
- Differentiation of instruction for students to meet them at their level and encourage growth.
- Strategic student groupings so that students can learn from each other at their level.
- Intensive support and remediation for struggling students.
- Practices such as engineering design principles that reinforce that failure and struggle are a natural part of problem solving and an opportunity for learning and improvement.

Los Alamitos-Rossmoor Branch Library

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Sean Whittle
Branch Manager

Using the Library to Open Up and Explore

Recent events that were showing up in the news over the summer have raised for us many questions and many strong emotions. Our information flows so fast, that some of us are overwhelmed by the pull to take a stand and voice an opinion on a topic, even if we feel we're not fully acquainted with the topic, no matter which side we fall on.

In this context, I'd like to present to you the library as one vital tool to engage in an opening up and exploring of these topics when a society debates matters on the public stage. There are any number of topics from the past, present, and to come that will not slow down for us. In our everyday lives we could not possibly meet every person of every background and engage in a one-on-one conversation and dialog. But in the four walls (physical and digital) of the library, there is a vast array of materials to explore virtually any topic, any person, any point of view, any historical event, to learn about all the sides of a debated topic and decide which view seems most reasonable. And this seems to be a well-needed balance to the fast-paced information flow that demands from us an opinion immediately, and isn't even designed for thoughtful and reasoned investigation. "Look before you leap" is an old-time saying. It is a way to step out of oneself and one's tribe, and take a 360 view. Sometimes a view is confirmed, and sometimes a view changes, but I don't think anyone would regret the perspective and growth they could undergo through this learning process – this opening up and exploration – and providing a counterweight to the demands of our fast-paced media environment.

School News

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A Page Turner

Joplin, Wishing by Diane Stanley is an extraordinary page turner! It really makes you feel like you are there with the characters. This fantasy novel is about a 12 year old girl named Joplin who finds an antique

platter with a picture of a girl at a pond and wishes she could be her friend. The next day Joplin sees a girl in the garden.

When she goes to say hello, she learns that the girl, Sofie, is new to the neighborhood. Curiously, when Joplin goes back to her room the girl in the platter is gone! When Joplin discovers everything Sofie has been through, she comes to the conclusion that she must help her. Later when Sofie meets Joplin's mom, they think they recognize each other which made me think, "Is there a story behind this?" You'll just have to read the book to find out! I give this book 5 out of 5 apples.



Keira F. is a sixth grader. In addition to her love of books, she enjoys art, crafts, traveling and playing with her cats. She rates books from 1 to 5 apples with 5 being the highest.



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Lucy's Book Review



Lucy Davis

The Only Road

Author: Alexandra Diaz
Life in Jaime's small
Guatemalan village is
pretty peaceful, excluding
one group: the Alphas.
Drug dealers that ask for
'favors' and new recruits.



If you refuse, you die. So when Jaime's beloved cousin, Miguel, is murdered for that very reason, the whole family is devastated. And the death comes with something else: a request for Jamie and Miguel's sister Angela to join them.

The only way Angela and Jamie can escape is to leave Guatemala, and that might be harder than it seems. Train hopping, refugee churches, immigration officials, and lost dogs are all part of their journey, and hopefully they can make it to the other side. The U.S. is promising safety, but the road to get there isn't.

I really enjoyed this book. It talks about serious topics while still keeping the mood as light as possible. Five of five stars are well earned in this wonderful story.

Lucy is a 6th grade student. When she isn't immersed in a book, she loves musical theater, ballet, and singing. She enjoys stretching her imagination by writing short stories of her own. Lucy will rate the books 1 to 5 bookworms with 5 being the best.

Novelist –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 Los Al in the subject line.

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Entries must be received by November 15, 2017

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a GAZUMP card/dice game - fun for all ages!



Congratulations to: Austin
Winner of our June Word Search Contest!

YOU'RE INVITED



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11:00AM

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