

**FREE**

# School News

*Education + Communication = A Better Nation*

**Covering the Los Alamitos Unified School District**



Volume 15, Issue 78

October / November 2018



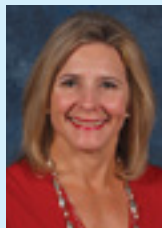
## Ready for Success!



### Board of Education



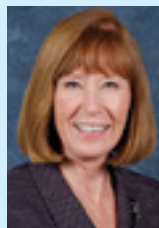
**Dr. Jeffrey Barke, M.D.**  
*President*



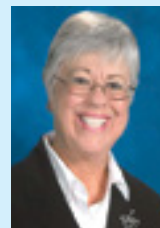
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## SUPERINTENDENT

### District Priority Goals



**Dr. Sherry  
Kropp**  
*Superintendent*

Every summer, the Board of Education meets with Executive Cabinet members to review student data from the previous year and uses this information to update the District Priority Goals. The Board ensures that the goals represent what our families want for their children, what our community wants from its schools, and what our teachers and staff need to continue their excellent work.

#### The five priority goals include:

1. Passionately pursue academic excellence from all students.
2. Ensure a healthy, safe, and drug-free environment.
3. Enhance communication processes to engage, inform, and educate all stakeholders.
4. Manage and allocate financial resources to maximize students' educational experiences.
5. Optimize the use of District facilities by improving maintenance, planning, and Joint Use Agreements.

The most important priority goal is student safety, and there is always work to be done with this priority. Simply put, students do not thrive and achieve at their best when they are not physically, socially, and emotionally safe. On a continual basis, needs get identified, challenges surface, and we learn new information. We've hired additional mental health therapists and added programs at our sites, such as the Sixth Grade Summit, Middle School CARES, and Start with Hello, but we want to do more. What we are learning is that it will take a comprehensive, dedicated, relentless pursuit of this goal to make significant, wide-spread progress.

We are passionately committed to cultivating an inclusive culture for all students filled with kindness, compassion, empathy, and respect for one another. We want students and families to feel welcome on our campuses and know that we embrace and value them as part of our Los Al Family. We know that the more we learn and listen to other peoples' experiences and perspectives, the more we understand. We are investigating and exploring new ideas, programs, and events aimed at uniting us, not dividing us. I'm confident that the students, families, and community will join us in this endeavor so that Los Alamitos Unified remains the best place possible to live, work, and go to school.

## Teachers See the Possibilities

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**Kay Coop**  
Founder/Publisher



# School News

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Covering the

**LOS ALAMITOS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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**ADVERTISING SALES:**

562/493-3193

**CONTENT COORDINATOR:** Barbra Longiny

**GRAPHIC DESIGNER/PRODUCTION:**

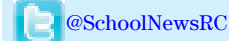
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**Netragrednik** by Neta Madison



**SCHOOL NEWS ROLL CALL, LLC**

P.O. Box 728, Seal Beach, CA 90740

562/493-3193

[www.schoolnewsrollcall.com](http://www.schoolnewsrollcall.com)

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Welcome back to another school year filled with excitement and anticipation of a great year ahead. By now students have settled into their routines and are focused on academics.

Superintendent Dr. Kropp starts off with her message on District Priority Goals. Board of Education President Dr. Barke stresses the enhancement of campus security.

On the subject of safety, on page 6 the Seal Beach Police Department reminds us of National Preparedness Month and the Great CA Shakeout October 18. And Common Sense Media informs about Parental Controls for young kids online.

Each of the school articles remind us of why this is an exciting time to be a student.

Our next issue is December 5.



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## BOARD OF EDUCATION

# Los Alamitos Unified Enhances Campus Security Systems



**Dr. Jeffrey Barke, M.D.**  
*President*

Los Alamitos Unified School District is continuing to make improvement to security at all nine of its campuses according to School Board President, Dr. Jeffrey Barke.

### Physical Security

Last school year, the Board of Education approved the installation of perimeter fencing at each of the elementary schools and both of the middle schools. During the school day, the fencing is secured requiring visitors to check in through a single point of entry.

That single point of entry is managed through a camera and “buzz-in” system at the front gate.

Each visitor who is accessing the campus as a volunteer is then required to provide a picture ID through the District’s visitor management system. The District has identified areas for further improvement in the area of security fencing and camera/buzzer systems to support the after school programs provided by LAEF, extended day care (Kids Korner), and Pre-school. In addition, the Board authorized the addition of six campus supervisors at each of the six elementary campuses during the after school hours. The Board has also authorized the installation of a full video surveillance system at McGaugh Elementary School, and the Seal Beach Police Department will be able to monitor the camera feed. Los Alamitos High School currently has a video surveillance system and is the next site to receive perimeter fencing.

Finally, a blue-light security tower is being installed this fall in the east parking lot of Los Alamitos High School, Barke said. The tower is a free-standing wireless device that enables anyone in distress to call 911 with one touch of a button. Upon activation the device also takes a picture of the immediate area, flashes the blue light and sounds a siren. The towers are commonly found on college campuses. Barke said the installation of the tower is a pilot project “to determine if it is an effective devise to improve student and staff safety.” If successful, wider application across other campuses will be considered. Student and staff safety is a priority to the School Board. Orange County Sheriff Sandra Hutchens has commented that “Los Alamitos is a model district in Orange County.”



**An emergency tower will be installed in the Los Alamitos High east parking lot.**

### Staff Training

In the Spring of 2018, the Board of Education authorized the active shooter training program for school staff. All staff will receive comprehensive training involving multiple stations led by law enforcement and former military experts that cover evading an intruder, engaging in self-defense tactics, administering emergency first-aid, and using the classroom setting to one’s advantage. All substitutes, volunteers, and chaperones are also invited to these trainings. In addition, the District continues to offer CPR/First-Aid/AED certification classes at no cost for all employees.

### Law Enforcement Partnerships

The District continues to partner with local law enforcement. The School Resource Officer program is a shared endeavor by which the City of Los Alamitos, the City of Seal Beach and the District have combined efforts to fund a full-time Los Alamitos Police Department Officer at Los Alamitos High School. In addition, each of the school sites have a designated space on their campus for law enforcement to make phone calls, answer emails, use a clean restroom, or simply have a cup of coffee while being a presence on the school campus. The Director of Safety continues to collaborate with the Los Alamitos PD and Seal Beach PD to review emergency operations plans in the event of evacuation and response. For the past two years, the District has partnered with Los Alamitos PD and the Drug Enforcement Agency on a Prescription Drug Take-Back event, and will continue that effort during the 2018-19 school year.

### Threat Assessment Team

The District has threat assessment teams that regularly meet to review how threats are assessed, how threats are addressed, and the supports and resources needed to mitigate threat-making behavior. The District has employed additional support staff in the areas of mental health, school psychology and counseling to support students’ social-emotional needs. The District also partners with law enforcement to properly assess any potential exterior threat to ensure student and staff safety. The District has a confidential reporting system, TEXT-A-TIP (562-344-5498), to encourage the reporting of any potential safety concern to District administration.

### Needs

While the District is a leader in school safety, there is still much work to be done. We would like to enhance fencing at our K-8 sites, install fencing at the high school, install security surveillance cameras at all sites, install blue light security towers at all sites, employ more campus supervisors and law enforcement personnel on our campuses, and much more. Safety is an ongoing priority.



## Common Sense Media

### Parental Controls for Young Kids Online



Some very basic parental controls are a good idea, are simple to set, and will put you at ease. These can be as basic as using safe search on Google or installing a basic content filter on your web browser. If you're supervising your young kids while they're online, this is probably all you need;

more complex controls can sometimes get in kids' way by blocking harmless content.

To figure out whether you need more robust parental controls, consider how much time your kids spend online, how much supervision you can provide while they're online, how technically savvy they are, and whether they have a history of searching for age-inappropriate stuff.

If you decide you want extra controls, research the different parental controls in the marketplace, many of which require a monthly subscription. These include filters that are constantly updated and include screen-time-management features. Some parental controls also offer entertaining, useful, and educational features for kids, making the controls feel more like a fun tool than a lockbox. Many parental-control products also will send you updates on what's been searched generally, whether certain terms were searched (such as "drugs"), and how much time your kid spent doing what.

The downside to parental controls -- other than cost -- is that they can provide a false sense of security. Determined kids can defeat them, and the filters are often *too* good, blocking out plenty of harmless stuff.

Your ultimate goal is to raise kids who use the Internet safely and responsibly and think critically about their actions, but a little technical assistance can help. And, as your kids get older, you'll need to dial down the restrictions to help them develop their own sense of responsibility.

Common Sense Media is an independent nonprofit organization offering unbiased ratings and trusted advice to help families make smart media and technology choices. Check out our ratings and recommendations at [www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)



## Seal Beach Animal Care Center

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### Meet the Great Gretzky!

*By Murlyn E. Burkes, Cat Committee Liaison*

My name is Gretzky, and I have been a resident at the Seal Beach Animal Care Center since 2012. My brother and I spent the first three months of our lives on the streets, and when we arrived here, we were shy and timid cats—with a little wild streak. My brother was adopted several years ago, as he started to trust humans sooner than I did. I do trust humans now and will just need time to adjust in a home.



**Gretzky**

I love the mouse on the wire, and I enjoy watching birds and lizards from a window. I enjoy sitting in a cat tree, so my new home should make sure to purchase one that has a lot of places to sit and relax.

I am a handsome boy with a lot of love to give. Won't you visit our shelter and see for yourself?

## City of Seal Beach Police Department

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562/799-4100 Ext. 1145 • [www.sealbeachca.gov](http://www.sealbeachca.gov)

### National Preparedness Month

*By Julie Clasby, Police Corporal, Emergency Services Coordinator*

National Preparedness Month is recognized each September across the country, and the Great California Shake Out, is an earthquake drill held throughout California on 10/18/18 at 1018am. Both events provide an opportunity and a reminder that we all must prepare ourselves and our families for the next disaster. There are many ways that we can prepare now and throughout the year. These include making and practicing an individual / family plan, learning lifesaving skills such as CPR and first aid, checking insurance policies for the hazards you may face such as flood or earthquakes, and learn how to take practical safety steps like shutting of water and gas. The devastating hurricanes and wildfires this year remind the nation of the importance of preparing for disasters. After a disaster strikes, we will often be the first ones in our communities to take action, long before first responders are able to arrive, so it is important to prepare in advance to help yourself and your community.

The FEMA Family Communication Plan template can be found on the FEMA website and is designed for parents to organize emergency contact phone numbers and identify an emergency meeting place:

<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/34330>

The Great California Shake Out website offers lots of information and resources for how individuals and families can protect themselves during an earthquake: <https://www.shakeout.org/california/dropcoverholdon/>

## What is Irritable Bowel Syndrome?



**Barry Steinmetz, M.D.**  
*pediatric  
gastroenterologist,  
MemorialCare  
Miller Children's &  
Women's Hospital  
Long Beach*

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common digestive disorder that involves normal gut contractions that are interpreted as abnormal, resulting a collection of symptoms, such as abdominal pain, bloating and unpredictable bowel movements.

### What are the Causes?

While the specific cause in children is not clear, there are several factors that may cause an increase in IBS symptoms.

- Symptoms can occur before or after a stressful event, such as a big test at school
- Diet can be a factor, but foods that trigger symptoms will vary in each child

### Symptoms of Irritable Bowel Syndrome

- Abdominal pain or cramping
- Bloating
- Constipation or diarrhea (or both)
- Gas



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### Treatments for Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Specific treatment of IBS will be determined by your child's doctor. However, common treatment can include lifestyle changes, such as:

- Eating more fiber
- Drinking plenty of fluids
- Eating less fat
- Setting aside time for bowel movements each day
- Finding ways to reduce stress in your child's life

### What Can I Do?

- Encourage your child to maintain a healthy diet
- Learn which foods your child should avoid. Keeping a diary of what your child eats and how they react will help you identifying foods that trigger IBS
- If your child has ongoing symptoms that can't be managed at home, they may need a referral to a pediatric gastroenterologist

MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach has outpatient specialty centers from the South Bay to South Orange County, allowing a child with gastrointestinal conditions, like IBS, to be treated by a specialist close to home.

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## Hopkinson *Elementary*

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**Evelyn Garcia**  
*Principal*

### Huskies are Readers

The Hopkinson Elementary School Huskies are enriched with a balanced literacy program, which includes skill development, encouraging love for reading and literature, and language-rich activities.

In Transitional Kindergarten through second grade, there is a focus on learning to read. Teachers use Reading Foundations of the Common Core (RFCC), shared reading, guided reading, a language wall, and whole- and small-group instruction to ensure that all students are met where they are and are instructed in a way that will push them to their highest potential.



In third through fifth grades, our Huskies are reading to learn. Although we continue to support their advancement in reading, all curricular areas are language rich, and

students dig deeper into comprehension and making meaning with text.

Students are regularly assessed and monitored to drive instructional decisions. Though our teachers work tirelessly to promote literature, we also count on our home-school partnership. A rich literature experience both at home and in the school setting is invaluable for ensuring that our Huskies are readers.

## Lee *Elementary*

11481 Foster Rd., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4540 • [www.losal.org](http://www.losal.org)



**Amy Laughlin**  
*Principal*

### Making Magic

Welcome to the 2018–2019 school year! The staff at Lee Elementary School is making magic and inspiring change across our campus. With purposeful planning based on individual student needs, a common goal to challenge all students, and a passion to engage students in learning experiences rather than basic lesson plans, we make magic happen for every student, every day.



Lee's unique art program, hands-on engineering and coding program, cross-grade level learning, deep-thinking grand conversations, and strategic intervention encourage students to maximize their own learning. Teaching with a growth mindset means Lee teachers involve students in active learning while empowering them to persevere, igniting curiosity, embracing challenges, and celebrating accomplishments.

We look forward to another year of developing critical-thinking skills and academic success for all students!





## Los Alamitos *Elementary*

10862 Bloomfield St., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 714/816-3300 • [www.losal.org](http://www.losal.org)



**Gary Willems**  
*Principal*

### Exciting Events

Los Alamitos Elementary (LAE) School is excited about the new school year. We celebrated with our annual Camp LAE. More than 700 people attended the camp, and 640 spent the night on our field. Families enjoyed four food trucks, a neon glow hike, the camp store, and the highlight of the event: our first annual neon/fog machine dance party.



In addition, LAE celebrated National Art Week with our free PTA Art Night. More than 200 people attended and made beautiful art work that they were able to take home. We also celebrated our annual Fit-A-Thon, a four-week fund-raiser focusing on eating healthy, getting plenty of sleep, and exercising.

These events highlight what makes LAE “The Place to Be”: our amazing community. It is a great start to the year, and we are excited to watch all of our amazing Tigers learn and grow during the school year!



## Los Alamitos *High School*

3591 Cerritos Ave., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4780 • [www.losal.org](http://www.losal.org)



**Dr. Gregg Stone**  
*Principal*

### Off to a Great Start

On August 8, we welcomed back our senior class of 2019 and welcomed in the class of 2022. The weather may have been a bit warm, but the classrooms remained a cool 72 degrees.

Across campus, one could observe science classes conducting hands-on laboratory experiments, world language classes speaking in the target languages, performing arts classes prepping for their first performance, and English classes poring over short stories and novels. Instruction began day one.

New initiatives for the year include our summits on late-start Wednesdays. These summits allow us to provide information to designated classes without interrupting instructional time.

Also, in partnership with Cypress College, we have four college classes being held on the Los Alamitos High School campus. Through the Dual Enrollment Program, we are offering multivariable calculus, business, sociology, and counseling. A fifth class, cyber security, is held at Cypress College on Saturday mornings.



**On a recent visit to the high school, School Board President Dr. Jeff Barke and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Andrew Pulver observe a lab in Mrs. Bonis' Chemistry class.**

## McAuliffe *Middle School*

4112 Cerritos Ave., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 714/816-3320 • [www.losal.org](http://www.losal.org)



**Dr. Ryan  
Weiss-Wright**  
*Principal*

### Embracing Challenges

McAuliffe Middle School has had a successful opening to the 2018-2019 school year! Striving after Christa McAuliffe's vision to "be yourself, try your best, and never be afraid to dream" McAuliffe Eagles are embracing the challenges and opportunities for a new school year. This year, McAuliffe students are excited to embrace Science Olympiad, a new Instrumental Music program, Math Counts after school enrichment, a new Drama program, and work on our Fall musical Shrek, Jr. Every day we seek to find ways to help McAuliffe students strive to be their best and connect to school through things they are passionate about!



## McGaugh *Elementary*

1698 Bolsa Ave., Seal Beach, CA 90740 • 562/799-4560 • [www.losal.org](http://www.losal.org)



**Roni Ellis**  
*Principal*

### Inspiring Hope for a Brighter Future

Patriotism is alive and well at McGaugh! Over 1,100 students, teachers, and community members recently attended a 9/11 memorial ceremony and tribute. Dignitaries from the City of Seal Beach and our school district also took part in the event.

FDNY retired firefighter Bobby Senn shared some of his experiences of being

at Ground Zero on that tragic morning 17 years ago. Mr. Senn also recognized three of our McGaugh Sea Lions who celebrated their birthdays on September 11th, and told them that they were the key to our future. "We must not forget this day," he said. "And we must not forget to celebrate the freedoms we have as Americans."

The Flag of Honor was also proudly displayed listing the names of those we lost on 9/11. The students read essays, recited poems, and waved American flags as they sang Proud to be an American. Pride was felt everywhere.





## Oak *Middle School*

10821 Oak St., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4740 • [www.losal.org](http://www.losal.org)



**Erin Kominsky**  
*Principal*

### Everyone Belongs!

The Oak Lions are off to a great start! We have been back at school since August 8 and have been busy providing “extraordinary experiences for everyone, every day!”

Our students have been engaging in rigorous academics, fun activities, athletics and the arts. Our first schoolwide celebration focused on P.E.A.C.E. week (people exhibiting appreciation and compassion for everyone). During P.E.A.C.E. week, students each signed a specially designed set of wings to represent that Oak students “lift each other up.” Other activities included special collaborative games at lunch and a showing of school pride at the end of the week.

Oak Middle School is a place where students show compassion, work toward being inclusive, and help build a



school environment where “everyone belongs.” Our student ASB, under the direction of Mrs. Siegmann, helped to make this event a memorable one. Here’s to a great year! Oak Lions—hear us roar!

## Weaver *Elementary*

11872 Wembley Rd., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4580 • [www.losal.org](http://www.losal.org)



**Dr Robert Briggerman**  
*Principal*

### Celebrating Our Community

Students who are involved in school perform significantly higher than peers who are not engaged. Additionally, research shows that student enrichment activities help them develop a deeper, more conceptual understanding of core academic curriculum.

At Weaver Elementary School, students participate in a number of activities to motivate and engage them and to pique their interest. At weekly Friday flag ceremonies, the whole school comes together. In addition, student birthdays are announced, and students are recognized for helping out at school and for demonstrating random acts of kindness. Special flag ceremonies, such as our Veteran’s Day Celebration in November, connect our school to our veterans and peace officers who have sacrificed for our freedom. This instills in our students a sense of understanding of our country’s rich history.

In addition to our flag ceremonies, a variety of other activities involve students and parents in the Weaver community. Field trips and school-wide assemblies extend learning from the classroom into the “real world.” After-school classes in the arts, sciences, and foreign languages and scouting also extend and enrich the classroom curriculum and support working parents in the afternoon. In addition, our daycare program, Kid’s Korner, provides working families with a safe place for students to play and complete homework. Other events, such as our annual carnival, the talent show, Weaver Goes Hollywood, Summer Jam, and other family nights truly allow us to come together to celebrate as a community.

Student connectedness is a key goal in keeping young people on track for success. By providing students with safe and enriching activities, we hope to provide opportunities for all students to achieve.

For more information, please visit our Web site or contact our main office.

## Rossmoor *Elementary*

3272 Shakespeare Dr., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4520 • [www.losal.org](http://www.losal.org)



**Amy Belsha**  
*Principal*

### **Knights at the Ready!**

Rossmoor Knights and staff are thrilled to launch our House System for the first time! It was an exciting day as all Knights were sorted into one of our fearless four Knight Houses:

House of Galahad—courage

House of Gawain—loyalty

House of Lancelot—integrity

House of Percival—resilience

During our Spirit Assembly, students gathered on the stage with their classrooms, dancing and eager to see what house they would join! With excitement, they reached into a bag and grabbed their bracelets identifying them to one specific house.

Then, they ran through the balloon arch and celebrated with their new teammates!

This year, we are building our school culture through the house system to support Knight PRIDE across campus. We are working together to create ways to motivate students to achieve within the four A's: academics, athletics, activities and the arts, both inside and outside the classroom. This is done through fun and exciting monthly house competitions, thus affording opportunities to create smaller communities within our larger school community. Noble Knights honors will be awarded to those students



who show Knight PRIDE, and each student can donate those Noble Knights toward house points if they wish. Our purpose for bringing the House System to Rossmoor is to create a sense of community and camaraderie while building strong relationships across all stakeholders on campus.

"I love my house (Lancelot) because it stands for integrity and red is my favorite color!" said Justus Doby, 4th-grade Knight. "I also like that it makes us all excited and everyone in our school is included!"





# Immersing Ourselves in the Natural Wonders



**Dr. Al Mijares**  
*Superintendent  
Orange County  
Dept. of Education*

Outside the urban glare of Los Angeles, we found a night sky packed with stars and a still silence interrupted only by the wind's whisper and the chatter of crickets and frogs. It was different, yet familiar.

My father packed little more than a kerosene lamp, a small tent and some fishing gear for those family camping trips of my youth. But it was never about what we brought or left behind. It was about immersing ourselves in the natural wonders of Southern California's mountains, forests

and beaches — and discovering that we were connected to something bigger.

Whether we were on a KOA Campground or Refugio Beach, every direction offered frontiers to explore, mysteries to be solved and scientific observations to be made, without textbooks, lab coats or microscopes. Allowed to chase our curiosities, my brothers and sisters and I were laying deep foundations for learning. But if you asked us, we were just having fun.

Today, technology has emerged as a primary frontier of childhood exploration. But while there are obvious benefits to raising tech-savvy children, I echo the sentiments of countless researchers who suggest we're missing out on opportunities to nurture brain development and strengthen mental health when we close ourselves off from nature.

Author Richard Louv, who has written extensively on this subject, points to an emerging body of evidence connecting nature to greater physical and emotional health. By contrast, disengagement from the natural environment results in what Louv terms "nature-deficit disorder," which, he says, correlates with attention difficulties, greater rates of physical and emotional illness, and reduced use of our senses.

Louv isn't alone. A number of writers, psychologists and academics have produced volumes quantifying the benefits of direct exposure to nature. At the same time, studies continue to show we're spending less time outdoors and more time with electronic screens, which do little to stoke happiness or well-being.

Access is part of our challenge. Census data shows that more than 80 percent of Americans live in urban areas, some of which lack parks or open space. And while more children are participating in organized sports, fewer kids are experiencing the outdoors through unstructured play, according to Louv, who blames a perceived lack of time, as well as concerns about safety.

In 2004, Rhonda L. Clements, professor of education at Manhattanville College in New York State, conducted a survey of 830 mothers nationwide. While 71 percent of them reported playing outdoors as children, only 26 percent said their kids did the same on a daily basis. Interestingly enough, the results showed little differences between rural and urban settings.

With supercharged academic standards and a greater

focus on the STEM subjects of science, technology, engineering and math, some educators may choose to ignore these trends. But we do so at a tremendous cost given such extensive evidence that nature — in addition to being intertwined with a number of scientific fields — not only sharpens minds but amplifies learning in other subjects.

Indeed, a recent study of children ages 9 and 10 revealed that hands-on lessons in nature produce students who are more engaged in their other academic studies. Moreover, a duo from UC Berkeley points to more than 100 studies that demonstrate how exposure to nature can have positive impacts on thought processes, as well as our physical and mental health.

This is why environmental education programs like OCDE's Inside the Outdoors are so vital.

Since 1974, Inside the Outdoors has been nurturing student knowledge and stewardship of the natural environment with highly qualified staff and 15 field trip locations throughout Orange County and Los Angeles counties. Lessons are aligned with the state's instructional standards, and for classes that can't venture out, the program dispatches Traveling Scientists to schools, often accompanied by wildlife.

Inside the Outdoors logs more than 150,000 hours of environmental STEM learning each year and has served some 3.5 million students to date. Suffice to say, many of these students might not otherwise have these experiences.

In April, about 100 teachers, school administrators and experts gathered in Orange County to discuss how outdoor and environmental learning experiences can be used to help develop a well-rounded curriculum. Jointly organized by OCDE, Inside the Outdoors and the state Department of Education, the symposium also offered educators a preview of how environmental literacy is being incorporated into the state's Next Generation Science Standards.

Richard Louv was also in attendance as the event's keynote speaker. The renowned author told the audience that "Every teacher who connects students to nature is doing sacred work."

It is that and more. Teaching students about nature and immersing them in the natural environment is both transformative and enduring, producing benefits to our bodies and minds that we are only beginning to understand. Even as we prepare young women and men for an increasingly digitized world, we must continue to create opportunities to recharge their minds and spirits in the great outdoors.

As a child, my family didn't take lavish vacations. But I am fortunate that we could occasionally escape the urbanized confines of Los Angeles to experience a larger world that asked as many questions as it answered, and today these trips are among my most cherished childhood memories.

Years later, I see how they prepared me for life as an educator, as well as for trips with my own sons, who similarly had moments to gaze up at the countless stars and wonder.

## Keira's Book Nook



Keira

### Action Packed

*Snared* is a very heartfelt book about a hobgoblin trapsmith named Wily Snare, who has never been above ground until he meets Odette, Pryvyd, and Moshul after they successfully defeat his traps. From them, Wily



learns that the Above is not so bad, and that he is actually human. He also discovers that in the Above the Infernal King takes hostages and brings them to prison, from which no one ever escapes. Wily then aids the fight against the Infernal King, in the process learning about sunsets, butterflies, and experiencing harrowing encounters with death. This is a book of fantasy and adventure that I would recommend for any sixth through eighth graders that don't mind the suspense of cliffhangers. I rate this book 4 out of 5 stars because although it was an action packed novel, it was not quite captivating enough to remember forever!

Keira is a 7th grader who loves to read. She also enjoys crafts, traveling, soccer and playing with her cats. Her reviews are rated from 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest.

## Los Alamitos-Rossmoor Branch Library

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Semra Bilse  
Branch Manager

### Great News!

Los Alamitos/Rossmoor Library has recently had a cable network upgrading project which has been completed. The main benefit is the speed of the network. Cable and fiber upgrade is now at 10 gig instead of 1 gig. This is quite an increase. The recabling will greatly assist in making the Internet run faster. As new technologies arise and the demands of wireless devices increase, we will be prepared and ready. The increase in advancement of technology on a regular and fast pace required Libraries to step up to the strong interest.

So, the next time you need to write a resume, pay a bill online, conduct personal and leisure research, think of the Los Alamitos/Rossmoor Library to meet this need. The Library also has many eLibrary resources to offer for patrons.

Please call or come by the Los Alamitos/Rossmoor Library for more information.

## Rabina's Review



Rabina K.

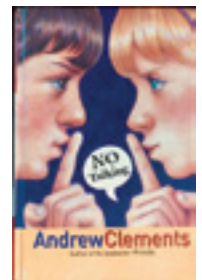
### Humor and Suspense

#### *No Talking*

This book could be considered a realistic fiction because kids who are currently reading it or kids who have already read it, could relate to how things are in a

school. The book is about a middle school boy named Dave Packer who is a part of a pack of middle school boys, and a middle school girl named Linsey who represent a group of girls in the same middle school. Both of these groups started a competition against each other to stay quiet. They went through a lot of challenges to lead a 'no talking' day in school or at home. For example, the teacher called on Dave to present his project to the class but, since he could not talk, he had to sacrifice his grades for the victory of his team.

I recommend this book to other kids because not just that this book is full of humor but, it also creates enough suspense at times to sure keep you at the edge of your chair. I give this book 10 out of 10 stars.



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