



## THE DISTRICT BRIDGE

Sharing Our Progress, Accomplishments and Appreciation

SPRING 2016

Dear Friends,

Here in the Sunnyvale School District, we are grateful for the rich backdrop Silicon Valley offers for educating children. Our valley demands excellence and resilience from its workforce, and its innovations are celebrated worldwide — a constant reminder of the importance of our mission.

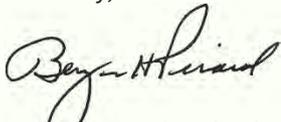
In our district, we celebrate more than our valley's accomplishments. We celebrate the relationships that empower our work — our engagement with neighbors, parents, and other community partners, the people whose involvement exemplifies the values Sunnyvale holds close to its heart.

Our neighbors recognize that every child deserves the opportunity for growth, learning, and achievement. By investing volunteer hours, grants, tax dollars, and services, our community demonstrates an understanding of the serious nature of this joyful business.

In this and future editions of “The District Bridge,” please know that when we discuss our progress, accomplishments, and appreciation, we speak to you. You bolster our ability to serve our students, and we are grateful, as the stakes are very high. The future of today's children is in our hands, and our collective future is in theirs.

So today we aim to share some of the wonderful opportunities you are making possible for our students, and to celebrate you — our community of partners — the heart of our Sunnyvale School District schools.

Sincerely,



Benjamin H. Picard, Ed.D  
Superintendent, Sunnyvale School District



#### **OUR SCHOOLS**

Bishop Elementary  
Cherry Chase Elementary  
Cumberland Elementary  
Ellis Elementary  
Fairwood Explorer  
Lakewood Elementary  
San Miguel Elementary  
Vargas Elementary  
Columbia Middle  
Sunnyvale Middle

#### **SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS**

Jeffrey Arnett  
Jeff Clarke  
Anita Herrmann  
Reid Myers  
Nancy Newkirk



## Enhancing our Learning Environment

### Classroom and Technology Upgrades at Lakewood

Lakewood construction is complete! We built 11 new classrooms; renovated 21; installed a new heating, cooling and ventilation system; replaced the roof; modernized the multi-use building; and equipped each classroom with mounted projectors, Apple TVs and increased Internet bandwidth.

The roughly \$18 million project is one example of how community support is benefiting our students. Our local school bond, Measure G, allows us to improve technology and make all schools more energy efficient. Our parcel tax, Measure B, funds classroom programs, allows us to attract and retain exceptional teachers and staff, and keeps class sizes small to enhance student learning.

### Up Next: Bishop and San Miguel

Bishop Elementary will be upgraded next, and will house our first two-story building, new classrooms, a media center, and a new multi-use building. The historic Bishop Theatre will be preserved to enable our young performers to showcase their emerging talents in the performing arts.

San Miguel will get a renovated canopy, eight brand-new classrooms and a new preschool play structure.



## Teacher Spotlight

### Teachers are Students Too

Learning is continuous in the Sunnyvale School District, for teachers and students alike. We use a train-the-trainer approach to build an in-house corps of instructional experts in all subject areas: academic, social-emotional, project-based learning, and more. We then leverage that expertise, sharing methods with each other so we can continually improve our effectiveness for our students.

### Teacher Gets an “A”

Jonathan Watts, six-year district veteran and instructional technology coach, was recently named Outstanding Educator of the Year by the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce at its annual Murphy Awards. Through his work with faculty and students, Mr. Watts helps our learning community to make the very best use of all available tools to ensure our students gain the skills they need for 21st century workforce success.

### High Expectations. Strong Support.

Our teachers expect great things from their students. To encourage success, they create a safe and supportive learning environment so students can stretch to do their best work, and find extra help — or greater challenges — as needed.

## Celebrating Success

### Good as Gold

We are delighted to announce that Cumberland, San Miguel, and Vargas elementary schools have been named Gold Ribbon Schools. The statewide program recognizes schools for outstanding work in implementing the new content and performance standards, which are designed to ensure students are ready for college and careers.

### It's an Honor

Two of our schools recently received Hoffman Awards from the Santa Clara County School Boards Association. Fairwood Explorer won for its parent participation program, which gives students access to more than 20 enrichment classes in addition to its rigorous standard curriculum. Cumberland Elementary was recognized for its Project-Based Learning — Leveraging Parent Engagement and Technology program, which requires that students tap a variety of academic and technical skills to tackle and resolve real-world problems.





## So Many Ways to Learn

- Columbia students benefit from the best new teaching techniques through the school's University Partnership Program with Stanford.
- Cherry Chase students learn about caring by putting their compassion into action. Students recently teamed with Cub Scouts to collect 3000 pounds of food for those in need.
- Ellis students utilize technology to share research results using iMovies and Keynote presentations, proving it's never too early to influence our world!

## And We're Learning from YOU

- Twenty-five community members recently helped Sunnyvale Middle School refine its mission statement to encourage the highest possible levels of student achievement.
- More than 60 friends and neighbors helped us chart a course for the future at our annual Lyceum in February.

## Support in Action

### Be the Leader

Thanks to a \$40,000 grant from the Panda Charitable Foundation, Bishop Elementary School has become the first official *The Leader in Me* school in the South Bay. A FranklinCovey initiative, *The Leader in Me* helps students to shape effective habits for high levels of achievement in school and beyond.

### Feel Well. Learn Well.

Students have a leg up on learning thanks in part to El Camino Healthcare District (ECHD), whose cumulative gifts of \$1.1 million help keep our children healthy. Funds support two full-time nurses, mental health services through Community Health Awareness Council, and fitness and nutrition education through nonprofit providers Playworks, and GoNoodle. ECHD also partners with Palo Alto Medical Foundation to promote healthy living through its 5210 initiative.

### Destination: Learning

Located just a mile away from Lakewood Elementary, Google has formed a close partnership with the school, bringing several enriching opportunities to our students. Volunteers have organized a technology fair, hosted a field trip to the company's Sunnyvale campus, and coordinated free robotics and coding classes after school. In addition, the partnership recently allowed students to experience a virtual field trip as part of Google's Expeditions Pioneer Program. With the help of the Expeditions team, a tablet, and company-supplied cardboard viewers, the teacher selects a learning destination and the whole class follows!





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[www.sesd.org](http://www.sesd.org)

### Learn more about our busy days!

Sign up for our e-news at

<http://sesd-district-digest.org/subscribe/>

SSD reflects the diversity of Silicon Valley, with 45 languages represented among its approximately 7,000 students.

Our schools have earned many state and national awards, including:

- California Distinguished Schools
- Blue Ribbon Schools
- Ashoka Changemaker School
- Gold Ribbon Schools
- Hoffman Awards
- Governor's Reading Awards

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