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School News

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Covering the Los Alamitos Unified School District

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Los Alamitos Unified Classified Employees of the Year



Dr. Sherry Kropp
Superintendent

The cornerstone of Los Alamitos Unified School District's culture of excellence is a team of highly skilled and passionate staff who are relentless about Igniting Unlimited Possibilities for Students. The Orange County Department of Education gives us the opportunity to recognize classified employees in multiple areas, and we are proud to recognize our various classified employees of the year for 2013 who exemplify our outstanding staff.



May Vang
Director, Fiscal Services

A bundle of energy, Administrator of the Year, May Vang, is in charge of the purchasing, payroll, and accounting departments. Her extensive knowledge of State appropriations and the school budget process enables her to effectively

manage and monitor the budgets allocated to all schools, analyze data and perform budget projections. She is a manager who cares about her staff and appreciates hard work and team work. Mrs. Vang's collaborative managerial approach and open-door policy obviously works as evidenced by her staff's teamwork attitude as they deal with very detailed, time-consuming financial reconciliations and data.



Shawn Williams
Grounds Maintenance Worker

Mr. Williams has gained a reputation for being an exemplary employee performing his work with consistency and thoughtfulness of the sites and students he serves. He has become a leader in the department due to how his co-workers look

up to him and the level of respect he has gained from them. Mr. Williams has a talent with engines and technology and has become indispensable in assisting with machine maintenance. He inspires others by demonstrating the best of his abilities and invites challenges and learning opportunities. He enters a school site with a smile and a wave to administrators, parents, staff and students.



Maureen Motsinger
High School Secretary

Mrs. Motsinger has been described as consistent, calming, confidential, objective, level-headed, a solid communicator, and a professional. She is noted for her tremendous skill set in the oversight of a 3,300-student campus

which requires communicating with stakeholders, managing records and budgets, and coordinating the volume of calls and visits that occur each day. Mrs. Motsinger is recognized for her leadership, positive attitude, high standard of excellence and her ability to consistently drive others to improve their skill sets to make the school better.



Gail Dessert
Administrative Assistant, Business Services

Mrs. Dessert is the District's Confidential Employee of the Year. She communicates effectively and establishes positive public relations when responding to community members seeking information such as

Mello-Roos and Bond Taxing. Her strong knowledge of business practices enables her to expeditiously handle multiple complex issues that come her way. Mrs. Dessert also serves as the recording secretary for the Citizens' Oversight Committee. As a team-player, Mrs. Dessert makes herself available wherever and whenever she can to support the District staff.



Krista Hall
Health Clerk, Rossmoor Elementary

Recognized for her devotion and passion for the health and safety of students, Mrs. Hall is the District's Classified Employee of the Year for Support Services. In her position, she is responsible for ensuring

that the school is in compliance with state mandated health and registration requirements. As a member of the Rossmoor PTA, she has demonstrated her dedication to disaster awareness by organizing Rossmoor's parent education nights for home disaster preparedness.



Rose Friedman
Instructional Assistant, Laurel High School

Although primarily responsible for assisting special education students, Rose was quick to recognize that every one of Laurel's students needs to feel safe and accepted to be able to succeed academically. Her ability

to connect with each and every student drives them to her for additional support. Without being asked, she single-handedly organized the credit recovery packet program, making sure that every student's electronic grade book was accurate. If a student is frustrated, Ms. Friedman finds a way to divert the student's attention and de-escalate a potentially challenging situation.

Community Service at Los Alamitos Elementary



First Sergeant Shawn Brown, Staff Sergeant Randy Ranoa, and LAE Ambassadors gather around some of the toys collected for the Toys for Tots Program. (please see page 4)

Inside:	LAUSD Child Dev Center..... 8
Board of Education..... page 3	On the Run 8
Schools 4-6	From the Boathouse 9
AHA for Kids 7-11	Nutrition Update..... 10
College 4 Less 6	OC Dept. of Ed. 11
Note-ables 7	Ask Dr. Shari 11
Do the Math 8	Contest..... 10



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Kay Coop
Founder / Publisher



The years go by quickly and we are celebrating 10 years publishing *School News* covering LAUSD. Every issue has been a pleasure to publish with the good news the district has to share.

Adding to that pleasure has been the joy of sharing my golden retriever, Page, with many of you who have stopped by our office in Brita's Old Town Gardens. Page never missed a day of work in her 11 years. She could be in a deep sleep by my desk and a child's voice would bring her to her feet in hopes of a loving pat.

The years have been full of loving moments for Page including monthly visits from a little girl named Giana. She would bring nail polish (most often blue) to paint Page's nails...it was a manicure for the front paws and a pedicure for the back paws. My grandchildren went to sleep many nights gently stroking Page's silk ears. Page would quietly lay beside them until their hands were still as they slept. And so it is now, this week Page lay peacefully still as we said good bye. We will miss her so much and will be forever grateful for her peaceful, gentle nature and joy she brought to so many people of all ages.

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13790-12



Cooper and Maddie
enjoy a perfect summer day with Page.



Time for a break from play to relax with Page.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

By Dr. Jeffrey Barke, Clerk
School Safety

School safety has become a critical issue for 2013. Fortunately for Los Alamitos Unified School District, we have been on the forefront of this issue by establishing a School Board priority last summer to create a Violence Prevention and Response Task Force to advise the School Board on strategies to keep our kids safe.

We take the issue of school safety very seriously. Not only do we have an obligation to provide the best possible education but also we MUST keep our kids safe. In light of the recent tragedies in Connecticut, Colorado, and elsewhere, we have a heightened sense of urgency.

Our task force has now met twice. Included on the task force are members of Seal Beach Police Department, Los Alamitos Police Department, Orange County Sheriff's Department, Long Beach Police Department, Orange County Fire Authority, security companies, teachers, principals, administrators, parents, and community members. The role of the task force is to create an overview of strategies we can use to keep our kids safe. Some of the ideas are straightforward and easy to agree upon, such as active shooter drills, locked classrooms, better communication systems, and coordination with our law enforcement partners. Some items create emotional reactions and are controversial, such as putting armed security at every campus or allowing school employees to be armed. Some considerations are expensive, such as security fences and security cameras.

Because the Board of Education and administrators are not security experts, it is critical that we educate ourselves and bring in expert opinions so we can make the best possible decisions. This, in part, is the role of the Violence Prevention and Response Task Force. If you are reading this and you have expertise in this arena, I welcome your perspective and opinion. We are not simply waiting for the recommendations of the task force. We are actively moving forward by meeting with our law enforcement partners and are in discussions about bringing back our School Resource Officer program. In

addition, the School Board recently held a Board workshop to discuss the issue and give further direction to Superintendent Dr. Sherry Kropp.

As we move forward, we need to balance the need for expediency with the desire for expert opinion. Ultimately the School Board will review all the recommendations and then move forward with a violence prevention and response program. Such a program will not be implemented all at once. The process will likely be slowly rolled out as we build consensus and as resources allow.

As we focus on safety, we continue to build our educational priority of academic excellence. Our schools remain some of the best in the county, and we are very excited about 2013. The School Board is dedicated to the well being of the students, both from an educational standpoint and a safety perspective.

Los Alamitos Unified School District Board of Education



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Hopkinson *Elementary*

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Andrea Reed
Principal

Huskies Head to the Mountains

“Great things are done when men and mountains meet,” said English poet William Blake. It is in this spirit that the Hopkinson Elementary School fifth-grade class put on their snow gear and boarded buses to Big Bear for a week of outdoor science education.

The Huskies were at Camp High Trails, located in Angelus Oaks, for a week of outdoor adventure in January. It has been a longstanding tradition in the Los Alamitos Unified School District to send fifth-graders to camp.

While at High Trails, students received instruction in grade-level science content standards, were exposed to the beauty and diversity of the wilderness, learned how our community and the environment work together,

and discovered the importance of protecting our ecosystem. Students returned from camp having learned more about themselves, their potential, and how to work and communicate with their peers.

High Trails gives our students the opportunity to explore and shine.



Hopkinson 5th grade students ready to board the bus to Camp High Trails.

Laurel *High School*

10291 Bloomfield St., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4820 • www.losal.org



Heidi Olshan
Principal

Innovative Production Aids Reading Skills

Our students were very busy getting ready for their second-annual “Laurel Live” production in January. This year the students performed plays that were based upon their study of Greek mythology in their English classes.

The performance was presented as a “Readers Theatre” activity instead of a traditional play format. Readers Theatre is a type of production where the actors can read from written scripts instead of memorizing their lines. The actors use their verbal expressions to help the audience understand the story through cues rather than by the traditional visual storytelling method of elaborate costumes and sets.

Readers Theatre can help our students improve their reading skills. Having to act out dialog forces the reader to work more closely with the text to project and interpret meaning into the reading experience. As a result, the students have the ability to gain improvements in vocabulary, comprehension and retention.

Small-group activities like Readers Theatre can also provide good role models to help improve reading skills. Research has shown that Readers Theatre can help our students develop their reading fluency, word choice and comprehension.

Every English-class student participated in the production. The students created masks and simple T-shirts to identify their characters, and handled every aspect of the technology, including lighting, simple props and sound effects. They even created flyers to help promote the production and invite their parents to attend!

Los Alamitos *Elementary*

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

Lee *Elementary*

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



Robert Briggerman
Principal

Continuous Learning

What allows a school to maintain continuous improvement? It is a staff that believes in high growth goals not only for their students but also for themselves. When teachers see themselves as lifelong learners, both the teacher and his or her students reap the benefits.

Lee Elementary and the Los Alamitos Unified School District engender this continuous-improvement philosophy for the maximum benefit of our students. Each year, Lee’s staff participates in staff development that supports our school’s growth goals and the district’s signature instructional practices.

These goals evolve from continuous analysis and discussion of student achievement by the staff, administration and parents.

Lee teachers assess students at least three times each year in order to identify student performance levels and needs. Then small groups are formed, allowing the teacher to provide differentiated instruction and assignments at multiple student levels. This allows the teacher to support struggling students and to challenge those who are already meeting or exceeding grade-level standards.

The 2012–13 school-year focus for staff development is in the area of reading and in preparing for the new California Common Core Standards. The focus of the new standards is to bridge the gap between what most students learn in schools and the knowledge and skills that students will need for success in 21st-century communities and workplaces.

Lee’s quality staff cares about all of its students and takes whatever steps are needed to meet each student’s needs. A continuous improvement philosophy and comprehensive, sustained staff-development program allow teachers to accomplish this mission.



Dr. Sunghie Okino
Principal

Community Service at LAE

By LAE Ambassadors and LAE Student Leadership Council

Part of being an ambassador and a good citizen is doing what we can to help others. Each year, we sponsor a community-service project to help those in need. In the past; we have given money to tsunami victims in Japan, pet food to the animal shelter, cookies and toys to Precious Life Shelter, and holiday gifts to Katella Manor.

This year, we chose to collect new, unwrapped toys for Toys for Tots. As a bucket-filling school, we wanted to help needy children who may not have the opportunity to receive a new toy for the holidays. We made flyers, hung posters, and collected toys before and after school for a week. We are proud to say that we collected over 250 toys!

We presented the toys to 1st Sgt. Shawn Brown and Staff Sgt. Randy Ranoa from the United States Marine Corps and thanked them for all they do for children in need. Since Toys for Tots was founded in 1947 by Maj. William Hendricks, the Marines have distributed over five hundred million toys.



First Sergeant Shawn Brown, Staff Sergeant Randy Ranoa, and LAE Ambassadors gather around some of the toys collected for the Toys for Tots Program.

Los Alamitos *High School*

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



Joshua Arnold
Principal

Ready for the Future

There's no doubt that technology is changing the way students learn. From easy-to-use tools for collaboration to the portability of powerful electronic devices, students have opportunities to learn through different mediums than they ever have before.

Technology is changing teaching, too. We're now able to extend learning time for students well beyond the classroom and engage learners in ways we would have never thought possible just a generation ago.

That's why, at Los Alamitos High School, we're interested in making it easy for teachers and students to use technology to organize, create, collaborate, and publish their work. We share apps with each other and forward meaningful Twitter feeds and blog postings to our

colleagues. We're rolling out iPads and Chromebooks to teachers and students in an effort to enhance instruction and increase learning.

The possibilities are endless for what technology can do. And at Los Al, we're ready for it all!



McGaugh *Elementary*

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



Bill MacDonald
Principal

Students Push Toward 100-Percent Proficiency

Effective primary-classroom instruction remains the most influential factor in terms of increasing student academic achievement. This being said, there are times for all students when second opportunities to learn are needed in order to ensure that content is mastered and objectives are met.

At McGaugh, a multitiered intervention model has evolved over the course of several years to provide all students, if needed, with multiple opportunities to learn. With financial assistance from the Los Alamitos Education Foundation (LAEF), McGaugh has hired several skilled intervention teachers who work with students at all grade levels throughout the instructional day. These teachers provide targeted instruction in reading comprehension, fluency, writing and academic vocabulary. They also allow for small-group instruction in the upper grades, where class sizes are large, which gives teachers additional opportunities to target students who need the extra review.

After school, eight intervention classes in English language arts and mathematics run five days a week to assist students in reaching the goal of grade-level proficiency. Each of these classes is carefully designed to address key concepts and standards at each grade level and support students in navigating the rigorous classroom curriculum. Student progress is carefully monitored throughout the interventions to maximize progress and ensure that the right students are in the right place.

By providing outstanding primary-classroom instruction and providing students with multiple second opportunities for mastery, the entire McGaugh team is committed to every student achieving grade-level proficiency.

Read Across America
HAPPY BIRTHDAY DR. SEUSS

McAuliffe *Middle School*

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



Ann Allen
Principal

Our 'New' Principal!

LAUSD is pleased to announce Ann Allen as McAuliffe Middle School's new principal. Mrs. Allen has worked at the middle school level in Los Alamitos for 27 years. Beginning at Pine Middle School, she taught reading, language arts, social science, science and mathematics. In addition, she worked in partnership with OCDE developing and piloting a program in environmental education and providing staff development to surrounding Southern California school districts. In 1997, while teaching eighth grade science, she was selected as LAUSD Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Allen served as learning specialist at McAuliffe Middle School and was responsible for coordinating and implementing special programs including GATE, EL, RTI and site assessments. In 2006, she served as assistant principal at McAuliffe and continued to do so until she took over her new position as principal toward the end of January.

Mrs. Allen received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Fitchburg State College in Massachusetts and her Master of Arts degree in educational administration from United States International University. "I am thrilled to continue to work with the students, staff and parents in the McAuliffe school community, and I am grateful to be given the opportunity to further the legacy of success associated with our school," she said.

"We are grateful that Mrs. Allen will serve as our next principal," said Dr. Sherry Kropp, LAUSD superintendent. "Her knowledge, expertise, and care for children make her an exceptional leader in our district."

Mrs. Allen lives in Cypress with her husband of 30 years, Tom, and their two children, Sara and Thomas, both attending Los Alamitos High School.

Oak *Middle School*

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



Sally Neiser
Principal

Learning About Future Careers

By Kim Hamilton, School Counselor

Every fall, as the air turns crisp, the Oak Middle School eighth-grade students always anticipate our annual Oak Career Day.

This year Career Day was a great success. There were over 400 eighth-grade students who attended three sessions that detailed the different careers of their choice. Our Career Day speakers were volunteers from the community, and also frequently Oak parents.

Ms. Neiser, Oak's principal, attributed the success of Career Day to the wide variety of careers that were presented. The speakers included a superior court judge, a former Major League baseball player, an actor, and a chef. Many of the speakers involved the students in their presentations in order to make a greater impact.

Career Day is always a fun and educational event. Our students get to buzz around the campus sharing their favorite speakers, discuss what they have learned about each career, and daydream about their future.



Emergency room doctor shares career advice.

Rossmoor *Elementary*

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



Kiva Spiratos
Principal

Tools, Not Toys

Rossmoor Elementary School's fundamental focus for technology in our classrooms is to maximize learning engagement. A decade ago, classrooms and school libraries were limited in the amount of resources and texts available for conducting research projects. Today, students have unlimited access to information, so the challenge has shifted to teaching them to find quality resources. Our classrooms are focused on teaching students how to conduct quality research in an efficient manner.

Our recent Aim for iPads campaign enabled the school to purchase 40 electronic tablets to rotate throughout our classrooms. We are grateful to our generous fund-raising groups and parents for this gift. In addition, we asked parent permission for children who own electronic Internet browsing devices to bring them to school as research tools. Our teachers instruct students on the proper digital etiquette, techniques to conduct research, Web site evaluation methods, refining key words for search efficiency, and using the Internet as a educational tool.

In collaboration with our district, security measures are in place for students to use their personal Web browsing device to log on to our protected network and conduct research. We are fortunate that all Los Alamitos school sites have wireless Internet connectivity. At Rossmoor, and throughout the district, our aim is to convert children from using electronic devices as toys to using technology as a tool. We aim to produce talented researchers for middle school, high school, college, and the work place.



Fifth Grader, Even Leibl, uses his personal device to research information and take notes for his human body feature article on the bladder. Evan is researching types of bladder diseases, causes and treatment. All fifth grade students study "systems" in our science curriculum, and students use the human body to show how systems work together as one.

Weaver *Elementary*

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



Erin Kominsky
Principal

In Tune With Music

Each year, Weaver Elementary School has a wonderful opportunity to participate in "Class Act," a very special partnership with Orange County's own Pacific Symphony Orchestra. This year our resident musician will be Nancy Eldridge, a violin player with the Symphony.

Our Class Act year began with a wonderful prelude assembly for the entire school. Through story and music the students were introduced to the life and famous work of our composer of the year, Camille Saint-Saens. The teachers will soon be attending a staff development workshop to give them the tools to help share this music with their students. In addition, each classroom will also have a special lesson with our resident musician. They will then be invited to attend our free family night concert featuring the composer and a guest musician.

In May, students in grades K-1 will be participating in an interactive musical experience with the staff from the Symphony. Students in grades 2-5 will also be boarding buses to head to the Performing Arts Center in Costa Mesa to enjoy a performance by our resident musician and her friends at the Pacific Symphony.

Our entire school will celebrate this experience with a Bravo assembly for our musician. In addition to the Class Act program, students in grades 1-5 will also participate in piano keyboard instruction each week. After-school opportunities will include choir and instrumental music lessons.

Music education is alive and well at Weaver! We are extremely proud to be celebrating our 13th year with the Pacific Symphony's Class Act program.

College 4 Less



The Dream Begins



Susan D. Marshall

"Dad while we are here in Hawaii, can we visit the university?"
"Why?"

"When I go to college, I can surf—it will be awesome!"
Tyler, age eight, jumps out the car door and runs to the beach.
"Honey, there is no way he will get into the University of Hawaii. Besides, college is a long way off."

Mom shrugs.

"Tyler obviously doesn't know college is optional but since we expect him to go, we can just see the campus while we are here."
Needless to say, the child's first campus visit fuels his dream.

What Tyler's parents did right was allow him to dream, explore his hobbies, and plant the seed that someday he would go to college. They encouraged him to get good grades and were an active part of his education. They let him know how education opens doors and gives him choices in life.

What they failed to realize is how quickly the time passes. College seemed like a long way off, so saving for college was not in their financial plan. Tyler's dream may drown in the surf.

Today more than ever saving for college can be an overwhelming task.

What can you do today that will make a difference?

Start Early: The greatest benefit to starting early is being able to take advantage of the time value of money; the benefit of interest compounded over time. Even a small amount regularly can make a huge difference in future costs. There are many different types of accounts available to help families face the challenges of saving for college.

Speak with a trusted advisor: Be informed. There are many different types of accounts available to help parents put money away. Some of the most common are the 529 and the Coverdell Education Savings Accounts. Other options may include savings bonds, trusts, life insurance, annuities, IRA's, and stocks. Make sure the advisor you choose understands how each of these accounts can positively or negatively impact your ability to qualify for financial aid and the tax advantages of each.

Most Important: Let your children know how education opens doors, provides opportunities, and gives them options.

Begin saving now! No matter how small the amount. The message it sends to your child is huge. Your child will know that you value education and college is something you see in their future.

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Note-ables

Grammaropolis



Kate Karp

I don't often review multimedia, but this assemblage is exceptional. If you cringe at grammatical and usage errors and want your children to use language correctly—a key to future success—send them to Grammaropolis.

Grammaropolis is the hometown of the parts of speech. There's even a mayor—his name's Coert Voorhees, and he built this town. Mayor Voorhees is a former seventh-grade language teacher who found that his students had more fun personifying parts of speech than memorizing them. They learned them thoroughly, too, which is the idea.

"Sure, you can memorize the fact that an adverb modifies a verb," the Mayor said. "But if I show you a video of an adverb pulling a verb over for speeding and giving him a ticket, not only are you going to connect more deeply with that information but you're also going to have more fun doing it."

The CD, produced by indie-rock artist Dr. Noize and performed by the Mayor and other vocalists, is your Grammaropolis guidebook. Meet Roger the Pronoun who has this indefinite feeling about himself. Power couple Vinny the Action Verb and Lucy the Linking Verb rescue nouns from inaction and link up insecure ones with states of being. Interjections, the lives of the party, get invited everywhere. And there's Slang, spouting street stuff and stealing the show. Children—and you—can interact with them all through the website's games, e-books, quizzes, entertaining slide presentations, and hilarious, clever videos starring the sentence builders themselves.

Grammaropolis's website, www.grammaropolis.com, has a number of subscription options. Go play for a spell—or an entire paragraph.

Kate Karp is an editor for *School News Roll Call* and a freelance writer and editor.

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Do the Math!

This is a special series dedicated to emphasizing how important math is in every job and our everyday lives. If you would like to be included in this series, email me how you use math. The age limit is 5 to 105 so here's my email kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com —I can't wait to hear from you!



Joe Mazzeo
Co-Owner

Math Multiplies Success

As co-owner of a small communication/cabling company in Orange County, I am thankful to have learned some strong math skills as a youth growing up in Whittier.

When I started in the cabling business, I was asked to install computer wiring in the buildings where I worked. As I learned more about my trade, I was asked to do bids or proposals for customers needing cabling. To do these bids, I needed to calculate footages of wire I used to connect each computer/work station to the main computer room. This seemed fairly easy; I added up the wire and purchased what I needed for each installation. This worked well for simple jobs with 10 or 15 users.

As my company grew, we began bidding on larger jobs, such as entire buildings and campus environments connecting several buildings with networking and fiber optics. Now the mathematics required to create an accurate proposal became a bit more complicated. Because I was responsible for hundreds of users in multiple buildings, sometimes requiring as many as three connections per user, simple addition and multiplication were no longer enough.

These larger jobs required me to use averages. I determined cable lengths to certain areas of each building and the average, or approximate length, for the cables to a specific area. For example, if I had 100 cables in an area and the longest was 225 feet and the shortest was 175 feet, I would determine the average length of 200 feet and use that as the approximate cable length for that area. I then multiplied by the number of users and the number of cables per work station. It sounds easy, but errors in my math could cost my company a significant amount of money.

Besides calculating job costs, my partner and I also use our math skills to calculate our expenses for the company, such as gas, auto repairs, tools, building rentals, utilities, insurance, phones, internet access, and parts for the jobs we are working on. We also calculate our profits, the money left over after we pay our expenses. Sometimes our profit ratios are good, and sometimes they aren't, so we determine profit percentages on different jobs to see if they are worth doing in the future.

I can't imagine doing what I would do without the math skills I have acquired over the years. I realize now that my math education has really been an asset to our company!

Data Voice Connections, 6782 Stanton Ave., Suite C, Buena Park, CA 90621 • 888/382-9473

On The Run

Bunion Pain in Runners



Dr. Doug Richie

A bunion deformity of the foot can be a major disability for a runner. Often misunderstood, a bunion is a deformity of the great toe joint which causes shoe fit problems as well as arthritic pain with range of motion during walking and running.

One type of bunion is known as hallux valgus which causes a gradual drift of alignment of the great toe towards the smaller toes while a bone "bump" begins to project to the inside of the foot at the great toe joint. This condition primarily poses shoe fit challenges to assure that the bunion does not rub on the upper of the shoe. Generally, buying wider shoes or width sized shoes will solve this problem.

LAUSD Child Development Center

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Is My Child Ready for Kindergarten?



Kelly Rowe
Child Development
Coordinator /
Early Learning
Specialist

In California, children must be 5 years of age by October 1 to begin in a public-school kindergarten program. If a child turns 5 between Oct. 2 and Dec. 2, he or she can enter the public-school program in a transitional kindergarten classroom when school begins in the fall. However, just because a child meets an age requirement does not necessarily mean that he or she will be successful in kindergarten.

There are some key things to look for in your child's development that indicate school readiness, with the most essential being social and emotional competence. This is the greatest indicator for school readiness and success. Social and emotional competences are developed for each child through their relationships, initially with their primary caregivers and then through day-to-day interactions with others they come into contact with. The social and emotional skills necessary for school success include confidence in themselves and in their abilities, a capacity to develop good relationships with peers, concentration and persistence on challenging tasks, the ability to effectively communicate their own feelings such as frustration, anger and joy, and the ability to be attentive and listen to instructions.

Readiness Check

To further delve into this, here are some questions to ask yourself: Does my child have strong self-management skills? Can he or she work independently and make his or her own choices without adult interaction? Is he or she apprehensive about new situations after a short judgment period? Can my child wait his or her turn in a group situation, during play, during snacks or when sharing materials? Does my child interact well with other children, negotiate most of his or her social problems, express himself or herself in order to communicate what he or she does or not understand, and have self-confidence and self-esteem?

What do kindergarten teachers expect your child to know? Children entering kindergarten should be able to listen and follow directions, focus their attention, take turns, control themselves emotionally and physically, solve problems with words rather than through aggression, work in small and large groupings, make friends and use age-appropriate social skills, and communicate with other children and adults about their needs and wants. In the matter of academic skills, it is helpful if children can recognize their written name, can write their name, recite the alphabet, count to 10 or higher, recognize shapes and colors, and use scissors.

If your child does not meet the kindergarten cutoff and turns 5 between Oct. 2 and Dec. 2, he or she can enter the public-school program in a transitional kindergarten classroom when school begins in the fall. If you have more questions, please contact the Los Alamitos School readiness coordinator or your nearest elementary school office.

Another type of bunion is found in a condition known as hallux rigidus which is an arthritic condition of the great toe joint. A bump often forms on the top of the joint which can rub in the shoe. More disabling in this condition is arthritis in the great toe joint which causes progressive stiffness and pain with walking and running. Other than modifying shoe fit, surgery is often required to relieve pain and allow the patient to return to running.

Regardless of the type of bunion deformity, the initial treatment should be focused on finding a proper fit and appropriate design of a running shoe. In addition to finding a shoe with a wide and deep toe box, the runner with a bunion deformity should seek a shoe with maximum stiffness to prevent bending of the great toe joint. A specialty running shoe store will likely have employees who are trained to help select and fit shoes to runners who have special needs such as a bunion deformities and arthritis of the great toe joint.

Dr. Doug Richie is a sports podiatrist who has practiced in Seal Beach for 28 years. He is president of the American Academy of Podiatric Sports Medicine and serves as a medical advisor to U.S. A. Track and Field. 562/493-2451

Rowing Your Way to College

Six minutes and 30 seconds. That's the magic time a male high school athlete needs to achieve on a rowing machine to receive a college scholarship. It's the strangest thing, relying on a machine known as the Concept 2 Indoor Rowing Machine, which measures the amount of work performed while pulling a lever. A football coach doesn't offer a scholarship simply because someone runs a certain 40-yard time. A basketball coach doesn't offer a scholarship because someone can dunk. A baseball coach doesn't offer a scholarship because of how far someone can hit a baseball. But in rowing, when a male athlete records a time of six minutes and 30 seconds, the word spreads like wildfire among college recruiters.



Brad Teter

Brad Teter, a high school rowing athlete at Marina Aquatic Center, and Andy Marshall, a high school rowing athlete at Long Beach Junior Crew, were up for the challenge. Jack Nunn, the owner of Powerhouse Fitness, reviewed their eating habits, examined their old workout routines, and helped them set goals. He developed detailed fitness and nutrition plans, which included daily rowing-related workouts. Both young men also attend Powerhouse Fitness indoor rowing classes at the boathouse and warehouse locations, which they enjoy due to the diversity of the participants.

Since Teter and Marshall have been training, they have gained muscle, increased aerobic endurance, and dramatically improved their rowing times. Both athletes aspire to achieve fast enough 2,000-meter scores to continue rowing in the colleges of their choice.



Andy Marshall

Powerhouse Fitness provides personalized athletic performance training combined with highly effective consulting services. This consulting service, which was developed through two decades of rowing for collegiate and national team coaches, focuses college rowing programs, the recruiting process, and the steps an athlete needs to take to be considered for recruitment to a college or university. Our goal is simple: To ensure that you maximize your rowing potential through training and knowledge, so you can reach your ultimate goal of gaining admission to the college or university of your choice.

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562/688-1716, www.powerhousefit.com.

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SNRCLA

A Perfect Pantry for Hungry Teens



Carol Berg Sloan, RD

When your 10th grader crashes through the door after soccer practice what do you throw their way for snacks? I see too many kids munching on chips, cookies, candy, one because that's what's readily available to them and secondly, because they don't know what constitutes a healthy, satisfying, and tasty choice.

When families come to me for nutrition advice I start simply: a grocery list! I tell them to visualize the layout of the typical grocery store and divide it into four corners. Let's start with produce. Best bets are the usual apples, oranges, bananas, and baby carrots, but don't forget about tangerines, grapes, kiwi, and the dried fruit section which have raisins, dried apricots and my favorite, dried cranberries. Many produce items come in single serve packs for grab and go, but they can be expensive. Opt for bulk items such as celery, pineapple or sugar snap peas and put in snack size storage bags.

Next corner: dairy. Usual staples are nonfat yogurt, string cheese, and chocolate milk. Try Greek yogurt, cottage cheese singles (some have fruit or granola as sides) and if you check out the frozen section, you can find frozen yogurt bars and lower fat ice cream sandwiches.

In the third corner you find the bread section. There are many high fat choices here but look for whole grain items such as bagel or sandwich thins, whole wheat rolls or bran muffins. Read the labels so you know fat, sugar and calorie content.

The final section of the store contains processed and mixed items such as canned foods, crackers cookies and the like. These items are easily placed into a healthier meal plan...it just takes some time and knowledge. Crackers: look at the labels to be sure they are whole grain and lower fat. One of my kids favorites is graham crackers. Canned foods are great and many come in single servings. Fruit cocktail, applesauce, and soup are all great choices to tide appetites over until the next main meal.

Even if you work full time you can still make time to bake snacks that will hold up and be available when the hunger monster comes around. Try these "cookies" from King Arthur Flour™ which store well and provide fiber, healthy fats and dried fruits.

Oatmeal and Flax Cranberry Cookies

- 1 cup soft butter
- 3/4 cup brown sugar, lightly packed
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg
- 1 1/2 cups King Arthur White Whole Wheat Flour™
- 1 1/2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats (not instant or quick cooking)
- 1/2 cup King Arthur whole flax meal™
- 1/4 cup King Arthur whole flax seeds™
- 1 1/2 cups dried cranberries or raisins
- 1/2 to 1 cup chopped nuts, optional; walnuts or pecans are tasty

Directions

- 1) Lightly grease two baking sheets, or line them with parchment.
- 2) In a large bowl, beat together the butter, brown sugar, cinnamon, vanilla extract, baking soda, salt, and egg until fluffy.
- 3) Mix in the flour, oats, flax meal and seeds, dried fruit, and nuts.
- 4) Let the dough rest for 30 minutes or so at room temperature, for the oats to soften. Towards the end of the rest period, preheat the oven to 350°F.
- 5) Scoop the dough by rounded tablespoonful's onto the prepared baking sheets. Flatten each ball of dough slightly.
- 6) Bake the cookies for 10 to 12 minutes, until golden brown. Cool them on the baking sheets for 15 minutes or so, to allow them to set. Move them to a cooling rack to finish cooling.

Yield: 3 1/2 dozen cookies.

Carol Berg Sloan, RD is a nutrition therapist in Long Beach. She can be reached at: cbsrd@verizon.net

Swim 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 subject line)

Entries must be received by March 15, 2013
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

- | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Anchor | Flippers | Paddles |
| Backstroke | Freestyle | Pool |
| Boards | Goggles | Pulleys |
| Breaststroke | Headcap | Race |
| Butterfly | Kickboards | Relay |
| Chlorine | Kicking | Strokes |
| Diving | Lane Lines | Surfacing |
| Dolphin | Medley | Times |
| Earplugs | Meets | Underwater |

Congratulations to **Makenna Wright**
Winner of the December Word Search Contest!

Word Search by Gunnar Coop

G	N	I	K	C	I	K	N	I	H	P	L	O	D	L
O	M	H	C	A	S	D	R	A	O	B	K	C	I	K
G	P	C	M	E	D	L	E	Y	Y	A	L	E	V	D
G	A	H	J	F	H	I	T	R	V	O	B	G	I	G
L	C	L	B	R	K	I	A	N	O	U	M	S	N	Y
E	D	O	P	E	M	V	W	P	T	H	I	I	G	T
S	A	R	S	E	K	O	R	T	S	K	C	A	B	O
W	E	I	S	S	T	T	E	T	F	A	K	N	O	R
T	H	N	V	T	L	R	D	A	F	T	S	B	A	Y
X	N	E	I	Y	F	V	N	R	R	M	Y	C	R	N
L	F	Z	J	L	W	D	U	O	U	P	E	E	D	L
V	F	R	Y	E	E	S	P	A	D	D	L	E	S	R
T	C	M	V	D	M	N	D	Z	Y	A	L	U	T	N
E	B	B	I	Y	O	Z	A	G	Y	P	U	C	G	S
G	U	A	G	K	S	B	F	L	I	P	P	E	R	S

Video Games



Dear Dr. Shari,

What is your opinion about video games? It seems there was the huge wave of “anti video games” and then people started talking about the value of video games in increasing, reaction time, imagination, mental agility, etc.

I am not the kind of parent who can't figure out how to set limits...We definitely limit the video games. But, I just wanted your overall thoughts on the value/detriment of them. I know you are big on insisting that schools promote creative ‘brain’ experiences (You spoke at our PTA!), but at home does technology

destroy this? My boys spend a lot of time on the ipods, which doesn't require a babysitter.
—John, San Diego

Here is what I think John..

I love technology. The amount of information, knowledge, resources and answers that are at our fingertips makes me giddy. You can find a job, recipe, cure for an ailment and a video on “how to” do almost anything in a second! I LOVE IT.

I find it phenomenal and fascinating that I can stand in front of my computer and train 300 middle school students on the other side of the country. I frequently text, on my phone, check emails on the ipad while working on a project on the laptop, all from the front seat of my car (my parked car).

So, don't call me a hypocrite when I share the following...

There is a certain form of development that only evolves through the personal creativity, imagination and vision. The stimulation of video games takes away some of our creative development. That is a fact.

- Texting vernacular kills our ability to spell and impedes the “human connection”
- Looking things up often replaces “figuring it out” on your own.
- Overuse of computers and videos is detrimental to eye health and is negative for our physicality.

Kids who use up all of their play time in front of video games that do most of the visual creation for them, lose the practice of “pretending, imagining and creating” and, yes, it is detrimental...the brain needs and craves the creative experience. This has implications for learning and memory ability.

Building a house from blankets, creating a story from sock puppets making stuff from play dough and telling ghost stories in the night are special memories to almost everyone who is over 30. Building from blocks, making up a game, or drawing a picture requires a special brainpower, yet the result is this sense of accomplishment and joy. Why do the images that I suggested leave you with a pleasant nostalgic feeling?

Your brain craves these experiences and we have to make sure our children have the opportunity to satisfy that craving.

To truly support growing, improving and expanding our minds, we have to use the best of the past and the exciting new developments of today.

You remember the excitement of fixing your own bike, running from whomever was “it” and creating the perfect secret “fort.” You remember the accomplishment of sand castles, snow fortresses, and wonder and warmth of campfires. Don't forget the feeling and connection to others that these experiences brought.

Does technology destroy this? Sure it does, if you let it. If your boys spend more time, side by side on the ipod than “real” play, that is detrimental to their brains, eyes, bodies and moods and memory capacity.

So, John, you are right about the fact that ipods function as babysitters. Further, encouraging real life experiences will take more effort on your part! Providing building materials, fielding questions, responding to “Watch this!” and “Look what I made!” all take time.

You have to decide the most valuable expenditure of it.

Dr. Shari Sweetnam is the Founder of BRAINPOWER *The Ultimate Program for Schools*. Author, Motivational Speaker. Follow on Youtube and twitter: DrShariS, contact: info@doctorshari.com

Promoting Student Success



Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent

Research shows that healthy children are more likely to have positive outcomes in school as well as improved physical fitness and mental health. Recent data at the national, state, and local levels raise much concern about obesity and the overall wellness of American citizens. Since 1980, obesity among children and adolescents in the United States has almost tripled. According to a recent study by Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the number of obese adults has also grown dramatically in California over the past fifteen years, and is expected to grow significantly in the next twenty years. In 1995, the adult obesity rate was under fourteen percent, and by 2011, it had increased to almost twenty-four percent.

In Orange County, only thirty-nine percent of fifth, seventh, and ninth graders passed California's Physical Fitness Test in 2011. In addition, economic disparities have the potential to negatively impact the health and academic success of an alarming percentage of students in our county. Among fifth graders whose families have low-incomes, fifty-four percent are overweight or obese, compared to twenty-nine percent of non-economically disadvantaged students. Almost forty percent of low-income fifth graders are at high risk for Metabolic Syndrome (the precursor for Type Two Diabetes), compared to seventeen percent of their non-economically disadvantaged peers.

The economic implications can also be felt statewide. A study published in 2005 by the California Department of Health Services described the economic costs of obesity and physical inactivity and their collective impact on health care expenditures and worker productivity. The study found the total annual estimated cost to California for obesity and physical inactivity was \$41.2 billion. For Orange County alone, the estimated cost was \$3.3 billion.

It is clear that we have a lot of work to do to improve the health and fitness of our residents. Researchers propose using evidence-based strategies to improve nutrition and increase physical activity in our schools, neighborhoods, and work places, in order to significantly reduce obesity-related diseases and health spending in California. The school environment is one of several settings that can influence positive nutrition and fitness habits, and the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) is committed to collaborating with schools and community members to address these important issues. Earlier this year, OCDE formed the Center for Healthy Kids and Schools which has staff dedicated to the areas of student health services, physical education and fitness, youth sports, nutrition education, and school-based mental health.

This year, the Center has established the Focus On: Obesity campaign which aims to prevent and reduce childhood obesity through programs such as Move More, Eat Healthy OC Schools!, a county-wide campaign designed to identify and spread solutions for improving health and fitness; Healthy for Life, a revolutionary approach where Healthy Classroom Fit Kits are being distributed and teachers are being trained to integrate physical fitness into their daily routine; and Kids Run the OC, which provides free training, tools, and resources to start an after school running program for students ages 6-12.

These are just a few of the programs available to support schools with implementing health and fitness activities on their campuses. I hope you'll take advantage of the many tools and resources available through the Center for Healthy Kids and Schools. We are committed to helping create cost-effective, sustainable partnerships and programs leading to systematic changes in school health environments that will produce healthy, fit kids who are ready to learn.

For additional information, visit

www.ocde.us/healthykids

www.ocde.us/healthyschools

<http://www.ocmarathon.com/kids-run-the-oc/registration-kids-run-the-oc.aspx>

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