Torrance Unified School District (TUSD) can proudly boast a 95.5-percent graduation rate, one of the highest in the state of California. Our students are constantly being recognized for their academic and extracurricular activities. Whether they are being accepted to the colleges of their choice or receiving honors in debate, choir, robotics, athletics, or dance competitions, our students are able to achieve their goals because of the talented team of teachers, classified employees, and administrators that works tirelessly to ensure their success. I have always said that our goal is to maximize student achievement. We are able to accomplish this goal because our educators focus on growth models for each individual student, making certain the student’s educational needs are met. During the month of May, we celebrate the week of the teacher, the nurse, and the classified employee. Please remember to thank them for their unwavering commitment and service.

I am very excited that three of our schools – Jefferson Middle School, Richardson Middle School, and West High School – are the recipients of the 2015 California Gold Ribbon Schools Award. These schools were chosen because they exemplify learning centers where students succeed as a result of dynamic teaching and a collaborative learning community.

Every year students throughout our district are awarded numerous scholarships for their accomplished academic records. This year we are proud to have two North High School students, Jacqueline Tayra and Ahsan Zaman, receive the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarship. Jacqueline Tayra and Ahsan Zaman, have been awarded the gates Millennium Scholarship.

Academically outstanding North High students, Jacqueline Tayra and Ahsan Zaman, have been awarded the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarship.

Effective leadership is achieved through valuable communication and policy transparency with an engaged community. Having served in various leadership positions over the years, including Torrance City Council, I understand the necessity for dialogue and conversation. My colleagues and I on the on the School Board are committed to building strong relationships with the Torrance community so the school district can continue to grow and flourish. We have even made contacting us super easy by including our personal e-mails and phone numbers on the Torrance Unified School District Web site at www.tusd.org. I encourage you to call or e-mail us with comments and issues that are important to you, or even just to say hi.

We are fortunate to live in a town with engaged residents, and I want to continue to hear from community members on issues that matter to you. As a School Board member I am able to stay connected to the community I grew up in, have raised my family in, and have chosen to serve.

One of my favorite parts of School Board meetings is when residents, especially our high school students, come up and make comments about issues that are of significance to them. School Board meetings provide a great opportunity for community members to address the Board. We value transparency, and by attending School Board meetings, Torrance community members can gain a better understanding on our decision-making and policy-setting process.

Stay connected by attending School Board meetings. If you cannot attend a meeting, you can view them online by going to www.tusd.org and viewing them in the Board of Education section of the Web site. You can also view them by going directly to www.youtube.com and searching for tusdtv.

As this year winds down, we have so much to be proud of. Our students continue to excel and shine, our teachers exemplify the best of their profession, our support staff continues to provide essential services to our sites, and our administrators continue to lead with creativity and innovation. An especially cool part of my job as a School Board member is being able to hand out diplomas at middle and high school graduations. At the end of the day, being able to celebrate their accomplishments with them and their families makes the job worthwhile. I look forward to seeing our students’ joyful faces at this year’s celebrations. Feel free to say hello! We like that!

I hope the summer holds fun and adventure for you all. See you next year!
K-7 Online Math Acceleration Program

Developed by Stanford University

This summer students can:
• Advance more than a full grade level
• Use math to tackle real-world problems in STEM careers
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Accelerate learning this summer!

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Enroll at GiftedandTalented.com/Math
Scholarships available. View our support center for details.
Does my child have pinkeye?

When a child’s eye becomes itchy and red, parents can become alarmed and assume their child has bacterial conjunctivitis, but many conditions can cause eye redness and irritation and only some of them are contagious.

Pinkeye is kind of a wastebasket term — a lot of things get thrown into it. When we talk about pinkeye, we usually mean bacterial conjunctivitis, but many things can cause the eye to become red or inflamed, including viruses, allergies, contact lenses or air pollutants.

Conjunctivitis is any inflammation of the clear membranes covering the white of the eye and the inner side of the eyelid. The same viruses that are responsible for colds and infections of the ear, sinuses and throat can also cause conjunctivitis. Children with viral conjunctivitis do not benefit from taking antibiotics. The condition is contagious, however, and they may need to stay home from school until the fever or other symptoms resolve.

Children who suffer from allergies or have a family history of hay fever, asthma or eczema are prone to allergic conjunctivitis, which causes itchy eyes but is treatable, and not contagious. This type of inflammation is usually accompanied by nasal symptoms including a runny nose or stuffiness and a recent exposure to allergens such as cats, dogs, dust or pollen.

If the reddened eye also develops a green or yellow discharge (pus), bacterial conjunctivitis or pinkeye is usually the cause. Children with allergic conjunctivitis typically have a watery discharge from the eye, but no pus or discharge.

Preventing pinkeye
Bacterial conjunctivitis easily spreads from eye to eye and person to person. The best way to prevent the spread of infection is through frequent hand washing. Children with bacterial conjunctivitis should see a doctor immediately and should not return to school until 24 hours after beginning a course of antibiotic eye drops or ointment.

Children with any type of conjunctivitis — whether caused by bacteria, viruses or allergies — typically awaken with crust in one or both eyes. Some children also complain of a sandy or gritty feeling in the eye. You can gently remove the crust by using warm compresses.

When to take your child to the doctor
Pinkeye is fairly common and unlikely to cause long-term vision or eye problems if promptly treated. See a doctor immediately if your child develops any of the following symptoms:

- Eye redness accompanied by green or yellow pus
- Vision suddenly becomes blurry
- Eyes become sensitive to light
- Significant eye pain or swelling
- Inability to open eyes due to pain or photosensitivity

Dr. Vizireanu is a family medicine physician at the UCLA Health office in Redondo Beach, located at 514 N. Prospect Ave., and sees patients of all ages.

uclahealth.org/redondobeach

(310) 937-8555
Congratulations Class of 2015!

It is always nice to see a headline that says “Accomplishing Our Mission” and Torrance Education Foundation has done just that. Please see their article on the next page.

This issue is very informative with spelling bees, technology wizards, celebrating Earth Day, Parent Night, school construction updates, and so much more...enjoy!

Our next issue is October 28th. Have a wonderful summer and please remember to include reading among your summer activities.

FREE Summer Classes at El Camino College!

Free college classes available to eligible high school juniors and seniors!*

Earn college credits while still in high school!

ECC has two summer sessions:

Eight-week session begins
Monday, June 22

Six-week session begins
Tuesday, July 7

Eligible high school juniors and seniors must apply online and submit a Concurrent Enrollment Application. For more information visit www.elcamino.edu/free.

EL CAMINO COLLEGE

Apply online today at www.elcamino.edu/free

*Enrollment fees are waived for California residents.
Accomplishing Our Mission

By Dee Hardison, President

The 2014-15 Torrance Education Foundation (TEF) scholarship winners were honored at a reception in April at an automotive museum, with 40 out of the 41 scholarship recipients in attendance along with members of their families. TEF also provides students of all grade levels the opportunity to attend a variety of enrichment classes for elementary and middle school students during the summer. In addition, they host academic classes for high school students from Torrance and surrounding South Bay schools. This summer will be the South Bay Enrichment Academy’s seventh year; the Academy has served over 12,000 students over the past six summers. The Academy is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and is recognized by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). For more information, please visit our website.

TEF is proud to be the largest donor to the Torrance Unified School District! We appreciate the support of the parents and local business community in helping us to fulfill our mission statement: “to enrich the educational experience for students of the Torrance Unified School District.”

What is Prematurity?

With the advancement of medicine and prenatal care, prematurity is declining in the United States. In 2006, the pre-term birth rate was 12.8 percent and in 2013, it dropped to 11.4. Even with all of the advancements, 1 in 9 babies are born prematurely in the U.S. each year.

Prematurity is when a baby is born at least three weeks before the designated due date (37 weeks). A full-term baby is born between 37 and 40 weeks.

When a baby is born prematurely, they are more likely to experience health problems and may need to spend time in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). Even if a woman has a “normal” pregnancy, there is still a risk of having a premature baby. Some known risk factors for prematurity, include:

- Previous premature birth
- Multiples (twins, triplets)
- Problems with uterus/cervix
- Chronic health problems
- Certain infections during pregnancy
- Alcohol, tobacco and drug usage

If a woman is experiencing a “normal” pregnancy and does not have any of the known risk factors, it is still important for her to go to her regular check-ups to ensure the health of the baby. Issues may arise, so it is important to be as prepared as possible and communicate with the physician during the entire pregnancy.

Our specialists are the leaders in children’s health care.

Jax and Piper were born 16 weeks early and were immediately rushed to the level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Miller Children’s – where they were under the same roof as their recovering mother. Not even weighing 3 pounds combined, the twins were in the NICU for four long months of treatments and surgeries. Today, Jax and Piper are healthy 3-year-olds who love spending time with their family and building sandcastles.

From tip-top head to itty bitty toes, Miller Children’s is the leader in getting kids better.

Follow the leader to Miller Children’s.

MillerChildrens.org/NICU 800-MEMORIAL
The Incredible Westward Movement
By Bryan Terrazas, 5th-grader,
Mrs. Arevalo’s 4/5 Combination Class
Lights! Camera! Action! It was an exciting day in April, the day of our amazing play, “The Incredible Westward Movement.” The play was about the westward movement in the United States from that trailblazer Daniel Boone to that golden day in April, Utah, of ’69. The best part in my opinion was the finale when we all sang “The Golden Spike,” a song about the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad.
I thought the singing was terrific and the acting was great. The audience loved our play. Most parts made them laugh, and it was entertaining, not to forget educational.
“Amazing!” one student said. “Great play,” said another. A golden day was had by all.

Spelling Bee!
Torrance held its First Annual Spelling Bee! Fourth and fifth grade students from Adams, Anza, Towers, and Wood elementary schools competed against each other at Hull Middle School on April 30, 2015 to find the first TUSD champion. The students were selected in smaller class competitions and then in grade level competition. The top 5 students in each grade level moved on to the district competition. All of the 40 students were amazing, focused and determined! Adina P., a fourth grader from Anza, took overall district champion and 5 of the 10 Anza students placed. The winning word was “parsimonious”. Congratulations to all of the students and their families!

Earth Day
Arlington Elementary School celebrated Earth Day all week long! We kicked off our planned activities with a school-wide photo from the air! With the help of our PTA and 5th Grade 5 Star students, all planned activities focused on teaching our students to be environmentally responsible Super Stars! Our students had the chance to be Trash Busters, cleaning up our school campus. It was amazing how clean and litter-free our school grounds were by Friday. Our students and staff were challenged to bring a trash free lunches and to continue to sort our waste as compost, recycle or landfill. Arlington school, with the support of the PTA, switched from using Styrofoam lunch trays to 100% recyclable cardboard trays, too. Our school strives to teach our students to be environmentally responsible not just on Earth “Day” but every day.

Five Decades Strong!
Arnold Elementary celebrated its 50th birthday this year as we continued a tradition of academic excellence and strong community values. Throughout the year, our Arnold Alleycats were busy with many fun and enriching activities. The Aquarium of the Pacific, Madrona Marsh, Rancho Dominguez Adobe, Banning Museum, Mission San Gabriel, Page Museum and the Armstrong Theater are just some of the study trips taken to bring the curriculum to life.
Six of our students were recognized at the District Science Fair, two of our students were recognized at the district-level Reflections Contest, our Track Team has been practicing three times a week to prepare for the upcoming districtwide meet, and our GATE students are studying for the upcoming Academic Pentathlon. We kept busy on campus as well! In our classes, we became independent thinkers as we learned how to ask deeper-level questions and clearly explain solutions we found. We wrote, experimented, read and solved challenging problems both on our own and collaboratively. We had science, literature, history and character assemblies. We even stepped back in time as we walked through California and the Revolution.
On one very special night, over 50 of our students were brave enough to share their talents with a packed house at our annual Variety Show with the theme of “Best Day of My Life.” And to top it all off, we had a 50th Birthday Carnival with former faculty, staff, students and families in attendance. What a great birthday year it has been at Arnold Elementary!
Talented Students

Calle Mayor Middle School students showcased their talents at this year’s talent show! Teachers Mr. Balderas, Mr. Stavropoulos, Mrs. Acosta-Snustead, and Mr. Mitchell helped put this amazing night together for the community to enjoy.

Student bands performed some great musical hits, student singers sang to the highest notes, student dancers danced the night away, and student drummers drummed us into the late evening hours, all for a supportive audience.

If you missed this wonderful event, it occurs annually, so watch our school marquee for its return.

The staff, students, and community have built an amazing garden, provided through a grant written by Mrs. Litton and funded by donations and grants from an international oil company, Torrance Memorial Medical Center, and Boy Scout Troop 966. The students have truly taken ownership of it.

Have a wonderful and safe summer, and we look forward to showcasing many more great things happening at Calle Mayor.

Read to Achieve

At the end of May, the students in grades one to five at Carr School will participate in a Fitness Clinic hosted by the Los Angeles Lakers. This Clinic was awarded to Carr as a grand prize for their 90 percent completion rate in this year’s Lakers “Read to Achieve” reading challenge.

During the months of January and February our Carr students were challenged to read for 15 minutes daily, or complete six chapter books in a six-week period. For their participation, all students who completed the challenge received a certificate of completion and a Lakers prize.

In addition, schools with a high overall completion rate were entered into a drawing to win a fitness clinic hosted by the Los Angeles Lakers.

As a part of the fitness clinic, students perform fitness activities focused on improving agility, balance, strength, body mechanics, and cardiovascular endurance. All participants learn the importance of proper nutrition, hydration, and how to prevent injuries. The focus of the clinic is to make physical fitness fun while also encouraging students to stay active and healthy.

Thank you, Lakers, for making both reading and physical fitness a priority in our community.

Mentors All Around

One of the characteristics that sets Torrance apart from other school districts is the close collaboration and participation among the elementary and middle schools that feed the local high school. Casimir feels very fortunate to be affiliated directly with Arlington and Lincoln elementary schools and to have students then matriculate on to North High. Our band director outreaches on a regular basis to the elementary schools to encourage students to participate in band or chorus at Casimir and then to continue on that path when they move on to North. The band director at North encourages our students to participate during football half-times on a regular basis.

Casimir’s iLEAD students, selected for a variety of reasons, regularly create activities to share with students at Arlington and Lincoln. These interactions are usually based on leadership games to increase or identify the younger student’s leadership skills as well as provide collaboration time for grade-level teachers. Additionally our iLEAD students, along with the Casimir Student Council, have been training as “professional ambassadors” to assist professionals who come to speak on a variety of jobs. These are all skills that are translating into creating caring and successful high school students.

North High has also been reaching out to Casimir and creating opportunities for their students to speak with Casimir and Magruder students about the rigor as well as the fun available at North High. North High School students have come to speak to eighth-grade students as well as the general student body about what happens in high school and how to get the most out of your high school experience.

The work of the teachers, students and administrators at all of these school are creating an environment that supports student learning at high levels and fosters a sense of greater community in the North area.
**Edison Elementary**
3800 W. 182nd St., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4513 • edison.tusd.org

**Edison Enrichment**

Edison has hosted a series of after-school enrichment classes for our GATE and high-achieving students that are taught by fifth-grade teacher Ms. Hinman. One particular session focused on the fundamentals of physics and teamwork to build structures with planks. Their goal was to have balls travel the slowest down the ramps. Students used KEVA building planks to create their platforms, and a friendly competition ensued to see whose ball could travel the slowest and farthest. The students experienced the relationships of force and motion while also exploring what worked best.

Additional classes included building Lego Mindstorm robots, snap circuit remote controlled rovers, and wacky and weird contraptions.

Throughout the year, Ms. Hinman also participated in professional development around differentiating instruction to maximize student learning. Her students benefited from her application of advanced techniques, and she was also able to lead site learning discussions for the entire staff. Thanks to her efforts, everyone benefited.

**Hickory Elementary**
2800 W. 227th St., Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4672 • wh.hickory.tusd.org

**What a Year!**

Hickory continues to provide its students and parents with well-balanced and engaging educational experiences. Our school has always introduced events and activities that bring families and friends together.

In January we had our annual Family Math Night. Teachers and PTA volunteers helped to turn the cafeteria into a wonderful math lab. Children and parents were focused on problem solving, building geometric shapes using string and straws, and compiling data on graphs and charts. Math games and estimation jars are always a favorite with families.

In February, several primary grades marked the 100th day of school by sharing their counting collections of, well ... 100 items of course! We ended the month with a “MAD Science Night” complete with several rocket launches into the night sky. Our Jog-A-Thon and Central Area Common Core Night were highlighted in March.

Our Student Showcase and Science Fair kicked off the month of April. Teachers led by Mrs. Nagaoka designed our first Family Science Night. All of the activities were focused on science, technology, engineering, and math. Parents and children worked collaboratively to problem solve, invent, design, and test their theories. It was a wonderful evening of hands-on exploration.

We ended the month with a very successful Career Day. Parents came to school and shared information about their careers. We are so fortunate to have the kind of parents who are willing to come and share their knowledge.

The careers ranged from acting to law to medicine and science. We had presenters by police, firefighters, lifeguards, engineers, and entrepreneurs. Our students were very inspired!

**Fern Elementary**
1314 Fern Ave., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4506 • fern.tusd.org

**Making a Difference**

Falcon Ambassadors are in agreement with Margaret Mead’s famous quote, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” Since the launch of our Falcon Ambassadors group at Fern Elementary School, over 20 fourth-grade students have dedicated their lunch recesses to helping their younger peers.

In January, interested fourth-grade students had the opportunity to apply to become a Falcon Ambassador. After selection and parental consent, the students then received several days of training on how to facilitate friendships and implement effective strategies to resolve conflict. Under the guidance of fourth-grade teacher-leader Jessica Garcia, this new program has been extremely successful.

These Ambassadors are now modeling life skills such as respect, empathy, and problem solving to their younger peers on the playground. The program is a win-win for both the younger students and the Ambassadors!

**Jefferson Middle School**
21717 Talisman St., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4794 • jefferson.tusd.org

**Summer Learning**

Summer is the perfect time for unique learning opportunities for children to enrich their minds while keeping engaged. Families can launch into summertime learning while preparing children for next year’s grade by looking ahead and aligning standards and curricular themes to family activities. Parents can then create rewarding family experiences while building on children’s contextual background information. For instance, if your child is advancing into the seventh grade, make the medieval era a fun focus for the summer. Plan an afternoon at a local museum, tour a rancho, or head to the library to chase history through the pages of a book. Visiting a local university is another meaningful activity and means to promote higher learning.

Summer programs are an additional asset to the school year. Consider signing your child up for a Torrance library reading program, enrolling in the TEF Summer Session or at El Camino College, or having them attend a local educational camp. When expanded learning partners such as the Torrance Educational Foundation work closely with our schools, enriching activities are created to reinforce learning from the year into the summer. Expanded learning programs have the unique capacity to increase time with curriculum, highlight key concepts identified for mastery, and engage students with additional caring adults who provide support and connect students to school.

In light of newer expectations with the implementation of Common Core Standards, no time could be better than summer for participating in an expanded learning program as an effective support to student learning.
A Positive Culture

At Hull Middle School, we are always striving to foster a positive environment where students feel safe and secure. At the end of last year, a team of staff members was trained in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which has been successful in over 7,000 schools. With this team’s dedication and the support of our staff, we have implemented a school-wide system approach that is fostering a more positive culture on campus.

Our effective system has a number of major components: a small number of positively stated expectations for all students and staff; procedures for teaching these expectations to students; and a procedure for monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness on a regular basis. At Hull, the three major expectations are respect, responsibility, and safety, and all of these have specific expectations that are required in different locations on campus.

For example, when we are respectful in class or in the library, we follow directions, use appropriate language and a quiet voice, use positive words, walk in quietly, and are prepared to learn. When we are responsible, we get to class on time, bring required materials, complete assignments, and write assignments in our planner. When we are being safe, we keep our hands and feet to ourselves, use classroom materials appropriately, push chairs in, and enter and exit the classroom walking.

Our entire staff plays a huge role by teaching, modeling, practicing and rewarding appropriate behavior and having clear consequences for targeted behaviors. We strongly believe that teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehaviors to occur. Several classes held a recent poster contest, and it was evident that all of us aspire to be truly Hawksome!

Lincoln Elementary

2418 W. 166th St., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4464 • lincoln.tusd.org

You’re the Best!

How quickly the 2014–2015 school year has flown by—and what an incredible year it’s been! As always, not only are we committed to providing a quality education for our students but also countless to providing opportunities for them to discover their strengths, nurture their individuality, and create lifelong memories, all while getting ready and prepared for college, career, and beyond.

As I take a moment to reflect on the wonderful school year we’ve had, I recall the many great activities and events that took place throughout this school year. We not only enjoyed our traditional programs, such as music, library, and art, but also extracurricular activities, such as chorus, chess, science clubs, sculpting, drawing and construction toy classes—Phew! We were busy! We also got to show our fashion sense and encourage our school spirit through theme days, held in conjunction with spreading the important messages of Red Ribbon Week, Read Across America, and Buddies Week.

With all that we’ve accomplished this year, I immediately think about how grateful I am for the dedicated teachers, staff, and parents who work so hard to ensure that Lincoln Elementary School remains a positive, productive place for children. The time, effort, and energy never go unnoticed and are truly appreciated!

As for my Lincoln Lions, you’re the best! Thank you for your commitment to learn and grow with each passing year. Thank you for taking care of each other and being safe, respectful, and responsible in the process. I wish you the best in all you do!
Creative Computing

The biggest career opportunities for our students in the foreseeable future will require computer programming skills. Besides the obvious science and engineering applications, a working knowledge of computer programming has become necessary in almost every field imaginable. In addition to learning computer languages, critical thinking skills must also be developed.

In Mr. Tambara's computer science class, students are becoming tomorrow's technology wizards. They learn programming concepts through different languages, such as Scratch, JavaScript, Processing, and Python. Many have drawn on their artistic side, incorporating music, videos, and drawings into their projects. Students also created their own personal apps for smart phones!

Since almost all electronic items are now computerized, Mr. T’s students have learned to write code to control electronic circuits and sensors using Arduino microcontrollers, and they have designed, built, and programmed LEGO Mindstorms robots. Having a computer do exactly what you want it to is a real-world superpower!

Under the guidance of Wes Fowler and Kim Lee, these incredible students man all of our booths, set up, run the games, entertain the students, interact with parents, take money, make popcorn and cotton candy, and clean up! They are unwaveringly cheerful, helpful, fun, and resourceful.

We are absolutely certain that the success of our carnivals rests with CJSF. They are truly a testament to the positive, service-oriented attitude of the Calle community.
Recognizing STEAM and Service

Madrona Middle School has taken time to reflect on the achievements of our students. We would like to take time to recognize several of them for their continuing accomplishments.

Nicholas Levers was recognized in the PTSA Reflections program, where he won first place honors at the school, district, and 30rd District PTA regionals for photography! Kaitlin Lim also achieved individual honors outside the classroom, placing first in the National Junior Forensics League’s Debate and Public Speaking program at the state level in poetry. Her effort won recognition from amongst 50 fellow competitors, and she will be participating in the national competition in Dallas this month!

Wyatt Javate was Madrona’s recent representative to the city’s Students and Government Day, where he assumed the role of city manager for a day and assisted in conducting the city council meeting. Our Model United Nations (MUN) students, under the guidance of Ms. Wooldridge, were recently rewarded for their year-long efforts at the MUN awards banquet, where they picked up several competitive awards.

Madrona’s California Junior Scholastic Federation (CJSF) organized the first annual walk-t-Thon. Funds will be used to purchase a climbing wall, which will be installed on campus once our gymnasium is finished. Our drama department completed a production of “Romeo and Harriet” to standing ovations and a packed house. Congratulations to Ms. Poelvoorde and her students on their successful run!

As you can see, it’s been a busy spring for Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) and service on our campus. We look forward to continuing these important events and achievements.

A Winning Team

Much has changed since the beginning of the school year, especially how Magruder Middle School teachers do business during our Professional Learning Community (PLC) collaboration. After sending a team of teachers to a district-sponsored PLC conference in September, our teachers have worked collaboratively the last nine months toward establishing a “guaranteed and viable” curriculum. This process has allowed our Mighty Mustangs to actively engage in implementing our PLC program as it was designed.

Our journey began by establishing two consensus core values: We believe that all students can learn at high levels; and we, as educators, take responsibility to ensure that all students learn at these high levels. Having established our core values, we began our discussion about the differences between “intended, implemented and attained” curriculum and how to ensure that we were “attaining” that which we were “intending.” Our teachers began working in teams to establish collaborative meeting norms, determine critical and essential skills, and design lessons based on these skills. Teacher teams then worked collaboratively on common formative assessments, the results of which created the springboard and anchor by which all remaining collaboration has continued; the teachers conduct weekly examinations of student work through the lens of established skills for the purpose of using this relevant and timely data to inform daily instruction.

So, each and every Tuesday morning, teachers reflect on student work products from the prior week, identify common errors, and remedy these errors with instructional solutions, after which they determine upcoming opportunities to extend learning for all students. With this information in hand, they determine an action plan for the upcoming week and implement the plan to ensure that all students are succeeding.
**Seaside Elementary**

4651 Sharynne Lane, Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4532 • seaside.tusd.org

**Caring Care Team!**

Torrance is a special place with a strong community that supports the growth and development of our smallest members. Our district and local businesses team up for projects.

Recently, the Care Team from a national hotel chain visited Seaside to work with two classrooms in the front garden. Weeds were pulled, plants were trimmed, and new plants were put in the ground to grow and bloom. In the photo, you can see Stephanie Yee, a Seaside parent and Care Team member, working with students along with Care Team leader Keyla Bass.

Seaside is quite thankful for the team’s participation. They’ve supported many events that include the annual Monster Mash, our Fun Run, PTA night events and fund-raisers. The Care Team consists of hotel employees working out of the goodness of their hearts to support students. What a fine example of community involvement! Thank you, Care Team!

**Construction Update**

On Thursday, April 23, Riviera Elementary School held a Rededication Ceremony that commemorated our completion of the school’s construction and modernization. The cafeteria was filled with Riviera families, staff members, and state, city, and district dignitaries.

Assemblyman David Hadley addressed the audience. The wife of Congressman Ted Lieu also spoke on his behalf as both Riviera parent and supporter of public education. Our Riviera Chorus, under the direction of Mrs. Laura Savitz, sang songs from the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, and 00s to celebrate the school’s growth from 1952 to the present.

A highlight of the school’s construction history included 10 acres of land purchased in 1950 for $25,000! In January of 1952 construction began at a cost of $595,000. In September of 1952, the school opened its doors as a kindergarten through eighth-grade campus with 14 classrooms. Two years later construction began on the cafeteria, and four more classrooms were added.

In 1956 the enrollment reached a peak of 921, and our student body was split in half with attendance at both Riviera and Newton. Today our school has 35 updated classrooms and 656 students!

Riviera’s modernization highlights include a new construction wing, new windows, energy efficient lighting, concrete walkways, interior and exterior paint, and a new parking lot to accommodate our 70 member staff. We also have a guest parking lot and lighting! The scope of the work was huge, and the budget was also huge – almost 10 times the cost of the 1952 building.

The renovation was also completed ahead of schedule. The campus has been updated and improved for our students and teachers, and the next step will continue with the passage of Measures T and U. Security systems, fencing, and a 1,200 square-foot science lab are coming soon.

**Shery High School**

2600 Vine St., Torrance, CA 90501 • 310/533-4440 • shery.tusd.org

**Parent Education Night**

Thanks to the generous donations from the Gary Drevno family, parents from Gene Drevno Community Day School & Kurt T. Shery High School got to experience a fantastic Parent Education Night with guest speaker Christine MacInnis, TUSD school counselor and LMFT. The topic for the evening was “Creating Motivation – Tools to Build Success in Your Child.”

This interactive learning experience gave parents the tools to help their children find motivation in their daily lives. Parents were very involved in the discussion and they were able to walk away with strategies for having win-win conversations with their children. Parents learned the best ways to talk to their children about their dreams and goals and how they can best support their children in achieving them!

**Looking to The Past**

Each year the Torrance Elementary PTA awards scholarships to past students. The Scholarship Award Ceremony is one of the school year’s most rewarding traditions. Seniors from all over are encouraged to apply. There is only one requirement: the applicant must have attended Torrance Elementary.

Once the applications are collected, a committee of PTA members reviews each packet. The candidates are discussed and the selection is made. The recipients are informed of their award and are asked to attend a school-wide ceremony. The Scholarship winners, their families, the Torrance Elementary School staff, and current students all come together for the celebration.

The seniors are also asked to prepare a short acceptance speech. Usually they thank the PTA and share some special memory they have from their time at Torrance. They are each given a bouquet of flowers and their scholarship award.

It is a beautiful blending of past and present. The current students develop an understanding of the success possible through hard work and perseverance.

This annual event took place on May 16. Two Torrance students received scholarships: Ariel Codilla from Torrance High, and Jeannie Kim from South High.

It is always very interesting to see the paths our students choose, where they end up, and what a wonderful future they create. Torrance Elementary is extremely proud of its students both past and present!
Torrance Adult School
2606 W. 182nd St., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4689 ext. 8400 • www.tastusd.org

Parenting Is Teaching

Torrance Adult School (TAS) is beginning an exciting partnership with some of our elementary schools. TAS parent-education teacher Diane Trimble and elementary school counselor Gloria Gutierrez recently held a series of six evening workshops on parenting. These mini-seminars used research-based material and information to support best practices on various parenting skills.

Some of the important topics covered included opening effective lines of communication with children, teaching positive character traits such as courage and responsibility, defusing power struggles with children, stimulating independence as children grow older and seven key strategies for school success. The response to the seminars was overwhelmingly positive, so Mrs. Trimble is planning a similar series of seminars in the fall in order to reach additional parents in our school district.

TAS is also getting ready for our 2015 graduation ceremony on June 11 to celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2015!

Towers Elementary
5600 Towers St., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4535 • towers.tusd.org

An Evening of Science

Have you ever wondered, “How to save Fred?” How about, “How far a catapult will launch a marshmallow?” Or maybe, “How many drops of water can a penny hold?” Well, the students at Towers Elementary did, and after an exciting STEAM night many of them could answer all of these questions and more!

On March 19, our third- through- fifth-grade students participated with family members in an exciting evening of science investigations that used technology, engineering, art, and math. Students had the opportunity to visit a variety of science stations and get their individual passports stamped.

There was a lot of excitement and chatter heard throughout the cafeteria as the students explored and wandered their way from activity to activity. An absolutely stimulating night of science inquiry captivated everyone’s attention.

To support our first-ever Science Family Night, the teachers had the opportunity to receive grant money through TEF to help fund this fabulous endeavor. Thanks to their support, and our hardworking teachers, the event was a huge success. There was fun had by all!

Torrance High School
2200 W. Carson St., Torrance, CA 90501 • 310/533-4396 • ths.tusd.org

Poetry Slam

In April, the Torrance High School (THS) auditorium was filled with the spoken word. Our eighth annual SLAM poetry competition took place with more than 700 students and community members in attendance.

SLAM is a poetry competition where competitors are scored by five judges. Ms. Susana Gonzales, senior English teacher, helped to begin this event and has organized the competition every year. This year’s featured poet, Shihan, is a published poet and author who runs the Poetry Lounge in Los Angeles.

Ms. Gonzales is delighted that “students love the spoken word” and is inspired by the contestants’ courage in presenting poems with intensely personal messages.

Walteria Elementary
24456 Madison St., Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4487 • www.walteriaelementary.org

The Final Weeks

There are many exciting events coming up as we near the end of the 2014–2015 school year. There was an Elementary Pentathlon on May 21, and Walteria Elementary had many upper-grade participants competing. This is thanks to Mrs. Masi and Mrs. Ruth, two fifth-grade teachers, who have been meeting with their students after school for many months now to prepare them.

On May 28 we will have our Talent Show, an event we do every other year with the second-grade team handling most of the preparation. Third-grade teachers helped with the auditions, because Walteria has a lot of talented students. On June 5 we will have our Portfolio Day at the beginning of the school day. This is when parents/guardians take time to sit with their child or children and listen to them discuss their education and accomplishments. It is a chance for our students to reflect on this school year.

Later in the same day, students in the third through fifth grades will be participating in the district-wide Elementary Track Meet. Parent volunteers have been working tirelessly to prepare the Wildcats involved in this event. It will all end on June 18 for our students, but there will be park days and a special fifth-grade culmination of the students’ elementary school years before the final Thursday.

Yes, we are busy, but it is always about our students and giving them the opportunity to shine both inside and outside the classroom.
Victor Elementary
4820 Spencer St., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4542 • victor.tusd.org

GATE Enrichment After-School Classes
It has been a productive year for the GATE program here at Victor Elementary School. Our over 60 GATE students have been fortunate to hold after-school enrichment sessions twice a week. These sessions allow additional opportunities for the students to explore various topics and interests beyond the regular classroom instruction.

Fourth-grade teacher Ms. Victoria Perez, Victor’s GATE coordinator, differentiates each lesson and challenges her students with rigorous activities. The children recently experimented with Lego Mindstorms to design and program robots. They also developed a deeper understanding of Newton’s Laws of Motion, and had friendly competitions playing Gravity Mazes and building Weird and Wacky Marble Contraptions.

The students also submitted a “Brilliantly Ridiculous Toy Invention” to the Scholastic Reading Club. They learned about simple machines, and were challenged to create their own by using everyday household items. Our GATE students enjoyed their enrichment sessions, and are looking forward to continuing the program and seeing what the next year brings.

Wood Elementary
2250 W. 235th St., Torrance, CA 90501 • 310/533-4484 • wood.tusd.org

Ready for Summer!
This has been an exciting and busy few months for the students at Wood. We have had a lot of events that have kept the students busy. They include: SBAC state testing, which our teachers and students have handled beautifully; our Wood's Got Talent talent show; and the Fifth Grade History Tableau. Our top spellers in fourth and fifth grades completed in the first-ever District Elementary Spelling Bee. At this time, third-through-fifth-grade students are preparing for the District Elementary Track, and the GATE students are readying for the District Academic Pentathlon.

At Wood, we are focused on working as hard as we can academically, but our children love to have fun, too! I am very proud of our students, who I think are the best in the world. We hope everyone has a great summer and comes back ready and refreshed for the 2015–16 school year.

West High School
20401 Victor, Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4299

Players in Success
West High School just received notification that we were named a 2015 California Gold Ribbon School. This recognition is being awarded to 373 schools throughout the state that demonstrate signature practices that provide outstanding educational opportunities for all students. This award is a reflection of the dedication of the West High staff.

Thanks to Terry from a local gardening concern for choosing West High as a Sharefest 2015 project. Terry and his crew transformed the atrium in the administration building.

This time of year, we look back at recent months and realize how many opportunities our students have to excel. Girls’ soccer and girls’ basketball each brought home CIF victories on the same day. Jenna Hernandez was named CIF Player of the Year in soccer, and Jasmine Jones was named CIF Player of the Year in basketball. Their coaches, Jessica Murphy and Mike Caporaso, earned CIF Coach of the Year honors. Leilei Shao won first place in Dance with the Torrance Arts Council. West High’s top chorus, Aristocracy, was selected to sing the Verdi “Requiem” at Carnegie Hall. The Academic Decathlon team placed sixth in LA County and competed in state finals. Molly Kim was selected to compete individually at the Academic Decathlon national tournament, where she medaled in math and language and literature. Tiffany Hoang took first place in FHA/HERO state competition in salad prep, and Emily Takamura and Veronia Alkomos each took second place in fashion design and interior design, respectively. The Robotics team continued its success, winning four out of six competitions. The Speech and Debate team was well represented at state competitions, and Alanna Biedman took first place in her event.

West High is proud of every student and their teachers and coaches, whose dedication makes all of this success possible.

Yukon Elementary
17815 Yukon Ave., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4477 • yukon.tusd.org

One Great Year!
What an exciting year we’ve had!
A “mad scientist” periodically visited our fifth-graders to provide hands-on activities and memorable demonstrations of important scientific concepts—certainly a big help when the class took the CST science test. “Walk Through California” and “Walk Through The Revolution” enriched our students’ understanding of these important historical eras in an interactive way. Our kindergartners took their annual trip to the beach with their Big Buddies to be good citizens and keep our beaches clean. Our entire school enjoyed a trip to the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center to see a live performance of Shrek!

For the first time, Chromebooks were available for third- through fourth-graders. Technology was meaningfully integrated to prepare our students to compete in the 21st century. This year, a PE teacher provided wonderful lessons for all of our students, freeing grade-level teachers and special coaches to meet and collaborate in implementing purposeful Common Core math and English language arts lessons. After-school GATE classes provided our high-performing students with challenging hands-on activities. PTA gave us wonderful Adventures in Art lessons and a memorable carnival.

Yukon’s Mileage Club enabled students to stay healthy and active while they set goals and earned “shoes” for every 10 miles they ran, thanks to generous volunteers. Our students continued to set individual reading goals each trimester as they read great literature and learned how to persevere and build stamina by reading “long, long chapter books,” as many call them. By so doing, they learned to accomplish long-term goals while reading award-winning books.

All in all, it was a great year at Yukon. We’re undergoing a major renovation this summer and will greet you with a new look when you return. Our commitment to your children will remain the same, though! We wish you all a wonderful, safe summer and look forward to seeing you this fall!
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Author, Illustrator
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Covering the Torrance Unified School District

JUNE—SEPTEMBER 2015 15
I recently took part in two events promoting parent involvement in education. I delivered opening remarks at the Families and Fatherhood Conference and served as a panelist at National PTA’s “Take Your Family to School Week” Roundtable. It was wonderful to see so many people who shared a strong commitment to help meet the diverse needs of children and families.

I was delighted and honored to have been given the chance to speak about a subject that’s close to my heart – as a father and a grandfather myself – and that has been a top priority for us at the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

I know, from experience, that being a parent is no joke. As a parent you have very important roles – as a teacher, a counselor, a coach, a financial adviser, a judge and jury, and a protector, and so much more, all at once.

When my children were born, I thought if I could give them anything, I would give them that rock – that solid foundation – on which to build their lives. And that would be the greatest gift I could offer them.

There’s simply no way to overstate the importance how much parents mean to their children and the impact they have in their children’s lives.

By every way we can measure a young person’s life – from social behavior to academic achievement to their sense of self-worth and self-esteem – all these measurements go up dramatically when parents are there for children.

Yes, we need more outstanding teachers in the classroom, and more afterschool programs for our children.

But we also need families to raise our children.

No outstanding teacher or educational program or policy can substitute for a parent who is involved in their child's education from Day One.

We, as education administrators and educators, are doing our best, but we need parents and communities – the whole village – to partner with us.

Together, we can instill a love of learning and an ethic of excellence among our children.

We can encourage them to value self-respect and hard work and to set high expectations.

We can tell our children that we expect them to dream without limit and reach for those goals.

As President Franklin Roosevelt said: “We may not be able to prepare the future for our children, but we can at least prepare our children for the future.”

You may view PTA’s roundtable on parent engagement in the news section on www.lacoe.edu.
The Summer program is designed to introduce new players to a wonderful volleyball experience, and build the skills of Intermediate players to be ready to compete at the next level. Advanced 14 & Under & High School Indoor Clinics, and beach programs are also available.

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