

FREE

School News

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Covering the Glendora Unified School District

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Welcome New Board Members



Dr. Robert J. Voors
Superintendent

With longtime Board of Education members Doris Blum (32 years) and Doug Ferrell (16 years) retiring from the Board in December, we welcome newly elected Board Members Maura Murabito and Robin Merkley to the Glendora Unified School District Board of Education.

Ms. Murabito is a longtime educational leader, beginning her career as a teacher at Glendora High School. Her desire to help students connect with college and careers led her to becoming the Director of Career Services at East San Gabriel Valley Regional Occupational Program (ESGVROP). She continued working for ESGVROP as the Coordinator of Adult Career Training and an Instructional Supervisor. Currently, Maura serves as Director of Curriculum and Instruction at Tri-Cities Regional Occupation Program.

Maura earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Leadership and a Master of Education degree in Educational Leadership from the University of La Verne. She also holds a California Administrative Credential. Maura has served on many educational committees and organizations, such as the Rio Hondo College Adult Education Consortium, the University of California Curriculum Integration Institutes, and the Leadership Development Institute. Maura and her family are very active in the community of Glendora where her and her husband Gene have been longtime residents. Together, they have two daughters who have attended Glendora schools.

Robin Merkley also has strong ties to Glendora Schools. Her passion for students receiving an excellent education is exemplified by her involvement with Glendora students, schools, and community during her 29 years as a Glendora resident.

Robin and her husband Kendall have five children that have all attended and graduated from Glendora schools. Ms. Merkley has extensive involvement in PTA at multiple schools and at the district/council level. She has demonstrated and facilitated parental involvement. In the schools, Robin has both the experience as a teacher and as a volunteer on various school committees. For the last 10 years Robin has been a substitute teacher in the Glendora schools and has served on GUSD School Site Councils, and Calendar, Attendance, Budget and Bond Oversight committees.

Robin's passion for excellence has also been demonstrated in her involvement in the community. She is currently serving on the Glendora Library Board and also as President of the Glendora Community Coordinating Council.

Ms. Merkley has a Bachelor of Science from East Texas State University (now Texas A&M) and a Master of Arts Education from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

Board of Education



Dr. Charles J. Gomer
President



Cory Ellenson
Vice President



Mike Gautreau
Clerk

Maura Murabito and Robin Merkley, Members
(Pictures not available at press time.)

Grants Make All Things Possible

You've seen it before – great teachers looking for more funds and more ways to do more for their students. They might use personal funds for a classroom project or to make sure a student gets what he/she needs, or they may write a grant to secure that extra edge. In Glendora we are fortunate to have numerous community service groups and even individuals who donate to support teachers and students in the classroom. A very familiar grant to Glendora teachers is the Rotary Club of Glendora's "Mini Grant." This program annually contributes tens of thousands of dollars to our teachers' classrooms.



More recently, the Pomona Valley Division 13 of the California Teachers Association has provided similar grants to teachers throughout the Eastern San Gabriel Valley. Twenty-seven of our teachers applied for a CalRTA Teacher Grant this year and 5 of them will be funded:

- Michele Perez, La Fetra Elementary, will purchase a class set of novels.
- Luz Lozano and Rene Gonzalez of Glendora High School each received a grant toward purchasing a set of novels for their Spanish classes, and
- Gena Palo and Jacoba Vagnozzi from Sandburg Middle School shared a grant to buy equipment toward a calculator-based science lab.

Congratulations to these deserving teachers and thank you to the CalRTA. We're looking forward to the Rotary Grant winners!

Chromebooks bring technology to the classrooms.



Cullen *Elementary*

440 N. Live Oak, Glendora, CA 91741 • 626/852-4593 • www.glendora.k12.ca.us



Dr. Cheryl Bonner
Principal

Chromebooks and SBAC

When you visit Cullen, you may be surprised to see students working individually or collaboratively on Chromebooks, which are laptops designed to work on the Internet. Initially, the Chromebooks were purchased to facilitate testing on Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). Third-to-fifth graders must access the assessment online, and with the amount of time each student would need, it was nearly impossible to find lab time to accommodate them all. Chromebooks provided a solution, but it seemed wasteful to have such a great tool sitting idle for the remainder of the year.

Chromebook access throughout the year has presented many opportunities. Students can build familiarity with using them—a bonus for SBAC navigation. Students now access content-area skills, practice keyboarding, practice math, conduct research, code as part of Hour of Code, or take a quiz.

All in all, one of the benefits of SBAC is the new technological tool available for teaching and learning!



Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Happy New Year! The beginning of a year is always exciting with the anticipation of reaching goals. This year begins with Board of Education members retiring and new members being welcomed by the Superintendent in his article on the front page.

We are beginning our second year publishing the excellence from the Glendora Unified School District and appreciate you including *School News* among your reading choices.

Our next issue is March 16.

School News

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Goddard *Middle School*

859 E. Sierra Madre, Glendora, CA 91741 • 626/852-4500 • www.glendora.k12.ca.us



Brock Jacobsen
Principal

21st Century and Beyond

There is a lot of talk these days about 21st century learning. This concept means different things to different schools. At Goddard, we are committed to providing learning opportunities that are challenging, engaging and relevant. This happens in all subject areas every day.

In science, you might see a group of students using iPads to explain and present their sheep's eye dissection. In our Allegro choir, you might have heard them performing "We Are the World" in Japanese in preparation for our sister-school-exchange assembly. In English, you might observe eighth-graders hard at work on expository writing based on the question *Is lying always wrong?* In math, you might overhear a "Math Talk" before solving a real-world word problem. Innovation abounds at Goddard Middle School!

The reality is this: We are constantly searching for ways to expose our students to the topics and skills they will need to be prepared to compete in a global and constantly changing workplace. In December, Goddard participated in the Hour of Code by asking each student to spend one class period developing their coding skills. In February, we will host our second annual Cardboard Carnival, calling upon our students to showcase their creativity and ingenuity to develop a carnival-style game booth out of cardboard and other recyclable materials. In March, we will host our second annual STEAM Fair during Open House Night, where students will facilitate science demos, math challenges, coding and robotics stations, and 3-D printing.

We have always believed that these students are tomorrow's leaders. Now, we are having a lot of fun providing the opportunities and avenues for our students to develop tomorrow's skills today!



Paul Lopez
Principal

Students Continue to Focus

GHS is fast approaching the end of the first semester. Things have gone well and our students continue to focus and get to new heights in the classroom.

We have six Google chromebook carts that are out in our classrooms everyday! This is great because one of our school goals is to increase the student use of technology!

Our fall sports season has ended and we had a successful campaign. Volleyball and Football both won league championships and advanced deep into the playoffs. Several of our student athlete's received all league and all academic honors. We look forward to the beginning of our winter sports season with Boys and Girls basketball, Boys and Girls Soccer and Wrestling all taking to the field or court.

We look forward to the new semester in January! "It's Great to be a Tartan!"



Students using Chromebooks in an English class.

La Fetra *Elementary*

547 W. Bennett, Glendora, CA 91741 • 626/852-4566 • www.glendora.k12.ca.us



Marie Porcell
Principal

Go Lions!

We are proud and excited to reclaim the District Cross Country trophy! Each year, the five GUSD elementary schools compete in a cross country challenge at Sandburg or Goddard

Middle School. All interested 4th and 5th graders are encouraged to participate and are trained by our amazing P.E. teacher, Mr. Robert Clark. While we continue to focus on effectively implementing rigorous common core standards, as a school community we are equally committed to teaching students about the importance of staying fit and participating in healthy activities to promote healthy lifestyles. We take pride in our physical fitness programs and in representing La Fetra School. Congratulations to the La Fetra Lions for bringing back our cross country trophy. Go lions!



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Sandburg *Middle School*

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Eric Osborne
Principal

Sandburg Partners with City of Hope:

A comprehensive middle school education in Glendora is not only focused on building the academic framework needed to be successful in high school, but also providing opportunities for our students to begin to understand civility, compassion, and what it means to be a healthy and positive participant in our community.

During the week of December 1st, Sandburg Middle School students donated over \$2,200 to purchase gifts for the pediatric patients at the City of Hope National Medical Center in Duarte. Our students shopped, wrapped, and delivered presents for thirteen young patients with the donations collected from students and staff.

These patients will be spending their holiday in the hospital meeting the challenges of living with cancer.

Christmas 4 Kids has been a Sandburg tradition for over 28 years and will continue to be the season's highlight for everyone involved for many years to come. We are incredibly proud of this tradition as we are the only school allowed to provide this heartwarming service to the pediatric patients at the City of Hope.

For additional information and to view a video about this program, please visit our website www.sandburgspartans.com and click on the programs tab, then scroll down to the Christmas 4 Kids tab.



Sellers *Elementary*

500 N. Loraine Ave., Glendora, CA 91741 • 626/852-4574 • www.glendora.k12.ca.us



Steve Bishop
Principal

Encouraging a Heart for Giving

Jose Nieves was our beloved custodian. Jose worked the afternoon and evening shift and was always willing to help a student find his homework or a lost jacket. He had a lively personality and loved to tell stories of his beloved homeland of Puerto Rico.

When Jose was diagnosed with terminal cancer, it was a shock to the entire Sellers Elementary School community. Many felt helpless and wanted to do something to give back. Out of that desire, our annual Hats for Jose fund-raiser was born.

Participants make a donation for the privilege of wearing a crazy hat that day. These funds are donated to the pediatrics department of the City of Hope.

Through this event, we have realized that we need to teach our children and community the significance of giving back. We need to encourage a heart for giving in our students. Giving back is usually not a natural instinct in our society today. We want to give our students opportunities, from an early age, to contribute to a cause that is bigger than themselves. It is our desire to help our students develop the love and compassion for others in our world through giving of their time and resources.

We are looking forward to our annual Hats for Jose in February.



Jose Nieves

Stanton *Elementary*

725 S. Vecino Ave., Glendora, CA 91740 • 626/852-4604 • www.glendora.k12.ca.us



Dr. Sara Najarro
Principal

Parents Totally Awesome

The Stanton PTA always goes above and beyond. The goal this year was to increase parental involvement, and our parents have taken their support to another level!

I am so proud of what they have accomplished. Our Fall Fair was by far best event we have had. There were more than 50 volunteers in total, with almost every teacher preparing for or participating. Over 1,000 tickets were sold.

Our teacher's lounge was transformed into a mad scientist lab, but they didn't rest after that. Next was the Santa's Workshop. This Saturday included breakfast, photos with Santa, and the time to make holiday crafts for the home.

They didn't stop there, either. There was also the "Kids' Korner Shop," where our students could buy for their families gifts that cost from 25 cents to a dollar.

Aren't you exhausted from just reading about all that they have done? Our parents do whatever it takes to make Stanton a "home away from home."



Stanton enjoying Santa's Workshop.

Whitcomb *Continuation High School*

350 W. Mauna Loa, Glendora, CA 91740 • 626/852-4550 • www.glendora.k12.ca.us



Ron Letourneau
Principal

Honor Roll

On October 22, Whitcomb High School recognized 22 students for their accomplishments in the classroom. With the incredible financial contributions of two of Glendora's finest service groups, we were once again able to recognize these students at the first of our three Principal Honor Roll breakfasts. The event is held in our cafeteria and is attended by our student honorees, their families, district personnel, members of the Glendora City Council, and our valued community members.

The support we receive for this event continues to give me an overwhelming feeling of gratitude. This experience is one that we cherish a great deal, as it gives us the opportunity to congratulate our students for "getting it done" in the classroom. The students are always very excited for this event. Although they try to maintain a certain sense of "cool," they are appreciative of this recognition.



Sutherland *Elementary*

1330 N. Amelia, Glendora, CA 91740 • 626/852-4614 • www.glendora.k12.ca.us



Sheri Cole
Principal

Contributing to Student Success

It's hard to believe that the holidays are already past us!

We had many activities planned for the holiday season. One special event was our annual PTA Children's Holiday Workshop. Here our students could make fun holiday crafts, and as well as purchase holiday items for themselves and gifts for their families.

In addition, our fourth- and fifth-grade students participated in a holiday program at Goddard Middle School. This was an enjoyable event for both the students and their family members.

In addition to the aforementioned activities, Sutherland also held its annual All School Holiday Sing Along. This was an event where all of the grade levels sang familiar holiday songs to help ring in the season. Students and staff members wore festive pajamas to add to the fun.

With regards to curriculum, our teachers recently participated in grade-level data meetings. These meetings were intended to review district benchmark data by identifying specific areas of strength and improvement, as well as recognize the effective instructional strategies and learning activities that can contribute to increased student success.

These types of meetings are just an example of our ongoing effort to review information and engage in data-driven discussions about student achievement. What a pleasure it is to be part of a team that focuses on academic success.

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Don't Bring Negativity to Homework



Dr. Shari Sweetnam

My son has a hard time in school and I don't feel equipped to deal with it. I get so frustrated and angry when he misses silly questions on a test or does not understand when I explain things for the third time. Homework ends in fights and tears. Can you please help?
—Trae R., Newport, Calif.

Trae, We miss the fact that the emotion or "energy" around homework time plays a vital role in learning capacity and emotional stability. Frustration around homework time is common, but make no mistake, it is damaging.

Bringing negativity to homework time makes a child "dislike" it. People usually do not succeed at things or activities that they dislike. A child who is beaten down (by being "scolded" for not understanding) or who has to end up in a "fight" with parents over homework is being seriously compromised. Not only does this form of interaction damage his academics, it diminishes his self confidence, motivation and willingness to endeavor in other aspects of life, as well.

Trae, the good news is that you can turn all of this around.

Instead of being emotionally reactive to frustration. Simply ask yourself, "What does my child need at this moment?"

Then...

1. Explain in different ways.

If your child does not understand something you have explained three times, then you need to find a new way of explaining it. Every child and every adult has a different formula for learning and you need to find your child's path. That is a parent's role when it comes to their child's academics.

2. Be very conscious of the emotional atmosphere

Always stay calm and supportive, during homework time, even when your child has tremendous difficulty understanding something....even when you are frustrated. When faced with roadblocks, ask for help from the teacher, a tutor, but never punish your child for not understanding.

3. Help your child to calm down.

Once you are reliable in your commitment to positive energy, you can be a model of self control and focus. When children get to a point of "I CAN'T DO THIS!" You need to walk them through, and remind them that their attitude toward their work will affect how they learn.

4. Know when your child needs a break.

Allow him to race around the block to clear his head, talk about his frustrations or fears or "reset" their brain in some way. As you become consistently calm, your awareness of when this is necessary will improve.

Hang in there Trae, you can do this. You can make very positive changes that will enhance your child's level of motivation and success!

Motivational Speaker, Founder of *The Brainpower Programs for Schools*, Author, Consultant, Radio Host contact: info@doctorshari.com, www.doctorshari.com, twitter: DrShariS, Youtube: Dr. ShariS, LinkedIN: Dr. Shari Sweetnam

Helping Out



Charlene Ashendorf

I remember as a child my parents would "help out" at school. I really don't recall them using the word volunteering, in those days they were just helping out. I believe that in the beginning, my "parent volunteers" started out as a way to quell my separation anxiety. Holding onto dad's hand that first week of kindergarten gave me the security I needed to take the first steps toward independence. In actuality, dad was a yard duty volunteer in the morning, but to me, it meant that I would be able to spend ten more minutes with him before taking the walk into the classroom on my own.

The transition to first grade meant long days away from home. To help me cope, dad would come into my classroom each week, and sitting on a child's size chair as we crowded around his feet, he would read to my friends and me. It was comforting and familiar, just like those nightly bedtime stories.

Because my mother worked during the day and dad worked a night shift, it seemed natural to me when dad became the room parent! Mother would bake cookies after dinner and package them for dad and me to take to school the next morning, but having a dad as the room helper a special treat!

Fourth and fifth graders seemed to want their parents around less often, but having dad help with the SRA reading program meant he'd have a watchful eye on my progress in school. I recall him being so kind to the some of the children who weren't fast readers. I believe my friends didn't feel the pressure from him as from their own parents.

In middle school my parents wanted to help out more in school; I wanted them around less. So the subtleties of parental involvement came into play. Because I was a "joiner," there were school plays, talent shows, poetry memorization contests and pre-teen jeopardy. With each of the extracurricular activities, parent volunteers were needed. What I learned in the process was that my mother and dad were great to have around behind the scenes; helping with set designs, costume fixes and even as judges!

The distance grew between my parents and me. I was a teenager and the last thing I wanted was to see my mother or dad on my high school campus. And yet, having my mother involved in the parent teacher association or seeing my dad selling cookies and drinks at the snack bar to raise funds for school sports meant more to me than I ever let on.

My parents had this simple philosophy: "There are so many wonderful things that will never get done if we don't take the time to do them." I am grateful that they were just helping out!

Charlene remembers growing up in Chicago with hot and humid summers, leaves that turned colors in the fall and endless winters. Active in her community and church, she advocates for seniors, affordable housing, literacy and libraries. Her hobbies include reading, writing and visiting art galleries. Charlene resides in Costa Mesa with her husband, Dennis who is a teacher in the Newport Mesa Unified School District. <http://about.me/cmash>

Note-ables

Smiles Ahead



Kate Karp

You may have heard the term *indie music* and not thought about the meaning because what's played on indie stations sounds so good. Accomplished indie musicians are in fact artists who opt to transport their performances to eager ears through small labels and the Internet instead of recording with big, largely commercial corporations. This gives these artists more room for creativity, self-expression and their own "heart." If you've heard bands like Wilco and Radiohead, you'll agree that it all works really well.

And if you and the children around you also know the names Okee Dokee

Brothers, Rissi Palmer, the Pop-Ups and the 10 other artists and bands on this new multigenre collection, you'll also agree that a flourishing, delightful bunch of indie artists exists for the very young. *Smiles Ahead* is a project of Mighty Mo Productions, a small label founded by award-winning children's entertainer Jim "Mr. Stinky Feet" Cosgrove, who appears in this collection as a producer only. This happy, tuneful CD includes songs that all children will enjoy and that could also be on your own hit parade. Secret Agent 23 Skidoo, aka King of Kid Hop, raps about self-confidence in the hippy-hoppy "You're It." Grandparents and sixties-music aficionados will recall the English Invasion in The Verve Pipes' "Get Happy." Spring and bluegrass go together, and the Okee Dokee Brothers pair them well on "Walking with Spring." And Brady Rhymer and the Little Band That Could have the best CD opener ever—the catchy "Jump Up."

There are definitely smiles ahead for everyone here!

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

Taking Action to Advance Civic Learning



Arturo Delgado, Ed.D.
Superintendent

In its latest report card on U.S. history, geography and civics, the National Assessment of Education Progress has presented a dismal picture. Only 23 percent of eighth-graders tested at or above proficient in civics with no significant sign of progress since 2010.

These numbers serve as a call to action.

California and our nation are facing a crisis in civic learning. The problem is growing by nearly every measure – including record low voter turn-out – and this is putting our democracy at risk.

Preparing students for informed, engaged participation in civic and democratic life is not just essential; it is entirely consistent with the goals of increasing student achievement and closing achievement gaps.

In response to this problem, California Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye teamed up with State Supt. Tom Torlakson to establish the California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning.

The Task Force has released a report with recommendations to elevate the status of civic learning in schools.

We now also have a pilot network of six local partnerships. Los Angeles County – along with Alameda, Butte, Fresno, Sacramento, and San Diego counties – is taking action.

I am leading the Los Angeles County Civic Learning Partnership, along with David Rattray, executive vice president of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and Associate Justice Laurie Zelon of the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District.

We are reaching out to districts to adopt school board resolutions, policies and Local Control Accountability Plans that incorporate the Task Force recommendations.

At LACOE, our California Democracy School Civic Learning Initiative has provided schools professional development, coaching and technical assistance, as well as mini-grants to create innovative programming at each site.

This year, we are creating a series of 12 online professional development webcasts that will be available to districts at no cost. These resources are available on our website, lacoe.edu.

Civic learning deserves a lot more attention and support in the education community. We need to ensure that our students develop the knowledge and skills they need to participate in our democracy.

Arturo Delgado, Ed.D., was appointed superintendent of the Los Angeles County Office of Education in July of 2011. With headquarters in Downey, the Office is the nations largest regional educational agencies, providing a range of programs and services to support the county's 80 public school districts and 2 million preschool and school-age children.

Under the Sea – 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 Glendora in the subject line)

Entries must be received by February 15, 2016.
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

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