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# School News

*Education + Communication = A Better Nation*

**Covering the Los Alamitos Unified School District**



Volume 14, Issue 74

December 2017 / January 2018



Proud to be Americans (please see McGaugh Elementary page 10).

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Intermediate School Teacher  
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# 10-Year Facilities Master Plan



**Dr. Sherry Kropp**  
*Superintendent*

One of the District's five Priority Goals is to Optimize the use of District facilities by improving maintenance, planning, and Joint Use Agreements. In May of 2016, the District started to assess the facility needs to protect our future and to provide appropriate facilities for our students. This robust process included community surveys, site visits, input from stakeholders representing all schools, and community outreach that included two Town Halls meetings. We are extremely pleased to announce that the 10-Year Facilities Master Plan is now complete.

The most urgent needs are at Los Alamitos High School (LAHS). As we just celebrated the high school's 50th anniversary, we know that the school's infrastructure and most of the buildings were built in the 1960s. In addition, we also have more than 30 portable classrooms on the campus, which are becoming obsolete and in desperate need of replacement. Finally, with the additional focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM), we want to create the best facilities for our students so that they can thrive in STEAM related courses and careers. Therefore, the most urgent LAHS needs in the Facilities Master Plan are to 1) Replace the 50-year old infrastructure, 2) Replace portable classrooms with a multi-story building, and 3) Add new science classrooms.

With Measure K over a decade ago, all sites were completely modernized except LAHS. Consequently, the needs at our elementary and middle school sites are not as urgent but do include shade structures, additional restroom facilities, and the replacement of aging playgrounds.

The District is now exploring multiple strategies to fund the Facilities Master Plan. We have increased the amount of funds in our deferred maintenance budget to take care of more needs on an annual basis. We have also put funds into a Long-Term Facilities Budget to take care of needs in the future. We currently have 6.2 Million in this budget and plan to make this an annual budget priority. Even with these efforts, we will not have enough money to pay for the urgent needs at LAHS.

Last spring, the District formed the Bond Feasibility Committee, comprised of residents with diverse experiences and backgrounds. This Committee will be giving their input to the Board of Education on the Facilities Master Plan and whether or not to seek community support for a bond early next year so that we can begin to modernize our high school.

In the latest state assessment results, Los Alamitos Unified ranked #1 overall in Orange County. Our students and staff, along with our families and communities, have worked hard to produce this amazing educational achievement. Our facilities need to be #1 as well so that our students can continue to achieve at high levels in the 21st Century.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

### Financial Literacy

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

How do stocks, bonds, and mutual funds differ? What is the World Bank or International Monetary Fund? Does my FICO score really matter? Should I buy or lease a car? Why and how did the financial crisis of 2007–2008 happen? These are just some of the topics discussed in one of the newest course offerings at Los Alamitos High School (LAHS), Global Markets and Financial Literacy.

This class is a college-preparatory elective, where students experience the world of finance and its effects on economic, social, and political landscapes. Mr. Dave Carlson is the instructor and has been the driving force behind the launching of this one-semester course. It was implemented during the 2016–2017 school year with over 60 students taking advantage of this offering. The popularity has grown this year; there are now over 110 students enrolled in the class.

The course is based on real-life situations, which are supplemented with guest speakers who are professionals in

the financial world. These speakers include small business owners, stockbrokers, loan officers, bank presidents, and financial planners. The textbook, *Basic Economics*, was written by a senior fellow of the Stanford University Hoover Institute, Dr. Thomas Sowell.

As Mr. Carlson shared, "I wish I had this course when I was in high school. Students learn how to get their money to work for them instead of against them."

I believe this is one of the most important classes we offer at LAHS.

### Board of Education



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*President*



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*Netragrednik*

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Covering the

**LOS ALAMITOS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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I've said many times this is an exciting time to be a student, but I have to say it again...one of the newest course offerings at Los Alamitos High School (LAHS), Global Markets and Financial Literacy, is just one ezample.

## Want to learn to play GAZUMP?

Come to Doc's Pies, 350 Main St., SB, Dec. 14 from 3-6:00p.m. All ages!

Our next issue is February 14. In the meantime, have a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a Happy New Year!



## Los Alamitos Education Foundation

P.O. Box 1210, Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/277-6876 • [www.LAEF4kids.org](http://www.LAEF4kids.org)



### The State of the District: Igniting Unlimited Possibilities

By Carrie Logue, Executive Director

Nearly 200 people joined Los Alamitos Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Sherry Kropp and the Los Alamitos Education Foundation (LAEF) for the State of the District breakfast on Friday, September 29th. "It was such an honor for me to share our District highlights with the broader community," stated Dr. Kropp. This year's presentation began with former school board member Virginia Wilson providing an overview of the District's unification, which took place in 1979.

Congressman Alan Lowenthal and State Senator Janet Nguyen were featured speakers who expressed their support for education in the community. Los Alamitos Mayor Shelley Hasselbrink, Rossmoor Community Services District Director Tony DeMarco and Seal Beach Mayor Sandra Massa-Lavitt spoke of their partnerships with Los Alamitos Unified and congratulated the District on the amazing successes.

Guests were entertained before the presentation by the Los Alamitos High School Orchestra string quartet. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by School Board President Meg Cutuli and LAHS student Sarah Mislang sang the National Anthem.



**Congressman Alan Lowenthal, Superintendent Dr. Sherry Kropp, Board of Education President Meg Cutuli, State Senator Janet Nguyen, and LAEF Executive Director Carrie Logue.**

## Spread Fun. Not Flu!



**Graham Tse, M.D.**  
associate chief  
medical officer,  
MemorialCare  
Miller Children's &  
Women's Hospital  
Long Beach

Healthy kids of any age can get seriously sick from the flu, and they can spread it to family and friends. One of the best ways to stop the spread of the flu is to get vaccinated. Almost everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine every year. But did you know, there are other ways to stop the spread of germs?

You and your family can prevent the spread of flu at home, work or school by following these simple steps.

- Step 1:** Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away.
  - No tissue? Cough or sneeze into your sleeve (elbow) or shirt (shoulder).

**Step 2:** Clean your hands often.

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or long enough to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
- No soap around? Use hand sanitizer gel or hand wipes.
- Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes.

**Step 3:** Avoid close contact with people who have the flu.

- If possible, when your child has the flu, keep them home from school to help avoid spreading germs.

**Step 4:** Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects.

- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects at home or school, especially if someone is ill.

The number of flu cases increases drastically by December each year, with flu season peaking in January, February or March. As we head into the holidays, remember to spread fun, and not flu!

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# City of Seal Beach Police Department

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**Dave Barr**  
Sergeant

## Emergency Communications Systems

*By Michael Henderson, Police Sergeant,*

The City of Seal Beach and the Seal Beach Police Department use two systems to communicate. The AlertOC system and NIXLE. AlertOC is a mass notification system used by the City of Seal Beach and Seal Beach Police Department to issue government related messages to residents and businesses. The AlertOC

system replaced the older “reverse 911” system. All residential and commercial landline phone numbers are a part of the AlertOC system. During an emergency, you will receive a message on your home phone. Emergencies can happen at any time. A wildfire could spread or a flood could close the roads to a neighborhood while residents are away from home. In these instances, AlertOC is a critical link.

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The City of Seal Beach and the Seal Beach Police Department use two systems to communicate. The AlertOC system and NIXLE. AlertOC... register to receive emergency alerts.

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The key feature of AlertOC is the ability for residents to register more than one contact method at a specific address. Registrations of cell phone and alternate numbers increase the potential of reaching the greatest number of community members as rapidly as possible. This enables landlines, cell phones and e-mail addresses to be incorporated into a single notification system. Residents are encouraged to self-register their email addresses, cell phone numbers and other alternate numbers. For more information or to register alternate phone numbers and email addresses, visit [AlertOC.com](http://AlertOC.com).

The other communications system used by the Seal Beach Police Department is the NIXLE system. NIXLE is a messaging system that sends texts directly to your cell phone. The City of Seal Beach and the Seal Beach Police Department use NIXLE to send non-emergency and informational texts. To sign up; type the Seal Beach zip code “90740” into the text box of your cell phone. Then, type 888-777 into the phone number. Press send, you should get a confirmation text. You can get more information about NIXLE at [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com).

## LAUSD Child Development Center

10862 Bloomfield St., Suite P-5, Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4585 • [www.losal.org](http://www.losal.org)



**Kelly Rowe**  
Child Development  
Coordinator /  
Early Learning  
Specialist

## Promoting Reading Success

The characteristics of a good reader are understanding written language, having the background knowledge and strategies to obtain meaning from print, and engaging in frequent reading. Offering young children high-quality language and literacy experiences will give them a head start towards becoming a good reader.

At the Los Alamitos USD/Child Development Center, we provide a literacy and language-based program to help promote reading success for kindergarten. But here are some suggestions that you can do at home to help prepare your children for school.

At home, labeling games is great for young children, such as “where is your nose,” or verbally labeling objects and events in their world like, “Nina is on the blue swing.” Always encourage your child to label objects and events to help with their vocabulary.

During routine activities, take the time to talk with your child. While driving, narrate the drive or what specific events are taking place. When you take your child on outings, surround them with new experiences and lots of comments, questions, and answers. Talk about what you are going to do before and after the event.

Nurturing phonological awareness with activities that

include songs, rhyming games, language play, and nursery rhymes are also all excellent. Take advantage of everyday activities to talk about words and sounds. For instance, when buying fruit at the grocery store, you might ask your child which sound is the same in the words “peach” and “pineapple,” or “peach” and “tea.” Choose books that focus on sounds, such as Dr. Seuss stories that lead to lots of chanting and fun with sounds. Allow your child to supply the last word of each rhyme while reading. Have fun with your child too by making up your own games with rhyming words, silly sounds, and chants.

Simply reading storybooks beginning in infancy encourages the development of narrative knowledge. As your child gets older, encourage them to pretend to “read” to you. Oral storytelling is another way that children can learn about narrative, even when witnessing one adult share a story with another. That way they can begin to learn the fun and purpose of stories. Tell your children about your own stories too, and encourage them to tell you about their adventures in the form of a story.

As a child gets older, start pointing out words in their environment, or words on a restaurant menu, food container label, posters on a bus, street signs, or store signs. Physically labeling objects, toys, and other belongings also helps to establish the idea that print has meaning.

# Seal Beach Animal Care Center

1700 Aldofo Lopez Dr., Seal Beach, CA 90740 • 562/430-4993 • [www.sbacc.org](http://www.sbacc.org)

## Adopting a Kitten?

By Murlyn E. Burkes, Cat Committee Liaison



**Zahara (Zee) and Lady**

Adopting a kitten requires planning. You should be confident that the responsibility is something you can take on. Next, make sure that your budget can accommodate cat-food purchases and veterinary costs. Keep a checklist of all that is needed to ensure a smooth transition for you and your new companion.

Adopting a pair of sibling kittens can be preferable to adopting just one. If you spend most of the day at work, your new feline will appreciate having a companion to share the day with and be entertained.

Be sure to kitten-proof your home. Close off holes in your house or apartment, as kittens will attempt to crawl into these spaces. Store all food that might be harmful. Kittens will explore and jump onto counters when left alone. Store all medications, cover trash cans, and keep rubber bands in a drawer. Be sure to have all of the necessary kitten items prior to bringing home your new companion. Kittens need to feel comfortable and excited when coming into their new home!

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# Hopkinson *Elementary*

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**Evelyn Garcia**  
*Principal*

## Huskies Paying Tribute

In the words of a famous American, “The American flag is the symbol of our freedom, national pride and history.” It is under this pretense that the Husky students at Hopkinson Elementary School gathered together on Thursday, November 9 to pay tribute to the men and women who have served our country in a tribute to Veteran’s Day.

The flag ceremony was led by students from the Hopkinson Husky Leadership Council. Five student leaders educated the school on the history of Veteran’s Day and then led a school-wide flag salute and moment of silence. We highlighted the 4 As and honored veterans in our school community. A highlight of the morning was the ensemble performance of “Grand Old Flag” by our Huskies, all of whom were holding American flags.

The morning proved to be a wonderful opportunity for both students and the community to come together and recognize our servicemen and servicewomen.



## Lee *Elementary*

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



**Amy Laughlin**  
*Principal*

### **Cross-Age Learning**

Team Lee started the year with a growth mindset focus for all students. One way to build this mindset is through cross-age learning. Cross-age learning benefits all students by increasing academic skills, developing positive social behavior, and improving self-esteem.

Our upper-graders support primary students with technology, Grand Conversations, and academic skills. Fifth-grade students buddy up with Transitional Kindergarten students in the computer lab, teaching them how to log on and begin school-wide ST Math. Fourth-grade students buddy up with first-grade students to complete book summaries using Adobe Spark. Students took pictures of story scenes and recorded their voices retelling the stories. Last, through read aloud, Miss Gardener's fourth-grade students introduced Miss Jasper's kindergarten students to change over time, impact, and



multiple perspective icons. The kindergarteners used hand movements to help the students remember what they had learned.

Here at Lee Elementary School, we continue to foster the power of “yet” through cross-age learning for an amazing and successful school year.

## Los Alamitos *Elementary*

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



**Gary Willems**  
*Principal*

### **Workshop Approach to Composition**

In October, Los Alamitos Elementary School welcomed the experts at Momentum in Teaching for a schoolwide professional-development session that detailed the intricacies of Writer's Workshop. Teachers collaborated in grade-level teams to learn how to artfully deliver whole-group lessons on the writing process, how to conference with individual students to improve their writing, and how to choose mentor texts to highlight the author's purpose.

The goal of emphasizing student conferences is to increase student self-awareness of where they are making progress and where they can improve. Teachers practiced the conferencing strategies with each other, using actual student work samples and language that is emphasized in the Writer's Workshop units of study. The goal at LAE is to have all students flourishing as writers that are capable of publishing an engaging piece of written expression and to communicate their intention with others in a sophisticated way.

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## Los Alamitos *High School*

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



**Dr. Brandon  
Martinez**  
*Principal*

### Getting in Stride

To great fanfare, Los Alamitos High School recently celebrated its 50th anniversary season during the month of October. We won our Homecoming football game during Homecoming Week, put on a halftime show that featured over 600 students from various sectors of campus life, and held a highly attended Homecoming Dance.

One big weekend featured the 50th anniversary celebration itself, with thousands in attendance. This included alumni from every decade, guest speakers, and a number of dignitaries. An alumni reception was also created in the gymnasium, with yearbooks from every class on display, photo opportunities, and other ways for the various generations of Griffins to reconnect.

Our award-winning performing arts groups — including dance, jazz, marching band, comedy improv, and Show Choir — all put on a range of performances for our students, families, alumni, and community members.

As we conclude the fall athletics season, we also want to celebrate our varsity football and boys varsity cross country teams winning Sunset League titles, as well as CIF playoff berths. Our girls tennis, boys water polo, and girls golf also did well in the Sunset League and CIF playoffs.

We look forward to a strong continuation of the semester and beyond.



## McGaugh *Elementary*

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



**Roni Ellis**  
*Principal*

### Standing Tall and Proud

When the Seal Beach Police Department offered to send a helicopter to fly over McGaugh to celebrate Red Ribbon Week, Principal Roni Ellis and Assistant Principal Teri Malpass did not hesitate to say yes! The challenge was to come up

with a formation in which all 800 students and 120 staff could participate and that would be memorable. Fifth grade students from Mrs. Nadia Williams's class used CGI math strategies to figure out how many students and staff were needed for each of the three colors of the flag and the flag pole. The Seal Beach Police Department as well as the Seal Beach division of the Orange County Fire Authority joined in with students and staff and the result was fantastic. McGaugh students are proud to be Sea Lions and even prouder to be Americans!



## McAuliffe *Middle School*

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



**Ann Allen**  
*Principal*

### **Giving to Those In Need**

The administration and staff at McAuliffe Middle School encourages all students to participate in a variety of service activities throughout the school year. In October our Choir Boosters and their students raised

money for their program and engaged our entire school community in recycling and providing affordable clothing for those in need.

Partnering with Clothes for a Cause, parents and students donated new and gently used clothing, linens and shoes. And on October 21st, volunteers filled a truck with nearly five tons of material!



This is one of many examples of the McAuliffe family working to support our school and the needy with hard work and generous hearts!

## Rossmoor *Elementary*

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



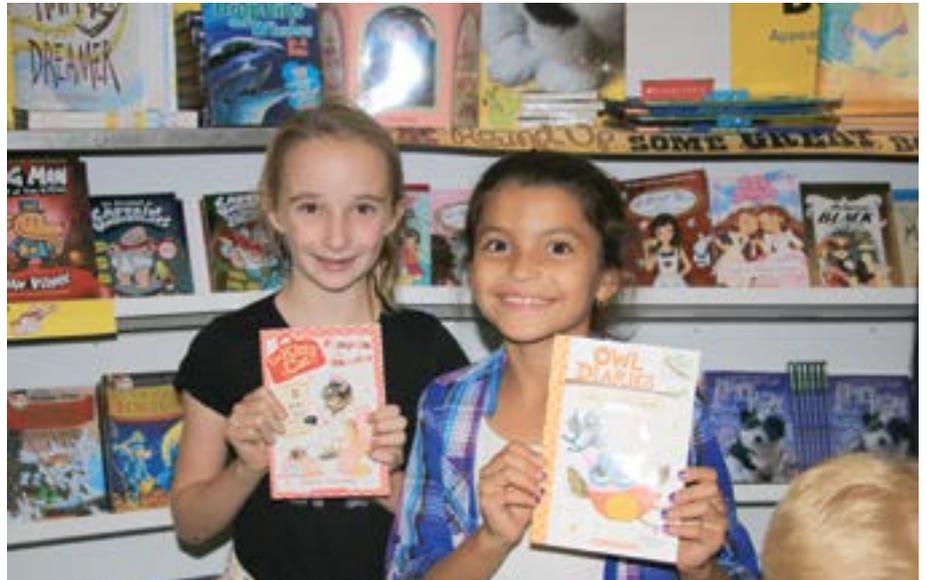
**Amy Belsha**  
*Principal*

### **Family Night**

Our Rossmoor Knights and their families sure do enjoy our family nights!

In November, we had our Wild West Family Night from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. During these events, we have a chance to come together as a community and are also surrounded by new and exciting literature at our Scholastic Book Fair. Students were eager to shop for new literature, create their own photo bookmarks, participate in some old-fashioned relay races, and even learn to country line-dance!

In addition to being passionate about their own reading, our Knights were proud to show their kindness to help Valley Satellite Elementary School, who lost their classrooms, books and materials in the Santa Rosa fires. One of our parents created a book drive, and in just two



**Rossmoor Knights, taking a break from line dancing and photo booth, to shop the book fair.**

days, we had collected over 500 books that we are donating to Valley Satellite Elementary School!

Our Knights understand the importance of giving the gift of reading! #KindnessMatters.

## Oak Middle School

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



**Erin Kominsky**  
Principal

### Science Olympiad

Meet the Oak Middle School Science Olympiad Team! This 34-member team, made up of sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students, has a love for science and engineering.

Science Olympiad is led by their coaches, Mrs. Martin and Mr. Miko. The team works with mentors to study, experiment, and test their engineering projects. They spend 10 or more hours per week preparing for their upcoming competitions. Students compete in categories such as hovercrafts, microbe missions, disease detectives, thermodynamics, Wright Stuff gliders, anatomy/physiology, geology, and ecology.



This year our Science Olympiad Team will be competing on December 9 at our first invitational in Fullerton. We will compete against over 40 teams! In January, we are competing in Placentia against over 56 teams that have traveled from all over the state. Regional competition will be held at University of California, Irvine in February.

We wish our Oak Olympiads the very best in their upcoming competitions!



## Weaver Elementary

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



**Dr Robert Briggerman**  
Principal

### Weaver is a CLASS ACT!

*By Dr. E. Joseph Arias, Teacher*

As one of our premier arts programs, the Pacific Symphony CLASS ACT Program enriches the lives of our students and families. Students learn about the music of a selected composer, and a musician from the Pacific Symphony unites all teachers, students, and parents in an interactive classical music experience. This year, Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), is the composer of the year. Our guest artist is PSO cellist, Andrew Honea.

There is abundant research on the advantages that studying music has on academic achievement. It provides students with a well-rounded education as well. Beethoven is appealing to children due to his ability to draw listeners

in and to thrill them with melodies with emotional highs and lows. Some favorites are Moonlight Sonata, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, and the Ode to Joy.

This year's theme is "Trials to Triumph." Teachers will participate in a workshop and students will attend a Beethoven Prelude Assembly to kick things off. Students will also participate in a classroom workshop taught by Mr. Honea himself. To cap off such immersion into music and Beethoven, Weaver has been invited to attend student concerts at Segerstrom Hall, home of the Pacific Symphony.

For Weaver families, this year's CLASS ACT events are exciting! You are invited to mark your calendars for some important dates: Weaver CLASS ACT Family Night, Thursday, January 18, 7-8:15pm at McGaugh School Auditorium; BRAVO Assembly (all family members are invited), Tuesday, May 29, 9:30-10:30 am, in the Weaver Quad.

## Keira's Book Nook



Keira

### A Brilliant Fantasy of Adventure

*Time Stoppers - Quest for the Golden*

*Arrow* by Carrie Jones

Welcome to a land of friends, stubborn grandparents and elves.

In this emotional book the author draws readers into an amazing fairy tale. (I

laughed and cried a lot!) Aided by luck, a quiet desiring Annie joins forces with the enemies of The Raiff. The company of a mighty arrow helps them cross dangerous lands. Full of intense force and simple luck, this is an intriguing book. Carrie Jones uses outstanding vocabulary such as moseyed. However, I thought it ended too abruptly. I recommend this book series for fourth to eighth graders to read. I can't wait to read the next book! (This book is such a page turner!) I rate this book 4 apples.



Keira F. is a sixth grader. In addition to her love of books, she enjoys art, crafts, traveling and playing with her cats. She rates books from 1 to 5 apples with 5 being the highest.

## Alana's Book Review



Alana F.

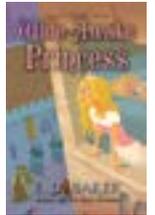
### A Hilarious Book

By: E.D. Baker

Long ago, in the kingdom of Treecrest, a baby princess was born, and was given many magical gifts. This little girl is known as Sleeping Beauty. So- as the stories say- when the evil fairy cast the famed curse on the newborn, her fairy godmother lessened it. However, the royal family was so traumatized that they decided that their second daughter, Princess Annie, should be immune to all magic. Hence, when the sleeping curse fell upon her older sister, Annie was unaffected, and set off to find the one who could save the kingdom. Traveling far and wide, she battles things scarier than magic, like evil, fear, and stereotypes. But without any magical gifts, will she triumph?

I'd give this book eight out of eight triforce shards for its cleverly hidden messages. It's also downright hilarious, and has had me laughing for hours.

Alana is a student columnist and a self-proclaimed "huge nerd". When she doesn't have a book in her hands, she loves to play video games and write fiction. She rates books on a scale of 1-8 triforce shards with 8 being the highest.



## Toy Store Items—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](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com) Please put LAUSD in the subject line.

Entries must be received by January 15, 2018

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a GAZUMP card/dice game - fun for all ages!

BIKE	MARBLES
DOLL	CRAYON
TRIKE	PENS
BOOK	COMPUTER
LEGOS	DOLLHOUSE
SOLDIERS	BUGGY
BALLS	KITCHEN
BUBBLES	TEA SET
CROQUET	BAT
BLOCKS	BALL GLOVE
KITES	



We had a record number of entries for October so we drew two winners —  
**Congratulations to: Isabell Sulu and Katie Bernardoni**

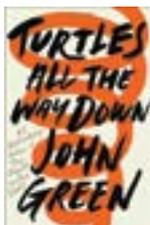
## Lucy's Book Review



Lucy Davis

### Turtles All the Way Down

Meet Aza Holmes. The sidekick, the best friend, the student. Every day, her thoughts condense and spin in what she refers to as 'thought spirals' - where one follows the other and then they don't stop.



Soon, she and her best friend, Daisy, go looking for a reward: \$100,000 to anyone who can provide information about Russell Pickett, a billionaire gone missing. With that much money on the line and the possibilities it could offer, their lives become a mess of night vision cameras, Applebee's, Star Wars fan fiction, and one very lucky tuatara.

Once again, John Green creates a story that makes you laugh, frown, and gets you to think in ways you never thought you could. I expected a lot from this book, and while it was wonderful and enjoyable, the things that I expected seemed to be its inefficiencies.

Four and a half bookworms that are very much deserved.

Lucy is a 6th grade student. When she isn't immersed in a book, she loves musical theater, ballet, and singing. She enjoys stretching her imagination by writing short stories of her own. Lucy will rate the books 1 to 5 bookworms with 5 being the best.

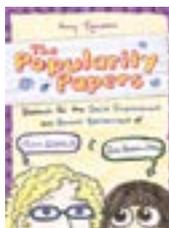
## Richard's Book Review



Richard J.

### Funny Book with a Message

*The Popularity Papers* is a book by Amy Ignatow. It's written like a diary by two middle school girl authors Lydia and Julie writing about their "observations" and very funny results on their



attempts to be popular. They go through many things to be popular, trying and failing in a funny way at hair bleaching, joining the popular sports teams, and even pretending to like boys, which really backfires, and many other things, too. The results are funny, unpredictable, but don't make them popular. They learned in the end that it's important to be yourself and be liked by your friends, not the people who everyone says are cool and popular. This is a really funny book written and drawn in a way I would have done with markers, pens and pencils, and the story is relatable in the way that they work so hard to be liked and noticed.

I give this book a 5 out of 5 stars, with 5 being the best.

Richard J. is a third grader. Richard likes math, playing sports, physical activities like bike-riding and running, reading and spending time with his family.

## Los Alamitos-Rossmoor Branch Library

12700 Montecito Rd., Seal Beach CA 90740 • 562/430-1048 • [www.ocpl.org](http://www.ocpl.org)



Sean Whittle  
Branch Manager

### Reading is Worth It

Will I get back more than I put in? We all ask these kinds of cost-benefit questions with decisions in our lives, including whether to spend our time reading. People may pass up reading because they consider the benefit not worth it compared to something else. I am here to share that investing in deliberate reading pays off greatly in benefits, and is worth it.

Here is a list of potential benefits to you. You exercise your mind, which is good for long-term mental health. You have a reduction in unhealthy stress. You expand your knowledge and vocabulary. You communicate better. You improve your memory and imagination. You enhance your analytical thinking skills. You improve your focus and concentration. You become more empathetic. Plus you get a source of free entertainment. We know that reading is incredibly entertaining because every movie and TV show we watch starts off as a literary work (book, screenplay, etc.).

Now finding time to read is easier than you might think. There isn't some secret formula. It's just about making choices. Here are some tips and strategies to carve out time for reading. Try reading first thing in the morning and/or before bed. When you leave your house, bring something to read with you. Start small with just 10 minutes. Find books and topics that are of interest to you. Set personal reading goals to encourage yourself. Start or join a book club. Simply schedule reading time in your day. Use all the formats at your disposal whether print or digital. Limit distractions when you're reading to make it rewarding.

And what about cost? Your local library has what you need free of charge. Choose to read, because it is worth it. See you at the library!

**2 games in 1!**

**SumDiceyFun.com**  
[info@sumdiceyfun.com](mailto:info@sumdiceyfun.com)

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# Orange County Department of Education

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## Need for Meaningful Civic Education



**Dr. Al Mijares**  
Superintendent

Our current national dialogue suggests our country is fragmented along cultural, racial and economic lines. This is particularly the case on social media, where avatars and anonymity serve as shields that embolden some of our worst behaviors.

So how do we elevate public discourse, which remains essential to a free, democratic society? I suggest this starts by promoting meaningful civic education.

Educators have in recent years ramped up efforts to provide hands-on lessons in science, technology, engineering and math, and we know this work is critical to keeping Americans at the forefront of 21st-century advancements in such fields as medicine, communications, transportation and defense.

At the same time, we must never lose sight of the value of the humanities, which, as the very term indicates, are central to being human. And we must not take for granted our moral obligation to empower the next generation with lessons that cover the rights and responsibilities of being an American.

Civics courses are more than just manuals to the machinery of our government. When taught properly, they spell out our roles as citizens to prioritize issues, allocate resources, vote responsibly, communicate with those who represent us, and adhere to the rule of law. Civics defines the expectations not just of our elected officials but of ourselves, building a framework upon which to discuss how we want to live and what kind of country we wish to pass along to our children.

Visit Pacifica High School in the Garden Grove Unified School District and you'll find a model of this in action.

As a signature practice, Pacifica's Service Learning Project calls for 12th-graders to spend at least 15 hours engaging in civic participation, which can include volunteering with the Orange County Student Poll Worker Program, political campaigns or nonprofit organizations. Moreover, the school's Community Action Project allows

students to earn service hours by researching and developing a plan to address a campus issue.

Pacifica also offers dozens of service-oriented clubs, and social science teachers integrate democratic exercises into their lessons, including mock trials of historical figures, bill-to-law simulations and close readings of historical texts that train students to scrutinize dubious claims.

For these efforts, Pacifica High became one of three California schools to earn the Civic Learning Award of Excellence this year. This award, created in 2013 to honor civic learning and spotlight best practices, was co-sponsored by State Superintendent Tom Torlakson and California Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye, who paid a visit to the Garden Grove campus in April.

The Orange County Department of Education is similarly looking to enhance civic learning opportunities throughout the region. Along with supporting history and social science teachers with professional development and curricular resources, our department annually hosts the National History Day-Orange County event, featuring hundreds of young scholars who are tasked with exhibiting thoroughly researched websites, papers, documentaries, performances and exhibits. In May, OCDE also teamed up with the Los Angeles County Office of Education to hold a civics summit for students, educators, elected officials and business leaders.

To restore a healthy national discourse, civics lessons must go beyond merely examining our differences or encouraging the veneration of founding documents and symbols. They must instead drill deeply into what it means to be an American in 2017, allowing students to discover the shared values that bond this country and its citizens together — the same shared values that our flag and anthem were designed to represent.

Far from a nostalgic look back, civic education remains our nation's best hope to move forward, and it is no less relevant today than in previous generations.

Arguably, it has never been more important.

## School News

*Education+Communication=A Better Nation*

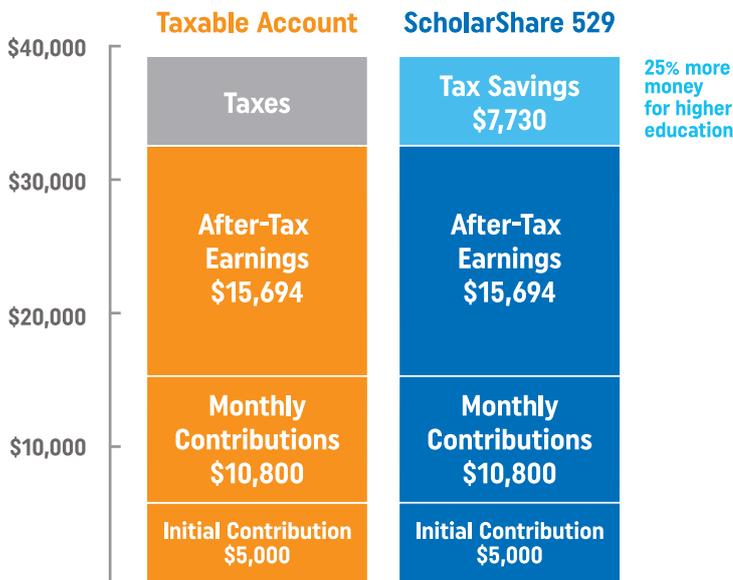
### Join Our Sales Team!

*If you have extra time during the day, perhaps you would like to join our sales team working from your home. **Kay 562-493-3193***

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