

**FREE**

# School News

*Education + Communication = A Better Nation*

**Covering the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District**



Volume 2, Issue 11

February / March 2018

## An Example of Commitment



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# Peninsula Education Foundation

P.O. Box 2632, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274 • [www.pvpef.org](http://www.pvpef.org)



**Christine Byrne**  
Executive Director

## Did you know?

That PVPUSD is ranked by 2018 Niche to be the second best school district throughout LA County? At the same time that our school district is ranked so high, we are almost dead last in state funding in all of LA County. Your donations to PEF help fund programs and teaching staff that otherwise would not be available in our schools, and help to continue to make our schools great!

PEF funds impact every school in our district. At each elementary school, PEF funds: Physical Education Teachers; Elementary Music; Library Aides; and STEM for 4th and 5th grades. At each Intermediate school, PEF funds: STEM; Parent University; and Safe School Counselors. At each high school, PEF funds: STEM (SMERT and PVIT); Additional Academic Counselors; College and Career Center staff; Senior Scholarships; Science Fair. Throughout the district PEF funds: \$1.1 mm goes towards teachers' salaries; Chuck Miller Teacher Grants; and increased school site technical support staff hours.



In the coming months, PEF holds awareness weeks at each school throughout the district. This is an opportunity to share with families how donations to PEF directly impact the schools your children attend every day, and emphasize the importance of continuing to support all of these positions and programs.

On behalf of our volunteer board, thank you to everyone who supports PEF in all areas off our fundraising. Direct donations, participation in the Skechers Walk, attendance at our Main Event, all go towards our reaching our goal and pledge of \$3.1mm to the district. It takes a large village to make all of this happen every year and it wouldn't be possible without your support.

# Challenging the Status Quo



**Donald B. Austin, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent

I asked our principals to write about their resolutions in this edition of *School News Roll Call*. Like any goal, it is important to share the desired outcome with others for accountability and reminders along the way. As a model for our leaders, I would like to start with my resolution for the year. It is my goal to make decisions based upon our students first and spend a little less time catering to those committed to placing barriers in the way of progress. This will be the year of doing things!

While the resolution is to take more action on behalf of our students, I need to clarify that input is needed and partnerships are essential. False steps are sometimes more damaging than a lack of action. Conversely, a paralyzed organization will see regressions in achievement and innovation. There is a balance to be struck and the next right answers are around the corner for those willing to look hard, focus efforts, and take some calculated risks.

Our site and classroom leaders are encouraged to join me in this resolution. The resolution of choosing action over inaction is a powerful movement. Challenging the status quo has been the hallmark of our country and should be a cornerstone of a community largely comprised of engineers, scientists, entrepreneurs, performers, athletes, and some of the most creative people on the planet. Here's to an exciting, engaging, and active 2018!

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New beginnings are always exciting with a renewed focus on goals. Many of us make resolutions only to forget about them after a few weeks. Superintendent Dr. Austin's message on page 3 is an excellent reminder that we need to share our resolutions with others for accountability and reminders. The District is fortunate to have a leader who is a role model.

This is an especially interesting issue as you read about the principal's resolutions. Many times people don't express their resolutions as such but they make a conscious effort to reach for higher goals at the beginning of a new year.

I hope everyone reading this will make the resolution "forever" to no text and drive! So many messages are directed to teens and I find it shocking how many parents are on their phone with little ones tucked safely in their car seats or sitting beside them on their own devices. Children want to grow up to be like their role models and I am afraid we are letting our children down with the need to always be connected.

The PV Library District article on page 13 has lots of information to keep you busy on Spring Break. And don't forget to enter our Word Search Contest on page 14.

Our next issue is April 11

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# Cornerstone @ Pedregal *Elementary School*

6069 Groveoak Pl., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-2261 • 310/378-0324



**Michele Marcus**  
*Principal*

## Resolutions and Commitments

I am fortunate to work on the beautiful Palos Verdes Peninsula, where I am surrounded by a group of wonderful people, including staff, students, and families. Our district is small, which allows me the privilege of getting to know the other administrators. I often find myself talking with them about the programs and opportunities we can offer our students

that will make their educational experience the best it can possibly be. The teachers and I start working long before the first day of school, planning, collaborating, and brainstorming what we will do in the coming year to make it the best year yet. And it never fails that, once we get started with the year, I get so caught up with supporting our programs that I forget to slow down to recognize and appreciate the small “wins” that happen every day.

A school year is composed of 180 instructional days, which means 180 days filled with opportunity each school year. I have opportunities every day to recognize student successes in the classroom, such as a child mastering a

concept in math that he has been working on for a long time, and on the playground, such as a kindergarten student making it all the way across the monkey bars, as evidenced by the huge toothless grin when she reaches the other side. I also have opportunities to recognize staff successes, such as a teacher experimenting with a new instructional unit and recognizing that students were engaged and it went better than she could have imagined, or the playground supervisors working together to design a successful system to ensure that our students are safe and having fun during recess and lunch.

I have been in education for over 25 years. Around this time every year, I remind myself of what I really want to do in my role as an educator: celebrate success. So this year my New Year’s commitment is to take advantage of the opportunities that I have each and every day to celebrate the successes of the students, staff and families at Cornerstone School. It is good to have a plan for success, but it is just as important to not be so focused on the end goal that I miss each day’s journey and those very special opportunities to see the wonderful accomplishments of the Cornerstone community.

# Dapplegray *Elementary School*

3011 Palos Verdes Dr. North, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274-7303 • 310/541-3706



**Nancy Parsons**  
*Principal*

## Moving Forward

At Dapplegray Elementary School, we don’t set New Year’s resolutions. We establish School Year Resolutions! It seems like the start of this new year, which is almost half-way through the regular school year, is a great time to check and see if we are on track with our school’s goals and initiatives. Our implementation of three specific programs is ongoing, and with a resolution to continue to

refine and improve practices.

For example, we are in our second year of implementing Accelerated Reader and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). It is also the first year for a full implementation of physical education focusing on wellness, fitness, and skills development in a non-competitive environment.

Accelerated Reader expanded to include the second-through fifth-graders who are independent readers. It operates on the premise that all skills require practice, and that the best practice is done at a level which provides appropriate challenge and support. Students are assessed at least three times annually to determine their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Under the guidance of his or her teacher, each student is provided with a specific

reading range. Books are selected for Accelerated Reader at the appropriate reading level for each student. Much like with Goldilocks, “This one is just right!”

A team of teachers, a student support specialist, a representative from our yard supervisors, and the principal are all attending training to continue implementation of PBIS. This nationally recognized program provides our staff and students with agreed upon expectations for behavior that focus on proactive measures to ensure positive behavior is the norm. It reminds adults that, just like the academic pieces to education, there is a need to teach and practice appropriate behaviors to create an environment that is healthy for all. This is aided by our student support specialist, who provides lessons in everything from the difference in tattling and reporting dangerous behaviors to conflict resolution.

The final goal this year at Dapplegray is a switch from competitive sports-related physical education instruction to a program which teaches each child the appropriate skills to become successful in sports. Our goal is a program where the students who may not play on outside sport teams are still active participants in all activities, and not just observers watching those who play on teams excel.

Proudly, we are on track with all of our programs, and are moving forward with our school year resolutions!

# Lunada Bay *Elementary School*

520 Paseo Lunado, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274-4377 • 310/377-3005



**Julie Tarango**  
*Principal*

## The Kindness Challenge

Happy New Year! On behalf of the Lunada Bay Elementary School faculty, I would like to wish you a joyful, healthy and prosperous 2018! The new year is a wonderful opportunity for reflection and revival. This year, we are enthusiastic about a brand-new initiative that has been implemented here at Lunada Bay.



**Lunada Bay students proudly encourage others to jump on the Kindness Challenge to celebrate our 60th year as a school!**

A few weeks ago, the teachers and I were talking about how we could encourage kindness among students, families and our community. We see many acts of kindness every day, but we wanted to find a way to grow and actively extend acts of kindness beyond our classrooms and playground into our larger community. The teachers suggested we organize a challenge to the students: complete 60 random acts of kindness for Lunada Bay's 60th birthday!

We discussed with the students how doing simple acts of kindness to others can bring great satisfaction and joy. From taking out a neighbor's trash to opening the door for someone, there are many ways we can spread kindness to others in a selfless way. We have enlisted help from everyone and are challenging every Lunada Bay family to complete 60 random acts of kindness by June 1, 2018!

Aim big for whatever you want to accomplish in 2018. My goal is to continually improve the learning environment at Lunada Bay while helping our students feel confident, safe, and happy in their classrooms, at lunch, and with each other. The new year is a great time for redefining and bettering our practices. I am excited about our 60 Random Acts of Kindness Challenge and am looking forward to celebrating the growth and change we all experience through this positive, student-family-community endeavor!

# Mira Catalina *Elementary School*

30511 Lucania Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-6272 • 310/377-6731



**Brett Egan**  
*Principal*

## Guiding Reading Instruction

Mira Catalina Elementary School has a rich history and a strong commitment to each and every student. Our academic goal is that when students promote out of our school in fifth grade, they will be able to strongly articulate in the written and verbal form, be accomplished readers, and have strong mathematical reasoning ability, along with a keen sense of numbers. Beyond

these academic goals, we want to develop students' social and emotional skills in a positive, nurturing, and safe environment. We encourage individual initiative: personal best, creativity, dreams, and imagination. Respecting individual differences, including culture, interests, and abilities, is imperative to our success. These are our core values at Mira Catalina, and they are revisited with everything that we do.

We have implemented a few programs to enhance our school and help us achieve the above goals. Our tiered reading instruction model is serving the students extremely well. Tiered reading instruction best prepares students by giving them targeted lessons at their own levels. Placing students in flexible, leveled groups for a part of the instructional day is a best practice that allows every



student to maximize his or her potential. This model, along with the research-based sound instruction they receive from teachers, enables our students to become fluent readers as they enter the upper grades.

Beyond improving their reading fluency, students are learning comprehension skills in context with higher-level skills of synthesizing and evaluating text. With students becoming strong readers, we work on research skills in the upper grades to develop the ability to articulate in the written and verbal forms. Our fourth- and fifth-grade teachers do an excellent job of helping students build these skills.

Our PTA has been instrumental in helping this cause by donating netbooks. Each fourth- and fifth-grade classroom has a netbook cart for students to use throughout the day.

It is a great time to be at Mira Cat!

## Miraleste *Intermediate School*

29323 Palos Verdes Dr. East, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-6470 • 310/732-0900



**Frank Califano**  
*Principal*

### Impossible?

Resolutions can be maddening. They are easy to make yet, most often than not, very difficult to achieve. My personal resolution this year is to try not to put on my winter 15 pounds that has traditionally found its way onto my stomach area.

I consider myself a fairly disciplined person—except when it comes to food. I have always been on a “see-food diet.” If I see food, I have a tendency to eat it. For those of you who have spent any time in and around a school, you know that food is omnipresent. The teachers lounge always has some kind of treat, and with banquets and luncheons, the winter 15 always has been a problem. My summers are spent working to melt it off. This year is going to be different. I am going to make my goal! Unfortunately, the five chocolate-covered pretzels that someone left in the teachers lounge aren’t going to help, as I devoured them yesterday. Oh, man, were they good!

Coming back to Miraleste, I resolved to move slowly. I needed to watch, look and listen. I had learned so much as an assistant principal and really thought I could take some of the great things that were happening at Miraleste during my initial time here and make them work at PVIS. I found out quite soon that every school has a unique culture. What was fun and popular at one school was basically ignored at the other. The one thing that I found that always works is that children love competition, not only athletic competition but also games in the classroom, geography bees, spelling bees, a battle of the bands and class lunchtime competitions. Those are the kinds of events that make school fun, that build teamwork and communication. My professional resolution is to continue to try to find ways to involve all of the students at Miraleste in events that grab their attention and to get our children involved in school. For them to have fun and enjoy coming to school,

I will do my absolute best to fulfill this resolution!

## Palos Verdes *Intermediate School*

2161 Via Olivera, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274-1983 • 310/544-4816



**Trista Ramirez**  
*Principal*

### Recognizing the Why

At the start of each new year, it is not uncommon to ask about our resolutions. What have you decided to do differently this year? How will you improve your every day? For me, the new year is a time of reflection—a time to think about my year ahead and reaffirm my commitments with a new sense of excitement.

This year at Palos Verdes Intermediate School (PVIS), we have committed to remembering our “why.” As we start each of our faculty meetings, we share the why of one of our staff members with the entire team. Our why is what inspires us each day in our work as

educators. It reminds us of our purpose and the value of our relationships with students. When we are motivated by our why, our work is more meaningful and fulfilling.

So, as we start this new year, I remember the why that our PVIS family proclaimed on a wall that is as part of a set of inspirational murals around our school. This particular mural reflects a statement and commitment made by our faculty about our work with our students. We are here to lead by example. We teach with compassion. And finally, we help those that need it. This is the why that drives the work of the PVIS team. I am so grateful to work with these educators to make a difference in the lives of our students. That is the why that will continue to drive my work here at PVIS.



## Montemalaga *Elementary School*

1121 Via Nogales, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274-1671 • 310/378-5228



**Jody Pastell**  
*Principal*

### Resolutions and Commitments

The beginning of 2018 is a perfect time to set realistic new year's resolutions. In past years, I have resolved to eat less chocolate, exercise more, shop less often and so on. Sometimes, I have been fairly committed to being more aware of the established resolution; however, I have not yet been able to make life changes with any resolution at the beginning of the new year.

I have been thinking about the perfect resolution for 2018. Is there a life lesson that should be part of my daily life? Sometimes, we know about life by remembering the past. What if we could study people from teenage years to old age? Could we learn a bit of essential wisdom? I researched a study that has been conducted for the last 75 years at Harvard University. The Harvard Study of Adult Development originally involved 700 men from two socioeconomic groups in the late 1930s. One group came from Boston's disadvantaged neighborhoods, and the other group comprised sophomores attending Harvard. According to the study, the original 700 men grew up to be in several different professions: doctors, teachers,

retail owners, industrial workers, bankers, utility workers, scientists, engineers, lawyers and other professionals. One person in the study became the president of the United States. Every two years, the men completed survey questions for the study. In-home interviews, doctor visits and family interviews were also held every two years. Today, there are about 60 of the original 700 men still living.

The research concluded that happiness is not about wealth, fame or even hard work. The good relationships that we develop and maintain during our lives keep us happier and healthier. Being socially connected to our family and community keeps us happy and healthy. The quality of close relationships matters. Those people who are most satisfied in their relationships have a buffer against getting old. Relationships are hard work and can even be complicated during life. Developing strong relationships with friends, family and community is very important for true happiness.

If we can agree that a good life is built with good relationships, then I have finally found a new year's resolution that I can incorporate into my daily living: a good life has a foundation strong with good relationships. Happy New Year to you—I hope that this resolution helps your 2018 to be a fabulous year!

## Point Vincente *Elementary School*

30540 Rue de la Pierre, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-5364 • 310/377-6972



**Beth Hadley**  
*Principal*

### Supporting Our Families

Maybe you began 2018 with plans for what you want to accomplish. For educators, this means that we have multiple opportunities to set resolutions and revisit goals. Actually, the beginning of the school year is the first "New Year" for us!

As the year turns, January provides another opportunity to take stock, reflect, and recommit ourselves to our goals. This cycle of reflection, re-evaluation, and planning occurs regularly throughout instruction. But in the spirit of the holiday, I want to share with you some of the areas of focus this year for us at Point Vicente.

We have a long-standing program led by parents who serve as docents for Hands-On Science lessons. We are now working on aligning with the Next Generation Science Standards, and have extended this program to all grade levels thanks to the support of our PTA. We have also worked with the PTA to provide opportunities for parents to get together informally to strengthen friendships and welcome new families. Room Parents are the vital link in

keeping parents up to speed, and so I am also hosting "New Family Meetings" to help support parents as they adjust to their new school. We want our families to build strong connections with each other, and with the school.

Keeping parents informed and providing helpful information and updates is one of our most important efforts. We use a variety of tools to serve the needs of our parent community and build communication success. Our webpage, at [pointvicente.pvpusd.net](http://pointvicente.pvpusd.net), is organized to include everything we think would be helpful for parents to use, and they can also sign up for email notices when the information is updated. We use Signal Kit to send emails and texts. Our PTA Newsletter is also emailed home weekly and posted on our webpage. Our twitter ([BethHadley@PointVLight](mailto:BethHadley@PointVLight)) provides snapshots of special events at school.

As a faculty, we work together to set goals that will align with the district's goals for the coming years. Our process of reflection and refocusing our efforts continues, and always with the aim of meeting the emotional and educational needs of our precious students.

## Palos Verdes *High School*

600 Cloyden Rd., Palos Verdes, Estates, CA 90274-1869 • 310/378-8471



**Charles Park, Ed.D.**  
*Principal*

### Developing Your Passion

Happy New Year, Sea Kings! It is not easy to come up with new resolutions each year, and so this time I asked around to hear those of others. Danny Barbara, our associate principal and excellent colleague, said it best: "To be a better me!"

The simplicity yet complexity of this statement rings true for all of us. It is incumbent to look at the brighter side of things and enjoy all that we can get out of life, and to simply "be a better me" this year than last.

My own resolution is to work even harder to be a better principal for Palos Verdes High School, always realizing that leadership is about teamwork and learning new skills to achieve higher levels of learning. I believe that Palos

Verdes High School can be all things to all students; where everyone can find joy in what they are good at, and further develop their own passion for a subject, project, sport, or activity.

I also know that 2018 will bring a year of opportune challenges met with the highest expectations, all to put our Sea Kings in the best position to learn from their experiences.

Life is about being okay with making mistakes and becoming better because of them. So I encourage our students to not be afraid of making their own mistakes, and to stay away from being perfect. Rather, go for it! Even if you fail, you will always have our support to get back up, and become even better individuals because you took that chance.

So, in 2018, be a "better you" this year, and go for it!

## Palos Verdes Peninsula *High School*

27118 Silver Spur Rd., Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274-2300 • 310/377-4888



**Brent Kuykendall**  
*Principal*

### Balanced Perspective

I, like many, spend time at the beginning of each year reflecting on the past while also looking to the future. This is an important balance, although it is easy to focus on one or the other. I believe we are not setting ourselves up for success unless we look at both.

I started off this school year speaking to the faculty. This made me think about the long history of the school, both as Peninsula and Rolling Hills High School. I shared that honoring and learning about the history of the institution is essential if we hope to continue to move forward and grow. Sometimes, we can make the mistake of looking only at what we think needs to be done instead of taking the time to truly understand where we have been. This can lead to making quick decisions instead of slowing down to learn from our past and asking a few more questions.

Then as I looked forward, I asked myself, what do we need to continue to grow and achieve at a high level? How are we reflecting on our practices and adjusting to the changing needs of all stakeholders? The world is constantly evolving, and our students need to be prepared for what they will face in the future. I came to the opinion that future success begins with a plan, a roadmap or a goal. We are fortunate to have many driven students, supportive parents and a talented team at Peninsula to help with this process. But do not underestimate the significance of a goal; without one, the likelihood of your growth will be limited.

So, as we all look toward the second half of the school year, I suggest keeping balance in your perspective. As important as it is to look toward and plan for the future, do not underestimate learning from the lessons of the past. Our success will be determined by a combination of understanding where we have been while also creating a plan for the future.



## Rancho del Mar *High School*

38 Crest Road West, Rolling Hills, CA 90274-5058 • 310/377-6691



**Micah Farrell**  
*Principal*

### **Gaining Perspective**

Being a principal, a teacher or a staff member at a continuation high school will constantly exercise your commitment and resolve as a professional educator. Even the most idealistic new teachers and administrators have undoubtedly questioned their effectiveness in reaching students at a continuation high school. Personally, there were days when I have felt frustration and

disappointment, but those times, in retrospect, were the days that I grew as a professional and as a person. I believe that the challenges in our lives give us great opportunities to become more than we are. Those times of challenge also make the positive moments in which I am able to help a student through a difficult situation, fill out a FAFSA, or simply tell a student that I was happy to see them even sweeter and more satisfying.

Lines between personal and professional can become blurred when your heart and soul are invested in supporting students in achieving their goals. Therefore, self-inventory and honest disclosure will require a sense of

vulnerability and humbleness, especially as the principal of a school who is willing to divulge this information before colleagues and community. My commitment to my current and future students is to meet resistance with compassion, doubt with reassurance, anger with care and instability with consistency. There are no battles to be fought, no wars to win when students step foot on our campus; we are solution focused. Being solution focused means we take a moment to discuss the how or why we got to a place but then quickly shift our energy towards developing what we are going to do to get back on track.

Lastly, I commit to providing unconditional care and support to my students. I have found through unconditionally supporting students, relationships of trust can be forged. Then, when I need to be the authoritarian with a young person, the message is better received. Sometimes, I don't need to say a thing, but because of a trust, students know what is expected of them. Young people, no matter what they may say, want to make adults proud and in turn be praised for a job well done.

I wish all a very prosperous, happy and healthy New Year!

## Rancho Vista *Elementary School*

4323 Palos Verdes Drive North, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274-1576 • 310/378-8388



**Salvatrice Kuykendall**  
*Principal*

### **Commitment**

Character traits like "commitment" are not born in us, but are purposely developed. The question then becomes, how we can develop this important skill in our children? How can we teach them the value of commitment and ownership?

We know that children learn best by modeling. So about three years ago I made a commitment to myself and my family that I would complete my doctoral degree.

Unbeknownst to me, not only was I modeling the value of education, I was also exhibiting the importance of the act of commitment.

Because of the great commitment that I had made, there were many times in which I could not attend a family outing, or stay up late to watch a movie, or enjoy sleeping in on the weekends. Through conversations and modeling, my own children understood that while there were many times that I would have preferred to play instead of work, I had already made the commitment to complete my degree. I had realized that every moment I spent working towards my degree was bringing me closer to it.

Setting goals and commitments with your children are things that you are already teaching them. When you discuss a story about those who have persevered through a

challenge to stay committed to their goals, you are actually teaching them about the value of commitment.

Getting children involved in household chores is a great and tangible way to teach them about the commitment of keeping their household running. Taking care of a pet also teaches ownership and commitment. As parents, we must discover the delicate balance of encouraging our children to go beyond what they think they can do. Teaching children the act of commitment takes practice, patience, and sometimes even bravery. But this "stick-with-it" mentality is something that they will respect their entire lives.

Things that you can do to teach your children commitment include giving them the opportunity to commit to something. You can also talk to them about the importance of not complaining or procrastinating. Also, have a conversation about commitment and responsibility. Teach them to persevere or "tough it out." Give examples of great people who have committed and achieved. And, have them think about how things would have been different if they had decided to quit.

Bringing to light the realization that commitment, perseverance, and ownership is an important leadership trait that we can all pass along to our children. It will allow them to not only become more successful as they reach adulthood, but also be more confident individuals.

## Ridgecrest *Intermediate School*

28915 Northbay Rd., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-4902 • 310/544-2747



**Jaime Mancilla**  
*Principal*

### **A Positive Resolution**

The new year brings New Year's resolutions. And while I have my annual personal resolution of eating healthier, I also started reflecting on what my commitments are as the principal of Ridgecrest Intermediate School. After assessing for a few months, I have a better understanding of who we are at Ridgecrest.

Through observations and conversations with teachers, parents, and students, I have learned that everyone here is committed to providing the best educational experience for our students. Aside from continuously monitoring our progress in this area, I was still left to contemplate what to commit to...until last week. After a recent visit to another intermediate school, I found an area of focus that I would like us to commit to for 2018 and beyond.

Last week several teachers and I were invited to visit Lorbeer Middle School in Diamond Bar to see how their school implements Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a system-wide framework for creating and maintaining safe and effective learning environments in schools. Simply put, it flips the traditional practice of reacting to a student's inappropriate behavior

with negative consequences by focusing on explicitly teaching and reinforcing positive, appropriate behaviors in school.

We visited the school because it is in its fourth year implementing PBIS, and we were truly inspired by the experience. On our drive back home, we could not stop talking about the positive impact PBIS has made on their school and how we would love to see the same at our school. We came away from the visit realizing how a system-wide commitment to promoting positive behavior can only improve a school culture and climate.

In order to be successful in this commitment, this change will take time. Lorbeer was not ready to invite us to their school until their fourth year. Changing a system's culture is like turning around a cruise ship—it requires the effort and buy-in of everyone involved, and it is a slow process. However, the results are worth the effort. Fortunately, we started implementing PBIS at Ridgecrest last year, so we are already moving in the right direction. Hopefully, a year or two from now, we can invite others to our school to show them the way we do things here at Ridgecrest.

I wish each of you a wonderful new year and success in your resolutions and commitments.

## Silver Spur *Elementary School*

5500 Ironwood St., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-1739 • 310/378-5011



**Marta Jevenois-Richardson**  
*Principal*

### **Miraculous Grapes for New Year**

The beginning of a new calendar year is often paired up with resolutions and commitments for the year. As a good Spaniard, I start my New Year eating 12 grapes, one for each stroke of midnight. This is a tradition I have rigorously followed since I was little, no matter what country of the world I find myself in when midnight strikes and a New Year begins.

My first 12 seconds of the New Year are definitely intense as I focus on eating all 12 of the "miraculous grapes" that symbolize 12 lucky months ahead. As a tradition of my own, I often say a "wish", "commitment" and/or "resolution" along with each stroke of midnight and each grape.

As a principal and foremost, as a teacher and an educator, these are my 12 resolutions/commitments for Silver Spur Elementary for 2018:

1. Support ALL students in their social and emotional well-being.
2. Continue being visible at drop off, pick up, on the playground and in the classrooms.
3. Teach in the classroom, at assemblies and at District

meetings

4. Continue professional development on Mindfulness with all stakeholders.
5. Continue creating a culture of positivity and a culture where everyone takes care of one another.
6. Be fair and reasonable.
7. Help all stakeholders find a solution to their problems. Remain calm, consider all options and offer a completely unbiased opinion to settle the matter.
8. Support all stakeholders in wanting to contribute and make a difference in our children.
9. Enhance communication and collaboration among all stakeholders.
10. Support teachers and staff in teaching and learning.
11. Recognize and celebrate individual students' strengths and talents.
12. Collect and assess data to drive interventions and provide differentiated instruction to all students.

May these New Year's resolutions help us make this year our best year ever!!! Thank you for your support.

## Soleado *Elementary School*

27800 Longhill Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-3909 • 310/377-6854



**Gina Stutzel**  
*Principal*

### **Finding that Balance**

It's time for the tradition of making resolutions for the upcoming year. Customarily we begin each New Year looking into the future and deciding how we can better ourselves. I follow this tradition as well, and try to find ways to improve on something new every year.

This year my focus is on wellness, not just for me, but for my staff and students at Soleado. At the beginning of the school year we made a pledge to find new ways to support effective wellness goals for our students, while at the same time focusing on personal wellness. Working closely with my staff has always

been a top priority. Supporting both their professional and personal goals is vital to a healthy learning environment.

At the start of the new year, I had individual conversations with my staff about how I can best support their personal development. Our discussions generated common themes like positivity, kindness, modeling resilience, relationship building, and continued learning.

After our thoughtful conversations, I quickly recognized that "balance" was a common focus. So in moving forward, I will continue to support my staff in creating new ways to have a balanced lifestyle. This includes everything from student work and expectations to personal growth and wellness. I'm excited about the productive year ahead, and welcome everyone to follow in our footsteps and create their own "balanced" 2018.



## Vista Grande *Elementary School*

7032 Purple Ridge Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-3059 • 310/377-6066



**Jeri Delatorre**  
*Principal*

### **A Time to Reflect**

The observance of New Year's Day usually leads one to consider the victories and struggles of the prior year, while also making plans for the year to come. For instance, when considering the challenges faced in 2017, do you wish that you could take a "do-over" on some of your own choices and decisions?

Recess is an intentional part of the elementary school day. A universal and timeless part of playing games includes "do-overs." Remember those? When players cannot decide if a player is out, they are allowed a do-over. That's because children have an innate understanding of trying again. This is the mindset that we strive to bring into the classrooms, and which we call a "growth" mindset. It views mistakes as opportunities to "do over" in order to learn.

While it may seem that projects, reports, and tests are high-stakes events, in reality they are a part of the growth

process. Assessments are opportunities to ask questions like, "What did I learn? What went well? Can I do anything differently next time?"

However, the stakes are different for us as parents. Your child will only be five once. You have only one chance to impact your child when she is eight, because she will very shortly be nine ... and then 17. The busyness of our daily routines can blind us to opportunities which will impact our children's lives on a daily basis, much less allow reflection about do-overs.

As 2018 begins, I encourage our parents to be "present" in the lives of their children. Sit down on the ground with them, look them in the eye, listen patiently to what they say, and notice what they show on their faces. Get to know their friends. Play their video games. Listen to their music. Read their books. Then share yourself, your dreams, your hopes, your values, your disappointments, and how you overcame them. Resolve to make each day with your child count.

Sure, we can make mistakes, and even ask for do-overs!

# Palos Verdes Library District

701 Silver Spur Rd., Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274 • 310/921-7500 • [www.pvld.org](http://www.pvld.org)



**Laura Henry**  
Young Readers  
Manager

## Resources Online with School ID

Calling all PVPUSD students! A treasure trove of free online library materials is just a few clicks away! With the new virtual Student Success Card, students can download e-books, read digital magazines or newspaper articles, and get online help from certified tutors. No physical (plastic) library card is needed.

So how does a student use a Student Success Card? It couldn't be easier! Every student already has a virtual card, assigned to his or her name. The "card" is actually a special number, easy to remember because part of it consists of the school district's previously issued six-digit student ID number. The Student Success Card number looks like this: 29350888xxxxxxx where xxxxxx is the student's unique ID number.

### How it Works

Armed with a personal Student Success Card number, all a student has to do is:

- Go to the Palos Verdes Library District website—[www.pvld.org](http://www.pvld.org)—and click on "Research" near the top of the home page.
- Choose the desired resource. (Options include Brainfuse, World Book Online, eBooks, *Los Angeles*

*Times*, Magazines, Novelist K-8 Plus, etc. Only Kanopy and Hoopla will not work with the Student Success Card—those services still require a traditional library card number for access.)

- Enter the 14-digit Student Success Card number.
- If the system prompts for a last name, enter "student".
- (No other information is required, thus, student privacy.)
- Start exploring!

### A Joint Effort

Creating the Student Success Card was a joint effort between PVPUSD and PVLVD. The goal is for PVLVD to share its digital library of research and homework help tools (as well as its collection of e-books) with as many K-12 students as possible. With the development of the Student Success Card, every student has easy access to these resources. There are no fines, and the card never expires.

For even more library materials such as print books, DVDs, and CDs, students still need a traditional library card, which is free of charge and easy to get. Just visit any PVLVD location with a parent or guardian to get your card, then explore our amazing collection of everything from hilarious graphic novels to amazing nonfiction to award-winning fiction.

Questions or comments? Speak to a librarian at one of PVLVD's branches, or contact us at [pvld.org/contact](http://pvld.org/contact).



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## PVP Council of PTAs

### Happy New Year

By Selina Lai, Council President / Nancy Shafer, Council EVP

A toast was made; a glass was raised; celebratory cheers and claps were heard; songs were sung to bring in the new year. 2018–Winter Olympics, World Cup Soccer, midterm elections. The world will be watching how these events unfold. Locally, in 2018 the PVP Council of PTAs resolves to continue to serve our community and focus on listening, learning and leading so that our PTA units can best meet the needs of our parents, students and teachers.

During my term as PTA Council President, I am most proud of the opportunities I have had to resolve community concerns through dialogue. Recognizing the value of personal communication with those we serve has been an important lesson for me. Sometimes when we learn through dialogue and discussion that the path forward means changing the status quo, it is hard to find a way to keep the community on your side as a partner in tough decisions. Knowing that the PVP Council of PTAs is always working to stay true to our mandate to “positively impact the lives of all children and families”, our PTA members can trust that we will keep the channels of communication open this year, and listen to your ideas to serve our community. We look to our members to guide us to make decisions that will sustain, secure and support PTA leadership at the PVP Council of PTAs.

Wishing you a 2018 that satisfies your hopes and dreams, and includes a bit of PTA service!

## Apprehension’s Blanket



Kan S.

Heisei Year 29 (2017): All-Japan Soroban Championships at the Kyoto International Conference Center in Kyoto, Japan

“Halt!” The utterance whipped through the silence, swift and deadly, cleaving the concentration of the contestants mercilessly, sending a shot of electricity through my fervent fingers. At once, hands leaped back to laps and the chamber filled with a hushed, sudden silence. Years of extensive perseverance and exhaustive praxis had gone into the three-and-a-half minutes before, the pinnacle of a soroban practitioner’s career, the best of adroit fingers nudging wooden beads. Though at a meager 4 dan – advanced level – and with only eight years of training, the same cloud of fearful anticipation lay from over myself to the most adept of masters, all dan-level and hand-picked from their respective institutions, filling all with doubt and anxiety; none were sanguine. Nevertheless, every entrant tensed as an elastic when the Flash Anzan rounds, where participants would mentally calculate substantial sets of digits as they fulgurated on a screen in the space of several seconds, was gravely announced.

Kan Shimada is an eighth-grader and an avid eight-year soroban practitioner who has participated in the All-Japan Soroban Championships, among others and holds, Pre-4 dan level, holding true to his Japanese heritage; however, he aspires for 5 dan in both soroban and mental calculations. One of his chief interests, besides every manner of learning, is the art of the soroban, a mighty coalition of wooden beads and pearls that has granted him great skill over the years. This is the 2nd issue amongst three.

## Things in the Sky–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 PVPUSD in the subject line.

Entries must be received by March 15, 2017

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

STARS	URANUS
SUN	RAIN
MOON	SNOW
AIRPLANE	SLEET
KITE	WIND
BALLOON	CLOUDS
JUPITER	SMOG
MARS	FOG
MERCURY	PLUTO
SATURN	RAINBOW



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