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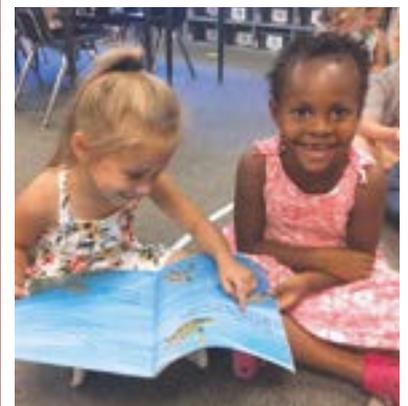
Covering the Los Alamitos Unified School District



Volume 15, Issue 79

December 2018 / January 2019

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College Day



Dr. Sherry Kropp
Superintendent

Making kids aware of college as a real part of their future can have a powerful and positive effect on achievement. For that reason, college is part of the conversation for every student from the time they enroll in Los Alamitos Unified. The first Wednesday of every month, for example, is College Day, and even preschoolers can be spotted wearing the emblems and colors of institutions of higher learning.

This year, we have embarked on an even more meaningful and practical way to guide our students toward college and make it more accessible. We have partnered with Cypress College to create a dual-enrollment program in which Los Alamitos High students can take any of college classes after the regular school day on the high school campus and receive college credit.

Fall course offerings, taught by Cypress College faculty at no cost to students, included multivariable calculus, business, sociology, and counseling. A fifth class, part of the Cybersecurity Pathway, is open to Los Alamitos High students and is held at Cypress College on Saturday mornings.

The classes offered by Cypress serve two purposes. The Cybersecurity Pathway can provide students with industry-based certificates that verifies that they meet requirements to successfully enter the workforce. Other classes satisfy freshman/sophomore level general education requirements for transferring to colleges and majors at UC/CSU campuses. The dual-enrollment classes offer Griffins an option, other than AP courses, to earn college credit.

Cypress College recruiters were back in campus this fall to engage students for Spring 2019 courses. In addition, Los Alamitos High students who enroll in the college classes receive priority registration at Cypress for other pre-selected courses. This benefit makes Griffins more likely to complete two years of college.

During the semester, a Cypress College counselor assigned to Los Alamitos High visits the school weekly to meet with any dual-enrollment students who need assistance or who want to discuss future opportunities in higher education.

We are very excited about this program and its potential for igniting unlimited possibilities in our students.



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Covering the

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the advertisers in this publication.

Superintendent Dr. Kropp begins this issue on page 3 with information about the District partnership with Cypress College. The Board of Education continues with positive news on page 5 with updates for this school year.

As we go to print with this issue, our thoughts and prayers are with the many families who have lost their homes in the fires throughout the state from Southern to Northern CA. During the holidays giving is always greater. Please remember there will be more people in need this year far beyond the holiday season.

Our community has always been mindful of those in need. Donut City in Seal Beach is a perfect example of the power of social media and a caring community. Children learn by example and the examples surround them daily as the needs are great.

Thank you for always including *School News* among your reading choices (Feb, Apr, June, Oct, Dec). February 6, 2019 is our next issue.

Be sure to enter our Word Search Contest on page 13.

Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



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Academics, Athletics, Activities and Arts

From the Board of Education

With the school year starting a month earlier for Los Al students the depth and range of fall accomplishments in the 4As—Academics, Athletics, Activities and the Arts—is especially impressive.

The latest release of state testing results brought fantastic news: Los Alamitos Unified ranks tied for #1 in Orange County in both mathematics and English Language Arts and in the Top 10 among unified districts statewide. The strong performance reflects, in part, a continuing focus from elementary to high school on common signature practices and teacher training. Across the district, for example, students in grades 6-12 participate in an innovative program called Modeling Mondays, in which all students tackle the same complex mathematics problem. Through discourse and application of various skills, students devise a range of strategies for finding a solution. In addition, a cohort of math teachers from both middle schools and Los Alamitos High School traveled to Stanford University to receive training on the importance of the mathematical mindset, as part of the Secondary Math Collaborative, a formalized consortium of teachers focused on student success in mathematics. An added highlight this school year is that both Oak and McAuliffe middle schools are fielding teams to compete in the American Mathematics Competition.

Schools at every level are also hard at work expanding the STEAM program to include opportunities for students to dive deep into topics such as math, coding and engineering. Schools at every level are implementing the Next Generation Science Standards, which emphasize strong core skills, investigation and engineering and the connection between scientific disciplines. One school, for example, has introduced Raspberry Pi programmable digital logic boards into its fifth-grade classrooms to promote computer science at an early age.

In the athletic arena, Los Alamitos High has continued its legacy of dominance across fall sports.

Football, boys' water polo, girls golf, boys' cross country were all Sunset League champions and moved on to CIF playoffs. Girls volleyball won the CIF Division II championship and moved on to the state finals. Part of the success is no doubt due to the extraordinary spirit student fans bring to the athletic games. The Los Alamitos High Student Section—lovingly dubbed the “Los Al Locos,” was twice voted best student section in Orange County during the football season and ranked #2 of all OC schools to win the Spirit Award in the OC Varsity Challenge.

Activities are the third of the 4As, and, since we now are in the season of giving, Los Alamitos Unified students have become highly active in philanthropy. Los Alamitos High's Interact Club began its annual “Dear Santa” Drive to provide much needed clothing, supplies and toys to local families in need. The Griffins Reaching Out leadership class staged a morning of “positive picketing” and began a monthly Start With Hello campaign of welcoming students, parents and staff to campus with posters of greeting and contagious smiles. Los Alamitos Drama students organized a drive to collect hundreds of pounds of food for a local food bank. Other students hosted a blood drive where 83 students and staff donated enough blood to save 249 lives. Government students volunteered to work a 16-hour day assisting voters at polling places across Orange County in the recent election. In addition, each of our elementary and middle school sites host a variety of activities that teach our students to give to others during the holiday season.

Oak and McAuliffe staged a first-ever summit for all 6th graders to give them support and guidance on how to be compassionate, responsible and welcoming toward others. The summit, which began last year with the planning phase, will be made annual and expanded to include seventh- and eighth-graders. Elementary schools also implement a range of activities to foster positive human interactions, such as character counts, PBIS (Positive

See **BOARD OF EDUCATION** • Page 14

Community

There was a time when America was rural and everyone knew his or her neighbor. The community would rally and lend a helping hand when one of the community had a setback. A barn burned down and neighbors would show up to rebuild, or a farmer had an accident and could not plow his field and others would show up with a team of horses or a tractor to plow for the injured farmer. The communication system was a general store or a wooden box phone on the wall that had "party lines" on which neighbors would listen in to conversations. One ring was your line, and two rings were someone else's line; and if you had nothing to do, why not listen in to the conversation? It was a good system for knowing what was happening in the community. We look back at those days with nostalgia for times passed by.

Then in the 1960s, the wall phone became a plastic box in various colors on the wall, with a phone cord that could reach any room in the house so that a parent could watch the children running around the house while on the phone. The party lines were also almost a thing of the past. The community had become more urban and mobile, and communication was done at PTA meetings, play days or the market to find out what was happening in the community.

By the 1990s, the community information system was beginning to move to the new *www* and flip phones.

that connected the community to the larger world for information. There was a flood of information being delivered to the community each day. Local information was getting lost in the mix.

That all changed in 2004 with Facebook. Local community information started to become available on new electronic systems: Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and local social networks. One of these is Nextdoor.com, which is a free private social network for neighborhood communities. The impact of these networks can be seen in a recent national news story.

Our own Seal Beach Donut City owner's wife had a medical problem, and Dawn Caviola posted on Nextdoor an idea to help. People continue to show up daily at the store and buy all of his doughnuts so that the owner can get to the hospital to help his wife with recovery. The news media picked up the story, and it went national and worldwide.

That nostalgia for the community of the past is not gone. The major relief efforts after fires, tornadoes and hurricanes at times dwarf small local relief events. Local communities still take care of their neighbors.

D.H.Coop is a retired fire/paramedic and retired teacher having taught IB and AP World History 30 years. He continues to substitute, tutor and consult. www.HistoryDepot.com

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Keeping Kids Safe This Holiday Season



Aileen Imai **Danny Luna**
*Injury prevention coordinators,
Injury Prevention Program,
MemorialCare Miller Children's &
Women's Hospital Long Beach*

The holiday season is an exciting time. Unfortunately, it's also one of the busiest times of the year for emergency departments. There are steps families can take to protect their kids from common holiday dangers.

Choose the Right Toys for the Right Ages

Choking on toys or ingesting something they shouldn't brings a lot of kids to the hospital during the holidays.

When choosing a gift for a child, it's important to know that it's appropriate for the child's age, has a secure battery hatch if batteries are required, and contains no small or moving parts that could be swallowed accidentally.

Even if the toy is safe for an older child, a toddler can swallow a part that's been left lying about. Older siblings should be taught that potentially dangerous items be kept out of reach of their younger siblings.

Decorate Safely

Brightly colored decorations and live Christmas trees are big parts of holiday celebrations, but even they pose potential dangers to children.

Christmas trees cause many fires each year, so it's important that they are purchased fresh and are watered every day. In addition, parents should use lights designed for the proper outdoor and indoor use. Surge protectors and lighting cords should be unplugged completely at the end of the day, not just switched off.

Injury Prevention Experts

The Injury Prevention Program at MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach cares about keeping kids safe – not just during the holidays, but all year long. Learn more at MillerChildrens.org/InjuryPrevention.



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Hopkinson *Elementary*

12582 Kensington Rd., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 • 562/799-4500 • www.losal.org



Evelyn Garcia
Principal

Project-Based Instruction

Hopkinson teachers are diving into the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). With NGSS, students learn through the discovery of various phenomena, and they use their knowledge to solve real-life problems.

At Hopkinson, all teachers make sure that students can demonstrate a mastery of science concepts

by providing hands-on, inquiry-based learning experiences that incorporate science process skills and the scientific method. Technology is used to give students access to scientific experiences, models, and current academic research pertinent to their learning. STEAM projects are also used to reinforce the engineering design process and provide a real-life connection.

From TK to the fifth grade, our Huskies are discovering new knowledge through collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. Children are engaged in the discovery of knowledge. It is a joy to see our students learning through project-based instruction.



Lee *Elementary*

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



Amy Laughlin
Principal

Power of 'Yet'

The staff at Lee has studied and taken great pride in learning how a growth mindset can influence the outcome of student success. We know a child's brain, like any muscle, gets stronger with practice. Dedication, hard work and perseverance contribute to students' talents and abilities. Having a growth mindset means that we have high expectations for all students. Our job is to allow students the opportunity to be faced

with challenges that require the development of critical-thinking skills. We believe that if it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you.

Recently, our students participated in a schoolwide assembly focused on discovering how to activate their growth mindset to overcome social, emotional and academic challenges. Teachers followed up with lessons on the "power of *yet*" to reinforce the power of believing that you truly can improve with practice. Students at Lee encourage and empower classmates with positive messages throughout the day to emphasize the "power of *yet*!"



Los Alamitos *Elementary*

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



Kindness is Key

Los Alamitos Elementary School (LAE) has taken big steps this year to help promote kindness!

We have begun a new program to reward those amazing Tigers who do random acts of kindness with our first-ever “Kindness Award.” So far, students have been recognized at our Friday Flag Ceremonies for standing up to bullies and for picking up trash. In the coming months, LAE will continue to recognize the students who go out of their way to promote random acts of kindness around our school.

Gary Willems
Principal



Another way that LAE is promoting kindness is through our new mentorship program. Fifth-grade students are mentoring a specific student in the third grade. The fourth grade is mentoring a second-grade student, and the third grade is mentoring a first-grade student.

This mentorship program has shown our Tigers that the younger students look up to them and want to model their behavior. By turning our older students into mentors, we have dramatically improved our behavior and the amount of kindness demonstrated at LAE!

Los Alamitos *High School*

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



Los Al Locos Bump Up School Spirit

Our Los Al Locos have brought a new meaning to school spirit. Led by ASB Spirit Commissioners Emma Giacomini, Jake Maffett, and Halimoht Rasheed, the Locos were started this year as a way to be more inclusive of all students, not just ASB.

Dr. Gregg Stone
Principal

Cheers are designed and led by ASB as well as any of the Locos. The group meets prior to each game to discuss the cheers and posters that will be used.

A highlight for the Locos thus far was when the OC Varsity section of the OC Register named the Los Alamitos Locos as the “Student Section-of-the-Week.” As Emma

Giacomini shared, “The Locos have been showing up to games all season.

Homecoming 2018 was legendary because of the parting of the Red Sea, one of the biggest rollercoasters in Los Al history, and that win from our football team.”



Jake Maffett revs up the Haunted Homecoming crowd versus Newport Harbor in early October.



Spirit Commissioners Rasheed Halomoht, Jake Maffeett, and Emma Giacomini lead the crowd in the famed Los Al rollercoaster during a break at the girls' volleyball game.

McAuliffe *Middle School*

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



Dr. Ryan Weiss-Wright
Principal

McAuliffe "C.A.R.E.S."

This October McAuliffe 6th grade students participated in a Summit focused on character

education. The 2018 McAuliffe 6th Grade Summit was aimed at developing social-emotional competencies, how the brain works, and creating a culture of inclusion, compassion, and empathy.

We are so proud of our students for their thoughtful approach to the work we did during this Summit.



McGaugh *Elementary*

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



Roni Ellis
Principal

Got Breakfast?

We do at J.H. McGaugh Elementary School! We have been hearing for years that breakfast is the most important meal of the day because it kick-starts our metabolism, helping us to burn calories throughout the day. It also gives us energy,

which enables us to focus at work and at school. What a great opportunity to make sure that our children are getting the nutrition they need to develop better memory and concentration by having a healthy and balanced breakfast!

We invite our parents to join their children in the mornings for breakfast at school, and we provide the parents with hot coffee! Don't mini maple pancakes and syrup sound

delicious? How about our glazed French toast or a Sea Lion sausage muffin with a choice of cereal? See all of our breakfast menu selections online. You, too, can be a member of our Breakfast Club!

Get your fuel and nutrition first thing in the morning to guarantee a great day of learning at McGaugh.



Students were excited to see the administrative team promoting their new breakfast program.



Erin Kominsky
Principal

Sixth-Grade Summit

In October, Oak Middle School hosted the very first C.A.R.E.S. summit for all sixth-grade students. The summit was created to establish a foundation for all students at Oak so that together we can be a cohesive community that shows *compassion, action, responsibility, empathy* and *support*.

Students attended workshops throughout the school day that included tools for students to develop social/emotional skills. Social and emotional learning helps students to integrate skills,

attitudes and behaviors to deal effectively and ethically with daily challenges. Workshops included developing skills in self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and responsible decision making. Mindfulness, creating connections and character/community building were just some of the highlights from the day.

Our goals are to be an inclusive campus where *everyone* belongs. The communication guidelines learned today will serve as a common language for all students and adults on the Oak campus. We thank LAEF and the Los Alamitos School District for their generous sponsorship of this program.



Rossmoor *Elementary*

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



Amy Belsha
Principal

Kindergarten Reading Super-Powers!

BANG! POW! WOW! Our kindergarteners have been busy activating their Super-Powers in Reading Workshop. We have been celebrating our students' growth as readers by using a variety of reading strategies such as Pointer Power, Snap-Word Power, Reread Power, Pattern Power and Picture Power. Our talented teachers have been spending time teaching them how to work with a reading

partner. This also has helped build our students' confidence and critical-thinking skills.

As our littlest Knights grow in their reading skills, we are also noticing a building sense of community in our classrooms. The skills our Knights learn in kindergarten really do set the solid foundation for each grade to build upon every year. We are very proud to see the growth that our kindergarteners have made as readers and look forward to their reading adventures throughout the year.



Weaver *Elementary*

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



Dr Robert Briggerman
Principal

Partners in Education

At Weaver, we value our parent partners. There are so many meaningful ways that our parents can support us and provide the best opportunities for their students.

One way is through active participation on campus. Many of our parents volunteer in classrooms to help support their children's teacher. Many also bring their professional expertise to teach various lessons that enrich student learning.

The Weaver PTA and Friends of Weaver (FOW), our two main parent organizations, also arrange for field trips, assemblies, art and music education, and STEAM education. These programs extend student learning and



Weaver parents volunteer at the Scholastic Book Fair on Friday, November 9.

provide real-world contexts for the curriculum. Parents also volunteer their time in the main office, our copy center, or the reading garden. There are many additional ways to actively participate on campus.

To parents, I extend our heartfelt gratitude. An actively involved parent community assists our teachers and staff in delivering greater learning

opportunities for students. Through these opportunities, we work as a team to maximize our students' education, and often form life-long bonds!

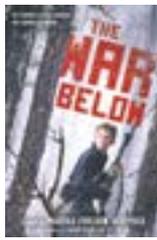
Keira's Book Nook



Keira

One Boy's Struggle

The War Below is based on true events from World War II. Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch is known for her historical non-fiction, including *Making Bombs for Hitler*.



In this novel Luka, the main character, must return to his family. Luka knows if he does not find his family they will end up dead like his grandpa and best friend. Have you ever wondered what it would be like to rely solely on instinct to survive? Well Luka has been forced to figure it out at a young age. Every moment Luka is in a constant battle for his life as he travels around the world to escape the war. However, Luka soon learns that there is no longer any safe haven.

The author keeps you on your feet, but does not include enough detail and background story of the characters. I rate this book a 3 out of 5 apples.

Keira is a 7th grader who loves to read. She also enjoys crafts, traveling, soccer and playing with her cats. Her reviews are rated from 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest.

Los Alamitos-Rossmoor Branch Library

12700 Montecito Rd., Seal Beach CA 90740 • 562/430-1048 • www.ocpl.org



Semra Bilsel
Branch Manager

Tech Tutor Service

The Los Alamitos/Rossmoor Library has launched a new "Tech Tutor" service to our patrons. It is personalized one on one computer tutoring for all ages.

The tutoring can range from basic internet searching to email account inquiries.

It's a very popular service at the Library so join the fun in learning about areas of technology that is of interest to you.

Reservations are required so please contact the Library at for more information or to reserve space for tutoring.

Exciting December Programs Coming Up:

12/18 - 4:00pm — STEAM program intended for ages 5-10 where we get creative with fun projects. Supplies are limited so call us to register.

12/20 - 11:00am & 3:30pm — Gingerbread House Decorating with supplies being provided by the Library. Reservations can be made for 1/2 hour slots from 11:00am-1:00pm and 3:30pm-5:30pm.

12/5 & 12/19 -4:00pm — Little Architects for ages 4 and up to experience and share in creativity with Legos and Duplos.

Road Trip—Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put LAUSD in the subject line.

Entries must be received by January 15, 2019

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble

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CAR GAMES	CREDIT CAR
BOOTS	SPARE TIRE
SNACKS	



Behavior Intervention and Support), Start with Hello, Bucket Filling Activities, and Buddy Benches. Many of the schools pair older and younger students together to yield both social and academic benefits. Rossmoor Elementary, for example, took the cross-age concept to another level by sorting the entire student body into houses — akin to those at Hogwarts in the “Harry Potter” novels — to create a sense of community, camaraderie and connection between students and staff of all ages. Reaching out to connect with the larger community is another important activity for the district. National Walk/Bike to School Day was a great example with parents, police officers, firefighters and neighbors turning out to encourage hundreds of elementary kids on their way to school.

The last of the 4As is the arts and Los Alamitos Unified remains a leader both locally and nationally. Los Alamitos High choirs have been named National Show Choir Champions for five consecutive years. Photography students have been featured winners in the prestigious Canon Spotlight Awards. Drama has consistently been recognized for outstanding performances at the local state and national level. Los Alamitos drama students took home top honors in their first major drama competition of the year against 23 other Orange County schools in a variety of acting, singing, design and technical events. The marching band took 1st place at the Warren High Field Competition.

The jazz band performed for the first time at the invitation Disney Community Arts Showcase and is auditioning for slots at the Monterey Next Generation Jazz Festival and the Essentially Ellington Festival at New York’s Lincoln Center. The orchestra also performed at the Disney Showcase and has been accepted into the Philharmonic Society of Orange County High School Orchestra Festival at Segerstrom Hall.

In the middle schools, McAuliffe recently staged their “Shrek” performance which pulled together the talents of the choir, drama and instrumental music programs. Additionally, the orchestra performed for several city events. Oak staged a production of “Antigone” and a three-day run of “A Night on Broadway” by the school’s choirs.

The elementary schools offered a range of arts instruction and activities. Los Alamitos Elementary, for example, hosted its second annual Art Night, in which families create different art projects as they rotate through six stations. It was a great night with over 80 students in attendance and over 200 art projects made. All schools integrate arts lessons into the classroom curriculum and offer performance opportunities for students.

It’s hard to believe the year is already half over, but in looking back on what our students have accomplished this fall, it’s clear that none of this would be possible without the steadfast support of our families and partners who ensure that all students benefit from attending our schools and that Los Alamitos Unified remains a great place to be a kid!

Teachers See the Possibilities

At Oaks Christian School, Mary Kay Altizer applies her passion for the arts and educational technology as she leads the school’s performing arts department, including a cutting-edge digital recording and production program.



Oaks Christian School, Advanced Digital Recording Class, Performing Arts Chair, Mary Kay Altizer, M.A. '15

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Adopt, Don't Shop!

By Murlyn E. Burkes,
Cat Committee Liaison

There are many reasons to adopt an animal from a shelter. If you have ever adopted a cat or a dog from a shelter, you know the feeling that you get once you bring the animal home. Just think how the animal feels!

All animals at a shelter deserve a second chance. They may have been lost, given up or abandoned. Many are unwanted and helpless. By adopting them, you can give them a new life in a loving home.



Gretzky

Adult pets make great pets. Often, they are already house-trained, and some may know "Sit" or "Stay." You don't have to deal with the kitten or puppy stage, which means less chewing, biting, scratching or clawing. You will already see the personality of the animal, and you won't have to wait and see what you get.

Adoption fees at shelters are much less than purchasing an animal from a breeder who sells them for a profit. All animals that come through shelters receive veterinary care such as vaccinations, spay/neuter and wellness checks. They also are treated for fleas, and an experienced staff member has observed their behaviors prior to adoptions.

When your friends ask you where you adopted your wonderful pet, you tell them, "At a shelter." Your adoption may encourage others to do the same!

Sandra's TLC Child Care

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