

FREE

School News

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Covering the Monrovia Unified School District

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

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Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)

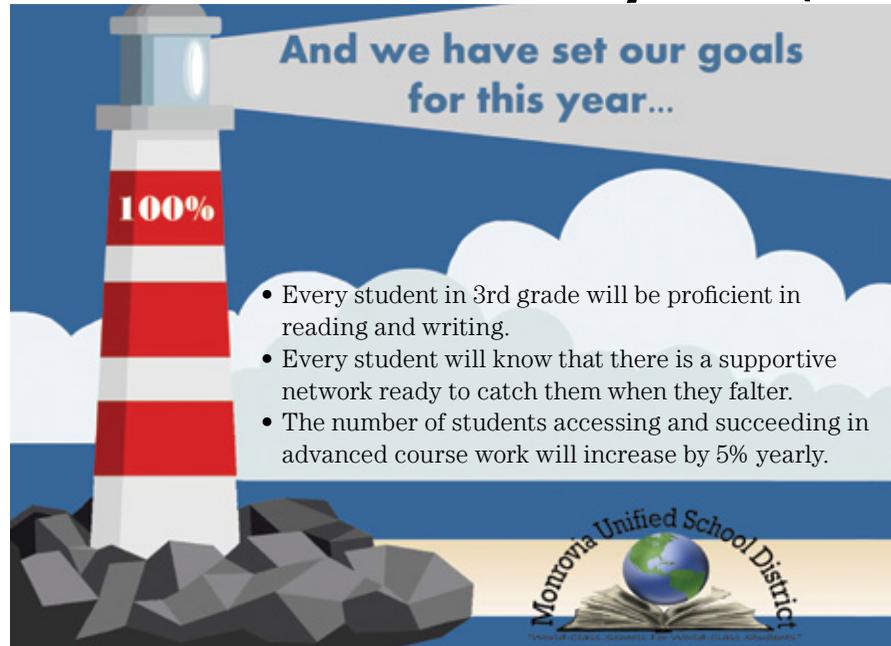


Dr. Katherine Thorossian

Last year, approximately 35 Monrovia Unified School District staff members, parents, and community volunteers spent their evenings reviewing student achievement data, and brainstorming opportunities to

develop a plan through which to increase and improve services to our underperforming students. This effort was launched following provisions included in California's new school funding formula requiring districts to develop, and annually update, a three-year Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) to identify goals and measure progress for student subgroups, across multiple performance indicators.

This team identified and prioritized three fundamental areas of need:



Monrovia Unified Sails the 7Cs:

Creativity, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Communication, Compassion, Community & Change.

Student Achievement: While many of our students excel, we are still not fully meeting the needs of our socio-economically disadvantaged students, our foster kids, our English Learners, and our special needs students – particularly as compared to student achievement levels in similar districts.

Third Grade Literacy – The transition from learning to read to reading to learn in third grade is foundational to student success. We will not be satisfied until 100% of our third graders meet or exceed proficiency levels in reading and writing.

Student and School

Connectedness – Students who are more connected to school, who feel that there is a trusted adult on campus to whom they can turn for support, are more likely to succeed. Our objective is to strengthen the ties between school and home by finding additional ways through which parents may get involved in the educational process.

This year, every school has aligned their resources with these LCAP goals to promote greater student success. They will monitor gains throughout the year in order to adjust accordingly. I look forward to reporting on our progress throughout the year.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

From the Board

In addition to the many wonderful initiatives taking place within our schools, this issue of School News highlights the many community partners upon whom we depend daily to promote student wellness and academic success. While, in the pages ahead, you will read about the myriad programs established throughout the city to support our students, it is in no way a comprehensive list. Indeed, we would be hard pressed to find a single group within our city that has not made a firm commitment to our schools. Rather, they have each found a way to bolster the educational and emotional strength of students.

During this season of thanks, we extend our gratitude and heartfelt appreciation to each of you who have made a positive difference in generations of Monrovians.

Board of Education



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27th Year Advocating for Students

This is Monrovia Schools Foundation's 27th year of providing support to the students of the Monrovia Unified School District. MSF supports and helps ensure a quality education for every child in the Monrovia Unified School District. As concerned, committed parents, citizens and advocates for education excellence, we raise funds, gather resources and act as a catalyst to involve the community in supporting public education. We celebrate the importance, value and achievement of our students, teachers and schools. By supporting our public schools, every day we make a difference in the lives of our children and add to the vitality of our community. Last school year we donated over \$70,000.00 to support school libraries, performing arts, music programs, teacher grants, college scholarships and the summer enrichment program. We would like to thank everyone who has donated to MSF. We couldn't make it happen without the support of our friends in the Monrovia Community.

We would like to invite everyone to help support Monrovia Schools Foundation. Your generous gift to the Foundation will help in supporting our mission to provide Monrovia students with a quality and enriching education.





A Grass-Roots Endeavor

By Joanne Spring, President



We proceed so all may read.

Fourteen years ago, representatives from the City, the MUSD, and the Chamber of Commerce gathered to discuss literacy, a concern the community chose to address collaboratively. As a result, MONROVIA READS, a grass-roots endeavor, was incorporated with a mission to provide and support an environment where reading is valued and resources are available so all may read. Fourteen years later its programs continue:

- A twice yearly "Read Across Monrovia" brings school children and the community together in a shared experience with literature.
- Financial support of a literacy van provides a circulating library with after school literacy and recreational programs.
- Financial support of a pro-active tutorial program offers struggling students added individual and small group assistance.
- Regular distribution of new books to families needing reading material at home.
- Mini-grants offering teachers class sets of selected literature.
- Financial support of public library summer reading programs and the development of little libraries throughout the city.



Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Fall is here and the students are focused on academics and Winter Break! The articles in this issue leave no doubt as to the District's focus on educating the whole child. With the many choices students have today it makes you want to go back into the classroom. In the coming months we will be reading more about the implementation of the Common Core Standards. Thank you for including *School News* among your reading choices.

Our next issue is January 14, 2015... Happy Thanksgiving, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! We are always mindful of our men and women in the armed forces and grateful for their service.

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Monrovia PTA Council

325 East Huntington Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016

Starting the School Year with a Bang

By Heather Warren, Council President

As the President of Monrovia PTA Council I am very proud of how our eight schools have begun this school year. We have five new unit presidents that have brought with them a lot of enthusiasm and drive.

Here are a some highlights from a few of our PTAs.

- Monrovia High School PTSA tripled their memberships by including a sign-up sheet in the registration packets and hosted an ice cream social at Back to School night.
- Bradoaks PTA continues to amaze me with the creative development of free family activities such as movie night, and parent lunch, that help build a positive environment at their school.
- Wild Rose's executive board is the most awe inspiring I've seen to date. The PTA board has offered to buy lunch for the parents that spend their entire day at the school volunteering. Wild Rose also has a wonderful volunteer that attends every PTA meeting to translate the meeting for Spanish speaking parents.
- Santa Fe continues with a strong team of families that are on the PTSA board sharing the load and making so much more achievable for those students.

Our PTAs have a lot more planned for this school year and I know that each school will be successful because of the amazing volunteers that so generously donate their time. Stay tuned for more exciting news from your local PTA.

Adult Education

920 South Mountain Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-3035 • www.mcasweb.com

Students Train for a Better Tomorrow



Flint Fertig
Director

At Monrovia Community Adult School / Regional Occupation Program (MCAS/ROP) we offer high quality, WASC accredited, affordable courses that serve approximately 2,500 students annually from the surrounding San Gabriel Valley area and beyond.

Our Career Technical courses provide students the opportunity to obtain a certificate and/or prepare students to take state certified tests. These courses are designed to lead students into the job market. They include Automotive Technology, Construction, Computers, and Medical courses such as Medical Assistant, Nursing Assistant, and Pharmacy Technician. Many of these courses include internship training.



MCAS offers complete programs leading to a High School Diploma or preparation to take the GED test. The diploma program offers rigorous, self-paced standards-based curriculum that allows you to earn a WASC accredited high school diploma as an adult.

Adult Basic Education is also available to help students improve Basic English and Math Skills for transition into training programs, the workplace, or higher education.

Our English as a Second Language classes are designed to help students at work, home, and out in the everyday world. They cover conversation, reading, and writing at all levels. Accent reduction classes are offered as well. Citizenship courses are available for those who want to prepare to take the citizenship test.

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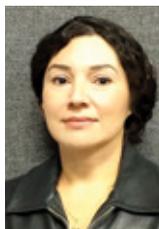
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Canyon *Early Learning Center*

1000 South Canyon Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2001 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Mariana Sanchez
Director

Autumn Leaves Learning

Fall is a wonderful time for exploration and discovery at Canyon Early Learning Center. The month of October brought us pumpkins and spiders. The fun began with the children exploring our very own pumpkins growing in the garden and the discovery of bugs. These adventures lead to a bug assembly where they learned about insects and insect habitats.

October concluded with trips to our very own pumpkin patch, followed by pajama day on Halloween. The month of November brings us leaves and Thanksgiving. The children will take a nature walk to collect different leaf samples, jump in a pile of leaves, and discover the “crunch” of dry leaves. They will use their collection of leaves to practice their math skills as they sort leaves by color, shape and type, creating patterns and seriating. November will conclude with discussions of friendships, family and gratitude.

Mayflower *Elementary*

210 North Mayflower Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2200 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Dr. Tamar Kataroyan
Principal

Celebrate 365

Fostering the success of students is at the very core of our mission at Mayflower Elementary School. As we “Celebrate 365,” our focus each day is to promote and recognize all the positive aspects of our incredible school. Students are encouraged to celebrate “wins” that occur daily in their lives. These range from being the cutest munchkins in “The Wizard of Oz” to earning 100 percent on a science test. Mayflower’s dedicated and highly accomplished staff provides the foundation of this effort by providing expert instruction within a nurturing environment.

Our parents and our community have not only embraced these efforts, but they have become an integral part of the team—inspiring each of us to aim even higher!

The personal value we attach to student achievement compels us to develop clearly-defined steps to lead our Mariners to greater levels of success. As we promote and reinforce positive behavior within our character education efforts, newly-adopted programs in math, reading and writing constitute the curricular foundation of our work. In fact, to promote literacy, Mayflower recently coordinated a school-wide reading competition with the goal of submitting 1,000 book reports within an 11-day time frame just before October 31. Principal Kataroyan knows that Mayflower students will continue to “treat” themselves to more amazing books. This is yet another reason to “Celebrate 365!”

Bradoaks *Elementary*

930 East Lemon Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2100 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Aimee Dyrek
Principal

Educating the Whole Child

Bradoaks Elementary School has enjoyed a great start to the 2014–2015 school year. Our students, staff and families have been very active serving, learning and leading.

Our PTA has continued their unparalleled “legacy of service” by offering many events for our families. McTeacher Night, Parents Lunch, Watch DOG Pizza Dinner, Garden Club, Coffee with the Principal, and (the most celebrated) our Fall Festival, have all been well-attended events that give members of the school community time to relax and learn together.

The students have been working very hard this year thanks to the expert guidance of our teachers. Swun Math and Nancy Fetzer reading and writing strategies are being implemented in the classrooms as we continue to align our curriculum to the Common Core State Standards. Bradoaks teachers are also honing their professional skills by analyzing the latest research, collaborating on best practices, and sharing productive materials and knowledge.

At Bradoaks, we continue to educate the whole child. As part of our school-wide effort to promote positive behavior, our students learn both inside and outside of the classroom. We also support enriched instruction in the arts and athletics. Our third-grade class has started working with a professional dancer from the Diavlo dance group, and we have scores of students participating in after-school instrumental and choral programs. The Bradoaks Bobcats also dominate the field as members of the football team and cheer squad.

Mostly though, our children continue to respond well to the character traits that lie behind our “ROAR” philosophy: Respect, On-task, Attitude, and Responsibility!

Clifton *Middle School*

226 South Ivy Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2600 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Jennifer Gates
Principal

PBIS Initiative

Clifton Middle School has started off the year with a new approach to behavior expectations and student accountability. We are now a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) school, and we are focused on teaching the expected behaviors, rewarding those who are following them, and celebrating successes.

Our ultimate goal is to provide support to students when they struggle behaviorally without resorting to punitive measures.

This is done through the use of Cub Cash for surprise incentives, interventions that lead to changed behavior, and seeking parental involvement when necessary.

A team of 14 committed staff members has worked hard to create this new approach, and we are starting to see the positive results of their efforts. Research shows that high suspension rates correlate to lower-performing schools. We intend to create a campus culture focused on positivity, celebrations, kindness and tolerance—a place where every student feels welcome and can confidently identify the caring adults to whom they can turn in case of problems.

Thus far, we have had a variety of reward days, where students redeemed Cub Cash incentives for extended lunches, free ice treats, a field trip to a University of California, game, and prize drawings. It is our hope that, with this new approach, students will begin to see the value in courteous, polite, and respectful behavior and make sure it becomes contagious!

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Monroe *Elementary*

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Cynthia Lathrop
Principal

Dual Immersion Program

Monroe Elementary School has begun its fifth year of a Spanish dual-language immersion program. With the addition of a transitional kindergarten class, more than 300 students are learning Spanish and English. The goal is for all students in the program to become completely fluent and literate in both languages by the time they leave fifth grade.

Instruction is presented by the teachers primarily in Spanish in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten and first grades. The amount of English is increased each year. By fifth grade, the amount of English has increased to 50 percent of the school day.

Learning a second language at an early age enriches and enhances a child's academic development. It also benefits the child by promoting creative thinking and a greater sensitivity to languages and cultures.



Parents who are interested in learning more about the dual-language program are encouraged to attend the school tours and parent meetings, which will begin on January 12, 2015. For more information or to schedule a school tour, please call the school office at (626) 471-2300.

Plymouth *Elementary*

1300 Boley St., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2400 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Suzanne Heck
Principal

We've Got G.R.I.T!

This year at Plymouth, students are focused on using grit! In the Old West, grit was commonly used to describe a person who was persistent—someone who, in the face of many obstacles, did not give up. It is an old term that highlights what we know to be true: students who work hard achieve at higher levels than those who do not. We want each of our students to have grit.

We also know that one of the keys to student success is literacy. In school, we teach students to read in the primary grades. In the upper grades, students read to learn about science and history, math and the arts. This exposure to the greatest minds and the most revolutionary concepts of all time promotes creative and critical thinking. For that reason, we are also promoting grit as an acronym. G.R.I.T. stands for "Great Readers, Innovative Thinkers."

Plymouth Dragons will develop a stick-to-it attitude to succeed in school and in life. So, when you visit Plymouth, you are sure to see hardworking students using grit in many forms!

Monrovia *High School*

845 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2800 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Kirk McGinnis
Principal

Scholars and Champions

Monrovia High School (MHS) is "Home to Scholars and Champions," and there is much to celebrate already in this school year. We are proud to acknowledge five outstanding seniors, who were nominated and recognized as Commended Students by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. MHS students Trinity Carwile, Melissa Johnson, Evan Launchbaugh, Austin Newton, and Bonnie Zucco each scored exceptionally well on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test and were nationally recognized for this accomplishment. It is students like these who exemplify the diligence and dedication of a successful Wildcat.

This year MHS is also able to recognize and thank Mr. Randy Bell, our athletic director and a teacher at MHS, as the 2014 recipient of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Southern Section Jim Staunton Champions for Character Award. This award recognizes athletes, coaches, administrators, officials, schools, and media members that model the CIF Six Pillars of Character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Mr. Randy Bell teaches, enforces, advocates, and models the value of good sportsmanship, treats everyone with respect, and includes parents as partners in his efforts to promote good sportsmanship. He equips staff, coaches, administrators, and students with the training and tools needed for effective, character-based behavior and is a visual reminder of the importance of sportsmanship, tolerance and positive behavior on the school campus. He values important life lessons and ethical behavior and makes great strides to make sure the school recognizes that the athletic program supports the academic program and that the academic success of the school is the highest priority. Mr. Bell is also a graduate of MHS, who exemplifies the spirit of Wildcat pride!

It is quality staff members and students like these at that make us Scholars and Champions!

Quest Academy *Day School*

1831 Santa Fe Pl., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2776 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Susan Hirsch
Coordinator

Real-World Education Reaps Benefits

Students at Quest have been very busy during the beginning of this school year! Beyond working hard on their regular subjects, students are actively engaged in the Power Save program, which is an alliance between participating schools and our electricity-supply company. Through weekly lessons and the use of high-tech tools, students learn ways to measure and conserve electricity at school and at home. Our future looks a bit brighter with these industrious detectives working hard on the project!

Another program in which students participate weekly is Skills 4 Success in Work & Life, a self-improvement workshop that focuses on job skills and readiness. In addition to the workshops, students who complete the required documents and training are placed in supervised entry-level positions at various businesses around our community. This program provides tremendous incentive to succeed in school, as one requirement is academic achievement!

Lastly, our most exciting news is about one of our students, Jeanie Antillon, who recently won first prize in a national essay contest! Television station WKCD, through their What Kids Can Do project, invited youth ages 13–19 to enter the nonfiction essay contest and state that they were looking for "diverse voices on diverse topics...written in a strong and true voice." All winning stories have been published in a book released this fall, titled *Stirred but Not Shaken*. We all stand very proud of Jeanie's entry, titled "Fighting for My Life," and know that she will continue to do so!

Santa Fe *Middle School*

148 West Duarte Rd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2700 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Dr. Caroline Sweeney
Principal

Living Out Kindness

At Santa Fe Middle School, we pride ourselves on our academic achievements; but that is not the only thing that makes us proud. The kindness and compassion with which our students spend their daily lives is also cause for celebration. In the month of October alone, Santa Fe Middle School had three prime examples of the way the Cougars choose to support the community within the school and throughout the city.

First, the Santa Fe leadership voted for kindness and cancer awareness to be recognized all month with pink Wednesdays.

In addition to taking a pledge to be kind to one another, every Wednesday students wore pink to support the fight against cancer.

Second, in her wish to be kind and support others, sixth-grade student Samantha Moniot raised over \$3,500 by collecting shoes from our school and community. The money she raised went to support a community member in her fight with cancer.

Third, Santa Fe Renaissance used the power of numbers to show their support of the sixth-graders on campus. After the first report-card grades were issued, Santa Fe Renaissance created signs saying "Congratulations" and "Job Well Done" to show the Class of 2017 how proud they were of the high grade-point averages that had been earned. They stood at the gates of the school and welcomed the sixth-graders in, chanting names, giving high fives, and recognizing all the hard work it took to earn such high grades.

This is just a sample of the goodwill demonstrated at Santa Fe on a daily basis. Kindness is being shown in invitations to lunch, offers to help carry heavy instruments, and passing the ball for the winning shot.

We couldn't be more proud, Santa Fe! Go, Cougars!

Wild Rose *Elementary*

232 Jasmine Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2500 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Stacy Ayers
Principal

The Renaissance Crew

Wild Rose Elementary School is the first elementary school to be starting a K-5 Renaissance program. Renaissance is a K-12 club that empowers students with the uplifting energy of awards and accolades. Wild Rose now has over 40 students in Renaissance. During this third year of implementation, our students had a chance to attend the regional assembly in Colton. The students came back to school fired up with excitement and great plans.

This year, Wild Rose Renaissance will offer an end-of-the-month assembly for our staff to win prizes, and an "unbirthday" celebration will also be held every three months. In addition, our Wild Rose students will be celebrated with a Popsicle party if they improve their benchmark scores

by 5 percent. Students achieving proficient on four benchmarks will be invited to a breakfast in their honor at the end of the year.

Students will also be celebrated in their birthday month, and will receive wristbands for showing excellent behaviors.



Contest!!

This Mr. Ruler is hidden somewhere in this publication. When you find it, email the page number to:

Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com
(Please put Monrovia in the the subject line)



Your entry must be received by December 15, 2014. From the correct entries, we will draw a winner to receive a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes and Noble.

Congratulations to Maria Garcia
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