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Covering The Redondo Beach Unified School District

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 54

www.schoolnewsrollcall.com

SEPTEMBER 2012

SUPERINTENDENT



Guiding Good to Great

Dr. Steven Keller has spent over 25 years in public education, beginning as a middle school history and English/language arts teacher. He quickly

Dr. Steven Keller moved from a teaching assistant principal to a full-time assistant principal. He earned the position of elementary principal at the age of 28, transitioning to the principal position at a large middle school, and later earning the title of Director of Student Achievement. He also served as Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Human Resources in Laguna Beach for five years prior to taking the helm at Redondo Beach Unified School District (RBUSD) in 2006.

As Superintendent, Dr. Keller has taken Jim Collins's catch title *Good to Great* to help transform the culture of both the schools and the wider educational community. The community is embracing "Redondo Beach USD is reaching for greatness!" The public responded to these efforts by passing a \$145-million bond measure in 2008, which has propelled RBUSD as the pinnacle of educational excellence in the South Bay. Construction on all school sites is scheduled for completion in mid 2013. The bond has been on time and on dime!

SEE SUPERINTENDENT • PAGE 15

Walking School Bus



Walking School Bus

*By Jens Brandt
RUHS Assistant Principal /
Vitality City Liaison
and Lauren Nakano
BCHD Vitality City Program Manage*

As we prepare for the 2012-2013 school year, we are excited to once again offer the Walking School Bus program in conjunction with Beach Cities Health District and the Blue Zones Project.

Last year, four Redondo Beach elementary schools utilized this program with much success. Congratulations to Madison Elementary School, Lincoln Elementary School, Beryl Heights Elementary School and Birney Elementary School!

SEE VITALITY CITY 15

Doing More With Less



Anita Avrick
President

On behalf of the Redondo Beach Board of Education, I want to welcome you to a new school year. This is our opportunity to start fresh, learn new things, and make the seemingly impossible seem suddenly plausible.

Over the last five years, we have managed the problematic state budget crisis and made learning possible by cutting \$6 million from our budget, with minimal cuts to the classroom. We cut overhead costs, asked employees to do more with less, raised rents, dipped into our reserves, and so much more.

The impact of these cuts has had minimal impact on the classroom, and we relied heavily on our reserves. At the beginning of this school year, our reserves are a mere 3.21 percent. The state has the right to take over our school district if our reserves go below 3 percent. So we can no longer use our reserves to weather the budget crises.

California's education expenses are \$9,524 per student. The national average is \$11,305 per student. The average of the top five states is \$18,660. Amazingly, the top five

states also have the top test scores in the country.

If one of the tax initiatives does not pass in the November election, Redondo Beach Unified School District (RBUSD) will face another \$3.8-million loss. Just to put this in perspective, \$3.8 million is equivalent to approximately 18 days of school or approximately \$457 per student. We no longer have enough reserves to cover the cuts.

Our budget is broken down like this: 85 percent personnel; 11 percent operating costs; and 4 percent books and supplies. If one of the November initiatives does not pass, the only place we have left to cut is the classroom, which means increased class sizes and/or furlough days.

As you can see, our budget situation is a very challenging one. In RBUSD, we do our very best to maintain the quality of education with what we have available. We are very fortunate to have GREAT teachers, staff, PTA, and Educational Foundation, all of which greatly support these efforts.

We are very happy to have you as part of our RBUSD family and hope that you feel just as proud as we (the Board of Education) do about our outstanding district!

Welcome to RBUSD 2012-2013!

2012
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October 3, 2012
See page 15
for more information.

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Kay Coop

Founder / Publisher



The golden days of summer have come to an end and it's back to school. Kindergarten students are entering the academic world and seniors are focusing on becoming the graduating class of 2013. Regardless of the grade level it is an exciting time meeting new friends, saying hello to old friends and getting into the groove of a new school year. We are right there with you and looking forward to bringing you the news from each school.

This issue we are highlighting the bio's of the superintendent and principals.

Thank you for including *School News* among your reading choices.

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SCHOOL NEWS ROLL CALL

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Welcome Back



Polly Kinsinger
President

On behalf of the Redondo Beach Council of PTAs, I would like to welcome you back for the 2012–2013 school year. This is my second year as president of the Council, and I'm excited about the process not feeling so new. Nine of our 11 unit PTAs have new presidents, and they've all spent the last few months gearing up their programs to help support the students, teachers and parents of this great school district.

PTAs from across the state are being asked to fill in the gaps for school districts that are no longer able to fund programs due to the years of budget cuts. Our district has done such a great job in protecting our classrooms from feeling this pain, but we can no longer hold off. We will see changes this year with class size and a loss of programs.

The PTA (and RBEF) cannot possibly fill the void alone, so if we all pull together as a community to help support our schools we can lessen the blow. So how can you help out? For one, you can always volunteer. Please contact your neighborhood school and ask how.

You can also join the PTA. All Redondo Beach schools have active PTAs, and your membership helps provide many programs for the students. The Council PTA has a community membership which helps provide district-wide programs for the whole community. It also gives you a membership at all 11 of the Redondo Beach schools. Please contact me for more information on membership, or any other school-related community issue, at kinsingers@roadrunner.com.

You can also donate to the PTA and/or RBEF. All funds to these two 501(c)(3) organizations are tax deductible and help support all of the schools.

I am excited, but wary, about the future for the students in California. Let's all come together and make sure that our students in Redondo Beach will continue to be the best prepared in the South Bay!

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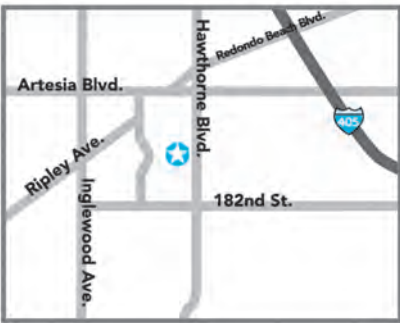
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RBUSD Student Services / Special Education

Student Services: 1401 Inglewood Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/937-1231

Special Education: 1107 Vincent St, Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8683 ext. 1301

www.rbusrd.org/specialeducation/

Supporting Special Students



Frank DeSena
Asst.
Superintendent
Student Services

Frank DeSena received his bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Dayton and his master's degree in counselor education from California State University, Los Angeles. He worked for three years as a Special Education teacher and nine years as a school psychologist.

Mr. DeSena is also a licensed educational psychologist. He received his administrative services credential from California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) and has worked as a school administrator since 1992.

Mr. DeSena worked as the Director of Special Education for the Redondo Beach Unified School District and currently holds the position of Assistant Superintendent of Student Services. From 1999 through 2006, Mr. DeSena was an instructor at CSUDH in the graduate education department. Mr. DeSena has also served on the advisory committee for the Loyola Marymount University School Psychology Program.

Overall, Mr. DeSena has spent 30 years in the field of education, with an emphasis on working with populations that include special needs and at risk students.

Vision, Direction, and Support



Dr. Aaron Benton
Director Special
Education

Dr. Aaron Benton originally hails from Orange County, a graduate of El Toro High School. He earned a bachelor's degree in English from the University of California, Riverside, a master's degree in educational administration from California State University, Dominguez Hills, and a doctoral degree from Western State University College of Law. Dr. Benton began his career in education in the United States Peace Corps as a volunteer in the Federated States of Micronesia as an English-as-a-second-language instructor and primary health care worker. He has been a middle school math, science, and technology teacher in South Los Angeles at John Muir Middle School, he has taught math and science in the gifted magnet school at Dodson Middle School in Rancho Palos Verdes, where he was also dean of students.

Benton began in administration as an assistant principal in Torrance at both Richardson Middle School and Madrona Middle School before being selected to serve as Director of Special Education in Torrance, a position he held for four years.

Dr. Benton joined the Redondo Beach Unified School District in 2008 as Executive Director of Special Education. In this position, he provides vision, direction, and support to staff at multiple facilities. He currently serves on the State Board of the Association of California School Administrators and participates locally in the Leadership Redondo program.

He and his wife, Grace, are blessed with two daughters, who currently attend Redondo Beach schools.

South Bay Adult School

3401 Inglewood Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/937-3340 • www.southbayadult.org



An Educator For the Youth & On Up



Vivian Ibarra
Director

Vivian Ibarra is the director of the South Bay Adult School (SBAS). She feels very lucky to have this job because she has many different programs for all families in the entire South Bay and every age from 0 to super-senior. Mrs. Ibarra herself is a proud graduate of the Parent Education Program at South Bay Adult School. This is her second year at South Bay Adult School, and she is thrilled to be leading a fantastic program with outstanding educators, staff and students.

Mrs. Ibarra received her Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology from the University of California, Riverside. She had always wanted to be a teacher and began her career in Connecticut teaching preschool. She combined career with family and had two children before moving back to California and completing her teaching credential.



Parent Ed has programs from birth to Pre-K.

Mrs. Ibarra is very proud that her public school career has always been in Redondo Beach, starting as a first-grade teacher at Beryl Heights School in 1990. In 1996, she received her administrative credential and master's degree from the University of LaVerne and began to pursue a career in administration. She moved to the position of program coordinator at Washington School and then in 1999 became the director of the child development program, the district preschool programs, and the before- and after-school programs at all eight elementary schools in Redondo Beach.

In February 2009, Mrs. Ibarra was asked to go back to Washington school as the principal. She stayed at Washington for another two years before coming to the South Bay Adult School. Mrs. Ibarra would like to invite everyone to visit the Adult School and join us for a class. Visit us on our website for a complete list of our classes.



Learning English is always a popular class.

Special education programs are authorized by federal and state laws.

These laws require that a free and appropriate public education shall be offered in the least restrictive environment to all students identified as disabled. Through the District's Student Study Team process and other procedures, a continuous effort is made to locate and identify individuals who might qualify for special education services.



The law also provides that parents may initiate a request to have their child assessed to determine eligibility for special education and/or related services. This request should be in writing and submitted to:

The Office of Special Education
1401 Inglewood Ave.
Redondo Beach, CA 90278



A Passion for Helping Families



Theresa Van Dusen
Director

Theresa Van Dusen, Child Development Program Director, is excited to be a part of the child development team and looks forward to what each new year will bring. She is the second generation of her family to grow up in the South Bay and enjoys living in the beach communities.

Theresa has worked in the field of child development for more than 20 years in programs in Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach. She has worked as a teacher assistant, teacher, site supervisor, and program manager. The passion that she possess for this line of work stems from the time when she was a student in the Child Development Center (CDC) program in Manhattan Beach, experiencing firsthand how the program works and helps so many families.

Theresa has a bachelor's degree in sociology from California State University, Dominguez Hills and is currently enrolled in a master's degree in public administration program. She also has her child development program director's permit from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Theresa would like to invite everyone to stop by and visit a CDC at any of the elementary or middle schools.



Child Development Program Director, Theresa Van Dusen, with CDC students.

Smaller Population, Same Large Goals



Dr. Erin Simon
Principal

In my second year as principal of alternative education, I have enjoyed becoming a member of this impressive program's community. The alternative education program in RBUSD has enjoyed a history of success that is the result of a collegial partnership between the school staff and parents, who together provide myriad wonderful experiences for students. At the outset, I have indeed found this close working relationship to be a vital necessity in order to help *all* students become academically successful.

Before becoming alternative education's instructional leader, my professional educational career began in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). I held the positions of special-education teacher, dean of students and head girls' basketball coach. After my tenure in the LAUSD, I served as assistant principal at Adams Middle School and Redondo Union High School. Although both schools were larger in comparison to the student population in alternative education, what I find comparable is the whole child-centered approach to education that characterizes all schools, which results in a model program.

I received a bachelor's degree in public relations from San Jose State University, a master's degree in special education from National University and an EdD with an emphasis in educational leadership from California State University, Long Beach. I am thrilled to be a part of the alternative education family and will continue to look forward to forging and cultivating positive relationships in order to make the program even better.

Our students' success begins today!



Dr. Simon (far left) poses with Redondo Shores' students and the Redondo Beach Police Department, including Chief Leonardi, during Red Ribbon Week.

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Anthony Taranto
Principal

Eagle Pride

Anthony Taranto is originally from Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, a small town northeast of Pittsburgh. He attended Pennsylvania State University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in business management in 1992. After working for a few years in business, he decided to enroll at Slippery Rock University to pursue elementary teacher certification. After completing his student teaching in 1997, he moved to California to begin his teaching career as a third-grade teacher at Oleander Elementary School in the Fontana Unified School District (FUSD).

While teaching, he completed his master's degree in educational administration in 2002 from the University of Redlands. In 2003, he left the classroom to become an instructional specialist teacher. In this position, he worked with numerous elementary school staffs on instructional strategies to differentiate instruction, as well as facilitating staff development at each site. Shortly thereafter, he relocated to Federal Way, WA to become a middle school curriculum specialist. In this capacity, he worked closely with administrators and teachers to revamp middle school assessments in mathematics. He was then promoted to the position of assistant principal at Saghalie Middle School in 2004.

In 2006, Mr. Taranto relocated back to Southern California as principal of Alta Vista Elementary School. After five great years, Anthony was promoted to principal of Adams Middle School in 2011.

Entering his second year at Adams, Taranto finds himself excited and fortunate to work with such a great community, staff, and student body. He is looking forward to a wonderful school year filled with rich learning experiences, and Eagle Pride for all students.



Welcome to Adams!

Alta Vista *Elementary (K-5)*

815 Knob Ave, Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8650 • <http://altavista.rbusd.org>



Susan Wildes
Principal

Our Well-Traveled, Greatly Experienced Principal

Susan Wildes is proudly starting her second year at Alta Vista Elementary and cherishes being a part of a school community that fosters a nurturing and challenging environment for our children. Mrs. Wildes was born and raised outside Washington, D.C. and attended the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, where she earned a double major in psychology and elementary education in 1994. After college, she began teaching in Virginia, where she taught third and fifth grades for five years. In 1999, she officially became Mrs. Wildes and moved with her husband to San Francisco, where she continued to teach kindergarten and fifth grade. After relocating to Atlanta, Georgia, for her husband's job, she taught a variety of grade levels for five more years, served as grade-level chair, and was awarded Teacher of the Year as well as the district's runner-up for Elementary Teacher of the Year.

During her career, Mrs. Wildes also worked outside the classroom as the lead writing and literacy coach, a member of the Fulton County Curriculum Writing Committee and a trainer in differentiated instruction and response to intervention. She earned her master's degree from Georgia State University in educational policy studies. In 2005, Mrs. Wildes was promoted out of the classroom to become a curriculum support specialist, an administrative position in which she trained teachers, managed site programs, ran parent education and oversaw grade-level curriculum, data analysis and budget management.

In 2011, Mrs. Wildes was named the principal of Alta Vista Elementary and has thoroughly enjoyed becoming a part of the community and watching the school grow. She has been married for 13 years and has two beautiful five-year-old twin girls, Hattie and Presley.



Principal Wildes with Alta Vista students.

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Beryl Heights *Elementary (K-5)*

920 Beryl St. Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8611 • <http://beryl.rbusd.org>



Karen Mohr
Principal

Education at Every Move

My name is Karen Mohr, and I am the proud principal of Beryl Heights Elementary, a California Distinguished School. I was born in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, and when I was two years old, my family moved to Huntington Beach, California. I attended Carden Hall Elementary School in Newport Beach, a private school, and Lutheran High School in Orange. I received my bachelor's degree in liberal studies at UC Santa Barbara and my bilingual clear teaching credential at UCLA. After teaching third, fourth and fifth grades in the Inglewood and Los Angeles Unified School Districts, I decided to go back to school and get my masters degree in administration at the University of LaVerne. I then became highly motivated to become a principal so that I could make a significant impact with more students while working with teaching staffs to improve their teaching.

After teaching at Jane Addams Elementary in Lawndale, I accepted the dean of students position at Rogers Middle School in Lawndale. I was then hired as the assistant principal at Dana Middle School in Wiseburn, where I helped the school receive the honor of California Distinguished School. When the position of principal at Beryl became available, I immediately jumped at the chance to become an administrator in Redondo Beach. That was seven years ago, and I am happy to say that it was the best career move I have ever made!

Raising the Bar at Every Step

My two daughters, Alyssa and Alexandra, attended Lincoln Elementary in Redondo Beach because I knew that the Redondo Beach Unified School District would provide an excellent education for them. My oldest daughter, Alyssa, spent two years at UC Santa Cruz and will pursue the teaching credential program at Cal State Long Beach after spending a year at the community college. I am looking forward to watching my younger daughter, Alex, who will be a senior this year at Redondo Union High School, excel in her academics and varsity basketball.

The past seven years at Beryl have been truly rewarding. We received California Distinguished School, ranking 10 out of 10 in both similar schools and statewide rankings for three years in a row, and we have been recognized by the California Business for Educator Excellence four years in a row as a member of the Honor Roll for outstanding academic achievement. This past year, we received National Recognition from the Alliance for a Healthier Generation by receiving the Bronze award because we have continued to teach our staff and students what it means to live well, eat healthy and get active. I couldn't be more proud to be a part of the RBUSD team, and I am looking forward to another great year in 2012-13.

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Word Search Contest on page 10**

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Birney *Elementary (K-5)*

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Lisa Johnson
Principal

A Part of the Birney Community

Lisa Johnson is proud to be returning for her second year as principal of Birney Elementary School. She enjoys being part of a school community that celebrates a remarkable staff, outstanding students and supportive families.

Ms. Johnson was born in Chicago, but as the child of an Army officer she grew up in many places, including Colorado, Georgia, Mississippi, Hawaii, and finally, California. Upon graduating from high school she left Monterey, California to attend CSU Long Beach, where she earned a bachelor of arts degree in English literature.



Ms. Johnson with Birney students.

While attending Cal State, Ms. Johnson also worked at Von's Grocery Store as a cashier and eventually manager. After 16 years in the grocery industry she joined the ranks of teaching professionals at the Inglewood Unified School District. During her tenure in Inglewood, Ms. Johnson worked in the capacities of language arts teacher, instructional coach, Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment mentor (BTSA) and administrator.

Although Ms. Johnson enjoyed teaching seventh- and eighth-grade language arts, she was also interested in educational leadership. So she returned to college to obtain her administrative credential and master of arts degree in educational administration. After acting as assistant principal of Crozier Middle School in Inglewood, she then transitioned to a principalship at Birney Elementary in 2011.

Ms. Johnson recently wed her longtime sweetheart, and is happy to assume her new title of Mrs. Lisa Veal! She looks forward to spending time with her new husband and continuing to be a part of the Birney family.

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Jefferson *Elementary (K-6)*

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Kara Heinrich
Principal

A Sterling Background

Kara Heinrich earned a bachelor of science degree in human development from the University of California at Davis. After completing her degree, she then continued on and obtained a multi-subject teaching credential and master's in education from the Claremont Graduate School.

While attending Claremont, Mrs. Heinrich received her first teaching position as a third-grade instructor in the Rowland Unified School District. She then went on to teach a span of grades, and became a district lead teacher in GATE, English Language Development (ELD) and technology.

During her time in the RUSD, Ms. Heinrich also became a site program specialist and then a vice principal. In these positions she worked closely with administrators and staff members in a variety of capacities. This included instructing teachers on research-based instructional strategies and differentiation, managing the sites' coordinated compliance programs, running school-specific programs and parent education, and even conducting data analysis and site budgeting responsibilities.

Throughout her career, she has additionally worked as a math, GATE and ELD trainer and presenter for educators. She has also made presentations to various conferences, colleges and districts throughout the area, such as at Cal Poly

Pomona, Cal State LA, UCLA, and the TEAMS Los Angeles County math program.

Mrs. Heinrich was also accepted into the Principal Leadership Institute at UCLA in 2003. She received her administrative credential and another master's in administration. In the summer of 2009 she was then hired by the RBUSD, and relocated to West Los Angeles. Since July of 2009 she has been the proud principal at Jefferson Elementary School.



Kindergarten Picnic gathering.



American Jump Rope for Heart Event

Lincoln *Elementary (K-5)*

2223 Plant Ave, Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8646 • <http://lincoln.rbusd.org>



Jeff Winckler
Principal

Excellence in Education

Jeff Winckler received his bachelor's degree in American history from California State University, Chico in 1994. He began his career in education with Four Winds Camp in Washington and went on to work for Kaplan Educational Services. Mr. Winckler worked as an elementary teacher while earning his master's degree in education, which he received in 2001. He then went on to earn an additional master's degree in educational administration from Pepperdine University in 2003.

After his tenure as a teacher, Mr. Winckler worked as a school site coordinator from 2003 to 2005 in the Hawthorne School District and an assistant principal from 2005 to 2007 in Los Alamitos Unified School District. In 2007, Mr. Winckler came to the Redondo Beach Unified School District, where he served as the coordinator of instructional services for three years. Mr. Winckler has been the principal at Lincoln Elementary School for the past two school years.

Mr. Winckler was recognized as Teacher of the Year at Williams School in Hawthorne in 2002 and received the Redondo Beach Unified School District Excellence in Education Award in 2009.

Mr. Winckler and his wife, a second-grade teacher, live in the South Bay with their five-year-old daughter and three-year-old son, all of whom love to travel and enjoy the outdoors.

Parras *Middle School (6-8)*

200 N. Lucia Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8616 • <http://www.parrasmiddle.org>



Dr. Lars Nygren
Principal

Looking Forward to the Future

Originally from Boulder, CO, Lars Nygren attended the University of Colorado, earning a bachelor's degree in history and his credential to teach social studies. He taught middle school for two years before deciding to trade skiing in the Rocky Mountains for living near the beach in sunny California. He was hired by the Redondo Unified School District to teach sixth-grade social studies at Parras Middle School. While teaching, he earned his master's degree in education administration and his administrative credential from National University. He was fortunate to teach for two years at Parras before being hired as the assistant principal.

Transitioning from teaching to administration was made easy for Lars due to the fact that he was already a member of an outstanding staff. For three years he enjoyed helping the teachers, staff, students, and parents. During his last year as an assistant principal, Lars was accepted into the doctorate program at the University of Southern California's Rossier School of Education. He earned his doctorate degree three years later. He then spent a year as an assistant principal at Redondo Union High School (RUHS), where he was able to learn about the important role that middle school has in helping students make a successful transition to high school. His year working with Principal Mary Little and the RUHS staff was invaluable and prepared him to return to Parras as the principal.

Lars is currently in his fifth year as the Parras principal. As a result of the progress Parras has made over the years, Lars was named the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Middle School Principal of the Year for Region XIV. He has been able to oversee a number of renovations at the school, which include a new artificial field, a gymnasium, new lockers, and a renovated library. He has also implemented targeted intervention courses to help at-risk students, improved technology use by staff and students, and placed teachers in professional learning communities to better address student needs.

"I am fortunate to work with such a great parent community, staff, and student body," Lars said. "Many positive changes have occurred, and I am looking forward to seeing many more occur in the future."

Madison *Elementary (K-5)*

2200 MacKay Lane, Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8623 • <http://madison.rbusd.org>



Joseph Ledoux
Principal

Continuing a Tradition of Excellence

It is with great enthusiasm that I introduce myself to our new Cometville families. I am beginning my third year as the proud principal of Madison Elementary School, a California Distinguished School. Madison has a strong tradition in scholastic excellence. My vision is to continue that excellence and ensure every child has a positive and rewarding elementary school experience.

I earned his bachelor's degree in history from University of California, Santa Barbara in 1997. I earned both my California teaching credential and master's degree in education right here in the South Bay at Chapman University. I am familiar with the local area, having taught for seven years in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. I also taught in the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, before moving on to become an assistant principal at a middle school in Fountain Valley. The bulk of my classroom experience is in the fourth and fifth grades, but I also taught a second- and third-grade combination class. My last teaching experience was in fifth grade at neighboring Birney Elementary School.



Mr. Ledoux with some students on a rainy day.

I live in Long Beach with my wife of nine years, my six-year-old son, and my three-year-old daughter. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time in the water with my family. We often go swimming, kayaking, sailing, and fishing.

I always love to hear from our parents and community members. You can e-mail me at jledoux@rbusd.org with comments or suggestions. Also, we are always looking for volunteers to help at school. If you are interested in giving your time, please contact the front office at (310) 798-8623 to join our team of volunteers.

Redondo Union *High School*

631 Vincent Park, Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8665 • <http://www.redondounion.org>



Dr. Nicole Wesley
Principal

Dr. Nikki Wesley. Our Proud Principal

Every Friday morning, which is RUHS Spirit Day, I begin the day with an exuberant declaration: "That's a Sea Hawk! That's a Sea Hawk!" Actually, this statement is repeated several times until I manage to walk out the door and to my car. It is my two-year-old daughter, Kamryn, who is already a self-declared Sea Hawk, and she is overjoyed when she sees our Sea Hawk logo and, of course, hears the band play.

I am excited to begin my second year as principal at the finest high school in the South Bay: Redondo Union High School (RUHS). Before RUHS, I was the principal at Adams Middle School for three years. My passion for education began with my first teaching assignment in LAUSD. I was 22 and fresh out of college. It seems like yesterday, and I have enjoyed every year of my career since. With two supportive parents who are retired middle school principals, there is no wonder why I take great pride in being an educator.



Dr. Wesley representing her two favorite teams, Sea Hawks and Bruins.

For all of you Trojans, please don't hold it against me that I am a UCLA alumna. I received my B.A. and doctorate (EdD.) degree from UCLA. As a pastime, I enjoy watching college football and basketball—guess my favorite team—cycling and socializing. I also love to attend cooking classes, but I'd rather my husband do the cooking at home.

The thing I love most is traveling abroad. I love the sense of adventure and learning about new cultures and traditions. I am at peace with putting this thrill on hold as I raise my toddler, and besides, as principal of a high school, every day is an adventure.

RUHS has a strong tradition in scholastic excellence. My vision is to continue that excellence and work with our amazing staff to achieve new heights.



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Christina
Giguere
Principal

Our Principal’s Continuing Voyage

Christina Giguere, principal at Tulita Elementary School, has enjoyed a rewarding career in education. After graduating from UC Santa Barbara, she earned a master’s degree in teaching and a multiple-subject credential from UC Irvine. Teaching first and third grades in Irvine Unified School District solidified her commitment to making a difference in the lives of children. While teaching in Irvine, Ms. Giguere earned a master’s degree in reading and a specialist credential through CSU Fullerton. During her elementary teaching years, she initiated a schoolwide positive behavior system, facilitated family literacy nights, and fostered a professional learning community.

In 2007, Ms. Giguere returned to UC Irvine to serve as the school of education’s Multiple-Subject Credential Program coordinator. She dedicated herself to leading, instructing and mentoring future elementary school educators. Ms. Giguere focused her efforts on increasing collaboration between the teacher-education program and local elementary schools as well as providing ongoing professional development for preservice and mentor teachers. While working at UC Irvine, Ms. Giguere pursued an administrative services credential with the goal of becoming an elementary school principal.

Ms. Giguere is a lifelong learner who demonstrates enthusiasm for learning, a positive and cooperative outlook, and a caring and respectful attitude toward students, teachers, staff and parents. “I am truly honored to be a part of Redondo Beach Unified School District and look forward to working alongside the dedicated Tidalwave community to ensure student success!” she said.



Jacqueline
O’Sullivan
Principal

A Varied Career

Jackie O’Sullivan is thrilled to be starting her eighth year in the Redondo Beach Unified School District, and to be part of a thriving community that knows how to work together to provide an exemplary education for its children.

Mrs. O’Sullivan was born and raised in a small town in upstate New York, and attended the State University of New York at Potsdam with a double major in psychology and elementary education. She moved to California in 1989 and began her career in the LA Unified, teaching grades two, three and five. She left the classroom in 1992 to try a career in marketing and advertising for an educational seminar company. Later she worked for Epson America.

In 1997 she spent a year in Seoul, Korea, writing curriculum and training elementary teachers in English language acquisition strategies. She then returned to Los Angeles to restart her teaching career at Jane Addams School in Lawndale, where she taught in the fourth and fifth grades.

Later Accomplishments

While teaching, Jackie also got her master’s degree in administration at Loyola Marymount University, where she graduated with honors.

In 2001, she became the assistant principal at Billy Mitchell School in Lawndale. In 2005 she became the principal of Birney Elementary in the RBUSD. In 2010, Jackie was named the Redondo Beach USD Administrator of the Year; and in 2011 she was named the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Elementary Principal of the Year for the state of California.

Jackie joined the Washington Explorer family in 2011, and is very excited to begin her second year in leading this excellent school.

She has been married to her husband Dan for six years. They have a beautiful five-year-old son named Daniel, who will also be starting kindergarten this year as a Washington Explorer!

Leadership 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 is the word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com (Please put “RBUSD” in the subject line)

Entries must be received by October 15, 2012
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

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Congratulations to Aden Severson
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TESTIMONIALS

Even I have learned new skills from watching the kids workout. You can be confident that you're leaving your child in hands of coaches who have an excellent understanding of the game. I recommend School of Skills for every child who wants to learn to play basketball with the proper fundamentals.
Lisa Leslie
Three-time WNBA MVP

I have been involved in many basketball camps/clinics over the years and what attracted me to the School of Skills for my son and daughter is their efficient use of time and emphasis on fundamentals. Their program is not a babysitting service; it is a workout from start to finish. The drills run and skills emphasized are beneficial to a basketball player at any level. The program is well structured and serious, yet delivered with care and a sense of humor. The "Skills" experience passes the true litmus test...the kids want to come back for more.
Jim Eyen
Asst. Coach Los Angeles Clippers

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The Dream Begins



Susan D. Marshall

"Dad while we are here in Hawaii, can we visit the university?"
"Why?"

"When I go to college, I can surf—it will be awesome!"

Tyler, age eight, jumps out the car door and runs to the beach.

"Honey, there is no way he will get into the University of Hawaii. Besides, college is a long way off."

Mom shrugs.

"Tyler obviously doesn't know college is optional but since we expect him to go, we can just see the campus while we are here."

Needless to say, the child's first campus visit fuels his dream.

What Tyler's parents did right was allow him to dream, explore his hobbies, and plant the seed that someday he would go to college. They encouraged him to get good grades and were an active part of his education. They let him know how education opens doors and gives him choices in life.

What they failed to realize is how quickly the time passes. College seemed like a long way off, so saving for college was not in their financial plan. Tyler's dream may drown in the surf.

Today more than ever saving for college can be an overwhelming task.

What can you do today that will make a difference?

Start Early

The greatest benefit to starting early is being able to take advantage of the time value of money; the benefit of interest compounded over time. Even a small amount regularly can make a huge difference in future costs. There are many different types of accounts available to help families face the challenges of saving for college.

Speak with a trusted advisor

Be informed. There are many different types of accounts available to help parents put money away. Some of the most common are the 529 and the Coverdell Education Savings Accounts. Other options may include savings bonds, trusts, life insurance, annuities, IRAs, and stocks. Make sure the advisor you choose understands how each of these accounts can positively or negatively impact your ability to qualify for financial aid and the tax advantages of each.

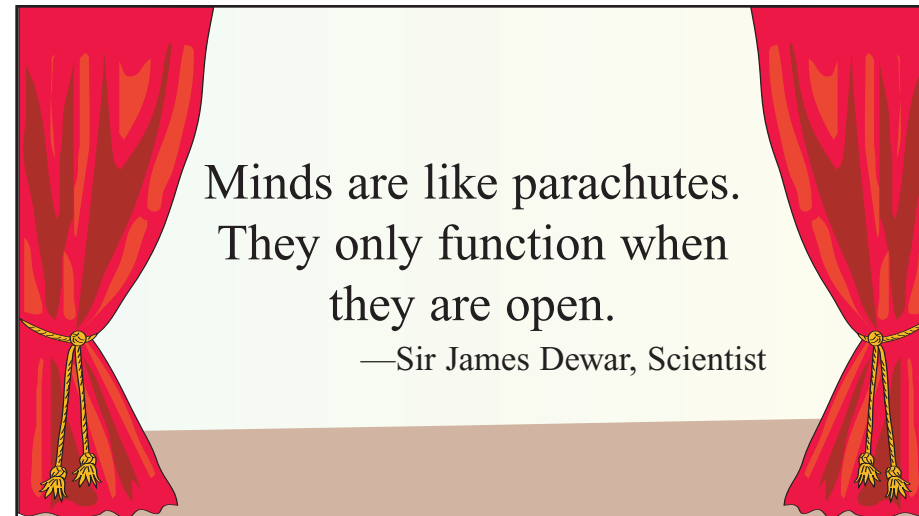
Most Important

Let your children know how education opens doors, provides opportunities, and gives them options.

Begin saving now! No matter how small the amount. The message it sends to your child is huge.


Your child will know that you value education and college is something you see in their future.

Susan both educator and advisor specializes in college planning. She helps families save for and pay for college. If you have questions you would like answered in a future article e-mail her at Susan@College4Less.com.



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—Sir James Dewar, Scientist



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School Smarts

Back to School



Rajeshri Gandhi

The period just before a new school year can be as stressful as it is exciting, for both students and parents. Start your school year with less anxiety:

Start preparing for the first day of school 10-14 days ahead of time. This amount of time allows students to complete (or start!) any summer work that was assigned, complete school-related shopping trips and for students' bodies to acclimate to "school year" routines.

Talk with your child to gauge sources of excitement and anxiety. Getting to know your child's apprehensions makes you aware of potential triggers and better allows you to coach him/her. Having this knowledge will also allow you to communicate with his/her teacher better should a situation arise.

Use the new school year for a new start. Encourage your child to enter the new year without any old baggage (conflicts with classmates, apprehensions about academics, etc.) Help your child learn the lifelong lesson on how to use time as a healer.

Prepare your child for major changes, especially if your child is transitioning to a new school. Every new school year holds changes and change can cause anxiety. You can help address questions and ease your child's fear. An older student can serve as a mentor, answer any 'technical' questions and provide your child a peer/ 'in house' expert.

Prepare yourself financially for the start of school. Starting a new school year is expensive! Request the school supply list ahead of time. Calculate additional classroom costs (projects, fieldtrips, uniforms etc) and optional choices (sports, scouts, lunch, etc) to budget and talk with your children ahead of time about their choices.

Go through steps 1-4 above for yourself. As a parent, you have your own set of emotions about sending your children back to school and working through your anxiety allows you to be best prepared to help your child.

Rajeshri holds a BS from the University of Michigan and a MA in School of Leadership with Principal Certification from Harvard University. She uses her background in public and private schools both teaching and administration to collaborate with students, parents and schools about the various educational options available. Rajeshri may be reached at rgandhi24@gmail.com www.rajeshrigandhi.com

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Note-ables

Make Believers, 23 Skidoo



Kate Karp

The title of this inventive collection of contemporary musical styles may be initially deceptive—none of the songs, even the one about “Jack and the Beanstalk,” concern fantasy play. Instead, they’re vehicles and metaphors intended to make believers out of children—believers in themselves.

The performer and writer of the songs, hip hop artist Secret Agent 23 Skidoo, has gathered an ensemble of musicians that include vocalists from indie bands, his wife and his preteen daughter. The instrumental backup features horns from tuba to trumpet, great percussion, and strings, including an appearance

by indie-folk cellist Ben Sollee. The songs, all penned by Skidoo, concern the issues that preadolescents encounter as they prepare to face the world. They are written as much for parental enlightenment as for a motive force for young people.

“Gotta Be You” deals with issues of popularity. The song, scatted by Skidoo’s daughter, Sati, takes the cliché out of “Be your own best friend.” The doo wop-infused “Nightmares Disappear” lifts the fear from the night, leaving only its beauty and the security of a safe adult. “Snowforts and Sandcastles,” a gorgeous and radio-hit-worthy number, can best be described as a double monologue of melody and hip hop. “High Five for the High Dive” not only sends the guys off into summer but also revels in the bravery “from the wading pool to the high dive, so high that it looks like a sky dive.” And the trip back to school will come up before they rinse the last drop of chlorine from their swimsuits—“Back Home” traces the first day in a new school as related by a nervous student to his best friend, the dog.

Adolescence can be a difficult period and one during which children and parents may find communication difficult. To this purpose, and in another play on words, *Make Believers* works as a musical bridge. Available on Underground Playground Records.

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

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Dr. Steven Keller

In addition to his role as the leader of the district, he has served as an adjunct professor at Chapman University and University of California, Irvine (UCI). Dr. Keller's son, Jaxon, is a junior at The Colorado College. Dr. Keller's daughter, Sloan, is already saving her money for college. Kelli, Dr. Keller's wife, is an elementary school principal. Dr. Keller is a graduate of South Torrance High School. He earned his undergraduate degree from Pitzer College in Claremont and his master's degree from Claremont Graduate University. His doctoral degree is from UCI, where he proudly holds the record for the briefest dissertation.

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Walking School Bus



Jens Brandt
RUHS Assistant
Principal /
Vitality City Liaison



Lauren Nakano
BCHD Vitality
City Program
Manager

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Fun Fact: The students of Madison Elementary School saved nearly 300 car trips to school thanks to last year's 2011 Walking School Bus program.

The Walking School Bus supports students, their families and the schools by helping students get active, get healthier and feel more connected to their neighborhood and local community, all under the supervision of adult volunteers. Benefits include:

- Increasing student safety by reducing vehicle traffic around campus
- Teaching students valuable lessons about pedestrian safety
- Improving student well-being by increasing time spent outdoors and providing a safe environment for kids to bond with their friends
- Reducing financial and time strains for parents

If you are interested in getting your kids involved or becoming a volunteer, please contact the Walking School Bus Coordinator for your school:
Beryl Heights Elementary, Rebecca Moore, akmo7@hotmail.com
Lincoln Elementary, Heidi Powell, wsblincoln@gmail.com
Madison Elementary, Jane Hyman, janehyman@yahoo.com
Birney Elementary, Lori Beauchamp, usbeauchamp@yahoo.com
For more information on how to bring the Walking School Bus to your school, please email Sara.Russo@BCHD.org.



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**Board of Education
Regular Meeting Schedule**

2012

August 28
September 11
October 2
October 23
November 13
November 27
December 11*

* Due to holiday schedule,
only one Board meeting in December.

2013

January 8
January 22
February 12
February 26
March 12
March 26
April 9
April 23
May 14
May 28
June 11
June 25

*April 9 – Organizational Meeting

2012
State of Education
Redondo Beach Partners in Education present...

KINDER TO COLLEGE

October 3, 2012
5:30pm: Meet & Greet
Chili Tasting
6:30pm: Program Starts

Education Advocate of the Year Announced.
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