

**FREE**

# School News

*Education + Communication = A Better Nation*

**Covering the Redondo Beach Unified School District**



Volume 10, Issue 91

October 2016



**Volunteers Prep Gardens As Part of Beach Cities Health District's LiveWell Kids Anti-Obesity Program. (please see page 4)**

## Board of Education



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## Superintendent



### With Our Thanks

When I joined the Redondo Beach Unified School District (RBUSD) in July 2006, I knew nothing about the Beach Cities Health District (BCHD). Ten years later, it is a very different narrative.

**Dr. Steven Keller** BCHD is a critical and caring partner in our school district's whole-child approach to teaching and learning. BCHD embraces the notion that students who find social and emotional balance, students who manage stressful situations with calm and focus, students who maintain a healthy diet, and students who exercise regularly are more inclined to thrive academically. Redondo Beach Unified School District students are more well-rounded than ever, and this can only help them in their adult lives.

Of course, any great organization typically (although not always) has a great leader. In this case, Susan Burden is that leader. Susan is the chief executive officer of BCHD. She has been in this position for over 12 years. When I joined RBUSD not knowing a thing about BCHD, Susan was the one who walked me through their mission and vision. (I couldn't get past the fact that the BCHD offices were exactly where I received eight stitches in my chin in July 1985 after an injury playing beach volleyball in Hermosa Beach.) As Susan shared every detail, it was clear that the organization's purpose aligned to my values as a parent and as a public educator. BCHD's focus was indeed RBUSD's focus.

Over the last 10 years, Susan's team and the RBUSD team have partnered with a multitude of projects and movements—Blue Zones, MindUp, Walking School Bus, Streets for All, LiveWell Kids, and so many more. Susan has been instrumental in leading the BCHD charge to create healthier, happier, and more resilient students.

Susan is retiring this month from her role with BCHD. This will be a sad day for many, including me. Perhaps my biggest pet peeve when it comes to public education is what I call the Espousal Theory. That is, many public educators and alleged student advocates talk a big game about improving the lives of our youth as well as the communities in which they live. However, when you see these same people at their workplace, their deeds (actions) do not align with their espoused values. I can assure you that Susan Burden does not fall into this category. What she says, she does—daily. On behalf of the entire RBUSD family, thank you, Susan, for your relentless pursuit of bettering our students' lives, not to mention the fabric of the Redondo Beach learning community. You have been a friend that none of us will ever forget. On behalf of the Board of Education (Anita Avrick, David Witkin, Brad Serkin, Michael Christensen, and Brad Waller), thank you!

## Board of Education



### Thank You!

**Brad Serkin**  
*Presiding Officer*

Welcome back! We hope that all of the students, teachers, staff members, and administrators of our wonderful district had a happy and healthy summer. As we move forward into this new school year, we are looking at a bright and positive future for our district. We are excited to welcome to our district all of our new teachers and staff at all sites throughout the district. This year we hired more new staff members than we have in a long time, bringing lots of new and excited faces to our RBUSD family.

We are continuing to improve our school campuses, most notably the new building and upgrades at Parras Middle School and the fresh paint at some of our schools in the district. Our schools continue to win awards, both Blue and Gold Ribbons as well as environmental awards. Our solar project continues to yield tremendous benefits to our general budget as well as making our district more environmentally friendly. Our enrollment continues to increase each year, and overall test scores continue to propel us in the right direction. Technology improvements abound, which, in large measure, can be attributed to the passage of Measure Q in our community. We sincerely thank you. We should all be very proud of our beautiful campuses, and I believe the best from our district is yet to come.

A huge thank you to all of our staff for all of their hard work and leadership, for doing whatever it takes to make our school district the best that it can be, and for their tremendous support over these past few years. The district is only as good as its staff, and I believe we have one of the best group of teachers, staff, and administrators around. To our parents, your time and continued efforts to ensure your child's success have not gone unnoticed. We thank you for your time and support.

I am proud to be a parent and serve our community and this great school district. I can't wait for all the amazing things to come! Please volunteer and support your PTAs and donate to the Redondo Beach Education Foundation (RBEF), as they are the single biggest fund-raiser and private outside supporter for our district. Most importantly, stay involved and volunteer in your child's classroom or at sporting or community events. As busy as all of our lives are, a few hours really do make a difference for both your children and the community at large.

Wishing everyone a wonderful year! Thank you for supporting this outstanding community!

**Redondo Beach Unified School District**  
1401 Inglewood Avenue, Redondo Beach, CA 90278  
(310) 379-5449 • [www.rbUSD.org](http://www.rbUSD.org)



**Kay Coop**  
Founder/Publisher



# School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation  
[www.schoolnewsrollcall.com](http://www.schoolnewsrollcall.com)  
Covering the  
**REDONDO BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**FOUNDER/PUBLISHER:** Kay Coop  
562/493-3193 • [kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com)  
**ADVERTISING SALES:** Valerie Reid • 310/874-2716  
[valerie.schoolnewsrollcall@gmail.com](mailto:valerie.schoolnewsrollcall@gmail.com)  
**CONTENT COORDINATOR:** Barbra Longiny  
**GRAPHIC DESIGNER:** Tim DeLacy  
**COPY EDITORS:**  
Lisa Brock, Kate Karp & Anna Zappia  
**Netragrednik** by Neta Madison



**SCHOOL NEWS ROLL CALL, LLC**  
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Fall is here and the students are ready to harvest the gardens thanks to Beach Cities Health District and volunteers. You can read all about it in their article below.

"Back in my day" reading, writing and arithmetic were the subjects, in this issue you will read about Growth Mindset, Self-Management, Digital Natives, Google Classroom, Infinite Campus Parent Portal, Screenagers, WATCH DOGS, Playground Buddies, and so much more...

Congratulations to our September contest winner Bryn Rose. I know our readers love contests, but I didn't have space in this issue. Lucy wrote her

book review on page 18 so maybe this is a good time to pull up a chair and read. Our next issue is November 2 and we'll have a fun contest then. In the meantime, have a Happy Halloween! Speaking of Halloween, be sure to read Miller Children & Women's Hospital article on page 7 for a safe and healthy holiday.



## Beach Cities Health District



**Dr. Denise Bevly**  
Youth Services  
Senior Manager

### 100 Volunteers Prep Gardens

*By Kerianne Lawson,  
BCHD Director of  
Lifespan Services*

Classes are back in session and school gardens in Redondo Beach are ready for action – thanks to the efforts of 100 volunteers from 16 community partners in the South Bay who got their hands dirty back in August to give the gardens a little extra TLC.

Ranging from local restaurateurs and bankers to politicians and lawyers, the volunteers spent hours repairing planting beds, mulching, weeding crab grass, and building/installing compost bins and shelters at eight elementary school gardens.

Thanks to their efforts, the gardens are now primed for students to begin growing and harvesting a variety of vegetables like tomatoes, lettuce and pumpkins – which will be sampled and used during nutrition education lessons throughout the year.



The gardens were added to elementary schools in 2004 as part of Beach Cities Health District's LiveWell Kids anti-obesity program. Since the program's implementation, the obesity rate in Redondo Beach schools (K-5) plummeted from 20 percent in 2004 to just 7 percent today.

For more information or to get involved, go to [bchd.org](http://bchd.org).

514 N. Prospect Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/374-3426  
[www.bchd.org](http://www.bchd.org)



## Redondo Beach Educational Foundation



**Ted Craddock**  
President

### Walk (or Virtual Walk) to INVEST

Skechers Pier-to-Pier Friendship Walk has become a South Bay staple. This family-centered event benefits children with special needs and education. Money raised goes directly back to the schools for site-based needs as well as RBEF's general fund. Funds earned by RBEF are distributed to the schools proportionately according to the number of people registered for each school team.

Last year, RBEF was able to turn your \$25 registration fee into \$50 per walker, which was donated back to each school. We earned \$161,000 at this event for Redondo Beach schools, with 1,904 virtual and actual walkers. Those funds helped schools purchase programs and materials of their choice! Let's see if we can do even better. Don't forget



virtual walkers are counted as well, so even if you can't attend the actual event you can still contribute to the cause from the comfort of your own bed!

To help RBEF invest in your school, please register now to join RBEF in the Skechers Friendship Walk, taking place on Sunday, October 23rd. Go to [www.skechersfriendshipwalk.com](http://www.skechersfriendshipwalk.com) to register today. The cost is \$30 per walker if you register in advance and \$35 the day of the event. Please remember to join your school team and select the Redondo Beach Educational Foundation for your school to benefit from your investment!

409 N. P.C.H., #310, Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/954-2004  
[www.rbef.org](http://www.rbef.org)

## Redondo Beach Council PTA



**Raymur Sweeney**  
President

### National PTA School of Excellence Honor

Jefferson Elementary School PTA is one of only three schools in California and 173 schools and PTAs from across the country recognized as 2016-18 National PTA Schools of Excellence for their leadership and accomplishments nationwide in building strong, effective family-school partnerships. The schools and PTAs represent 31 states and one Department of Defense school in Germany.

National PTA School of Excellence is a recognition program that supports and celebrates partnerships between PTAs and schools to enrich the educational experience and overall well-being of all students. Through the National PTA School of Excellence program, PTAs partner with their schools to examine how families feel the school measures up to the research-based indicators of the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. PTAs

and schools then work together to address barriers and create new ways for families to support student success. The National PTA School of Excellence designation is awarded when a PTA and a school have achieved a high level of family engagement or when a PTA and a school have made substantive, positive improvement in families' perceptions by the end of the school year.

Jefferson Elementary School PTA has put into place strong practices that involve families in the life of the school and are true examples of what can be accomplished when schools and families work together. Decades of research prove that students do better in school when their parents are involved. One of the easiest ways to become involved is by joining PTA. You can become a community member of every PTA in Redondo Beach on our website. Together, we will continue to do good things for students.

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**Theresa Van Dusen**  
*Director*

## Finding the Right Program

Many parents today do not have the luxury of staying home with their child. The reality is, more and more families rely on the help and support of quality preschool and after-school programs. Here at the Redondo Beach Unified School District Child Development Center (CDC), we work together to cohesively improve our overall program while keeping with the idea of continuously “Realizing Greatness.”

So, what makes an excellent child development program?

- Providing a safe, nurturing environment for all children.
- Developing positive relationships and interactions among staff and the families that we serve.
- Recruiting and hiring only the best staff members who are committed to providing quality instruction and guidance, with each teacher holding a Child Development Permit or Credential from the state of California.
- Having a strong staff development program to teach and help further support the best practices in child development.
- Providing a well-rounded variety of activities and opportunities that support the physical, social and cognitive growth and development of all participants.
- Working closely with elementary school staff to ensure that both preschool and after-school academic components and activities are aligned with and enrich school standards and curriculum.
- Establishing a strong partnership with our families and community in order to achieve program goals.
- Systematically evaluating our program and using that information for on-going program planning and enhancement. Each year we survey our staff, children and parents for feedback and program improvement ideas.

The CDC program of the Redondo Beach Unified School District recognizes the importance of possessing and maintaining all of these key qualities that make up an excellent child development program.

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## This Halloween, Don't Be Afraid of Diabetes



**Mario Brakin, M.D.**  
Medical Director,  
Endocrine &  
Diabetes Center  
Miller Children's &  
Women's Hospital  
Long Beach

Halloween can be a thrilling holiday for children of all ages, but the wide availability of candies with high levels of sugar can prevent children living with diabetes from joining in on the fun.

Diabetes is a condition in which blood sugar levels are unusually high. Inside the body, food is changed into glucose (sugar) that is carried throughout the entire body. Insulin is a hormone that helps the body use glucose for energy.

With diabetes, the body makes little to no insulin. Without insulin, the body's cells are unable to use glucose, and the glucose instead builds in the body's blood stream.

Children with diabetes should be able to actively participate in special occasions and holidays like Halloween. Planning ahead is the key to celebrating these occasions without compromising diabetes control.

This Halloween, you can help your child by:

- Giving your kids money or toys in exchange for their candy (example: a quarter for each piece of candy)
- Participating in the Halloween Candy Buy Back event – local dental offices and other businesses will trade a child's candy for money, prizes or other treats. The candy gets sent to troops overseas and helps kids avoid cavities. Find participating locations at [HalloweenCandyBuyBack.com](http://HalloweenCandyBuyBack.com)
- Planning a party instead of "trick-or-treating" door-to-door
- Visiting a haunted house or renting a scary movie

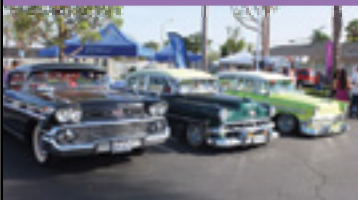
Enjoying Halloween may be difficult for your little witch or wizard living with diabetes, but it's manageable. For more information on how to help manage your child's diabetes, visit [MillerChildrens.org/Diabetes](http://MillerChildrens.org/Diabetes).

2801 Atlantic Ave., Long Beach, CA 90806 • 800-MEMORIAL  
[MillerChildrens.org/Diabetes](http://MillerChildrens.org/Diabetes)



# Diabetes Family Festival & Classic Car Show

## November is Diabetes Awareness Month



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## RBUSD Alternative Education



**Sue Hall**  
Principal

### Attendance Important

As we settle into the school year, we want to remind parents how important it is for students to attend school. Research shows that by ninth grade, regular attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than test scores. The first months of school are an important time to establish routines and build habits for the school year, so let's get off to a good start!

Parents often ask me what they can do to make sure their teenagers get to school. We know that people's lives are very busy, and it is not always easy. But we do have a few suggestions to help encourage your students to get to school on time.

First of all, simply talking about the importance of going to school every day and making it the expectation makes a difference. By modeling and establishing daily routines, you create a healthy and positive climate in your household. It is also important to regularly ask your teenager about school and find out if he or she is engaged.

Parents can stay on top of academic progress and stay

connected to the school by using our Infinite Campus Parent Portal and e-mailing or calling the teachers as needed. You should also plan to attend school functions, including Back to School Night, parent conferences, and parent educational workshops.

As your child gains more independence, it is essential that you remain aware of your teen's social contacts and afterschool activities. If you need support, please know that we are here for you and have resources within the community if you need them. The South Bay has a wonderful support network for families, including Beach Cities Health District, Thelma McMillan, South Bay Adult School, and El Camino College, just to name a few.

Remember, showing up for school is an important life skill that will help your child to graduate on time and earn a diploma. This work ethic will transfer as they graduate and enter college or the work force. Keep a positive attitude; it is never too late to start creating healthy habits!

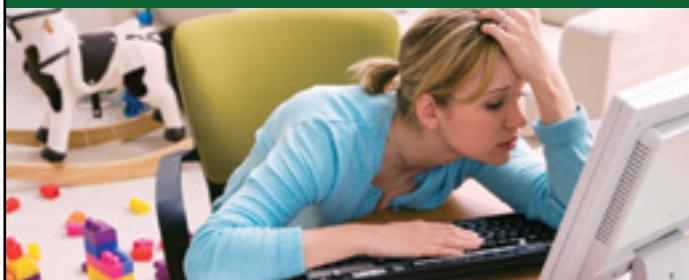
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## RBUSD Educational Services



**Dr. Annette Alpern**  
*Deputy  
Superintendent,  
Educational  
Services*

### Digital Native? That's So 2001!

Remember when we used to talk about digital natives? The phrase referred to a generation of people who could never remember a time when computers and digital technology were not an integral part of their everyday lives. Flash forward to 2016. With few exceptions, all of the students we serve in our school district today, including a growing percentage of our faculty, can be defined as digital natives.

The Redondo Beach Unified School District (RBUSD) one-to-one student technology program is now entering its third year of implementation. The use of Google Classroom, Infinite Campus Parent Portal, and other digital communication tools are making information available more quickly and accurately. This year, you will see a focus on increasing the capacity of digital citizenship

for our students at all grade levels. This is a broad category that encompasses areas such as digital access, communication, etiquette, literacy, security, and rights and responsibilities. If you are interested in previewing the sample digital citizenship lessons that will be utilized at each grade level, you can check them out at [www.commonssensemedia.org/educators/training](http://www.commonssensemedia.org/educators/training).

Please also be on the lookout for information regarding an upcoming joint RBUSD/PTA-sponsored evening for the screening of the documentary "Screenagers." This film for tweens, teens, parents, guardians, and educators explores the issues of screen time in our lives. Technology is here to stay, and, as our RBUSD mission statement proclaims, "We are dedicated to providing every student with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in a global society, today and in the future."

1401 Inglewood Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278  
310/937-1221

## South Bay Adult School



**Dr. Anthony  
Taranto**  
*Director*

### South Bay Family Tree

According to a study by Epstein (1996), the role of parents in the education of their children has long been recognized as a significant factor towards educational success. As part of the South Bay Adult School, the South Bay Family Tree Parent Education Program (SBFT) annually provides lasting learning experiences for families in the South Bay in a safe and fun learning environment.

The South Bay Family Tree classes help prepare our families for the future. Through play based learning and hands-on academic experience, children develop the skills they need to become engaged, confident, and successful learners ready for kindergarten. As their children's first teacher, our parents also learn child

development techniques, as well as practice effective parenting skills in the classroom and during our monthly parent seminars. Parents are also required to work in the classroom one day a week on age-appropriate activities, including art, fine motor skills, science, etc.

Meaningful family engagement in a child's early learning will support school readiness and later academic success. The South Bay Family Tree Parent Education program offers an opportunity for friendships and family connections. Join us in our supportive parent participation program where you can learn along with your child.

Register for classes at [www.southbayadult.org](http://www.southbayadult.org).

3401 Inglewood Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 310/937-3340 • [www.southbayadult.org](http://www.southbayadult.org)



## Adams *Middle School* (6–8)

2600 Ripley Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8636 • <http://www.adamsmiddle.org>



**Lisa Veal**  
*Principal*

### Keeping it Positive!

At Adams, we recognize the need to have a system in place to facilitate the transition to middle school so that the frightening aspect of the secondary level does not become a reality. Studies show that if students can have a positive experience in the first year of middle school, their chances of success will increase dramatically. Middle school does not need to be an excruciating experience; it can,

and should, be an opportunity to experience new things, make new friends, and explore new interests.

With WEB, or “Where Everybody Belongs,” Adams makes this possible. The WEB program is comprised of over 70 eighth-grade students who have expressed a desire and dedication to help others. Their teacher-leaders spend several days in the summer instructing students to act in a leadership capacity to help them get ready for their new role as peer mentors. This training culminates in Camp Adams, a morning of team-building, bonding, games, and forming new relationships.

However, it doesn't stop there! Over the course of the year, WEB leaders will provide ongoing guidance and support as new students learn to navigate the intricacies of middle school. They will support academic success through visits to advisement classes, organize lunch intermural sports activities, and plan social gatherings and one-to-one

check-ins. Our sixth-grade students know that they have a buddy in their eighth-grade WEB leaders who they can count on for guidance and support.

Middle school is an adjustment for students, but it doesn't have to be a scary place. Our WEB program provides the perfect vehicle to assist incoming students with their transition to middle school so that they can feel welcomed, supported, and comfortable in their new environment.

We are proud of the amazing work that our WEB leaders are doing to help support their fellow students!



**Sixth-grade students enjoying a team building challenge with their WEB leader**

## Alta Vista *Elementary* (K–5)

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



**Susan Wildes**  
*Principal*

### Fostering Rich Conversations

As parents of school-age children, don't we always want to hear about the day, whom they played with and what meaningful lessons they learned? After being apart all day, the first questions I often mistakenly used to ask were “How was your day? What did you do?” only to be answered with “Fine. Good. Nothing.” Now as an educator for over 20 years, I am fully aware that most

days are more than fine and filled with more than nothing. As a school principal, I engage in rich conversations with children all day long, so the challenge was to carry over those conversations into my own home and tease out how their time was spent away from me.

One step to deepening conversations is to ask open-ended questions that might target a specific portion of their day. Knowing your children's daily schedule in school can help you narrow down your focus around questions that lead to yes or no answers—questions such as Tell me about what you played at recess, Who played with you? or Tell me about the book that your teacher read during read-aloud

time. After posing the question, make sure to provide your children with plenty of think time. Once the stories start rolling, make sure to hold off on jumping in and asking follow-up questions, which can throw up a roadblock to their story.

### Take Every Opportunity

Dinnertime or bedtime-stalling can be other important opportunities to engage in rich conversations. Model for your children the type of sharing that you'd like to hear from them, such as their interests, friends, challenges and successes that they had throughout their day. Play games such as “one good thing/one challenging thing that happened today,” especially over dinner or in bed where your children will feel safe to share. As your children share particular challenges or hard times, you as parents can give additional comfort by helping them express emotions such as frustration, disappointment or anger.

Using open-ended questions and sharing specifics of your day will hopefully help foster communication with your children wherein they feel safe to share, connect and seek advice, or just be heard.

## Beryl Heights *Elementary* (K-5)

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



**Karen Mohr**  
*Principal*

### Reach, Reach, Reach

As we continue our journey as a Beryl community, it is our collective vision that we will continue to reach for greatness by creating an atmosphere in which we can all become lifelong learners.

We are a Gold Ribbon and a Gold Alliance School, one of only 14 schools in the nation who have met this challenge. Throughout the year we will be reiterating our philosophy

and our vision of success, and will reassure all parents that the idea of a village raising a child is the key to a student's success in school and in their life.

This translates into making positive connections with our staff and becoming an integral part of your child's learning and education. We realize the importance of having a positive outlook on life. Our staff incorporates this outlook into its daily routines. We also recognize that educating the whole child leads to success in life. This idea

will be a central theme throughout the school year.

The legendary coach John Wooden, when commenting on working together, said, "We can become great in the eyes of others, but we will never become successful when we compromise our character." Character development is taught daily at Beryl, and we will continue to recognize our students for respect, responsibility, caring, fairness, trustworthiness, and great citizenship.

We also realize that we need to grow as teachers and people in order to reach greatness, because when we do, we affect our students' lives in a positive way academically, socially, and emotionally. Therefore our staff will continue to learn and support one another throughout the year, and we will actively support all efforts to teach students and reward them for their accomplishments.

Greatness comes from learning to rise to every occasion, giving our best effort, and making those around us better as we do. Let's make this year the greatest year ever.

## Birney *Elementary* (K-5)

1600 Green Ln., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8626 • <http://birney.rbusd.org>



**Mira Baskaron**  
*Principal*

### WATCH DOGS are Back!

Last year was our first year implementing the wonderful WATCH Dads Of Great Students (DOGS) on the Birney Elementary School campus.

This amazing program is a school-based, father-involvement program that

works to support education and safety. Last year our Birney Bobcat fathers, grandfathers, uncles, and other father figures were invited to help on our campus. The response was overwhelming! We had a WATCH DOG (or two) on campus almost daily!

The WATCH DOGS participated in many areas on campus. They were in classrooms reading with students, in the yard playing football and basketball, in the hallways chatting with students, in the valet line helping with drop off and pick up, and just lending a helping hand around campus. They also enjoyed lunch with their children. The WATCH DOGS have become an important part of the Birney community.

Birney will once again embrace this wonderful program. We kicked off the program with our Pizza with Pops event in late September. At the event, dads and other father figures heard all about the research behind the success of



**A Watch DOG gives first graders a lesson in cartooning.  
First graders showcasing their works of art.**

this program. At the event, dads and father figures were able to select a day to volunteer their time at Birney.

The Birney Bobcat staff and students love having the WATCH DOGS on campus. Students continue to show big smiles when giving our WATCH DOGS high fives or greeting them in the hallways. Staff members have also commented on how wonderful it is to have the WATCH DOGS on campus. We are truly looking forward to another successful year of WATCH DOGS at Birney.



## Jefferson *Elementary* (K-5)

600 Harkness Ln., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8631 • <http://jefferson.rbusd.org>



**Jeff Winckler**  
*Principal*

### On Solid Grounds

When you think of an ideal setting to have children come to school to every day, educators often use the phrase “a safe, clean, learning environment.” It goes without saying that a premium must be placed on safety. Fortunately, both Jefferson Elementary School and the Redondo Beach Unified School District (RBUSD) take safety seriously by keeping students’ wellbeing in

mind when establishing schedules and procedures.

After safety, next on the list in establishing an optimal learning environment is maintaining a school that is clean both inside and out. While teachers and custodians are charged with the primary duty of having classrooms look organized and inviting, the burden of responsibility for the campus grounds falls on the school district’s Maintenance and Operations team.

Within this team, one special group of employees to shine a spotlight on is our RBUSD grounds crew. From our many grass areas to our numerous planter beds, all are kept looking amazing thanks to the tireless work of our grounds crew. Their efforts often go without praise, but this should not be the case. The grounds crew works

behind the scenes as unsung heroes. As recently as this summer, their tireless efforts got our school looking sharp and ready for the start of the school year. Now that the year is underway, they stand ready to maintain our school’s fantastic curbside appeal.

The grounds crew is a vital part of our children’s safe, clean learning environment at Jefferson and throughout RBUSD. As a community, we cannot thank them enough for their attention to detail and their work on behalf of our school.



**RBUSD grounds crew and Jefferson students  
next to the backflow of our new potable system.**

## Lincoln *Elementary* (K-5)

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



**Jane Tasker**  
*Principal*

### Playground Buddies

The teachers and staff at Lincoln Elementary School have taken bullying prevention one step further this year with the recent addition of buddy benches on all three playgrounds. These benches help to eliminate loneliness and foster friendship on the playground.

A buddy bench is a place where students can sit if they are feeling bored or lonely. It’s usually brightly colored and clearly labeled. Other students can then go to the bench and ask the students there if they would like to play or talk.



**Buddy Benches at Lincoln foster friendship on the playground.**

Lincoln’s Recess Buddies program has helped to resolve conflict and foster kindness at recess, and these buddy bunches are adding to our success.

The Buddy Bench rules were established during an assembly on the first day of school. They are:

1. Before you sit on the Buddy Bench, think of something you would like to do. Ask someone else to play with you.
2. The bench isn’t for socializing. Only sit there if you can’t find anyone to play with.
3. While you’re sitting on the bench, look around for a game you can join.
4. If you see something you want to do or a friend you want to talk to, get off the bench!
5. When you see someone on the bench, ask that person to play with you.
6. If you’re sitting on the bench, play with the first classmate who invites you.
7. Keep playing with your new friends!

The rules may be simple, but the concept spreads the messages of inclusion and kindness in a powerful way. The teaching staff and noon supervisors are committed to making this work for all students, and we recognize that this is an ongoing process.

## Madison *Elementary* (K–5)

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



**Drew Gamet**  
*Principal*

### Let's Volunteer!

Letting your child know that their education is an important part of your family's life is a vital component of our school effort. Aside from taking time out of your day to say this to your child, an important action that you can also take is volunteering at school.

Volunteering shows your child that the work they do every day matters so much to you, and that you are willing to provide support to make their daily experience even better. While volunteering is not something that many of us can do every day, it is important to find some time to volunteer, even if it's just a little bit each month.

The main entity supporting volunteerism at Madison Elementary is the Madison Parent Teacher Association, led by PTA President Kari Chatterji. Together with an executive board of highly dedicated parents, they work

tirelessly to provide our students with opportunities not otherwise available.

That means assemblies and programs like LiveWell Kids, Hands on Art, and STAR Reading would not be possible without volunteers taking the time to make them happen. Additionally, daily activities such as Morning Valet do not work smoothly unless volunteers take time to make sure that our students and parents have a safe and efficient drop-off in the morning.

Finally, it is so important to mention our Watch D.O.G.S. program. We are signing Madison dads up right now to volunteer for just one whole day to help support our Madison students. The support of a Watch D.O.G.S. volunteer truly lasts in the memories of our students.

If you are interested in volunteering, please go to <http://madison.rbusd.org>. As Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world." We ask that you start by volunteering your time at Madison Elementary!

## Parras *Middle School* (6–8)

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



**Dr. Lars Nygren**  
*Principal*

### Ready for the Future!

Thanks to the school bond that the community passed, we've built additional facilities, painted the entire school, and modernized several classrooms. We can now accommodate more students in a safer environment.

Some of the renovations include four additional classrooms for our growing seventh- and eighth-grade math classes, an extensively renovated band room and two other classrooms, and double-pane low-e-tinted windows to replace the single-pane ones in place since the 1950s. They look beautiful and lower the level of outside noise.



**The new entrance routes people into the main office.**



**The new lunch structure can house hundreds of students underneath it.**

A security entrance and additional fencing were installed; visitors must now enter the administration building before entering our main campus. Wrought-iron fencing has been installed between our classroom halls, extending to the new classrooms.

An impressive shade structure was constructed over our lunch area to protect our students from sun and rain. It's big enough to hold events!

We're fortunate to have such great facilities for our students to learn in and an outstanding staff to teach them!

# Redondo Union *High School*

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



**Jens Brandt**  
*Principal*

## Welcome Back, Sea Hawks!

It is always an exciting time of year as we transition from summer vacation to the start of school. This year we are welcoming our largest ninth-grade class ever of approximately 800

students! Given so many students, and our hyper-connected world of social media, a renewed focus on social-emotional skills is more important than ever.

We are making this focus a priority this year by incorporating competencies from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning into our programs ([www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)). These “five competencies” are critical not only to student success in high school, but also in college, career, and life.

We polled our new and returning parents about which of the five CASEL competencies their students need the most support in, and they selected “Self-Management.” This will be addressed directly by one of



**CASEL Defines “Self-management” as the following: The ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.**

our key focus areas this year: reflection. In and outside of the classroom, our students will frequently be asked to reflect upon their feelings and actions.

At home you can help reinforce this focus by asking similar reflective questions. What made you react that way? How could you have reacted more positively? What goals do you have this year, and what time do we need to set-aside to make sure you can reach them with minimal stress?

An important recommendation regarding self-management is agreeing to tech-free times at home, especially around bedtime. Research shows that teenagers are staying up later to send and respond to text-messages and social media. Setting the expectation to turn off all devices at bedtime is a top recommendation from the experts.

Redondo Union is proud to be a school that focuses on the whole child. We will

continue to follow current research to partner with you, our parents, in developing healthy students who will find success in the 21st century.

## Washington *Elementary (K–5)*

1100 Lilienthal Ln., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8641 • <http://washington.rbusd.org>



**Kristen Holm**  
*Principal*

## Best Day Ever!

As we get settled into the school year and the buzz and excitement of the first day of school begin to dissipate, teachers, parents, and students find comfort in the daily routines we’ve begun to establish. Setting an earlier bedtime, preparing daily lunches and organizing our outfit the night before all help set the pace for the days and weeks ahead. Routines and forming strong habits

help set the groundwork for not only good days but also our best days!

Dr. Monte Selby stressed this idea in his presentation to the RBUSD staff at our annual beginning-of-the-year pep rally. Through song and humor, Dr. Selby reminded us of the importance of keeping the momentum and excitement of the new school year going by identifying habits and outlining a number of helpful hints to remind us how to re-create those “best days ever” throughout the year.

## A Few Good Ideas

Create an image of your best day ever. If you don’t know what it looks like, then this is the time to brainstorm!

Practice virtues and skills until they become a habit. Practice them for 21 days.

Model what you would like to see more of, and recognize and praise the positive you see in others.

Try not to assume that students know what is expected of them. Your job is to teach them. Be explicit about what you expect of students.

Let children hear you correct your own mistakes. This will help them recognize and correct their mistakes. And notice their own hard work and good choices.

Connect to a student you do not know well by sharing stories.

Remember, too, that everyone wants to be needed. And laugh!

As we move forward throughout the 2016–17 school year, let’s remember the excitement of the first day of school and try to re-create our best day every day through solid routines, positive habits and attitudes that nurture positive behavior not only in ourselves but also in everyone around us. Go Explorers!



## Tulita *Elementary* (K-5)

1520 Prospect Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8628 • <http://tulita.rbusd.org>



**Dr. Tanaz Bruna**  
Principal

### The Growth Mindset at Home

If you have a growth mindset, you believe that with effort and perseverance, you can reach goals and improve in any area, whether it's academic skills, sports, performing arts or anything else. Thanks to Stanford professor Carol Dweck, we know now that not only is the growth mindset accurate but also that those who believe improve more

than those with a fixed mindset—a belief that you are either born with intelligence or talent or are not. This is why instilling the growth mindset in children is so important.

There are easy ways to help instill a growth mindset. For one, praise children for skills that don't sound predetermined—hard work, persistence, learning from mistakes—rather than making statements like “You are so smart!”

Be a role model. Be honest and open with children about how often you yourself might say “I can't!” or “I'm awful!” Talk to children about a time when you had to learn from a mistake, or point it out when it happens!

Remind your child that it's not about taking the easy route. Instead, help them embrace challenges. Studies indicate that your brain grows when you make a mistake and learn from it.

Remember that the growth mindset isn't just tied to academics and school. Find other areas in life where the growth mindset is necessary, like sports or music.

Discourage your child from envying peers. Instead, talk about what he or she can learn from others who seem to be more successful at a certain skill. Talk about the elements of practicing, persevering and hard work, which often lead to great achievement.

The growth mindset is everywhere at Tulita—in the classrooms, on the playground, among staff. We've all embraced the growth mindset and remind our students that it's not hard—it's just not easy yet!



**Tulita teachers encourage growth mindset in the classroom as a reminder to students to persevere.**



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## Lucy's Book Review

### Marvelous!



**Lucy Davis**

*The Land of Stories:*

*An Author's Odyssey*

Author: Chris Colfer

I had been waiting for this book to arrive at my local library, and after much suspense, the story continues! Conner and Alex travel into Conner's short stories; in hopes of recruiting an army of different storybook characters: their own! With help from some leftover Portal Potion, which allows people to travel into stories, the twins hope to recruit the Zibblings, Auburn Sally's crew, the British Navy, and many more.

Not much better things are in the other dimension: the Masked Man's Literary Army rebels and joins evil witches who plan to take over the Otherworld. Will they succeed?

Chris Colfer succeeds once more in continuing the series and relying on a readers imagination to create a marvelous story further extending the fairy-tale world we thought we already knew.

I give this book four bookworms for its imagination.

Lucy is a fifth grade student that enjoys theater, playing guitar and singing. She's a Harry Potter fanatic and hopes to one day publish a series of her own. Lucy will rate the books 1 to 5 bookworms with 5 being the best.



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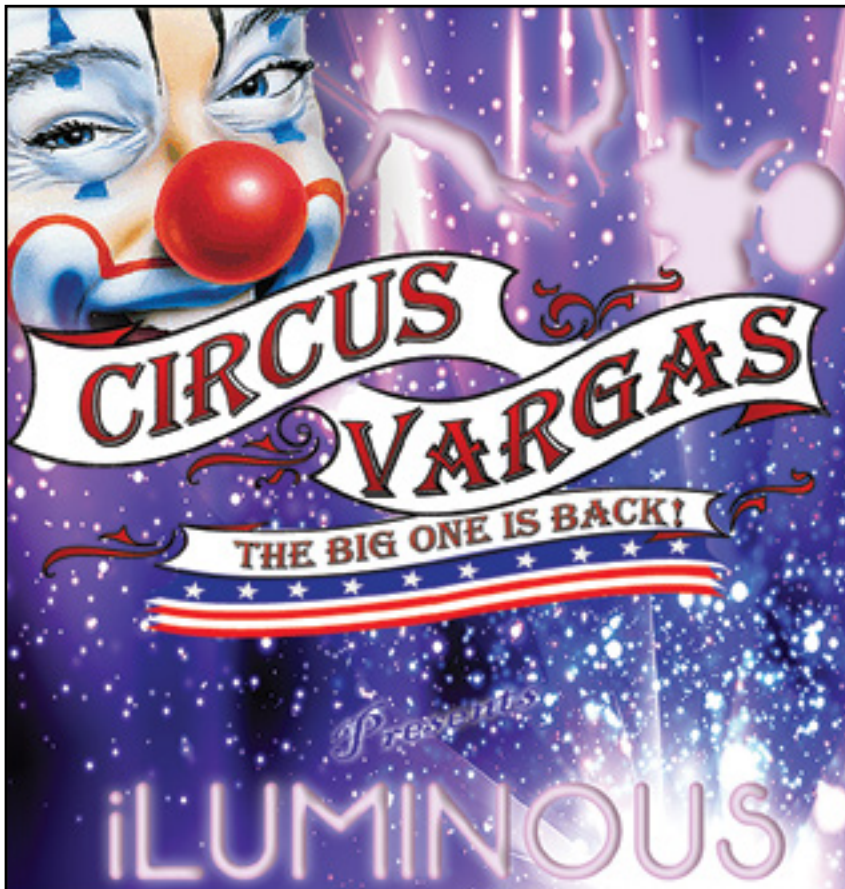


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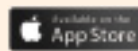
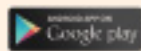
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