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School News

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Covering the Torrance Unified School District

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 11

NOVEMBER 2016–JANUARY 2017

SUPERINTENDENT



Why Torrance? Because TUSD Offers Students a High-Quality Education

Torrance Unified School District (TUSD) has been successfully educating Torrance students

Dr. George Mannon

for over 60 years. At the recent State of the City event, Mayor Pat Furey proposed the question to the Torrance business community and residents: Why Torrance? And the top most response was “Education!” Families move to Torrance because they want to provide their children with a high-quality education. TUSD students continuously meet and exceed state and national standards, distinguishing themselves as the best of the best. The goal of the district is to maximize student success and potential by offering learning experiences which meet every child’s educational needs. We are able to accomplish these goals because of our team of highly qualified administrators, faculty, professional development teacher leaders, and support staff at our schools. They work tirelessly to ensure every student has access to meaningful academic interactions and opportunities.

The 2016–2017 school year brings many changes, all of which advance student learning. These shifts in instruction will enable the district to continue to provide learning environments in which our students will continue to grow and thrive. As we implement the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), it is increasingly essential that we create classroom spaces for students which are conducive to hands-on learning. All 17 elementary schools’ brand-new

See SUPERINTENDENT • Page 15

Employees of the Year Recognitions



(Back) Hiroko Sumi, Gregory Wheeler, Gayle Hall, Doreen Asari
(Front) Razia Khan, Carlyn “Andy” Jones, Zobeida Merlos, Shelley Miller, Miguel Moreno

By Tammy Khan,
Public Information Officer

Torrance Unified School District is fortunate to employ many extraordinary individuals who are committed to providing a high caliber education to all TUSD students.

Our teachers pour their heart and soul into their classrooms and our classified staff provide our schools with unwavering dedication and support. All our employees work tirelessly to serve our TUSD families. Congratulations and Thank you to our 2016 Employees of the Year!

See EMPLOYEES RECOGNITIONS • Page 16

BOARD OF EDUCATION



Martha Deutsch
President

A Great TEAM

The school year is off to a wonderful start! We are looking forward to the many great changes, enhancements, and opportunities planned for this school year.

While our students had time to rest over the summer, our teachers and administrators stayed busy by attending professional development workshops during that time to better prepare for the upcoming school year. They are dedicated and committed to learning new techniques and curriculum to share with our students and prepare them to succeed.

Our district takes pride in having well-trained teachers, staff, and administrators as well as state-of-the-art campuses with new amenities and enhancements. Our construction on school campuses throughout the district continues. We have begun construction on brand-new science labs at our elementary schools, gyms at our middle schools, and auditoriums at our high schools! These projects also include the incredible, history-making aquatic center funded by Bond Measure U. Once complete, it will feature a 60-meter competition pool and locker rooms to house the district’s four high school competition teams.

We have also installed new technologies and equipment in order to enhance safety and security and protect our students, teachers, and staff. Along with my colleagues on the School Board, I have made it my priority to ensure that our campuses are secure and that everyone on our school sites always feel safe. I would like to recognize the tremendous work our district administration has done to deliver quick results and to implement the Board’s safety goals and priorities.

As this new school year begins, I invite you to join us in supporting the many programs and events happening throughout our district. Come and visit our beautiful campuses. Our schools host a multitude of events, including talent shows, science fairs, plays, concerts, and sporting events, throughout the year.

Our students, families, teachers, staff, and administrators work hard in the classrooms and also provide many extracurricular enrichment activities for our students.

I would like to thank all of our staff, faculty, and administrators for their willingness to always go the extra mile for our students’ academic success. Together We Can Achieve More (TEAM)!

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School News

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Covering the
TORRANCE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Superintendent Dr. Mannon begins this issue with an informative article on Why Torrance? The articles in this issue continue to reinforce the excellence in TUSD.

Congratulations to the 2016 Employees of the Year, who are recognized on the front page.

We have two contests in this issue for all ages — Seek 'n Find on page 18 and a Word Search on page 21. On pages 18-21 you can read student book reviews and a movie review.

Our next issue is January 25, 2017. In the meantime, have a Happy Thanksgiving, fun Winter Break, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

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Steven Jensen, M.D.
Medical Director,
General Pediatrics,
Miller Children's &
Women's Hospital
Long Beach

Children and adults are different and so are their health care needs. Many children's illnesses are rarely seen in adults or affect kids differently. That's why children need access to Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach — a hospital with pediatric specialists dedicated exclusively to the quality and compassionate care of kids.

Only five percent of all hospitals are children's hospitals, making them unique not only to children's health care needs in the community, but across the region.

Miller Children's has embraced new technology to help close the gap in access to pediatric specialty care. Telemedicine is the use of medical information exchanged from one site to another via electronic communications to assess and treat patients.

Telemedicine includes a variety of applications and services using two-way video, wireless tools and other forms of technology.

Miller Children's is virtually connected with two other MemorialCare Health System hospitals in Orange County – Orange Coast Memorial and Saddleback Memorial.

Through telemedicine, emergency department physicians at Orange Coast Memorial and Saddleback Memorial can now contact the pediatric specialists at Miller Children's for consultation at the push of a button.

The telemedicine console features advanced video conferencing technology, just like Skype™, that allows Miller Children's specialists to have a two-way conversation with patients and the physicians who are miles away. The console also give specialists access to diagnostic capabilities, such as x-rays and blood work.

Telemedicine results in faster access to medical management, creating better outcomes and convenience for patients and their families without a children's hospital in their community.


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Torrance Council of PTAs

www.torrancecouncilofptas.org

A Powerful Advocate

By Michelle Van Lerberghe, President

The Torrance Council of PTAs (TCPTA) oversees the PTA units at all 30 schools in the school district. We are organized under the authority of the California State PTA to provide information and instruction to our units, along with leadership training and coordination of the efforts of our units.

TCPTA was busy over the summer with community outreach projects. Through Project BOSS (Bring Our Students Supplies) we were able to provide over 450 backpacks filled with supplies to students in need here in the TUSD. The TCPTA's 30 units gathered donations of school supplies and monetary donations. We also received donations from community members and businesses in Torrance. Project HOPE (Helping Our People Everyday) is an exciting new outreach program that will also be assisting the families of homeless students from TUSD.

Many students are busy working on their entries for the National PTA Reflections program. The theme this year is, "What is your story?" Original works will be accepted in the categories of dance choreography, film production, literature, music composition, photography, and visual arts. Students will be submitting their projects to be judged at their unit level in October. The first-place winners are then sent to be judged by the TCPTA in November. The first-place winners at the council level will be sent on to district PTA, state PTA, and national PTA judging. It is always great to see all of the original art pieces that the students turn in.

The PTA continues to be a powerful advocate for education and child welfare issues. Each of our 30 schools' membership campaigns are in full swing. If you have not joined the PTA at your local school, please do join and become part of the biggest advocacy group in the United States.

Torrance Education Foundation

P.O. Box 1397, Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/972-6418 • www.torranceeducationfoundation.org

A New School Year Begins!

By Susan Swinburne, Executive Director

Despite record heat in Torrance, Fall has arrived and students are back in the classroom at TUSD. At Torrance Education Foundation, two important activities are underway.

On October 23rd, Torrance students and families will participate again



2000+ Torrance Walkers Teams

in the Skechers Pier-to-Pier Friendship Walk, raising funds for their TUSD schools. This annual partnership between our schools and the Skechers Foundation offers our community a terrific opportunity to get out, exercise (great for health and learning!) and fundraise at the beach. More than 2000 Walkers came out for TEF at the 2015 Walk. We are shooting for 2500 Walkers in the 2017 Walk! Find out more at www.TorranceEducationFoundation.org.

Closer to home, TEF is moving... well, sort of. We are moving in next door. Our office is expanding as we grow! Stay tuned for our Ribbon Cutting and a community Open House later this Fall.

Welcome back to School!

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Adams *Elementary*

2121 238th St., Torrance, CA 90501 • 310/533-4480 • adams.tusd.org



Dr. Kumi Toyoda-Smart
Principal

Always Improving

John Adams Elementary School is looking forward to another exciting and successful school year. Celebrations from last year include acknowledgement by the California Department of Education as a Gold Ribbon School and a Title I Academic Achievement School for our Science, Technology, and Engineering in Math (STEM) program. Adams will strive to ensure we continue to advance our practices in regards to our STEM programs. Last year all fourth- and fifth-grade teachers attended Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) training. This year we will add our second- and third-grade teams to ensure our STEM focus does not wane.

Adams will continue with full integration of Common Core State Standards in math and English language arts. Teachers will continue to utilize our district coaches and content experts from Loyola Marymount University and University of Southern California to improve our instructional programs. State testing data confirms we are on the right track. Based on the results of the 2015–2016 test results, our school improved six points in English language arts and one point in math. We hope to continue our upward trajectory.

We will be implementing something new year, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Our leadership team and staff will be receiving professional development through the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). PBIS is a research-based behavioral support program which has been shown to improve academic, behavioral, and social-emotional outcomes.

We will be implementing something new year, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Anza *Elementary*

21400 Ellinwood Dr., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4559 • anzaelementary.org



Barbara Marks
Principal

'Zootopia' at Movie Night

Every year, to welcome Anza families back to school, Anza's Eagle Education Alliance hosts a Movie Night, during which families bring their lawn chairs and a warm blanket, depending on the weather, to watch the chosen feature movie on a giant outdoor movie screen. Just like at the old-fashioned drive-in movie theaters, snack bar choices included popcorn, pizza, hot dogs, candy and soft drinks. Before the movie, students burned off their excess energy in various activities such as

tug-of-war, Hula-Hoop and Giant Twister. This year, the movie of choice was Zootopia.

The Anza community is very generous and supports the school by donating reams of copy paper during Movie Night. A sticker is placed on each ream to note that it was donated by a student to Anza Elementary School. This year, Anza collected over 270 reams of copy paper. This generous donation by Anza parents will go a long way in helping Anza use the general supply fund on other important supplies for students and staff.



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Arlington *Elementary*

17800 Van Ness Ave., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4519 • arlingtonpta.com



Dr. Vicki Hath
Principal

Refining the Process

I am so excited to be welcoming our Arlington Super Stars to the 2016–2017 school year!

Arlington recently had a successful Back to School Night, where parents attended presentations put on by their children's teachers that shared our curricular plan and year-long learning targets. In addition, the teachers also took time to demonstrate how to access our student/parent online portal, which contains links for electronic textbooks as well as web-based reading programs that the children can use at home.

To ensure that our Superstars will have the best first-instruction in their classrooms, Arlington teachers will continue to refine and improve their craft by attending professional development programs throughout the year in the areas of math, science, and reading.

To strengthen our collaboration model, our school also has a team of teachers who are attending a district-sponsored Professional Learning Community conference (PLC). The team will help refine our PLC collaboration process and establish a "guaranteed and viable" curriculum. The process will also allow our teachers to identify critical and essential skills, and design lessons based on these skills (as well as common formative assessments), which will then be analyzed for our next steps in instruction.

Arnold *Elementary*

4100 W. 227th St., Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4524 • arnold.tusd.org



Justine Lang
Principal

Celebrating the New School Year

Arnold Elementary School started the 2016–17 school year off with lots of community spirit and a dedication to creating a learning environment where all students can experience success. Our second year of registration went extremely well, with all but 20 students turning in their required paperwork and getting their teacher assignments the week before school started. Then, after school on the first Friday, the PTA sponsored an ice cream social to bring the community together and kick off the school year with some sweet fun!



This was also the day that we kicked off our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) month. Through PBIS, we teach our students the schoolwide behavior expectations that will help guide their decision making. We spend the entire month talking to children about what it means to be respectful, responsible and safe, and to "use your best effort."

Here's to a great year for our Arnold Alleycats!

Calle Mayor *Middle School*

4800 Calle Mayor, Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4548 • callemayor.tusd.org



Dave Mosley
Principal

All Kinds of New Additions!

Welcome back to another great school year at Calle Mayor Middle School! I hope that your child is as excited about the new school year as much as we are.

We are pleased to announce that we have a new assistant principal, James Ashikawa, at Calle Mayor. Mr. Ashikawa comes to us from another Torrance middle school, J.H. Hull Middle School, where he had worked for the last three years as an assistant principal. In our continued effort to provide more to our wonderful students, the Calle Mayor students are extremely excited this year about the addition of two new after-school enrichment programs, Speech and Debate, and Art. With the support of the PTSA and the Calle Community, Calle Mayor is proud to offer its students a robust after-school program. These two new additions complement our other fantastic after-school programs: Robotics, Computer Programming, Model United Nations and Woodshop. These great after-school programs give students an opportunity to participate and learn many new, challenging and fun skills that will prepare them for the 21st century.

We are also proud to announce that the school will begin its Community Night Meetings, which will gather input from the local community on the construction of our new school gymnasium. We are excited to see this construction project begin, and it is a great addition to our already wonderful campus. The addition of the gymnasium was part of Bond Measure T and U, which was passed by our Torrance community. We would like to thank you all for this wonderful addition to our campus.

Carr *Elementary*

3404 W. 168th St., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4467 • carr.tusd.org



Richard Peterson
Principal

A Fresh, New Look

Carr Elementary School is in the final stages of its modernization project. The school has been painted, and a new breezeway has been installed. Parents and children alike have commented on how bright and clean the campus is now. Every room and office, including the cafétorium, has benefited from improvements that are readily noticeable. The decorative fencing and the new safety gates have not yet been installed, but the campus already feels more protected than it previously did.

Although it was difficult for everyone to have to move out of and back into their classrooms, the staff feels it was worth the effort to gain the improvements.

In addition to the new and improved facilities, Carr also has three new teachers: a new speech therapist, who visits our campus once a week; a new counselor; and a new psychologist. We also have some new teachers: Danielle Uy, who teaches Transitional Kindergarten; Marilou Hajir, who teaches part-time in our Learning Center; and Stacey Lee, our new physical education teacher, who is on campus each Thursday.

We also have a new part-time speech therapist, Jeannine Black, who will be joining Craig Lowery, who now works two-third of the week at Carr. Our new counselor is Jessica Lee, and our new psychologist is Jessica Haugen. In addition, Sophia Vuong is our new Response to Intervention coordinator.

We welcome all of these new faces and wish them well in their new assignments.

Are you looking for
me for the contest
on page 18?



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Casimir *Middle School*

17220 Casimir Ave., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4498 • casimir.tusd.org



Susie Holmes
Principal

A Brand-New Look

Casimir Middle School has been tucked away in North Torrance since 1950, when it first opened as North Torrance School. Casimir operated as a K-8 school for the north area and saw very little change until it was converted to a middle school. Over the years, we have received new fences and additional building and internal upgrades, but nothing can compare to the scope of work that has been completed over the last year.

The improvements and upgrades here at Casimir have everyone excited. Every building has been upgraded with new windows, floors, and a wide variety of other amenities. The new fencing is Saxon blue, and our buildings are all bright white. During our recent back-to-school event, parents were able to find their way around with greater ease, thanks to the new lighting! Thanks to the bond measures, Casimir has another science lab and is on the way to getting a gym.

Students and teachers alike continue to be excited as we anticipate the final unveiling of the new and improved Casimir Middle School. Our school has never looked so good!

Fern *Elementary*

1314 Fern Ave., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4506 • fern.tusd.org



Debbie Mabry
Principal

Welcome Back, Falcons!

The Fern Elementary School staff looks forward to another fantastic school year. We want to welcome our returning families and extend a special greeting to our new Falcons across the campus, from staff to students. This year promises to be another successful one, with many new programs and events!

We are excited to implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). This school-wide system includes strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting positive student behaviors to create a safe and positive school environment. With PBIS, students learn about behavior just as they learn math or science.

All students will be encouraged to be Scholarly, On time, Accountable, and Responsible and Respectful (SOAR). Students are excited to earn purple SOAR slips, which can be cashed in each month at our student store.

I'm truly looking forward to another great year as your principal, and I'm proud to be a Fern Falcon!



Edison *Elementary*

3800 W. 182nd St., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4513 • edison.tusd.org



Dr. Erin Lahr
Principal

Edison's Renovations

Welcome back to school! We are excited to be finishing up our site modernization from Measures Y & Z Bond projects as we start the new school year. It is amazing how much work was completed during summer break and we are thrilled to be back in our newly renovated campus. Here is an overview of the work that was completed:

- Front Fencing & Courtyard Seating
- Covered Walkways
- New Art Building with sink
- Relocation of Computer Lab & Library
- Fire Alarm Requirements
- New Classroom Ceilings & Lighting
- New Door & Window System
- Sinks in Portables
- Gutter Replacement of Portables
- Painting & Floor Replacement in Portables
- Replacement of Damaged Exterior Wood
- Handicap Access Requirements
- Abatement
- Sight Security Lighting
- Site Drainage Improvements
- Asphalt Replacement
- Concrete Replacement
- Irrigation Replacement at Buildings

For a complete listing of Bond Projects and Construction Updates visit: tusd.org/InformationNews/BondUpdates/ConstructionReports

Hickory *Elementary*

2800 W. 227th St., Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4672 • w1.hickory.tusd.org



Edna Schumacher
Principal

Getting Involved

Hickory Elementary School opened for the 2016-2017 school year with record enrollment. Together with our PTA, we welcomed 950 students. The opening went smoothly. And, thanks to the district's Family Welcome and Enrollment Center, paperwork was completed and registration was a breeze. We also welcomed two new teachers and introduced several new staff members to the Hickory team.

We have many exciting events already scheduled for the school year, starting with our annual Book Fair and Family Movie Night, which took place during the week of October 3. Our student council elections also took place in early October, which included a petition and campaign week followed by elections. What a great opportunity for all of our students to experience the democratic process of petitioning, campaigning, and finally delivering a campaign speech outlining goals for the elected term! Congratulations to all our fourth- and fifth-grade students who ran for office.

After-school enrichment programs are very popular. We offer a wide variety of opportunities for our students. For a reasonable fee, students in first through fifth grades can participate in classes that range from art, sculpting, acting and scouting, and chess to robotics, engineering, cheer and dance, tumbling, and soccer. This year PTA and Hickory held a parent information night. Representatives from the after-school enrichment programs shared short presentations about what they offered and how these experiences connected to student development and achievement. It was a very informative night!

We are off to a great start, and we are looking forward to a fantastic school year!

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J.H. Hull *Middle School*

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Patty Girgis
Principal

Science and Math Camp for Girls

JH Hull was proudly represented this summer by Brenley Koepp and Francheska Aguilar at the American Association of University Women's Science and Math Camp for Girls. This organization sponsors and sends campers to sites in Southern California for a weeklong experience in science and math.

Brenley spent her time in the engineering course, which included creating a bridge to study force and velocity; studying different forms of energy, e.g., wind, solar, tidal power; and the different types of engineering as a career. Francheska spent her time in the computer science course, which included the language of coding, designing and creating a game app, and the different types of careers that computer science has available. Both young women, as part of their weeklong experience, participated in projects that included education about sustainable farming; re-sourcing for our environment, e.g., reusing decommissioned oil rigs; and the use of remote-operating vehicles in the oceans.

Great job, Brenley and Francheska!



**JH Hull Middle School students,
Brenley Koepp and Francheska Aguilar**

Jefferson *Middle School*

21717 Talisman St., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4794 • jefferson.tusd.org



Kara Heinrich
Principal

Creating a Future Focus

Middle school is a critical and amazing time in a child's development. Students know their interests and talents and begin to explore opportunities best suited to them. It is also the perfect time to begin the foundation for college and career. There's a lot you can do now to pave the way for high school and college success.

First, connect with the school. Don't hesitate to ask for resources or support, and check in often.

Second, pursue concrete challenges. Students should take the four core subjects. To ease the way for college, you should also encourage your child to play an instrument, take a foreign language, or include a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) elective.

Third, build solid study habits. Children always do better when they keep materials organized and establish strong study routines. Help your student to use a planner, organize a binder, and utilize the library as a place of study.

Finally, connect with your child. Pre-teens may try to push you away, but you are just as important as ever. Spend time together in activities you both enjoy. Talk and listen. Ask plenty of nonjudgmental questions. Encourage your child to dream and set goals for the future. Plan a day trip to a nearby university to build future aspirations.

This future focus doesn't mean middle-school students can't enjoy life. But know that, as parents, we play an invaluable role in helping children choose wisely when planning for the future. In today's world, opportunities to earn a living wage and positively participate in society require higher levels of literacy in both math and language. There is so much more information to learn, understand, and disseminate. This isn't just about getting into a prestigious university. It's about reaching your dreams and goals in life.

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Teresa Lanphere
Principal

Preschool Programs

September has been a very busy month for the youngest students in Torrance Unified School District. On September 7, all of the Tykes Preschool classrooms at Arlington, Carr, Edison, Lincoln, Torrance, and Wood Elementary Schools opened their doors to almost 350 smiling four- and five-year-olds.

On September 21, at our LAUNCH Preschool site, we held a very successful Ready, Set, Go event to welcome parents onto campus and allow them to complete needed documentation and participate in our PTA meeting. On September 22, close to 300 LAUNCH students and their Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) friends officially started school.

It has been exciting to welcome our students, who are ready to learn and build the foundation skills that will prepare them for kindergarten in the future. We can't wait to see how far these children can soar with their learning!

Lynn *Middle School*

5038 Halison St., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4495 • bertlynn.tusd.org



LeRoy Jackson Jr.
Principal

Today We Learn

Our campus awoke from its summer slumber as 730 students returned to school abuzz with renewed energy, new shoes, and backpacks! Along with the students, our faculty and staff members also returned renewed from their summer adventures refreshed and ready to teach.

This year we have identified three areas for professional growth: fine-tuning our Professional Learning Community (PLC); implementing a school-wide behavioral support program; and increased differentiation for English learners, GATE students, and struggling students.

While state testing indicates that Bert Lynn Middle School is on a very strong academic trajectory, we believe that time spent discussing common learning targets during our "Late-Start Tuesdays" is key to continued success. Guiding questions during our meetings focus on what we expect our students to learn; how will we know they are learning; how will we respond when they don't learn (interventions); and how will we respond if/when students already know the planned learning targets (GATE).

At Bert Lynn Middle School, "Today we learn, tomorrow we lead!"

North *High School*

3620 W. 182nd St., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4412 • northhighschool.org



Dr. Ron Richardson
Principal

Developing Strong Skills

It is no secret that North High's top priority is making sure that all of its students learn at high levels and prepare to become active contributors to our community.

We are delighted to report that our North High students made great improvement on the Smarter Balanced California Assessments in both mathematics and English language arts. The exams were given to juniors in May of 2015, and again in May of 2016. It's clear that the hard work of our teachers, students, local schools, and the entire district are paying off!

Scores for North High juniors improved by 8 percent in mathematics from 2015 to 2016, and were well above the state average. In English language arts, 76 percent of North High juniors scored proficient or higher on the most recent Smarter Balanced exam. This is wonderful!

North High appreciates and thanks all of the schools in the North area. Our students are learning to write, think, investigate, debate, and draw their own conclusions. These are skills which are desperately needed in today's changing world.

Lincoln *Elementary*

2418 W. 166th St., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4464 • lincoln.tusd.org



Katherine Castleberry
Principal

The Start of the Journey

Oh, how time flies when you're having fun! That's how I feel as I enter my tenth year as principal of Lincoln Elementary School.

I am so excited to be welcoming everyone back to our newly remodeled school. The campus is looking wonderful too as it sets the tone for our work ahead this school year. As always we have lots to do, and will approach every new bit of learning with passion and optimism!

I consider it a distinct honor to serve as Lincoln's principal, and feel as though my professional journey has shaped me into a leader who is insightful, transparent, and understanding of the importance of having strong relationships with our school and community stakeholders. My professional experiences have included serving as an elementary principal for the past 11 years, working in both the Torrance Unified and West Contra Costa School Districts.

Prior to my current role, I was a middle school assistant principal, curriculum coach, and classroom teacher throughout Northern and Southern California. I am proud to be a life-long learner with continued high expectations for myself, my staff, and my students.

Throughout my career, what has remained paramount to me is ensuring the success of our students by nurturing their academic, social, and emotional development, and in an environment which is both safe and encourages exploration, risk-taking, and empathy for fellow learners. I believe that this is achieved through truly getting to know each child – their strengths, their areas to develop, their beliefs, their culture, their family, their uniqueness.

This is how we, in education, can position ourselves to meaningfully educate and shape the lives of young people. We can help guide them through a journey in which they will realize their maximum potential, and ultimately, their happiness in everything they do!

Madrona *Middle School*

21364 Madrona Ave., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4562 • madrona.tusd.org



Chris Lipsey
Principal

Expanded Elective Offerings for Students

The Madrona faculty and staff have been working diligently to expand and refine its message of "STEAM and Service." With the start of the new school year, we are very excited to once again be including the Science Olympiad and fielding a team ready to compete for regional and state honors.

Our Project Lead the Way offerings have grown as well. We now host two sections of "Automation, Robotics and Design" for our eighth-graders, as well as a new computer science class for the seventh-graders. These student opportunities lead directly to college credit through PLTW courses at Torrance High School, a benefit unique to THS.

Last year, on their own initiative, our students also built a claw machine device for fundraising, and hosted the Torrance Chamber of Commerce for a Battle Bots session. We continue to work with district and community resources to provide these classes for our students, recognizing that the South Bay has an extensive history in the aerospace and defense industries.

Our arts program runs strongly with instrumental music, vocal music, drama, and fine arts classes. This year a new organization is also gaining steam on campus. Mr. Snow has opened up a Cinema Club for students to discuss and explore classic movies starring the likes of Charlie Chaplin and Laurel and Hardy. Added to our elective line-up this year is also "Contemporary Issues," a debate class for students who are interested in investigating and discussing current events and their impact on a global society.

We are providing exciting opportunities for our students to explore a variety of career paths and interactions that will respond to their interests, and with the help of an expanding network of local businesses and entrepreneurs. Go, Wildcats!

Richardson *Middle School*

23751 Nancy Lee Lane, Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4790 • richardsonmiddleschool.org



Ian Drummond
Principal

Welcome Week

At Richardson, our Leadership Class is setting the positive tone right from the start. They created Welcome Week, with activities designed to help send the 2016–17 school year in the right direction.

The week began with the Leadership Class performing skits in the Positive Behavior Assembly. The skits illustrated the negative outcomes of making poor decisions and reinforced the positive results of making better choices. Leadership also created the Wall of Kindness, which encouraged students to write a positive statement on a colored card and post it on the wall. By the end of the week, there were over 200 inspiring quotes. The week continued with Performances in the Park. Students and teachers gathered on the lawn at lunch to watch performances on a small makeshift stage.

Welcome Week, a week of togetherness, concluded ironically with Class Wars! Students wore their class colors all day and competed in three-legged races at lunch.



Riviera *Elementary*

365 Paseo de Arena, Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4460 • riviera.tusd.org



Christie Forshey
Principal

Peer Models

Riviera's Peer Mediator Program (RPM) began in 2001. For 16 years students in grades three, four, and five have been able to apply to serve as peer role models. They are then selected to attend a special training at SHS.

Why SHS? Well, past RPMs who are now in high school speak to our current RPMs about leadership. This is very motivating to young students, and the elementary to high school connection is also celebrated in our community.

The training is facilitated by Riviera teachers Kim Egan, Lisa Mille, and retiree/founder Jeanine Pagarigan. Students also participate in Conflict Resolution Training, which includes role play, mediation, and finding peaceful solutions to problems. After training, mediators then meet weekly to review and analyze Riviera conflicts.

Special guests also speak at each meeting. Our students can find peer mediators on duty wearing their bright yellow RPM hats. Those in need can approach them for assistance.

This program cultivates student service to school, and empowers new leaders. Having peer models helps to foster social and emotional growth in our Riviera students!



Magruder *Middle School*

4100 W. 185th St., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4527 • magruder.tusd.org



Chris Sheck
Principal

Here We Grow Again!

Just a few short years ago, a local newspaper article acknowledged Magruder as the only school in TUSD that showed API improvement, as follows: “In the Torrance Unified School District, just one school saw its score rise; Magruder Middle School gained an impressive 18 points.”

In following years, many curricular changes have taken place in education across the country, our state and our district. Those changes have in turn impacted how achievement and performance are measured and made public. Once again, our Magruder school community has been part of a few South Bay Schools to experience growth at every grade level in mathematics and English language arts (ELA), as determined by the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). Most notable is the number of eighth-graders meeting or exceeding grade-level standards in ELA. In 2015–16, Magruder’s ELA eighth-graders ranked number one at the middle school level in the district, and the number of students meeting or exceeding schoolwide grade level standards grew 9 percent in ELA and 10 percent in math.

The following data more specifically illustrate the overall grade-level change in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards from just a year ago: grade 6 math—9 percent change; grade 6 ELA—3 percent change; grade 7 math—8 percent change; grade 7 ELA—8 percent change; grade 8 math—13 percent change; and grade 8 ELA—15 percent change.

I have been told that every once in a while, an educator has the incredible opportunity to work with an engaged parent community, a dynamic student population, and a group of teachers driven by excellence; and that this combination of factors will have such dramatic impact that it will change the course of that educational community forever. I am proud to say that I continue to have such an experience at Magruder Middle School.

Seaside *Elementary*

4651 Sharynne Lane, Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4532 • seaside.tusd.org



Michele Bauer-Bean
Principal

A Bold Mission

Each school year brings a new beginning, a chance to improve upon what we did the year before, and an opportunity to try new things. Seaside Elementary School is proud to announce that 74 percent of our students in third through fifth grades met or exceeded the standards in both language arts and math as measured by the Smarter Balanced Assessments, which were administered in May. Congratulations, students! We are proud of you and your excellent efforts!

This year, Seaside joins other schools in the district in our



collective mission to create an effective professional learning community. Grade-level chairs will attend trainings throughout the school year to learn how to effectively collaborate and enhance what we do in the classroom in order to reach even higher levels of student achievement.

This is a big, bold mission, and we look forward to working toward our goal to help all students succeed.

Shery *High School*

2600 Vine St., Torrance, CA 90501 • 310/533-4440 • shery.tusd.org



Jamie Jimenez
Principal

Our Knights are Proud!

Shery High School finished a year-long process of working on a full WASC accreditation application. This resulted in a three-day visit from the WASC Visiting Committee in March of 2016. In April, we learned that we were granted a full six-year WASC accreditation, which is the best you can get!

We are super-excited and proud for our staff, students, and parents that the WASC Visiting Committee got to experience the dedication and support we provide to our students at Shery High.

Not only were our staff members excited about this honor, it was great to see and hear the joy that came from our students and parents! Many students and parents echoed the same sentiment, that now everyone will know what we already know: that Shery High is awesome and does great things for its students.



South *High School*

4801 Pacific Coast Highway, Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4352 • shs.tusd.org



Dr. Scott McDowell
Principal

21st-Century Learning Takes Off

As we begin this school year, South High School students have several new courses to choose from in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). As we begin our third year of Project Lead The Way (PLTW) engineering, aerospace engineering has been added to the existing engineering design and principles of engineering courses. One of the first assignments was to design and build a wing using a three-dimensional printer and test it in the wind tunnel. After attending a two-week training in San Diego this summer, math teacher and ex-Boeing engineer Carol Bonn couldn’t be more excited about teaching this class and helping students explore the engineering of flight and space travel.

In addition to the current Advanced Placement (AP) computer science courses available, computer science principles and cyber security/Cisco networking have been added. The entry-level computer science principles course covers introductory programming concepts and languages. Students will have the option of taking the new AP Computer Science Principles exam at the end of the year.

Last year’s afterschool CyberPatriots competition program has now grown into a seventh-period course with over 40 students enrolled. The course covers cyber security and allows students earn level I, II, and III Cisco networking certifications. Technology teacher Julie Wood has used CyberPatriots as a basis to develop a program rich with problem-solving, higher-level thinking, and real-world application.

As South High’s STEM offerings continue to grow and evolve, more and more students will be able to experience these fascinating and valuable hands-on learning opportunities.

Torrance *Elementary*

2125 Lincoln Ave., Torrance, CA 90501 • 310/533-4500 • torranceel.tusd.org



Dr. Kelly Joseph
Principal

Summer Science Academy

Teachers at Torrance Elementary School were busy this summer attending a teacher's academy in Pittsburgh. There, they experienced firsthand how to write and implement lesson plans using the 5E Model. They worked hands-on with science, technology, engineering and math practices in both student and teacher roles.

The days were filled with activities that ranged from force and motion to data collection. One of our teachers recalled her experience, saying, "We can't wait to incorporate these practices in the classroom. It truly makes learning fun, and students will take ownership for their inquiries."

An engaging time was had by all, and the learning didn't stop there. Every day, Torrance Elementary teachers worked cooperatively with colleagues from all over the United States to problem-solve and construct viable hypotheses based on the data. They even had the opportunity to sight-see the Andy Warhol Museum and take a Duck Tour around the city.

Teachers continue to implement the NGSS standards and are now members of NSTA (National Science Teachers Association). They are active members of a learning center community forum where ideas are shared from newly formed friendships. It was an academy like no other, full of fun, friends and a love for science!

Torrance *High School*

2200 W. Carson St., Torrance, CA 90501 • 310/533-4396 • ths.tusd.org



Karim Girgis
Principal

Celebrating Our 100th Birthday!

On September 11, 2017, Torrance High School will turn 100! We are very excited about our birthday and hope that the entire city will be able to participate in this historic event.

A Web site has been created, <http://www.torrancehighcentennial.com>, where you can join our mailing list so that you can be informed of our coming events. Additionally a Centennial Pathway is available, where alumni, family and friends of Torrance High can leave their

names for decades to come. Also, please save September 9, 2017. We will be holding an open house and family reunion to celebrate. More information about all of these items is available on the Web site.

The centennial logo was created by 2016 graduate Jonathan Cordova and is a combination of our past, represented by the torch, and our present, represented by the double T. Our slogan, "Honor, Celebrate, Dream, One Hundred Years of Tartar Pride and Tradition," was a combination of the ideas of alumni and community members.

We hope to see you next fall!



Towers *Elementary*

5600 Towers St., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4535 • towers.tusd.org



Sandy Skora
Principal

Teaching By Example

At Towers, we believe in Positive Behavior Intervention and Support for our students (PBIS). This system was put into place to help all students succeed academically, behaviorally, and socially.

Each school year we begin our PBIS kickoff program with a student assembly put on by Camfel Productions. This year's topic was "The Right Choice." It was a very engaging and interactive presentation that utilized three large video screens, as well as speakers, to help engage our students in knowing how to make the right choices. Our teachers will also be reviewing our behavior expectations to help remind students to Be Responsible, Be Respectful, make their Best Effort, and Be Safe.

Our voucher system – where children receive Towers Timberwolf tickets when they are caught being good – is also popular among our students. To celebrate their success, several vouchers are handed out every Friday to those students who follow the rules and show signs of good citizenship.

Torrance *Adult School*

2606 W. 182nd St., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4689 ext. 8400 • www.tastusd.org



Dr. Wayne Diulio
Director

New Math Courses

Our school is offering two new math courses to prepare students for academic success. First, the College Math Preparatory course is designed to help students prepare for the Accuplacer exam in the area of math.

Throughout the course, students receive direct-instruction lessons as well as participate in collaborative groups to enrich their learning. This technology-rich course utilizes resources such as Plickers, Desmos, Wolfram Alpha, Google Forms and EdReady to enhance the students' learning experience. Mr. Chang is a leader at Torrance Adult School in the area of technology, and his website, www.mathwithmrc.com, is a showcase for class information and student resources.

We are also offering high school equivalency math-test preparation, which includes pre-algebra, algebra, geometry, statistics and probability material. Students will learn the necessary skills to successfully pass the high school equivalency math tests (both HiSET and GED) offered by our school and approved by the state.



Math Teacher Li Chang

Victor *Elementary*

4820 Spencer St., Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4542 • victor.tusd.org



Bill Baker
Principal

Enhancing Professional Learning Communities

Many of you know that the reason your child is dismissed early from school on every Wednesday is so that our teachers can participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLC). The purpose of a PLC is for teachers to work collaboratively and collectively towards a shared mission: the vision and goal of ensuring that every child will learn.

Although we have been active in this process for many years now, we still want to enhance our knowledge and gain stronger skills to ensure that all Victor students will succeed. To assist in this effort, our Victor administrators and teachers are taking part in Solution Tree's "Professional Learning Communities at Work Coaching Academy." Many other Torrance schools are also a part of this great program.

Overall, we have been doing an excellent job in making sure that our students are learning in a safe and positive environment. Still, educators are life-long learners too, and we believe that we can do even better. The resources and knowledge gained at this Academy, and then shared with our peers, will help move Victor Elementary on to an even higher level!

Are you
looking for me
for the contest
on page 18?



Walteria *Elementary*

24456 Madison St., Torrance, CA 90505 • 310/533-4487 • www.walteriaelementary.org



A Solid Start!

This school year got off to a smooth start with an enrollment of 680 students. We have some new staff members as well. Mrs. Ruparatne has become a fifth-grade teacher; she was our hourly intervention teacher last school year. Mrs. Petty and Mrs. Michaelian are our hourly intervention teachers this year, and Ms. Lee is our substitute counselor.

Bobbie Wynhoff
Principal

Walteria's teachers will continue to participate in multiple trainings throughout this year, some of which they started during summer. This is a testament of their dedication to ensuring that learning for all of Walteria's students is a priority. Creating and sustaining an environment in which students feel safe and can access their educational program is a focus of the Walteria staff.

The culture of Walteria is also something staff has made and will continue to make another priority. Last year, a team of five attended training in Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS), and it is continuing this year. This will be kicked off with all staff, students and families in January 2017. PBIS is a well-researched and -implemented program that fosters a schoolwide positive environment with clear behavioral expectations across all areas of the campus.

Last but not least, we continue to have involved parents and are grateful for that. Many of you volunteer at our site or support our PTA and WAA. All of this gives students opportunities to experience activities that enhance their instructional program, which includes bringing in the arts.

Wood *Elementary*

2250 W. 235th St., Torrance, CA 90501 • 310/533-4484 • wood.tusd.org



Building a Professional Learning Community (PLC)

It is an exciting time to be a part of the Wood community as we continue to embark on a journey that focuses on the three big ideas of a PLC: learning, collaboration, and results. This year we have a team of teachers attending workshops centered around the continuous improvement process of the PLC. Here at Wood, we are using our early-out Wednesdays to continue to create a school that fosters learning for all. We are doing this by collaborating in professional teams that focus on student work results to guide instruction, and in turn meeting the needs of students. The PLC process gives us the opportunity to reflect

on student learning and make adjustments as needed. Everyone wins in a professional learning community – especially the Howard Wood Woodchucks!



West *High School*

20401 Victor, Torrance, CA 90503 • 310/533-4299 • www.whs.tusd.org



Opportunities for Students

West High School opened the school year with 2,050 students, welcoming a freshman class of 515. We also welcomed four new teachers in math, social science, science, and career technical education.

We are adjusting to new bell schedules this year. All high schools in the district began implementing Tuesday morning late starts to allow teachers to collaborate on instructional strategies and common assessments to support the success of all students. Also, West High will soon begin its workshop sessions for students on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Students who need additional help concepts or skills or who need to make work up will be given that time in the workshop sessions. Students who do not need to meet with a specific teacher will have the opportunity to choose from a variety of enrichment workshops.

West High was named to the *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report* lists of top schools in the country. Selection is based on college enrollment rate, graduation rate, Advanced Placement and SAT/ACT exam composite scores, and counselor-to-student ratio. These recognitions are an indication that we are providing our students with a challenging, well-rounded education.

Club Rush was held in late September, and students were invited to find their favorites among over 50 clubs and organizations. Service clubs, special interest clubs, and academic clubs make up a majority of the opportunities for students to get involved.

Fall sports have begun, and we proudly support our student athletes. Performing groups, including dance, drill team, drama and music, are preparing for fall productions and competitions. Community involvement in these activities is evident in the attendance at various events. In addition, Robotics, Academic Decathlon, Science Olympiad, and similar organizations give students an opportunity to put their knowledge and skills to work in competition.

There's always something going on at West High.

Yukon *Elementary*

17815 Yukon Ave., Torrance, CA 90504 • 310/533-4477 • yukon.tusd.org



Commitment and Caring

The Yukon Elementary School family has returned to a new and improved campus. Our library has doubled in size, the classrooms are freshly painted, we have new lights, windows, doors, and, in some cases, new floors. The entire school has been painted and is ready to sport our new Gold Ribbon award plaque, which will be placed on the front of the school.

Besides all the great changes you can see, other advances are in the works. Yukon is in the process of implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) throughout the school, providing our children with consistent guidelines for behaving responsibly and encouraging them to be kind and respectful at all times.

I am very happy to report we now have an additional full-time teacher assigned to Yukon. This teacher will assist us in implementing research-based best practices in all of our classrooms and facilitate the gathering of important academic data at strategic times during the school year. This data will be used to identify and provide intervention for those children who may need extra assistance and to provide challenging enrichment for those who are performing above grade-level standards.

Yukon is happy to welcome a new kindergarten class from the county and two new general education teachers to our campus as well. We are especially grateful for two new part-time teachers, who will be with us in the morning to ensure reading groups and math curriculum can be enhanced at every grade level.

It is always a joy to welcome our children and their families back after a long summer, which somehow flew by quite quickly! I encourage you to stop in and see us anytime. We are a friendly and welcoming campus. Our graduates often stop in throughout the school year, full of success, gratitude, and wonderful memories—which, after all is said and done, are the true indicators of a great school.

We look forward to a year filled with the new as we build on our past traditions with the commitment and caring that are Yukon's hallmarks.

SUPERINTENDENT • From Page 1



Dr. George Mannon

science labs (funded by Measure T) will now be fully equipped with the latest tools and supplies, thanks to the generous contributions of the Torrance Education Foundation (TEF). Some of the equipment being funded by TEF includes: barometers, beakers and test tubes, storage carts, chopsticks, dissection scissors, eye droppers, forceps, fossils, goggles, hammers, hot plates, a human body model, magnets, ping-pong balls, prisms, rope, rulers, a digital scale, telescopes, terrariums, test tubes, and a wave tank. These new labs will transform the district's science program by offering interactive and engaging lessons.

At the middle and high schools, we continue to expand courses in engineering and computer science. It is essential for students to be able to connect classroom concepts to real-world industry. We have been able to expose our students to college and career opportunities in high-demand, skill, and wage fields. Additionally, we now offer a biomedical course at one of our high schools and plan to add to the sequence of course offerings in the near future. Our goal is to provide our students with the academic foundation they need to be successful beyond their K-12 education.

Teamwork, dedication, and strategic leadership are evident throughout the district, which is confirmed whenever I visit a school site. As superintendent, I am so proud of all that we have accomplished together and look forward to another successful year.



Middle and High School students enrolled in engineering courses had the opportunity to visit the Torrance Airport and get hands on experience related to careers in the field of aerospace and aviation.

Board of Education



Martha Deutsch
President



Terry Ragins
Vice-President



Don Lee
Clerk



Mark Steffen
Member



Michael Wermers
Member



Board President Martha Deutsch, with the District professional development resource teacher team.

Doreen Asari - Classified Employee of the Year (Middle School)

Doreen began working for TUSD at Calle Mayor Middle School almost 8 years ago as a Library Media Technician. She is a very dedicated person and the model for selfless service to students, staff, and the school. Her commitment far exceeds her job title as Library Media Technician. She is the Advisor to the School Recycling Club and the Free Afterschool Tutoring Program, serves on the Calle Mayor School Site Council, and handles a myriad of technology on the school campus. Doreen is an amazing individual who does not look at the idea of supporting students or staff as an hourly idea, she is the person who works until the job is done. She can be seen on campus after hours and on weekends all to support the students, staff and school. Doreen truly wants Calle Mayor to be an amazing place and she is a big reason why it is so great.

Gayle Hall - Certificated Employee of the Year (Adult School)

Gayle has consistently exemplified the highest standards in ESL instruction during her career at Torrance Adult School. She is not only an outstanding teacher, but she also provides leadership to her fellow ESL teachers. In addition to her regular teaching assignment, in 2005 she also took over the Lead Teacher position in the Community Based English Tutoring (CBET) program, an ESL family literacy program. Last year, Gayle also began working in the ESL distance learning program, providing materials and individualized help for students who utilized this instructional delivery. Gayle is always taking initiative and has excellent organizational and personal skills, which contribute to the success of Adult School programs.

Razia Khan - Classified Employee of the Year (Adult School)

Razia started out as an ESL student with Torrance Adult School in 1997. In 1999, the school began to provide childcare services for the children of ESL students and Razia was hired to be part of that program. Razia always made herself the supervising teacher's right hand. She worked equally well with the small children who needed nurturing as she did with the older children who needed homework help. Additionally, she helped the parents learn English when there were no children who needed her care. Razia has continued to work in the childcare program, being an integral part of its success.

Although the childcare program is not a true preschool, Razia creates a structured classroom with rules the children can easily follow. She is kind and loving with them and makes sure they have a balance of activities throughout the day in an environment that is conducive to learning. The day for the children of the program include themed topics with art projects, music, books, dance, and outdoor playtime. She treats the children as if they are her own and they thrive under her care. The school, students and their children are better because of Razia Khan and her work here. Razia Khan exemplifies the positive, student-centered ideals of the school and the Torrance Unified School District.

Carlyn "Andy" Jones - Classified Employee of the Year (High School)

Andy began her career at TUSD in 1989 at Torrance High School, then later moved to Wood Elementary, and in 1994, she found her home at South High School. Over this twenty-seven year span, she broadened her experiences, excelled in her area of expertise, and became a valuable asset to South High School's students, staff, faculty, as an integral part of the school's activity and athletic programs.

At South High School, she began working in the business and athletic Office, where her knowledge of business practices and school culture served as a welcome asset to a chaotic office environment that managed a myriad of responsibilities.

Andy continued to nurture her strengths at South High and always leaped at the opportunity to grow professionally in the Student Services Office. Her keen attention to detail, her rapport with students, her ability to be flexible, her willingness to take on additional projects, and her expansive knowledge of the office, has not only served the needs of more than six Assistant Principals during her tenure, but also the needs of our entire teaching staff.

The respect she has garnered from students, staff and community is genuine. Andy's intelligence and resourcefulness continues to benefit South High School. Her compassion, warmth and bubbly personality serve as a welcoming beacon of light for the staff, and her participation and commitment to the athletic and activity programs will be remembered at South High School for years to come.

Zobedia Merlos - Certificated Employee of the Year (Middle School)

Zobedia began her employment in TUSD at Jefferson Middle School as a 6th, 7th, and 8th grade science teacher in 2014. She quickly transitioned as a beloved teacher and expert in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math). Her passion for student learning and the field of STEM education stands out daily in her mindset of teaching to the whole child. She strives to develop her students into life-long learner and to bring out each student's personal best. She has the exceptional reputation as an instructional lead and compassionate educator.

Zobedia is a dedicated and strong supporter of TUSD and the Jefferson Middle School school team. Her talents and leadership shine in and out of the community as an Next Generation Science Standard Lead, Honeywell STEM Green Boot Camp recipient, Project Lead the Way teacher, 1st Lego League Robotics Coach, grant recipient of 3D printers, and as one of only 25 (across the US) selected Northrup Grumman Fellow Teachers. Her deep passion for teaching and learning stands out in everything that she does. When not working with students during lunch or her conference period Zobedia can be found in a colleague's room planning, sharing, learning, or reviewing student data. She is seen as a valuable resource and lead on campus. JMS colleagues and peers from other sites seek her out for support, professional suggestions, and instructional best practices.

Miguel Moreno - Classified Employee of the Year (Elementary)

Miguel cares deeply about his work, but even more so about the people he serves. Everything he does, he does with a smile on his face and with concern for those he is helping.

A hard working and good custodian is essential for a school community, and Miguel fits that description in every way. He is reliable, competent, and honest with an unassailable work ethic. It is a joy to be able to recognize such a fine worker who is also such a fine human being. Yukon is most appreciative and so thankful for Miguel.

Hiroko Sumi - Classified Employee of the Year – District Support

Long-time Torrance resident Hiroko has dedicated 30 years of exemplary service to TUSD. She began her career in 1986 as a clerical substitute. Over the years, Hiroko has served as secretary at Magruder Middle School, worked in the Testing Department, and in the Personnel Commission.

Since 2008 Hiroko has been the heart and soul of the Special Education Department and is still going strong! She is known as the "go to" person if you need anything in the department and is appreciated by teachers, parents, colleagues, and administration because of her calm demeanor and institutional knowledge. Hiroko is a gem -- the District and the Community celebrates her dedication and service to the children of Torrance Unified School District!

Gregory Wheeler - Certificated Employee of the Year (High School)

Greg has served the North High community for over twenty years in several different roles. As a cross country and track coach, Greg mentored hundreds of students to become scholar athletes. As the science department chair, Greg fostered an inclusive environment where teachers felt supported and the science department thrived. Recently, Greg has played a pivotal role in establishing the engineering program at North High. He has helped build the program up to two classes with more expected next year. Greg has been able to obtain computers and equipment for the engineering program allowing students to practice hands-on engineering skills. Further, students have taken several field trips to aerospace companies, construction firms, and robotic competitions, where he has been able to bridge classroom learning to the real life careers. He has also arranged for engineers, computer scientists, and construction managers to visit North High and speak to students about their future professional goals. Greg has also served as a supportive mentor at North High to his colleagues. He has shares his lessons, teaching techniques, and equipment without hesitation. Greg continuously strives to push students academically, supporting their goals so that they can be successful. His stellar leadership and enthusiasm for teaching are part of why North is such a great high school!

**Shelley Miller - Certificated Employee of the Year
(Elementary School, L.A. County Office of Education
Teacher of the Year representative for TUSD)**

Shelley is a veteran teacher of 21 years at Towers Elementary School. She has taught Kindergarten, 1st, 3rd, and 5th grades. No matter what grade level she is teaching, her goal has always been to help her students recognize and reach their potential.

She thrives in her classroom because she continues to learn and move forward with the changes in education at the state and local levels. She immerses herself in the latest “best practices” instructional strategies. Shelley has the vision, courage, wisdom, and professional knowledge which create opportunities for all children to be engaged and motivated in what they are learning as well as improve student achievement. In addition, Shelley is a team player and often times, she is leading the team! All staff members welcome her positive attitude, comments, critiques, and suggestions. Her knowledge and experience gives credibility to her words. Her intelligence and character are what help her lead our school in a positive direction. Shelley embodies what Teacher of the Year recognizes and she has truly earned this honor.



Ms. Miller's kinder/1st grade class



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Alana's Book Review

Great Plot and Character Development



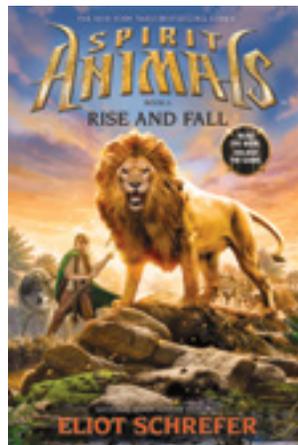
Alana F.

By: Eliot Schrefer

In this volume of the Spirit Animals series, Conor, Rollan, and Tarik travel across Nilo to retrieve the Golden Lion of Cabaro, their greatest challenge yet. But without the comfort of Meilin and Abeke, can they succeed? Meanwhile,

the girls are held hostage by the Conquerors, and Meilin struggles with her feelings of depression. Even though Meilin and Abeke found some comfort in a new ally, their struggle seems to never cease. Without each other at their sides, can the divided team members find a way to meet their goal?

I would give this book five stars because the plot and character development is astounding, and the ending really tugged on my heartstrings. This book reminded me of just how much I love to read, and it was nice to get a gentle reminder of when I was younger and more carefree.



Alana is a student columnist. When she doesn't have a book in her hands, she enjoys playing video games and writing fiction. She rates books on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest.

Keira's Book Nook

Man's Best Friend



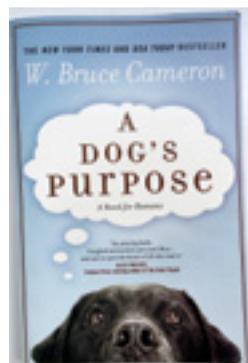
Keira

A Dog's Purpose

By W. Bruce Cameron

This remarkable story is about a dog who was reborn as a golden-haired puppy. Bailey tries to find his purpose in life, which leads him to an eight-year-old boy named Ethan. During his life with Ethan he learns to be good. "Good dog, Bailey." This is one of the most important sentences Bailey has

ever known. However, this is not the end of Bailey's journey. When he is reborn yet again he wonders when he will find his full purpose. By the way, this is a story for humans from a dog's point of view. It describes the unbreakable bonds between humans and dogs. This is a great book, and I could read it over and over again! I rate this book 5 out of 5 apples.



Keira Fukuwa is a fifth grader. In addition to her love of books, she enjoys jazz dance, art, crafts and traveling. Keira rates books 1-5 apples with 5 being the highest.

Isabella's Book Review

Second Book of this Series



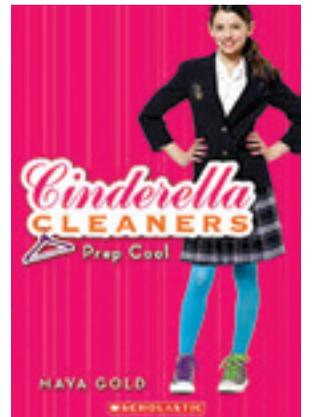
Isabella A.

Cinderella Cleaners: Prep Cool

is written by Maya Gold and is the second book of the series. Diana helps her dad at the dry cleaners and she didn't like it, but now she's okay with it. When Will, a student, from their school, invites them to go to one of his concerts, Diana's best friend, Jess, gets her cell phone stolen! In order to get it back, Diana must sneak onto campus, but how?

A student from the school takes her uniform to be cleaned. Diana decides to sneak in wearing the uniform. But the trouble is sneaking into the thieves' dorm, stealing it back, and making it back out unnoticed. She meets new friends who are willing to help. Will Diana be able to steal the phone back and get out of campus without being caught? Or will she end up failing miserably?

I would rate this book three and a half stars because while it is rather fun and interesting, sometimes it can be dull and under descriptive. It also shows bad habits.



Isabella is in fifth grade and continues to enjoy writing fictional stories based on true events, which she looks forward to learning how to publish when she is older. She will rate the books 1 to 5 with 5 being the best.

Contest!!

This Mr. Ruller is hidden in 2 places in this publication. When you find him, email the **page numbers** to:

Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com
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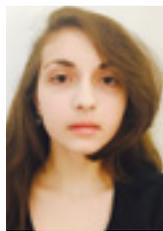
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Christina's Book Review

Power of Determination



Christina J.

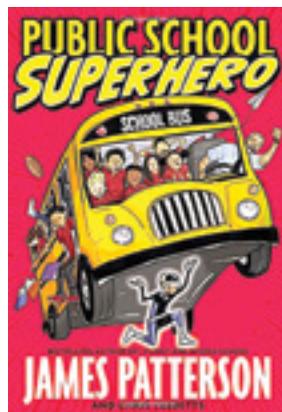
Public School Superhero

By James Patterson and Chris Tebbetts

The story is about a middle school student named Kenny Wright, who imagines being a powerful superhero named Stainlezz Steel. Kenny lives in a bad area that has gangs and drugs on the streets and he meets older students, trying to influence him into

doing things that will get him into serious trouble.

Kenny goes to an underfunded, overpopulated school run by bullies. Kenny is known at school as "Grandma's boy" and, while he is constantly a target for the 7th and 8th grade bullies, he must try to get through the school year without being peer-pressured into doing wrong things that his alter ego Stainlezz Steel would never, ever do. At one point Kenny meets a bully named Ray-Ray, whom he has to teach chess to. After a while Kenny sees that Ray-Ray is a normal person, living in a bad home environment, and starts to understand why he is so aggressive to everyone. Overall, the book is about a boy's determination to get through life with the best possible outcome, with a little bit of action comics mixed in. I liked the book and it's fun, quirky attitude, and it's deep emotional conflict that gives the story a deeper meaning. I give the book a 4 out of five stars, with 5 being the best..



Christina J. is a 7th grader. She is an avid reader, who enjoys some peace and quiet with a good book about some great adventure. Christina is a young author herself, in 5th grade she wrote a book *Melody's Stories: I Am a Spy Now*, published by Studenttreasures Publishing (PIN #3582798).

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Lucy's Book Review

Nothing is Impossible!



Lucy Davis

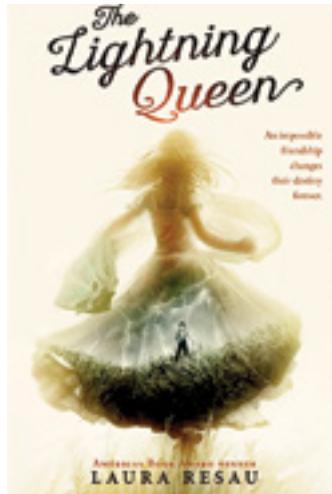
The Lightning Queen

Author: Laura Resau

Mateo spends his summers at the Hill of Dust, a small, rural town in Mexico. His grandfather tells him tales of the old town. When Mateo is transported into a story of his grandfather's childhood, he learns about Esma, the Queen of Lightning. Esma is a Romani girl who, with her tribe, came to the Hill of Dust and became lifelong friends with Mateo's grandfather.

The two friends go through a lot together, and when something seems it cannot be done, Esma always says, "Nothing is impossible, my friend for life."

This book gets four bookworms out of five because it shows the readers the power of hope, and it is a great example of the importance of telling family history. I recommend the story for grades 4 and up. I hope this book inspires you to ask about your own family's history.



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.

Marissa's Movie Reivew

Kubo and the Two Strings



Marissa Aldegarie

Kubo and the Two Strings, rated PG, is a fantasy action adventure film directed by Travis Knight, written by Marc Haimés and Chris Butler, and produced by Laika. The film features the voices of Art Parkinson, Charlize Theron, Matthew McConaughey, Ralph Fiennes, George Takei and Rooney Mara.



I have recently seen this movie which is very action packed and good for the family with kids over 10. This movie stars Kubo, a young boy who lives with his ill mother, in a cave on top of the mountain. Every day he goes to a nearby village to tell stories by magically using origami that moves by listening to music played from Kubo's instrument. He lives a fairly peaceful life until he accidentally summons a vengeful spirit from the past. As he runs from the evil, he is accompanied by a monkey and a beetle while they battle the Moon King and his mother's sisters.

What I liked about the movie is it was very mysterious and full of action. What I did not like was it left the viewer confused due to a lot of different stories that made up this movie. Therefore, it would be hard for a younger viewer to follow this movie. Overall it was a movie about heroism, love and forgiveness. I would give this movie a 3 out of a 5.

Marissa is a 7th grader who loves to watch movies, especially action films. She would love to be an actress in the future. She rates movies on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest.

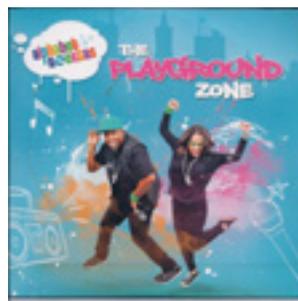
Note-ables

The Playground Zone



Kate Karp

For some, particularly the younger some, hip-hop is a playlist staple. For others a generation or three older, it's at best an acquired taste. And the menu on this lively collection is sufficiently spicy and substantial to satisfy any listener. It was cooked up by teacher/artists, songwriters and performers Kaitlin McGaw and Tommy Shepherd, along with the various other guest artists who comprise Alphabet Rockers.



As their website says, the songs were "fully kid tested" in Oakland-area schools and apparently pronounced delicious. The lyrics are a call to anyone who needs a hand up—or wants to put an elbow up, is different externally or internally, or just wants to move. "Players' Life" sings about each child's right to play in a safe area and his or her responsibility to create one. "That's Your Name, Wear It Out" tweaks and twiddles with children's own names and identities, inviting listeners to join in. "Gimme Some Skin" and "Oddball," to which a lot of us young and old surely can relate, wondrously segue into appreciation and acceptance, and "Change the World" sums up the collection.

And just for fun, there's "Wiggle Jiggle"—and why not? That's what hip-hop's about. No matter what your musical tastes are now, this collection guarantees that everyone's going to taste it, feel it and put those elbows up!

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

Richard's Book Review

A Twist On a Classic

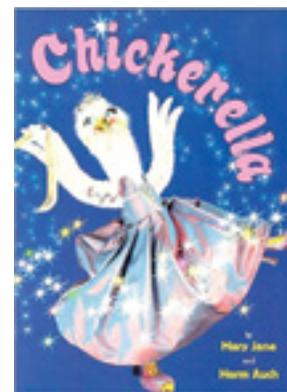


Richard J.

Chickerella

Written and Illustrated by Mary Jane Auch

In the beginning it is like the usual Cinderella story about how chicken Cinderella, named Chickerella gets an Evil Stepmother, and starts living in a coop behind the house. Then, because of her poor diet, the eggs she lays become more and more transparent, until they are pure glass. When it's time for the Prince's ball, the Fairy Goosemother appears and helps Chickerella go to the ball, but warns her that she must be back by midnight. So, Chickerella goes to the ball, meets the Prince, and when the clock strikes midnight, Chickerella runs away and leaves behind a glass egg! The next day the prince sends his servants to look for the chicken who laid the glass egg. When they find Chickerella, the Prince tells her that instead of getting married, he wants to start a fashion line with her! When the Fairy Goosemother hears this, she appears and asks if she could help and design clothes for the line. In the end the three friends start a successful clothing line and live fashionably ever after! I liked that the book starts like the usual Cinderella story, but has a funny, unexpected twist, ending in a fashion show instead of a happy marriage.



Richard J. is a second grader who likes math, coloring, fun activities, playing on the playground and reading. Richard rates the book 5 out of 5, with 5 being the best.

Have a Fun Winter Break...and Read!

Michael's Book Review

The Hardy Boys - The Missing Mitt

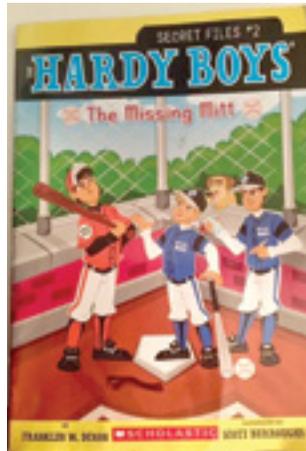


Michael H.

This Hardy Boy case is about Joe and His brother Frank. They try to figure out who took Jason Prime's baseball mitt. Their Team the Bayport Bandits were all ready to win the final little league game of the season using their good luck charm. Jason's mitt was special because his dad Winner Prime had used it to win the world series. Right before each game the whole team would touch it for luck.

Jason thought it was Conner Hound from the opposing team, because he had seen him snooping around their bags while they were practicing. Jason was upset and did not want to play until the mitt was found. After some detective work they figured out what had happened to the missing baseball mitt. They remembered that earlier that day Mr. Mack's dog Lucy had Jumped on Jason. Lucy loved to play fetch especially with things that people threw on the ground. You had to be very careful around her because anything thrown might end up buried somewhere. They decided to throw another mitt. Lucy immediately picked it up and began to run. Jason, Joe and Frank chased her. When Lucy stopped she dug a hole and there in the hole was Jason's mitt. The Hardy boys were very happy. Secret File Case #2 was solved

I give this book 4 stars I really enjoyed the mystery. The only thing that would have made this book more exciting was if Lucy the dog wasn't the one who had taken Jason's mitt.



Michael H. is a 4th grade student. Besides his love for reading, he also enjoys Karate, playing guitar and sharing new adventures with his mom. He will rate the books 1 to 5 stars with 5 being the highest.

Naomi's Book Review

A Magical Box



Naomi

The Secret Kingdom by Rosie Banks

The Secret Kingdom is a book full of mystery, suspense, adventure, thrills and excitement.

This book is about three girls called Jasmine, Ellie and Summer who found a magical box that gave them a riddle. That the girls couldn't solve. Therefore the box sent the three girls to another world where they saw fairies, kings, queens, and trolls. Where they also went through different stages in weather. After going through all that adventure the three girls solved the riddle. Then the box sent the three girls back home. Where they made sure to put the box in a safe place where no one could ever find it again.

I give this book 5 stars because it is interesting and has many different scenes that just make me want to keep reading it over and over again. This is why I recommend this book to everyone.



Naomi is a fourth grader that enjoys reading and writing. But aside from her joy of reading she loves to play the piano, drawing, coloring and be involved in any school event. She rates her book from 1-5 stars with 5 being the highest.

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Remember When?

Remembering Kindergarten



Charlene Ashendorf

Do you remember your first day of kindergarten; those anxious feelings of separation from mom or dad? Perhaps you are like me and those memories have faded. If you have adult children, you may have a more vivid memory of letting go of the hand of your daughter or son as well as the loss you felt as she or he took those first steps towards independence.

Those thoughts and more flooded my mind as I entered kindergarten last fall at the beginning of a new school year. This time, however, it was as a classroom volunteer. I had prepared for this "big step" with the necessary shots and tests. The sponsoring agency equipped me with several afternoons of training offered by Teachers on Special Assignments. But nothing would prepare me for the enthusiastic welcome by 26 - four and five year olds, eager to face the new challenges of this learning environment.

Do you remember the oversized letters of the alphabet and numbers on the walls? How about the colored squares or carpet spaces reserved for story time? It was good to see that some things do not change! My eyes caught sight of the fully equipped playhouse in the corner, the rows of cubbies and the classroom library.

That September morning as I entered Ms. Walker's class, I was probably more apprehensive than the children. But this experience was so rewarding and the positive feedback was instantaneous; I couldn't wait to return. And return I did, week after week. I struggled to learn names. I had to get accustomed to classroom rules and routines, just like every other kindergartner!

I remember when Robert Fulghum wrote that we need to live a balanced life, learn some, drink some, draw some, paint some, sing and dance some, play and work some... every day." I remember when as if it were yesterday!

Please visit Charlene's web site <http://about.me/cmash>

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Over My Garden Gate

Finding Your "Thing"



Nancy

As a parent I was always excited when the boys found something that kept them interested, in which they could find a challenge and they work to better their abilities.

For my eldest great grandchild, photography is her "thing". She is quickly becoming the family record keeper as she attends this event and that. Her enjoyment comes from photographing bugs and flowers to getting interesting juxtapositions of family members with an object or other person. She has quite the ability and is our shining camera star. She also looks pretty terrific in front of the camera too but you have a job convincing a just turned 12 year old she is (a) gorgeous and (b) looks great in photographs.

My youngest son spent many years in 4-H enjoying the hobby/project of photography. His object du jour was clouds, with irises being a close second. His photo of our dog and one of our little lamb made Kodak's traveling show many years ago, appearing at the 4-H convention the same time he did as a state winner in a Community Pride project. Photography was his "thing" too.

It is my fondest wish that you, as a parent or grandparent or even great grandparent, have the pleasure of watching your loved one find their "thing" to make their childhood special for them.

Publisher's note: Nancy is a rancher in Northern CA. I don't think I have ever known anyone quite as appreciative of nature as Nancy. She can stand in the middle of a field of weeds and find beauty in the gentle swaying of the tassels. At the end of her busy day, rather than settle down for a much needed rest, Nancy is preparing sugar water to not disappoint the hummingbirds the following morning. After much arm twisting, I convinced Nancy to share with our readers a few tidbits of her days on the farm. Enjoy!

Football Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.
When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com (Please put Torrance in the subject line)



Entries must be received by December 15, 2016
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
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|--------------|---------------|---------------|
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| Coach | Linebacker | Special Teams |
| Conversion | Loss of Down | Super Bowl |
| Cornerback | Offsides | Tackle |
| Defense | Personal Foul | Tailback |
| Field Goal | Possession | Touchdown |
| Flanker | Quarterback | Yardage |
| Goal Post | Roughing | |
| Interference | Safety | |

Congratulations to Ellie Choi
Winner of the June Issue Word Search Contest!

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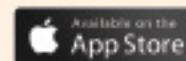
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Your kids are growing fast and your 529 college savings account needs to keep up. Luckily, right now you can give it a boost by transferring your 529 account into a ScholarShare account—one of the best 529 plans in the nation. Depending on your current balance, we'll give you up to \$500 to switch to ScholarShare (see chart below).* You are permitted to transfer funds from another 529 college savings plan to an account in ScholarShare for the same beneficiary once within a 12-month period without incurring federal income tax. The 529 college savings plan from which you are transferring funds may be subject to differences in features, costs and surrender charges. You should consult your tax advisor or the other 529 college savings plan. State and local taxes may apply.

| Balance amount | Bonus | Balance amount | Bonus |
|---------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| \$10,000 - \$20,000 | \$100 | \$40,001 - \$50,000 | \$400 |
| \$20,001 - \$30,000 | \$200 | \$50,001 + | \$500 |
| \$30,001 - \$40,000 | \$300 | | |



SCHOLARSHARE
529 COLLEGE SAVINGS PLANSM

scholarshare.com/switch

*ScholarShare has received a Silver rating from Morningstar, making it one of the best-rated plans in the nation. In an annual review (10/20/2015) of the largest 529 college savings plans (64 total), Morningstar identified 29 plans that rose above their typical peers, awarding those plans Gold, Silver, and Bronze Morningstar Analyst Ratings for 2015. These forward-looking, qualitative ratings signal Morningstar's conviction in the plans' abilities to outperform their relevant benchmark and peer groups on a risk-adjusted basis over the long term. Morningstar evaluates college savings plans based on five key pillars — Process, Performance, People, Parent, and Price. For more information about Morningstar's overview of ScholarShare, go to 529.morningstar.com. Past performance does not predict future results. Source: 529.morningstar.com



Consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses before investing in the ScholarShare College Savings Plan. Visit ScholarShare.com for a Plan Disclosure Booklet containing this and other information. Read it carefully. Investments in the Plan are neither insured nor guaranteed, and there is a risk of investment loss. TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing, Inc., Plan Manager. TIAA-CREF Individual & Institutional Services, LLC, member FINRA, distributor and underwriter for ScholarShare College Savings Plan. Taxpayers should seek advice from an independent tax advisor based on their own particular circumstances. Non-qualified withdrawals may be subject to federal and state taxes and the additional federal 10% tax. Non-qualified withdrawals may also be subject to an additional 2.5% California tax on earnings. Before investing in a 529 plan, consider whether the state where you or your Beneficiary resides has a 529 plan that offers favorable state tax benefits that are available if you invest in that state's 529 plan. Neither TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing, Inc., nor its affiliates, are responsible for the content found on any external website links referenced herein.