District Cabinet Members Visit Grand View Elementary School
We are thrilled to be fully back on our campuses this school year. 2022-23 has remained focused on maximizing the academic success of each student. You can read about those stories each week in our Superintendent’s Newsletter. Additionally, we’ve maintained an emphasis on developing a climate of care in each classroom, and many of those stories appear in this edition of School News. We started the year by launching the “We Are MBUSD” theme during Opening Day for our staff, which was an energizing event that took place for the first time since the pandemic.

The theme has also been the foundation for our video series showcasing our staff, students, and alumni. The hashtag #WeAreMBUSD has been successfully trending across social media posts by our school sites and community members.

To continue to strengthen our climate of care work, elementary and middle school students took trips to the Holocaust Museum. 4th and 5th grade elementary teachers received professional development from Holocaust Museum Los Angeles and all of our school sites continued efforts to eliminate bias and bullying on campus by participating in the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) No Place for Hate® Program. This put MBUSD on the map as a District recognized on the state level for being named the only school district in the ADL Los Angeles region to soon receive this designation.

There were many other milestones reached by our staff and students, including the achievement of California Distinguished School Awards for our elementary schools - with all five MBUSD elementary schools now recognized for this honor. We ensured student voices were heard through student advisory meetings with diverse groups of students and Mira Costa Principal Dr. Karina Gerger. It has provided us with critical insight into supporting our students. We are looking forward to finishing the school year strong and seeing our Class of 2023 graduate in June!

Students celebrating Lunar New Year by watching a Lion Dance performance.

Meadows and Pacific PTAs host Holi event at Meadows!

Pennekamp Principal Sharon Witzansky, Pacific Principal Rhonda Steinberg, and Meadows Principal Michelle Krzmarzick receive the CA Distinguished Schools Award honor.
Committed to Supporting the Whole Child

At MBUSD, we are committed to educating the whole child and supporting students to thrive in school and in life. We offer a wide range of wellness, mental health, and social-emotional learning support services to assist every student. We work closely with our partners Beach Cities Health District (BCHD), South Bay Families Connected, and South Bay Children’s Health Center to offer resources to our staff, students, and families. Additionally, we will be starting a telemental health program, through a grant with Hazel Health, to offer short-term counseling support for students. We are also proud to share that we have a low student-to-counselor ratio, with thanks to our partnership with the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation.

In early March, we hosted our 2nd Annual District-wide Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Week. Aligned with our District SEL Framework’s five areas of focus, activities were facilitated on our campuses all week long. It reflected the important role of positive relationships and emotional connections in the learning process and helped students develop a range of skills. Students participated in the Kindness Challenge, yoga during lunch/recess, attended a range of assemblies with guest speakers, created a “Love Yourself” heart garden, and wrote in their gratitude journals, along with participating in activities towards earning their Anti-Defamation League (ADL) No Place for Hate® Program designation. Mira Costa students took the NPFH pledge and committed to eliminating bias and bullying on campus.
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**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Nancy Lueder

**SCHOOL NEWS ROLL CALL, LLC**
P.O. Box 728, Seal Beach, CA 90740
562/493-3193
www.schoolnewsrollcall.com
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Measures C & EE Facilities Projects

We are grateful to the Manhattan Beach residents who approved Measures C and EE. These bond funds have provided local funding to improve our schools and facilities. In previous years, these funds replaced our 50-year-old gym with a state-of-the-art Athletics Complex, completed district-wide fencing and roofing projects, and modernized all five of our elementary schools, providing upgraded infrastructure, updated finishes (including storefronts, flooring, paint, and casework), and new HVAC systems for all classrooms. In addition, we constructed new classroom buildings at Grand View and Pennekamp Elementary Schools. Work at these two schools is nearly complete, including new gardens and a parking lot at Pennekamp and, at Grand View, new playfields and a three-story multipurpose building, which will house administration offices, a multipurpose performance space, and new cafeteria and lunch areas.

At MBMS, we recently opened our new music building, providing classrooms that are specifically designed to support the acoustical and performance needs of our music program. The facility has unique features including raised ceilings, acoustical paneling, large instructional areas, private practice rooms, and special instrument storage spaces.

This summer, we will continue our infrastructure upgrades at our preschool campus by adding new HVAC systems to classrooms at that site.

These campus improvements provide a safe and accessible environment for our community today and for generations to come. MBUSD is planning end-of-year celebrations for the completion of construction at MBMS and Grand View.
Thank You to Our staff

At Manhattan Beach Unified School District, we are grateful to our amazing administrators, educators, and staff from all of the departments who make MBUSD a destination district with outstanding schools. Together, we have worked together to provide exceptional educational experiences and have made efforts to motivate our students to maximize their academic success. You have all stepped up to support our students and their families in many ways and your efforts don’t go unnoticed. We have and will continue to support the whole student and provide quality education for each and every student. No matter your role in our District, your commitment is what makes MBUSD what it is today.

Whether you’re preparing to transfer, train for a career, or learn a new skill - we have what you need to make your next move. Learn more at www.elcamino.edu/explore.
A Foundation of Excellence
The Manhattan Beach Education Foundation (MBEF) is a community-driven fundraising organization which supplements state funding for programs that inspire learning, enrich teaching, and promote innovation and academic excellence in our local public schools. MBEF was founded in 1983 when school funding was at an all-time low and private donations were critical to providing a quality education. Four decades later, that support has grown into a multi-million-dollar commitment that maintains small class sizes, rigorous academics, and a breadth of educational experiences for all students.

Our strong public schools are an integral part of our vibrant and dynamic community. Parents, teachers, and neighbors are dedicated to the shared vision of creating a learning environment that incorporates a strong foundation in core subjects like language arts and math, hands-on opportunities in science, art, and music, personalized instruction to meet individual needs, and inspirational opportunities to collaborate and connect with peers.

The additional support from MBEF funds many of the robust learning programs and specialized educator positions that shape this exceptional education. These are the unique programs – like science lab and music in our elementary schools or advanced STEM pathways in our secondary schools – that support 21st century teaching and learning and challenge our students to think critically and creatively.

We are fortunate that our parents and the broader community continue to value quality public education and support our commitment to providing our students with opportunities that empower them to recognize their potential and realize their dreams.

Elementary Library Resource Specialist Heidi Snively creates a welcoming environment where students spend time each week personally selecting the book that is right for their reading level. Studies show that self-selection of reading material improves literacy skills as well as overall academic success.

Music education at a young age instills creativity, discipline, and appreciation of the arts. Students as young as eight explore vocal, string, and wind instruments before selecting a path to pursue more intently.
PTA Council
www.mbusd.org/PTA

Strong School Communities
If you have a child, you have experienced PTA! The Parent Teacher Association is the oldest and largest child advocacy association in America. PTA provides guidance, resources, and expertise to parents, helping them navigate their school experience. PTA provides timely information about National and state legislation affecting our schools and children. Here in Manhattan Beach, the amazing, ongoing partnership of the PTA and MBUSD continues. We are extremely grateful to our volunteers for their time, energy, and passion for our schools. This year PTA volunteered 75,000 hours on behalf of our schools!

We thank everyone who joined PTA; without you, our programs and projects would not be possible. Our PTA provides school supplies and technology; capital improvements; academic, social-emotional, and VAPA programming; teacher appreciation opportunities, community support, and cultural and school-wide celebrations.

Various PTA parent functions provide a forum for parents to voice their opinions, engage in discussions and learn about what is happening at our schools. We produce weekly newsletters and social media posts keeping the community informed on the latest school news and events. PTA is a constant voice for our children and strives to make our schools a better place to learn and grow!

Erin Levin
President
Jennifer Gale
Executive Vice President

Mira Costa Bands

Mira Costa Bands recorded a performance for the 2023 Pac-12 Basketball Tournament with legendary Bill Walton that aired on national T.V. during the week of the tournament. The music was composed by MCHS 11th grader Miles McPhee.
Annual Signing Day Ceremony

Mira Costa Student-Athletes commit to playing collegiate sports during the Annual Signing Day Ceremony!
Mira Costa Choirs Perform in Europe during an eight-day tour of Prague, Vienna, and Salzburg!
Mental Health is Health

Mental health is one of Beach Cities Health District’s (BCHD) four health priorities. This is fueled by the fact that while our Beach Cities community has a healthy presentation on the outside, there continues to be concerning rates of reported stress, bullying and substance use. Suicidal ideation and feelings of chronic sadness/hopelessness are high for our 11th graders. Adult suicide rates are greater than Los Angeles County. Focusing on mental health across the lifespan presents an opportunity for dramatic improvement in well-being.

BCHD is kicking off the month of May with our community-wide campaign “Mental Health is Health” with partners such as Manhattan Beach Unified School District. The campaign’s message aims to decrease stigma, increase help seeking behaviors, increase awareness of and access to resources for mental health, and build community capacity to support individuals who need mental health resources. For more information on Mental Health Awareness Month, visit //bchd.org/mentalhealthawareness.

Free mental health resources and other services for young people ages 12-25 are also now available at allcove Beach Cities. Monthly and weekly events include Open Mic Night, Movie Night, Study Lounge and Game Night. The center is located at BCHD’s campus, 514 N. Prospect Ave., 4th floor and is open Tuesday through Friday from 1-7 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. To learn more, visit //allcove.org/beach-cities/ or call 310-374-5706.

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Youth Services

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Visit allcove.org/beach-cities for more information.

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The MBX Foundation is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. MBX is proud to support academic, educational, musical, athletic, and co-curricular programs established for and in support of the Manhattan Beach Unified School District and the children which make it thrive. The breadth of support is wide and spans from the installation of the West Field, campus Improvements, a fully accredited Summer School, After-School Programs hosted at all five elementary schools and the middle school, ten plus Summer Camps, and the oversight operations of over forty-five Mira Costa High School Booster Clubs.

In addition to recently welcoming our new MBX Executive Director Heather Interian, MBX hosted over 1,200 8th grade students and their parents at “This is Costa Night Part 2” in March to learn everything Mira Costa High School has to offer. Families had the opportunity to attend up to three informational break-out sessions to learn about the MBX Foundation Summer School classes, academic clubs, athletics, music and art programs. Each sports team and arts program had their own classroom to answer in depth questions and allow families to hear from current students, coaches and advisors. The next “This is Costa” night will be hosted by MBX in Fall 2023.

A new program the MBX Foundation was proud to start last year is the MBX Foundation Grants Program. We have awarded over thirty grants to Manhattan Beach elementary schools, the Manhattan Beach Middle School and many Mira Costa High School Booster Clubs. These grants have supported everything from new robotics and sports equipment to playground structures and murals. As we look back at MBX we celebrate the last twenty years with pride and look forward to continuing our support of the children, coaches, administration, teachers, and advisors within our great district.
Preparing Students for the Future

Mira Costa is the home of the Mustangs! We are proud to continuously evolve and grow all opportunities offered to our students on campus.

Why Costa? At Mira Costa, we prepare our bright students for the future and part of that goal is to ensure we provide them with the chance to immerse themselves in rigorous academics and extracurriculars.

In January 2023, our Board of Trustees approved new courses for our students in 2023-24. Conceptual Physics, Graphic Design I, and Play Production were a few of the courses that were recommended in support of student-driven scheduling and to align with the District’s goals. Our teachers worked to create the course proposals that will add to our current rich and robust curriculum, while also tapping into students’ needs and providing new opportunities to grow their skills.

This year, we also have a record number of 2,896 Advanced Placement (AP) tests that our students plan to take, which is 470 more tests than last year! We offer 38 Advanced Placement/Honors courses, CTE pathways, and a variety of elective options to our students. There is more to celebrate! We have eleven students who have been named 2023 National Merit Scholarship Finalists putting them in the top 1% of all high school seniors graduating across the nation. To be part of this program, students earn some of the state’s highest PSAT/NMSQT Selection Index scores.
Fostering a Climate of Care

Manhattan Beach Middle School is committed to cultivating a school climate of care and inclusion for all students, staff, and families. 8th Grade students, staff, and parent chaperones visited the Museum of Tolerance in February 2023, funded by the Manhattan Beach Education Foundation (MBEF).

Students gained real-life learning with interactive exhibits and activities. They shared this experience as a community, understanding the impact of historical events on their current lives.

MBMS then hosted guest speaker Frank Meeink, an ex-neo-Nazi who now fights against prejudice and hatred. During his speech to students, Mr. Meeink described his descent into bigotry and violence as a teenage neo-Nazi. Through some personal encounters, Meeink rejected his beliefs and became an advocate for tolerance and diversity. This opportunity was provided by a community partner, Rabbi Dovid Lisbon, who works weekly with MBMS’ Jewish Club.

In English and Social Science classes, students are researching the importance and history of human rights issues. Simultaneously, an Inclusion Committee of staff, students, and parents have facilitated inclusion lessons and assemblies for the school highlighting important issues related to equity.

MBMS is proud to continue to foster a campus-wide climate of care where students become more responsibly aware of their civic engagement.
Diverse Programming Supporting Inclusive Campus

Social skills can be hard to master in elementary school, but it’s even harder if you have a disability. In school, students with the most severe social challenges play with their peers or practice these skills with their equally challenged comrades. At Grand View, we wanted to take a closer look at the many initiatives we already have in place to help foster a more inclusive school environment where all students take responsibility for the sharpening of social skills.

Grand View hosts Friendship Club on Thursdays, and we offer Global Gamers twice a month, a program where children play games from around the world learning about culture, language, and geography. Additionally, we have a Grand View Cares group of 4th and 5th graders who support activities in keeping our school bully-free.

While these programs are thriving, we thought we could do more to bridge these efforts and shift school culture on a larger scale. This year representatives from each of these initiatives as well as members of our Special Education team met to discuss ways to more effectively achieve the District’s board goal of creating a climate of care. Working with Beach Cities Marriage and Family Therapist, Chloe Canton, we designed a peer model training that will allow our Grand View Cares students to teach our primary students about anti-bullying. Furthermore, these students will be trained on ways to be an ally to students with social deficits, and ways they can support them during play. This means neurotypical peers will be given the tools to initiate and model social interactions to help ensure students with disabilities become an integral part of playtime.

Beach Cities Marriage and Family Therapist Chloe Canton leads anti-bullying assembly.
“Oh Meadows the Things We’ll Grow”

Meadows evokes a strong sense of pride in its traditions and sense of community. Thanks to our parents, the campus now boasts a thriving garden and hand-painted murals depicting some of the life growing in our unique garden that has twelve plant beds. This school year parents Lilian Dunker Cruz and Bob Black, District Green Team members, were inspired to transform the Meadows garden. They taught the students to grow broccoli, cauliflower, beets, kale, potatoes, and carrots. One of the highlights of the space is the beautiful banana tree and a greenhouse made out of sustainable materials.

From Transitional Kindergarten (TK) to fifth grade, students are given various opportunities to be part of the experience and also learn what is growing there. Most recently, students were able to eat the fruits of their labor and had a delicious salad filled with produce grown from the garden for lunch.

To add to the color popping around our campus, parent Bob Black dedicated his time to transforming the plain colored pillars on campus into pieces of artwork featuring the vegetables in the garden aligning with our school motto, “Oh Meadows the Things We’ll Grow.” Bringing creativity to the campus for our young learners, the students were able to see the artwork come to life one brush stroke at a time.

MBUSD is a Green District and we are proud to be a leader in our garden initiatives to promote this recognition.
STEM Education through Hands-On Learning

The Pacific staff would like to thank the PTA and MBEF for providing us with exceptional educational programs. Our STEM opportunities, such as Science Lab and Makerspace programs, are funded by MBEF and the Pacific PTA provides materials.

Pacific 5th graders’ recent Makerspace challenge was to create a working bow and arrow to hit a target. This challenge paid homage to Valentine’s Day and Greek Mythology. Pacific students learned about the legend of Cupid’s arrow and the concepts of potential and kinetic energy and gravity. They also found the physics behind archery in a fun, hands-on way.

The engineering design process was implemented as they designed, built, tested, and improved their bows and arrows. Each team was given a box of limited supplies and the arrow tip was a Q-tip. Heart-shaped targets were put up in the classroom and each team demonstrated their design. This fifth grade is the first class to have Makerspace since Kindergarten.

The science lab serves as a unique place to provide students the opportunities to learn through a hands-on approach. Through observation, experimentation, and inquiry, TK-5th grade students can also target the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). In this pictured experiment, 4th graders are tasked to generate and compare multiple solutions to reduce the impacts of natural Earth processes on humans such as earthquakes and floods. Students worked to create and test their design of an elevated earth and flood-proof structure in order to keep the “people” (represented by sugar cubes) dry during the flood simulation!

Student testing out her bow and arrow.

Students in the science lab working to create a design for their earth and flood-proof structure.
“Where Every Dragon Learns and R.O.A.R.S.!”

At Pennekamp, we believe all students can learn and it is our job as educators to maximize their academic potential. Behavior and conduct are large components of a school community and we strive to address issues age-appropriately and keep “The Golden Rule” at the forefront. Our staff models kindness and believes that mistakes do not necessarily define an individual. Our use of positive behavioral interventions and support (PBIS) is the framework that serves as our guide.

PBIS is a research-based, multi-tiered system used to identify and reinforce student behaviors with the backbone being a site-specific set of values. As Pennekamp Dragons, we use the acronym “R.O.A.R.S.” - Respectful, On-task, Accountable, Responsible, Safe. When students exhibit positive behaviors, they receive an incentive called a “R.O.A.R.S. card”. This is provided to all students and considered our Tier 1 universal support; 80% of the student population will not need anything beyond this tier.

If 80% of students are in Tier 1, what about the other 20%? Through collection of R.O.A.R.S. cards and disciplinary data, we identify approximately 15% who need interventions at the Tier 2 level. Examples of Tier 2 interventions might include classroom lessons, literature, playground rule review, and recess activity facilitation. The remaining 5% of students are provided Tier 3 interventions, which could be conferencing, behavior incentive charts, and lunchtime social-emotional instruction.

We are proud of our system of support and believe that every dragon “R.O.A.R.S.”!
Buddy Program Builds Strong Community

At Robinson, developing an emotionally strong, happy student is important to our community, as we want to serve the success of the whole child academically, socially, and emotionally. When a student becomes a Riptide, the entire family is embraced and becomes part of our community.

Parents are given buddy families from day one so that they have someone to call when navigating the new waters of elementary school. Every student has a buddy, too, and partners share an activity each month based on inclusion and diversity.

For our first buddy activity this year, students listened to *The Colors of Us* by Karen Katz. Then they drew portraits of their buddies using multicultural skin tone crayons designed by Crayola to celebrate the diversity of all people. The portraits are proudly hanging in the cafeteria and have become wonderful conversation starters for guests and visitors. Our buddy teams jogged laps together during our Buddy Run this year and it was a great opportunity for our community to embrace one another.

In April, we’ll have a Dress Like Your Buddy Spirit Day. At Robinson, everyone is welcome and everyone belongs, and this core value is reflected in all that we do.
Festival of Colors

Preschool students took a “trip” to India to celebrate Holi, also known as the Festival of Colors! It’s a time to celebrate the arrival of spring, forgiveness, and friendships.

It was a day of laughter, love, and color as students showered their friends with color and sampled a popular Indian flatbread known as naan. The day ended with students coloring vibrant mandalas to hang up in their classrooms to decorate the classroom to signify the festival.

Celebrations such as Holi allow students and staff to learn about the world and cultures around them. They have also taken “trips” to Mexico and China, and their next stop will be Japan! These traditions teach our students to celebrate different cultures in a fun and engaging way, while also giving them an opportunity to appreciate and respect the diversity of the world around them.

Throughout the year, our students take music classes funded by parent donations through Music Rhapsody. They learn about music theory and we have multiple performances during the school year for children to showcase all they have learned.
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11:15am - 12:00pm

Arising Generation (10-13yr) .. 12:00pm - 12:45pm

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Good for the Mind & Great for the Heart

The way we choose to spend our time and the activities in which we engage help form our value system. With a wide array of possibilities and opportunities, volunteering is a positive and vastly beneficial way of helping young people develop a strong sense of self.

Volunteering offers benefits spanning from the intellectual and spiritual to the educational and professional. As young people give of themselves and their time, they can learn about being selfless. In a busy world of “pursuit of personal happiness,” too often the intrinsic values of empathy and giving are the lessons that are overlooked. Helping others via a structured volunteer program is a positive and safe way to develop oneself in this regard.

Additional Benefits of Volunteerism:
1. Learning: Acquiring a new trade or skill can help teens see the world in a bigger picture and be inspired to continue to expand intellectually.
2. Networking: Volunteering brings people of like minds, interests and values together. This will inevitably lead to positive interaction and healthy relationships.
3. Building the Résumé: Engaging in service to others and taking the initiative to learn new trades or skills is a brilliant way to expand your portfolio. This is especially beneficial for students and young professionals.
4. Personal Growth: As Mahatma Gandhi said, “The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others.” Teens who experience growth at an early age are likely to continue cultivating positive behavior and friendships.

Motivational Speaker, Founder of The Brainpower Programs for Schools, Author, Consultant, Radio Host contact: info@doctorshari.com, twitter: DrShariS, Youtube: Dr. ShariS, LinkedIn: Dr. Shari Sweetnam
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August 7-11, 14-18
Boys & Girls age 5-12
Fees: $160
Time: 9:00am–12:00pm, Monday–Friday
Location: Hesse Park, Rancho Palos Verdes

19th Annual Half Day Peninsula Baseball Camp
July 31-August 4
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LIMITED SPACE!!

Day at the Beach – 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 Manhattan Beach in the subject line.

Entries must be received by July 15, 2023
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a $20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.

SUN BLOCK
TOWELS
SWIM SUIT
SUNGLASSES
UMBRELLA
HAT
FLIP FLOPS
PAIL
SHOVEL
BLANKET
BOOK

SURF BOARD
FLOAT
SHIRT
SANDWICHES
SHORTS
CHAP STICK
FIRST AID KIT
COOLER
DRINKS
SNACKS

W W R L I D H S W L P Z T I C
A T S H O R T S U A C S P I K
Q I D M U A H A I N S Z M R S
M U I Z I O T L H K B I E G B
N S V D V B L G W E O L H S J
Y M K E D F H N M T O S O A B
C I L I V R X U G O K V W C O
T W C O J U I S C W E C G X K
P S M S B S A N M E W N F R I
U I Q N H U W L K L O Q X V P
I T W E S J U A C S Q J E S C
Novelist – Word Search Contest

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Y U O T N D O P U O S X Y
H N O Z C B C C H V N P N
E N G X I K O Y V N U A N
L Q P V L J O V P W V Z K
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