



ISSUE NO. 13

LAS LOMITAS ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

SEPTEMBER 2026

## SUPERINTENDENT NEWSLETTER



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# A Great Start to the Year

## What a start!

There is nothing quite like the energy of the first few weeks of school. From welcoming our newest staff members to reconnecting as a team at our annual Convocation, to Meet the Teacher and finally opening our doors to our Lions and Leopards, it has been wonderful to see our campuses come back to life.

Our students have returned to classrooms filled with talented adults who care deeply about their learning, growth, and sense of belonging. Walking through classrooms, visiting playgrounds, talking with families, and watching our teachers and staff reconnect with students has made one thing very clear: LLESD is off to a fantastic start.

Thank you to our staff for the tremendous work that went into opening school, to our families for your partnership and support, and especially to our students for bringing the joy, curiosity, and energy back to our campuses.

We have an exciting year ahead. I'm glad we're underway—and even more excited about where we're going together.

**Welcome back, LLESD!**

*Erik Burmeister*  
Superintendent

# Message from the Board President



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*We begin this year fully staffed, with a balanced budget and an incredible team*

As we begin a new school year, the LLESD Board of Trustees has much to celebrate and much to look forward to.

Last month, we welcomed Erin Tiedens to the Board through a provisional appointment to complete former Trustee Paige Winikoff's term. Erin brings 16 years of involvement in the LLESD community and a long history of service to our schools.

We also know now what the Board will look like beyond December. With three candidates filing for three open seats, November's election will be uncontested. Erin will continue alongside returning Trustees Gautam Nadella and Heather Hopkins when their new four-year terms begin in December. That continuity gives the Board and District a real opportunity to build on the work we began last year.

We start this year fully staffed, with a balanced budget and an incredible team across the District. We're also preparing to develop LLESD's next five-year strategic plan, which will give our community a chance to help shape our priorities for the years ahead.

I hope you'll be part of that work — volunteering in your child's classroom, joining your PTA, supporting the Las Lomitas Education Foundation, attending a Board meeting, or completing a District survey. Every one of these contributions matters.

I'm grateful to serve a community that cares so deeply about our schools.

In partnership,  
*Kimberly Legg*  
President, LLESD Board of Trustees



# Welcome Trustee Erin Tiedens to the LLESD Board

The Las Lomitas Elementary School District welcomes Erin Tiedens to the Board of Trustees following her provisional appointment on August 26, 2026.

Trustee Paige Winikoff resigned effective July 15, 2026, ahead of a move out of the district. With only a few months left in her term, the Board chose to fill the seat by provisional appointment.

Three community members applied; two withdrew after learning Erin had applied and would join the Board in December as one of three candidates who filed for three open seats in November's uncontested election. At that meeting, the Board interviewed Erin in open session, voted to appoint her, and administered the oath of office that evening.

## About Erin Tiedens

Erin has been part of the LLESD community for 16 years. She is serving her second term as La Entrada PTA President, previously co-led the Las



Lomitas PTA when it earned a National PTA School of Excellence Award, founded the Las Lomitas Inclusion Initiative for families of students with learning differences,



and was elected last year to the La Entrada School Site Council.

Recruited as a TK–8 substitute during COVID, she still teaches today. She holds a master's in Nonprofit Management and has worked with arts, housing, and youth organizations, including Peace Corps service in Timor-Leste.

## From Provisional Appointment to Full Term

Erin will serve provisionally through December, when she will be seated for her full four-year term. State law allows a 30-day window during which a petition for a special election may be filed with the San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools. If none is filed, the appointment becomes effective under Education Code Section 5091.

We are pleased to welcome Trustee Tiedens to the Board and grateful for her willingness to step into the role immediately and serve LLESD during this transition.

# District Updates

## AI Will Help Support Teachers

LLESD staff are extremely interested in using AI for teaching and administrative tasks, according to [a survey conducted last spring](#). As of now, the district has no intention or plan to use general-purpose AI or chatbots in any student-facing capacity, but over 70% of staff are interested in exploring AI to speed up the work they do behind the scenes – giving them more time to focus directly on helping students learn and thrive.

LLESD plans to build on this strong interest with an expanded Artificial Intelligence and Technology Design Team and extensive professional development throughout the year.

We also look forward to learning more from parents and guardians, so stay tuned for a survey coming soon.



## Shaping Our Next Five Years

This year, LLESD will begin an important community-wide process to develop our next five-year strategic plan. The District's previous strategic plan expired in December 2025, making this an important opportunity to take stock of where we are today and, together, establish a clear vision and priorities for the years ahead.

At its August meeting, the Board directed staff to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an outside consultant to help the District gather input and develop a strategic plan for Board consideration and approval. Trustees Heather Hopkins and Erin Tiedens will serve as a Board subcommittee to review the submissions and bring forward three proposals for the full Board's consideration, likely at the October or November Board meeting.

A central part of this work will be a robust community, staff, and student input process. Once a consultant is selected and the process gets underway, there will be multiple opportunities to participate, including surveys, focus groups, and other forums for sharing ideas and perspectives.

Our goal is a strategic plan that reflects what we value as a community, identifies where we want to go next, and provides meaningful direction for the District's work over the next five years.

Stay tuned—we look forward to inviting you into the conversation.

# The Las Lomitas Play Yard Continues to Transform

Come check out Mane Street (a nod to Lion's Mane and a typical downtown Main Street)!

Brushes in hand, Las Lomitas staff, parent volunteers, and City and County Safe Routes teams painted a streetscape on the campus blacktop, adjacent to the newly installed ball courts.

This series of mock roadways, intersections, roundabouts, and bicycle lanes will be used for classroom-based pedestrian and bicycle education, as a platform for students' imaginative play during recess, Champions, and will be open to families after school hours where caregivers and children are encouraged to bring scooters or bicycles to learn to ride in a car-free setting.

This project was made possible through Las Lomitas' participation in the [San Mateo County Safe Routes to School Travel Fellowship](#), which brings school, city, and county stakeholders together to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety opportunities and infrastructure. For questions, reach out to LLESD Wellness Coordinator Nell Curran at [ncurran@llesd.org](mailto:ncurran@llesd.org).

Happy riding - and don't forget to always wear a properly fitted helmet and use your hand signals!



# Field of Dreams: From Community Vision to Grant Application

Over the past year, LLESD has been exploring an opportunity to transform the La Entrada field and surrounding outdoor spaces into a safer, more functional recreational resource for our students and community.

The current field is undersized, heavily used, and difficult to maintain. The planned removal of the aging "portable village" creates a rare chance to rethink this part of campus and significantly expand the field and play area. That opportunity grew with the State's commitment of Proposition 4 climate funds for parks in under-parked communities — a designation that applies to this part of Menlo Park.

Working with the City of Menlo Park and our partners — the Sequoia Healthcare District, AYSO, Alpine Little League, and the Las Lomitas Education Foundation — we are finalizing conceptual designs and preparing an application for the **maximum award of \$8.5 million**. LLESD will also contribute funds already set aside for removing and abating the portables. The full vision for the site will exceed that amount and will likely take multiple phases and years.

Because Proposition 4 is climate funding, sustainability is central to the design. Our conceptual work focuses on a highly engineered **natural turf field** built for intensive, year-round use, with a system that captures and stores stormwater beneath the field — adding flood protection while reducing irrigation needs.

There is no guarantee we will receive this grant, or the full amount. These are competitive statewide funds, and we recognize our community may look different from those traditionally associated with public grant funding. Our application has to make its case on the merits: this area's need for park space, the substantial public use of the site, the school district-city partnership, and the environmental benefits. Even without an award, the planning, engagement, engineering, and partnerships underway are the first steps toward the long-term future of this space.

**What happens next:** In September, the Board will review three conceptual designs, and community members are invited to weigh in on the tradeoffs and priorities. The Board is expected to give direction in October on which concept forms the basis of the grant application.





# Why Does LLEF Make Pancakes Every September?

Every September, our community gathers for the LLEF Pancake Breakfast, where kids bounce their hearts out while adults recharge with coffee and orange juice, and everyone enjoys the pancakes!

This annual tradition marks the beginning of something bigger than breakfast: The LLEF Annual Campaign, the fund-raising effort that keeps our schools among the best in California.

The LLEF exists because the public funding that our district receives from property taxes doesn't cover the full cost of the great education that our children receive – there is a gap of about \$2,500 per student.

The LLEF is committed to filling the funding gap by helping our community understand the value of investing in our schools. Your support is critical and greatly appreciated by teachers, administrators, and parents across Los Lomitas and La Entrada.

Last year, LLEF raised over \$1 Million to support our district's educational excellence, and we are building on that momentum.

It all starts over pancakes.

Join us Saturday, September 19, from 9am–11am at Las Lomitas Elementary. Get tickets at [llef.org/pancakes](http://llef.org/pancakes).

Las Lomitas Elementary School  
**PTA**  
everychild.one voice.®

  
Las Lomitas Education Foundation

La Entrada Middle School  
**PTA**  
everychild.one voice.®

## Pancake Breakfast

**Saturday, Sept. 19**  
**9:00am - 11:00am**  
**Las Lomitas Elementary**

**\$10 breakfast** (gluten-free option)  
**Free bounce house** (no purchase necessary)

[llef.org/pancakes](http://llef.org/pancakes)

# Help Shape the Work: Get Involved

Some of the most important work in LLESD happens when teachers, staff, administrators, parents, students, and community members come together to tackle challenges and shape what's next.

This year, LLESD is continuing and expanding our **Design Teams and Advisory Committees**. Some are intensive working groups tackling major District initiatives; others meet periodically to offer advice, perspective, and community input. Schedules and levels of commitment vary across groups.

You don't need to be an expert. We're looking for people who are curious, collaborative, willing to listen, and interested in helping LLESD continue to improve.

Membership on some teams will be limited to keep working groups balanced and manageable, but there will be many other ways to contribute through surveys, focus groups, and community meetings. Our schools are stronger when our community helps shape the work. We hope you'll join us.

- **Math Pathways** – Strengthening TK–8 math pathways, developing common assessments, and supporting this year's curriculum adoption.
- **Literacy** – Advancing research-based literacy instruction across TK–8, including LLESD's Literacy Framework and work in the intermediate and middle grades.
- **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)** – Building a districtwide framework for academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support.
- **Future of AI & Technology in Education** – Shaping responsible, ethical, age-appropriate uses of emerging technology in the classroom.
- **Wellness & SEL** – Strengthening social-emotional learning, belonging, restorative practices, and student well-being.
- **Green/Sustainability** – Advising on waste reduction, energy conservation, greener facilities, and environmental education.
- **Nutrition Advisory Committee** – Weighing in on student meals and nutrition as we transition to a new food vendor.
- **Strategic Planning/Future Ready** – Helping develop our next five-year Strategic Plan by bringing together student, staff, family, Board, and community voices.
- **LCAP & Equity** – Shaping the District's annual goals while keeping equity and inclusion embedded in our planning.
- **English Learner Advisory Committees (ELAC/DELAC)** – Giving families and staff a voice in programs and services supporting English Learners.
- **Superintendent's Budget Advisory Committee (SBAC)** – Reviewing the District's financial health, budget priorities, and long-term fiscal planning.
- **Parent Advisory Committees (PAC)** – A forum at each school for parents to work with principals on school priorities, climate, and culture.

We want these teams to reflect a range of experiences and perspectives from across LLESD. Parents and community members interested in being considered should email Superintendent Erik Burmeister at [eburmeister@llesd.org](mailto:eburmeister@llesd.org).

# Stay Connected

## Important Dates

**Monday, September 7**

Labor Day (Holiday)

**Wednesday, September 16**

Board Meeting, 6:30-10pm  
La Entrada MUR

**Saturday, September 19**

LLEF Annual Campaign Kickoff &  
Pancake Breakfast

**Monday, October 12**

Professional Development Day

## District Links

**Superintendent Contact**

[eburmeister@llesd.org](mailto:eburmeister@llesd.org)

**Board Contact**

[schoolboard@llesd.org](mailto:schoolboard@llesd.org)

Kimberly Legg: [klegg@llesd.org](mailto:klegg@llesd.org)

**District Website**

<https://www.llesd.org>

**Las Lomas PTA**

<https://www.laslomaspta.org>

**La Entrada PTA**

<https://www.laentradapt.org>

## Helpful Resources

[LLEF Pancake Breakfast tickets](#)

For questions on Mane Street/Safe Routes:  
Email **Nell Curran**, Wellness Coordinator at  
[ncurran@llesd.org](mailto:ncurran@llesd.org)

For Design Team & Advisory Committee  
interest: Email Superintendent **Erik  
Burmeister** at [eburmeister@llesd.org](mailto:eburmeister@llesd.org)



**Las Lomas  
Elementary  
School District**

Inclusive. Engaging. Inspiring.