



SUPERINTENDENT NEWSLETTER



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It's Been a Great Year

As we close out the school year, I simply want to say **thank you**.

Thank you for welcoming me into this community during my first year as Superintendent. This has been a year of hard work, meaningful progress, and tremendous partnership—and I have been continually reminded that LLESD is a truly special district filled with incredible staff, engaged families, supportive trustees, and remarkable students.

At the May 7 Board meeting, I reflected that if someone had told us a year ago where we would be today, many of us might have been skeptical. And yet, here we are—not by chance, but because this community came together and kept moving forward. On June 4, Mei Chan and I will present a fully balanced budget with no projected deficit spending over the next three years. One year ago, we were working to reduce a \$4.5 million structural deficit. That turnaround is something our entire community can be proud of.

But this year was about far more than finances. Together, we strengthened math pathways, expanded Science of Reading practices, brought back Apple for the Classroom, launched facilities initiatives, improved communication systems, and deepened our sense of shared purpose as a district.

Important work still lies ahead—but the energy across LLESD right now is tremendous, and I could not be more grateful to be part of it. Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your commitment to our students. Wishing each of you a wonderful, well-deserved summer.

With gratitude,
Erik Burmeister
Superintendent

Message from the Board President



We welcome continued community feedback as discussions on the Prop 4 "Field of Dreams" move forward

As we close out the school year, the Board remains focused on initiatives that support student learning, staff, and the district's long-term strength. In May, the Board approved a two-year collective bargaining agreement with LLEA for 2026–2028, reflecting our commitment to supporting and retaining excellent educators. Additional approvals included a transition to Schoolytics to strengthen our MTSS framework through integrated student data, a new nutrition services contract with Revolution Foods, and updated La Entrada bell schedules for grades 4–8 designed to improve coherence, flexibility, and fiscal sustainability.

The Board is also continuing discussions on the Prop 4 "Field of Dreams" grant project, evaluating field surface options including artificial turf and natural grass. Artificial turf would improve year-round usability during winter months, while any final decision will balance playability, sustainability, and community priorities. The District is also exploring underground drainage improvements to address seasonal flooding—regardless of which surface is chosen. We welcome community feedback as these discussions continue at the June 4 Board meeting. As always, please feel free to reach out at schoolboard@llesd.org.

In partnership,
Kimberly Legg
President, LLESB Board of Trustees

Field of Dreams: Synthetic or Engineered Natural Turf?

As part of a potential Prop 4 California Parks Grant application with the City of Menlo Park, the Board will continue discussing the proposed "Field of Dreams" project at La Entrada at its June 4 meeting, with direction anticipated at June 10.

Key topics include field surface options (engineered natural turf vs. synthetic turf), field size, and overall project priorities — weighed against considerations of student use, community access, sustainability, year-round functionality, and long-term stewardship.

The project represents a significant opportunity for LLESB and the City to collaboratively enhance outdoor athletic and recreational spaces for students and the broader community, with potential state funding support. The Board remains committed to gathering community input and balancing educational, environmental, operational, and neighborhood priorities.

Community members are encouraged to attend upcoming Board meetings and speak during public comment, or submit feedback directly to the Board at schoolboard@llesd.org.

Learning Community Updates



Summer School Reminder

Families of registered students, we're looking forward to seeing you at summer school! You should have received information regarding your child's enrollment in summer school.

Please note the following details:

- **Dates:** June 22 – July 17 (no school on July 3)
- **Time:** 8:15 AM – 12:00 PM
- **Location:** Las Lomitas

If you have any questions, please contact **Heather Smith**, Summer School principal at **650-854-5900**. See you soon!



Strong Academic Results Amid National Recovery Effort

Recent [New York Times coverage](#) of national research found that many schools continue working to recover from pandemic-related learning loss in reading and math. We're proud to share that LLES D tells a different story.

Based on the most recent CAASPP results, more than 83% of Las Lomitas students met or exceeded state standards in both English Language Arts and Mathematics — far above California averages.

Highlights from this year's results include:

- Continued strong achievement in both reading and mathematics across district
- Growth in math performance at multiple grade levels
- Increased numbers of students achieving at the highest performance levels in both ELA and math
- Student outcomes that continue to place Las Lomitas among the highest-performing districts in California

These results reflect the hard work of our students, the dedication of our staff, and the strong partnership we share with families. Thank you for your continued support throughout the school year.

New Smarter Balanced and CAST Reporting ALDs

California is updating the achievement level labels used for Smarter Balanced ELA and math assessments and the California Science Test, beginning with 2025–26 reporting. The new labels are designed to help students, families, and the public better understand assessment results.

| Level | Old Reporting Label | New Reporting Label |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 4 | Standard Exceeded | Advanced |
| 3 | Standard Met | Proficient |
| 2 | Standard Nearly Met | Developing |
| 1 | Standard Not Met | Minimal |

The updated labels address a common misconception that Level 3 represents a grade-level cutoff and that scoring below it means a student is "below grade level" — neither of which is accurate. The criteria and cut scores remain unchanged, and results are still comparable year to year. Full descriptions and a communications toolkit for educators and families are available on the [Reporting Achievement Level Descriptors web page](#).



LLESD Is Launching a Facility Dog Program!

Beginning next school year, LLESD will welcome two goldendoodles to our school community — Ruby at Las Lomitas and Leo at La Entrada.



Leo

Ruby

Facility dogs support students' social-emotional, mental, and physical health. Ruby and Leo will attend school daily, greeting students at arrival, visiting classrooms, providing comfort during difficult moments, joining recess, and participating in school events. All engagement is optional.

LLESD partnered with [CaliPals](#) to secure and fully train one dog per campus. Each dog will have a primary staff "host" and a team of trained staff "handlers."

Students and staff across both campuses voted on the dogs' names — and excitement is already building.

For more information, see the Facility Dog [FAQ](#).

Introducing Three New Educators

We are happy to introduce the following educators with new roles within LLESD. We're thrilled to have such gifted professionals joining the LLESD family.



Bethany Li has been selected as the next **Assistant Principal of La Entrada**, bringing a strong commitment to student engagement, collaboration, and instructional leadership. Ms. Li joins LLESD after more than 20 years as a middle and high school teacher and instructional coach, including the past 12 years at Burlingame High School, where she helped strengthen student clubs and expand meaningful leadership opportunities for students. With a thoughtful approach grounded in transparency and relationship-building, she brings deep experience supporting both students and staff. In this role, she will partner closely with the La Entrada Principal to strengthen school systems, support engaging teaching and learning, and cultivate authentic connections across the school community. She believes grades 4–8 represent a critical window to foster joy, curiosity, and belonging in partnership with students, staff, and families.

Danielle Schall has been selected as **LE's STEM Electives Teacher**, supporting the district's continued focus on building technology & engineering options. Danielle currently serves as a STEAM TOSA in Redwood City, where for the past three years she has supported K–8 students and educators through hands-on learning experiences that foster creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving. She has also completed professional learning through the Krause Center for Innovation, earning certifications as both a STEAM Instructional Leader and Makerspace Coordinator. Returning to LLESD represents a meaningful homecoming for Danielle, both as an LLESD alumna and as a former district employee supporting multilingual learners. In this role, she will expand STEM opportunities that inspire curiosity, innovation, and confidence while helping students build skills for future success.



Shayna Stuempfig has been selected as the **School Psychologist for La Entrada**. She comes with 20 years of experience, starting in rural Tehama County before moving to the San Francisco Bay Area. She has served as a school psychologist in Oakland Unified as well as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst, lead school psychologist, and program supervisor in the Berkeley Unified School District. She is a school psychologist at heart and works to support new school psychologists through lecturing in the school psychology program at St. Mary's College and building internship opportunities in BUSD. In her role, she will not only conduct psychoeducational assessments but also partner with students, families, and colleagues to build self-advocacy, independence, and self-regulation skills in learners.

Learning Together: LLESD Paraeducators Shine at the CSEA 29th Paraeducator Conference

This spring, five LLESD classified staff members represented the district at the CSEA 29th Paraeducator Conference: **Mitzi Melendez** (LL), **Yessica Ruiz-Rueda** and **Gerardo Sanchez** (LE), and **Olivia Betancourth** and **Diana Engel-Holmes** (District Office).

Joining over 1,300 classified employees statewide, the team immersed themselves in sessions covering IEPs and 504 Plans, high-leverage paraeducator practices, asset-based thinking, somatic regulation, and AI as a teaching support tool — alongside community-building through game nights, shared meals, and a meet and greet with CSEA President Weinberger.

What makes this experience especially meaningful is what came next. Rather than keeping that learning to themselves, the team facilitated a professional development session for LLESD paraeducators, sharing insights and materials directly with colleagues. That generosity is what makes this team exceptional.

The District offers six spots annually for classified staff to attend. If you haven't yet had the opportunity, we warmly encourage you to consider it — an investment in your professional growth and ultimately in the students you serve. The 30th annual conference will be held March 9–11, 2027 at the Ontario Convention Center.



District Updates



Mobile Device Policy Update: Share Your Input by June 10

In response to new California legislation requiring districts to review and update student mobile device policies, the LLESD Board of Trustees will consider [updates to Board Policy 5131.8: Mobile Communication Devices](#) at its June 10 meeting.

Day-to-day expectations for students would remain unchanged. LLESD's longstanding "off and away, bell to bell" expectation continues: once the first bell rings, cell phones and smartwatches must be turned off and put away for the duration of the school day — supporting focused learning, positive peer interaction, and reduced classroom distraction.

Families wishing to provide input are invited to contact Superintendent Erik Burmeister at eburmeister@llesd.org or the Board at schoolboard@llesd.org

Three Board Seats Up for Election this November

This November, the community will have the opportunity to elect three members to the LLESD Board of Trustees. The seats held by Paige Winikoff, Heather Hopkins, and Gautam Nadella will appear on the November 3, 2026, ballot. Trustees are elected at-large by voters within LLESD boundaries.

Earlier this month, the District hosted two informational sessions on board service and the election process. The informational deck can be found [here](#). Candidates must be at least 18, a California citizen, a registered voter within LLESD boundaries, and not legally disqualified from holding civil office. The filing period runs July 13–August 7, 2026 (5:00 p.m.), with County candidate seminars on June 24 and July 22.

Finally, Trustee Paige Winikoff has announced her resignation this summer due to moving out of the district. We are deeply grateful for her service. The Board will honor Trustee Winikoff and discuss replacement options at its June 10 meeting.

Campus Improvements Coming This Summer

Beginning June 12, the Las Lomas campus will undergo major improvements, including the removal of portable buildings, the installation of a water retention tank beneath the field, and full blacktop re-grading and repaving.

New basketball equipment, striping, and handball walls will also be added. Construction is scheduled to complete by August 4. Summer school and Champions programs will not be impacted. We look forward to welcoming students back to refreshed outdoor spaces in the fall!

LLESD Selects ParentSquare as New Family Communication Platform

Las Lomas Elementary School District has selected ParentSquare as its new unified family communication platform. The recommendation followed input and feedback from an ad hoc communications subcommittee of the District's Community Advisory Committee, including representatives from partner organizations and leaders from our parent organizations.

ParentSquare will replace the District's current Catapult communication tool, which no longer meets the evolving communication needs of our schools and community.

ParentSquare is currently the most widely used school-home communication platform in K-12 education and is used by districts across California and the nation. The platform is designed to simplify communication between schools and families by consolidating messages, alerts, newsletters, forms, sign-ups, and updates into a single, easy-to-use system.

One of the key benefits of ParentSquare is its accessibility and flexibility for families. Communications can be automatically translated into families' preferred languages, helping ensure broader access and inclusion across the community. Families can also choose how they receive information, including by email, text message, phone call, mobile app, or web browser.

For staff, ParentSquare offers streamlined tools that integrate directly with the District's student information system, reducing manual processes and creating more consistent communication practices districtwide. The platform also supports paperless workflows, real-time updates, emergency notifications, attendance communications, volunteer sign-ups, and improved engagement tracking.

Implementation of ParentSquare will occur gradually over the 2026-27 school year to allow for thoughtful onboarding and transition. Additional information will be shared with families in August regarding account activation, sign-up instructions, and how to customize communication preferences.

The District is excited about the opportunities ParentSquare creates to strengthen school-home communication, improve consistency across schools, and make it easier for families to stay connected and engaged in their children's educational experience. To learn more about the tool, visit <https://www.parentsquare.com>





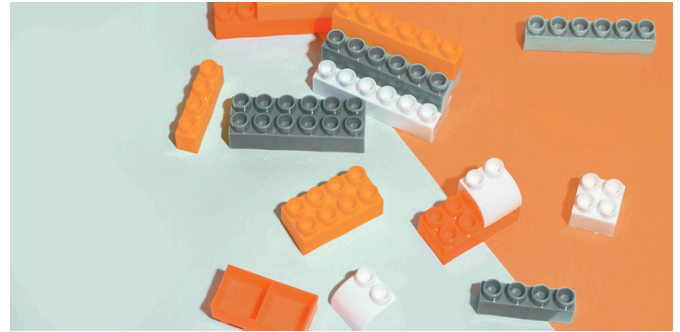
Las Lomitas Honored with 2026 Kent Award

Earlier this month, Las Lomitas Elementary School District was honored to accept a 2026 Kent Award from the San Mateo County chapter of the California School Boards Association, recognizing the Las Lomitas Elementary Third Grade Roarriors Program.

The Kent Awards celebrate innovative programs that make a meaningful difference for students — and the Roarriors Program is exactly that. Through the program, third-grade students serve as campus ambassadors for younger peers: welcoming new students, supporting inclusion at recess, leading schoolwide character initiatives, and creating opportunities for younger students to feel seen and connected.

What makes it especially powerful is that it's student-led. Our students aren't simply learning about leadership and kindness — they're living it every day.

We are incredibly grateful to **Heather Ryan** for dreaming up this program and bringing it to life with such care. We also thank the entire Las Lomitas staff for embracing and sustaining this work — programs like this only succeed when a whole campus commits to building a culture where students feel safe, connected, and empowered.



Help Us Build the LEGO Pit at La Entrada!

This summer, we are excited to be making several strategic improvements to the two-story building that houses our fourth and fifth grade classrooms at La Entrada. One of the new additions will be a “Maker’s Corner” in the atrium — complete with a giant LEGO pit designed to spark creativity, collaboration, engineering, and imagination for our students.

Now we need your help. Do you have tubs, bins, or boxes of unused LEGOs sitting in a closet or garage? Here’s your chance to make a lasting difference at La Entrada:

WE NEED YOUR LEGOS!

We are accepting donations of LEGO-brand bricks only — any shape, size, or color — as long as they are in decent condition.

Donation information:

- **Through June 19:** Donations may be dropped off at the La Entrada office.
- **After June 19:** Donations may be delivered to the District Office between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

Please label all boxes: “LEGOS FOR LE”

Thank you for helping us create a fun, creative, and hands-on space for our learners!

Stay Connected

Important Dates

Thursday, June 4

Board Meeting
6:30-9:30pm
LE MUR

Wednesday, June 10

Board Meeting
6:30-9:30pm
LE MUR

June 10 – 11

Minimum Day

Thursday, June 11

Last Day of School/LE Graduation

Friday, June 12

Staff Work Day

June 13 – August 4

Campus Construction

Friday, June 19

Last day to donate Legos at LE office
(Donate at District Office from June 20)

Friday, June 19

Juneteenth

June 22 – July 17*

Summer School
*No school July 3

Resources & Links

Summer School Principal

Heather Smith, 650-854-5900

Helpful Links

[Facility Dog FAQ](#)

[Board Election Deck](#)

[ParentSquare](#)

Board Contact

schoolboard@llesd.org

Kimberly Legg: klegg@llesd.org

Superintendent Contact

eburmeister@llesd.org

District Website

<https://www.llesd.org>

Las Lomas Education Foundation

<https://www.llef.org>

Las Lomas PTA

<https://www.laslomaspta.org>

La Entrada PTA

<https://www.laentradaptpta.org>



**Las Lomas
Elementary
School District**

Inclusive. Engaging. Inspiring.