



ISSUE NO. 12

LAS LOMITAS ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

AUGUST 2026

SUPERINTENDENT NEWSLETTER



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Welcome Back

There is something special about the start of a new school year. Campuses that have been quiet all summer are about to come alive with laughter, curiosity, and the joyful energy that only students can bring. We can't wait to welcome everyone back.

Our District Leadership Team recently gathered for our annual retreat, focusing on strengthening the systems that support efficient operations, clear communication, and joyful schools, while sharpening our instructional focus to bring greater clarity, coherence, and consistency to every classroom. Every conversation centered on one goal—creating the conditions where every child feels welcomed, challenged, supported, and inspired to learn.

We're also excited to welcome our talented 2026 recruiting class. One of my favorite traditions is introducing our newest employees to the communities they serve with a bus tour through our neighborhoods. It's a reminder that we aren't just joining a school district—we're joining a community.

A heartfelt thank you to our Maintenance and Operations team for preparing our schools and classrooms for another great year. Your hard work makes a difference every single day.

Thank you to our Board of Trustees, staff, families, and students for the partnership and joy you bring to our campuses each day.

Welcome back. Here's to an outstanding 2026–27 school year!

Erik Burmeister
Superintendent

Message from the Board President



*We begin
this school
year in a
strong
position*

As we welcome everyone back, the Las Lomitas Elementary School District Board of Trustees is filled with gratitude and optimism for the year ahead.

We begin this school year in a strong position with a balanced budget and positive financial outlook. This is a celebration of the hard work, thoughtful planning, and shared commitment that brought us here.

This summer also brought an outstanding hiring season. We welcome our 2026 recruiting class—including our new Director of Curriculum & Instruction, La Entrada Assistant Principal, school psychologist, and talented teachers and staff. Their expertise will strengthen our schools from day one.

Students will also return to enhanced campuses. Projects at both sites were completed on time and on budget, creating better spaces for learning, play, and creativity.

Finally, we invite our community to stay engaged in district governance. On August 26, the Board will conduct public interviews for a provisional Board appointment. We hope you'll join us. Thank you for your continued partnership. Here's to a school year filled with learning, growth, and opportunities for every student.

In partnership,
Kimberly Legg
President, LLESD Board of Trustees

This Summer: Projects Completed On Time & On Budget

While students enjoyed their well-earned break, our campuses were transformed. Thanks to careful planning and community stewardship, every summer construction project was completed on schedule and within budget. From expanded play spaces to new science labs, these improvements create better environments for learning, play, and collaboration.

At La Entrada:

- Reorganized classrooms
- Brand-new Art and Science Labs
- New Student Activities Center
- Library and music upgrades
- Jensen Hall enhancements

At Las Lomitas:

- Expanded play spaces
- Resurfaced blacktop and field
- Room numbering system
- New streetscape
- Stormwater systems

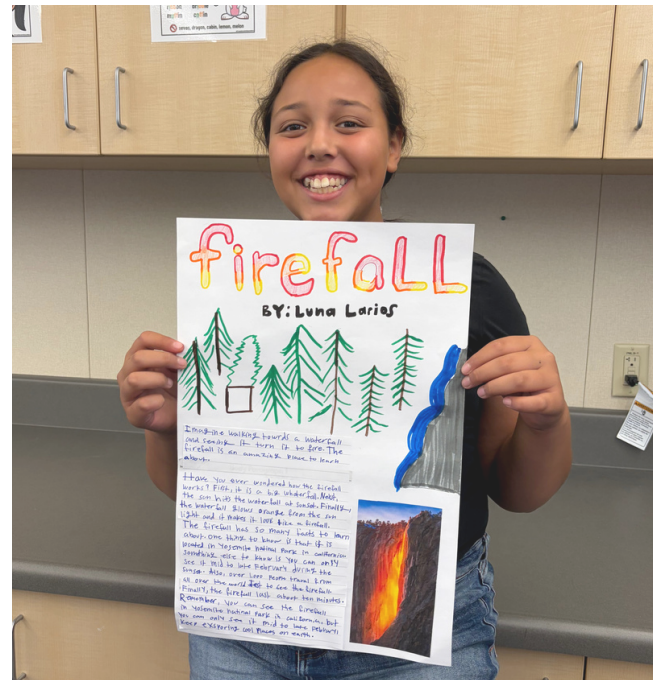
See [page 4](#) for complete summer project updates and photos.

Summer Session Blends Learning, Fun, and New Opportunities

From June 24 through July 17, Las Lomitas Elementary School District welcomed rising kindergarten through eighth-grade students for four weeks of Summer Session—a program that combined engaging academics with the energy and excitement of summer camp.

Classrooms came alive with creative themes inspired by summer adventures and the FIFA World Cup, helping students build reading, writing, and math skills through hands-on learning. Weekly games, celebrations, and healthy breakfasts created an environment where students were excited to come to school each day.

This year's program was strengthened through our continued partnership with Champions, whose before- and after-programming expanded opportunities for students and families. We also provided a seamless Extended School Year (ESY) program for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).



One of the most exciting additions was the launch of our Summer Math Bridge program for rising sixth graders pursuing the district's accelerated math pathway. The four-week course helps students begin the sequence leading to high school Geometry in eighth grade. Students were overwhelmingly enthusiastic, praising both the engaging instruction and the challenge.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the outstanding teachers, instructional aides, office staff, food service team, and support staff who made Summer Session such a success. We are especially grateful to Summer Session Principal Heather Smith, whose thoughtful leadership and unwavering commitment created an enriching experience for students, families, and staff. Summer Session is a chance to extend learning, discover friendships, and build momentum in a vibrant learning community.

Summer Projects Improve Learning, Play, and Sustainability

Great play spaces. Beautiful science labs. Modern classrooms. These improvements shape how students learn, connect, and grow. This summer, LLESD invested in spaces that reflect our commitment to the whole child.

At Las Lomitas, removing aging portable classrooms created room for a dramatically expanded play area with basketball courts, tetherball, wall ball, and four square. A new colorful streetscape on the blacktop, designed for bike safety and imaginative play, extends learning into everyday moments.

One project deserves special attention. This summer, we installed a stormwater filtration and capture system that cleans runoff before slowly returning it to the groundwater instead of the Bay.

That's environmental stewardship in action—students learning that buildings, playgrounds, and nature can work together.

At La Entrada, reorganized classrooms bring grade-level teams closer. Brand-new Art and Science Labs give teachers and students dedicated spaces for creative, hands-on learning. The new Student Activities Center has become the heart of campus—a hub for student leadership, clubs, dances, and the everyday moments that make school memorable.

Upgraded technology systems, new flooring, reimagined spaces—all were completed on time and on budget because of careful planning and shared commitment across the district.

We can't wait to welcome students back to campuses that are refreshed, modernized, and ready for another incredible year.



Learning Community Updates

Meet the Teacher

We can't wait to welcome students and families back to campus! Meet your child's teacher, visit the classroom, and reconnect with friends before the first day of school.

Join us on **Tuesday, August 18** during the following times:

- Las Lomitas: 8:45–9:15 a.m.
- La Entrada: 9:30–10:00 a.m.

Campus maps will be available in each school's front office. If possible, we encourage families to walk or bike to campus—it's a great opportunity to practice your child's route to school.



Champions After-School Program Joins La Entrada

We are excited to welcome Champions after-school program to La Entrada for the 2026–2027 school year. The program serves grades 4–8 from the end of the school day until 6 p.m., offering homework support, enriching activities, and a safe, engaging environment for students.

Important: Licensing Update

California requires childcare programs to be licensed by the state before operating. While efforts are underway, there is a chance Champions may not obtain the license by the first day of school. We wanted to share this information so families can make plans accordingly.

What Families Should Do

Interested families should complete online enrollment to reserve their child's spot. All families will initially be on a waitlist. Once Champions obtains their license, you will be notified and your child removed from the waitlist. Enrolled families will receive regular updates.

To enroll, visit www.discoverchampions.com/our-locations/menlo-park/ca/004077 or call 1-800-246-2154.

For questions, contact Champions at 650-613-0140 or mjostedt@discoverchampions.com

Adventure Awaits: Welcoming Our New Staff

Every school year brings fresh beginnings. This summer, we welcomed 13 talented educators and staff members to the LLESD family during our second annual Adventure Awaits New Staff Orientation.

From the moment they arrive, our newest staff members are welcomed by colleagues from across the district. District staff, together with our LLEA and CSEA partners, work side by side to create a warm, welcoming environment that reflects the collaborative spirit of LLESD.

Superintendent Erik Burmeister leads a bus tour through our neighborhoods, sharing the history of our district and the unique communities we serve. It's a reminder that joining LLESD means joining a community—not just a school district.

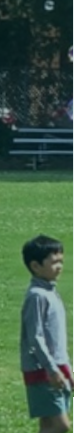
Throughout the orientation, new staff receive their technology, become familiar with district systems and instructional practices, and have time to get to know their campuses and the colleagues they'll be working alongside.

Each new staff member also receives a copy of *Rookie Smarts* by Liz Wiseman, a book celebrating the unique perspectives, curiosity, and strengths that newcomers bring to an organization. Their fresh ideas, thoughtful questions, and diverse experiences will help strengthen our schools.

The orientation concludes with a collaborative "web" activity—a reminder that while each of us brings unique strengths, we are united by a common purpose: ensuring every student matters, belongs, and thrives.

We welcome these talented educators and staff to our community:

- **Sam Asin** – 8th Grade CORE Teacher (Long-Term Substitute)
- **Grant Conour** – Teacher Librarian & Innovation Specialist
- **Theo Gardner** – 7th Grade CORE Teacher
- **Bethany Li** – Assistant Principal, La Entrada
- **Martha Maldonado-Clark** – 2nd Grade Teacher
- **D'Evi McCauley** – Strategies Teacher
- **Debbie Petish** – Director of Curriculum & Instruction
- **Javier Salas Chavez** – Bus Driver/Maintenance
- **Danielle Schall** – STEM Electives Teacher
- **Shayna Stuempfig** – School Psychologist
- **Frances Valinsky** – 3rd Grade Teacher
- **Yacaranday Saray Vazquez** – Paraeducator, Special Education
- **Hadassah Young** – 4th–5th Grade RSP Teacher



District Updates

New K-2 Reading Screener

Beginning this school year, LLESD will transition from Amira to DIBELS for kindergarten through second grade. DIBELS is a nationally recognized assessment that helps teachers identify students' early literacy strengths and areas for support, enabling timely, targeted instruction. This change aligns with California's new universal reading screening requirements and supports our commitment to ensuring every student becomes a confident reader.

Board Trustee Applications due 8/19

The LLESD Board of Trustees is accepting applications for a four-month provisional appointment. Applications are due **Wednesday, August 19, at 4:00 p.m.** Eligibility requirements, the application, and additional information are available on the [district website](#).



Free Bus Fares for Eligible Students

In partnership with the San Mateo County Office of Education, SamTrans launched the Youth Unlimited Program, which provides free bus fares for Socioeconomically Disadvantaged (SED) students, including those eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Meals, students experiencing homelessness, foster youth, migrant students, and students whose parents did not graduate high school.

To get a Youth Unlimited pass, email Selena Nichols at snichols@llesd.org. When boarding, swipe the pass through the farebox. If your pass is lost or stops working, contact Selena.

To find which SamTrans bus routes serve your school, email youthmobility@samtrans.com or call 1-800-660-4287.

Revolution Foods to Replace Lunch Master

After a competitive selection process conducted in partnership with neighboring school districts, Revolution Foods was chosen for its commitment to providing fresh, nutritious, and high-quality meals that meet state and federal school nutrition standards. Families can expect healthy breakfast and lunch options with menus that emphasize wholesome ingredients and variety.

Additional information, including menus and meal program details, will be shared prior to the start of school.

Introducing ParentSquare: Our New Family Communication Platform

This school year, Las Lomitas Elementary School District is transitioning to ParentSquare as our new family communication platform.

ParentSquare is one of California's most widely used school communication platforms, bringing district, school, classroom, and teacher communication together into one place. Messages are delivered by email, text, phone, or the ParentSquare mobile app, and families can message teachers and staff directly. Automatic translation in more than 190 languages ensures every family receives information in their preferred language.

Over the next couple of months, we'll be onboarding families and staff as we move away from our current communication tools. You may see messages from both systems during this transition. Our goal is to have all district communications fully on ParentSquare within the first few months of the school year.

Getting started is easy—scan the QR code below to activate your account. We strongly encourage downloading the free ParentSquare app on your mobile device for the best experience.

Thank you for your patience as we make this transition. We believe ParentSquare will make it easier than ever for families to stay informed, engaged, and connected with everything happening in our schools.

Getting Started with ParentSquare

1. Scan the QR code below or visit parentsquare.com/sessions to activate your account (register with **phone number**, not email)
2. Download the free ParentSquare app from the Apple App Store or Google Play
3. Verify your contact information and notification preferences
4. Turn on push notifications
5. Explore the app to receive announcements, message teachers, complete forms, sign up for conferences and volunteer opportunities, and customize notification preferences

Need help? Reach out to your school's front office.



LLEF's Strong Support for Schools

As we head into a new school year, the Las Lomitas Education Foundation (LLEF) is starting strong—and that strength comes from all of us. Please join us next month for our famous Pancake Breakfast and prepare to invest in the success of our schools.

Last year was about rebuilding, and LLEF met its goal of raising more than \$1 Million for our schools. We appreciate all of you who invested in the high-quality education provided in our schools! Those funds go directly to programs and resources to support our teachers and administrators in their pursuit of excellence. This year we are building on that momentum.

One program proving its impact is Apple For The Classroom, where funds go directly to specific resources requested by teachers at every grade level. Last year this program raised more than \$90,000 -- more than any previous year! The AFTC program funded creative learning experiences, residencies with visiting artists, innovative resources, and other enrichment to engage students.

Teachers across all grades were enthusiastic about the support they received from this program. That happened because families like yours show up.

With the district committed to a balanced budget this year (no more multi-million-dollar deficits!), the role of LLEF is more important than ever. There is still a significant gap between the funding received from property taxes and the cost of providing your children's education, and LLEF is committed to filling that gap. By investing in our schools through LLEF, you are supporting the foundational strength of our schools and our community.

Which brings us to Saturday, September 19 —our Annual Campaign kickoff and the biggest family event of the year: the Pancake Breakfast.

Come hungry. Bring your neighbors. We'll have pancakes, community, and a chance to invest in our schools together. Tickets are live now at www.llef.org/pancakes.

The year ahead is full of possibility. Let's build it together.





Stay Connected

Important Dates

Tuesday, August 18

Meet the Teacher

- Las Lomas: 8:45–9:15 a.m.
- La Entrada: 9:30–10:00 a.m.

Wednesday, August 19

First Day of School

Wednesday, August 19

Board Trustee Applications due
(4:00pm)

Monday, September 7

Labor Day (Holiday)

Saturday, September 19

LLEF Annual Campaign Kickoff &
Pancake Breakfast

District Links

Superintendent Contact

eburmeister@llesd.org

Board Contact

schoolboard@llesd.org

Kimberly Legg: 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

ParentSquare

Register: parentsquare.com/sessions

Champions After-School Program

- Enrollment: [Enrollment link](#)
- Family Support: 1-800-246-2154
- Questions: 650-613-0140 or
mjostedt@discoverchampions.com

SamTrans Youth Unlimited Program

- Apply: snichols@llesd.org
- Route information:
youthmobility@samtrans.com.
or 1-800-660-4287

Board Trustee Application

- Learn more: [District website](#)
- Application: [PDF](#)

Las Lomas Education Foundation

LLEF Pancake Breakfast Tickets:
www.llef.org/pancakes



**Las Lomas
Elementary
School District**
Inclusive. Engaging. Inspiring.