

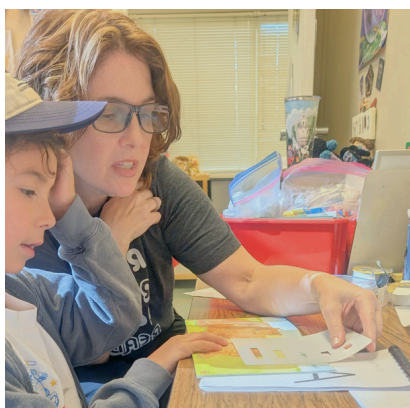


ISSUE NO. 14

LAS LOMITAS ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL DISTRICT

OCTOBER 2026

SUPERINTENDENT NEWSLETTER



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Ideas in Motion

Happy autumn, LLESD! The newness of August has passed. Routines are taking hold. Classrooms are humming. Students and teachers know one another better. The ideas and plans we discussed at the beginning of the year are coming to fruition.

You'll see a lot of that in this month's newsletter.

This month, we're celebrating LLESD's acceptance into Digital Promise's League of Innovative Schools, connecting our district with innovative educators and school systems across the country. We're inviting our community to dream with us through the new Student Enrichment Fund. We're taking our next steps on the Field of Dreams grant application. Our educators are continuing to learn together through professional development, and we're creating new opportunities for families and students to engage, learn, and help shape what comes next.

And, of course, alongside all of that is the everyday work of running great schools—buses, meals, technology, facilities, safety, and the countless other things that rarely make headlines but matter tremendously to our students' experience. That feels like October to me. We're no longer getting ready for the school year; we're in it.

As the leaves begin to change and we settle into fall, I hope we can also hold onto some of the energy and possibility with which we started the year. There is a lot happening in LLESD. Extraordinary things happen every day in our classrooms because of our students, staff, and families.

Here's to a great October.

Erik Burmeister
Superintendent

Message from the Board President



*We want
our next
five-year
direction to
reflect
what our
community
values*

It's hard to believe we're already into October. With the school year well underway, the Board has also been looking ahead to LLESD's longer-term future.

I'm especially excited about the launch of applications for the Student Enrichment Fund. Last spring, the Board set aside \$2.5M in one-time funds to create new opportunities for students, and this month we're inviting our community to bring us ideas. They don't have to be enormous to make a difference, but I hope you'll dream big.

Following action at the September Board meeting, the Board has published a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consulting partner to lead input-gathering and drafting of the District's next five-year strategic direction. The Board's subcommittee will bring the top three finalists to our Nov. meeting, when the Board will select the firm.

Once the planning process begins, there will be plenty of ways for staff, families, students, and community members to participate. We want our next five-year direction to reflect what our community values about LLESD today and what we hope our schools will become.

In the meantime, thank you to our teachers and staff for all you do each day, and to our families for the many ways you support our schools. I hope everyone enjoys the start of fall and a great October.

In partnership,
Kimberly Legg
President, LLESD Board of Trustees

Field of Dreams Survey: Last Call!

Thank you to the more than 250 community members who have already shared their feedback on the three Field of Dreams concepts under consideration!

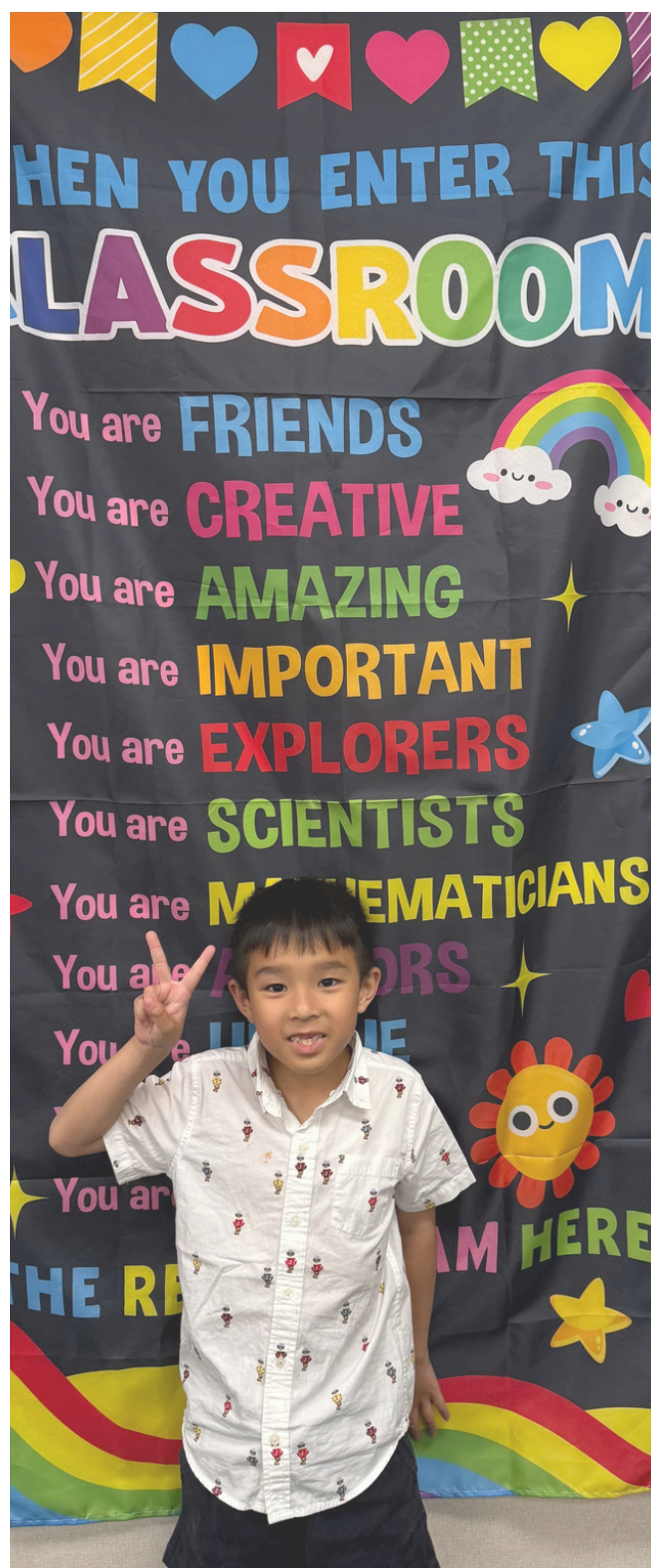
To give everyone one final opportunity to weigh in, we have extended the survey deadline to **Wednesday, October 7 at 4:00 p.m.**

This is your last chance to provide feedback on the three options before the Board considers the community input, discusses the concepts, and takes action at its Wednesday, October 14 Board meeting.

If you haven't completed the survey yet, please [click here](#) and take a few minutes to make your voice heard. And thank you to everyone who has already participated in helping shape this exciting project for our schools and community!

Dream Big! Student Enrichment Fund Applications Are Open

Have an idea that could make the LLESD student experience even better? This is your chance to dream.



Last spring, the Board of Trustees established a \$2.5 million Student Enrichment Fund using one-time dollars from the District's ending fund balance. Rather than cover ongoing expenses, these funds will create new and memorable opportunities for students over roughly the next ten years, including one-time or limited-term programs, activities, materials, services, and experiences beyond what the regular operating budget can provide.

Now comes the fun part: What should we do with it? The Board invites students, staff, families, community members, groups, and organizations to share ideas for the 2026-27 school year.

Dream big. Start small. Enrich the student experience. Maybe it's a new club, performance, competition, field experience, piece of equipment, visiting expert, or creative project. Maybe it serves one group of students or reaches hundreds. Maybe it costs a few hundred dollars, or maybe it's a bold idea requiring a much larger investment. There is no "right size" for an idea.

The application is intentionally straightforward. Tell us what you want to do, who would benefit, what it would take, and what success might look like. Reasonable cost estimates are enough to get started, and District staff can help refine promising ideas.

Qualified proposals will go to the Board of Trustees for final funding decisions, with the first round expected at the November 2026 Board meeting.

So, **students:** What have you always wished you could do at school? **Staff:** What idea never quite fit into the regular budget? **Families:** What opportunity could give our students an experience they'll remember for years?

[Download an application](#) (you'll be prompted to make your own copy in Google Docs). Submit your completed application to Dr. Debbie Petish at dpetish@llesd.org by Friday, October 23, 2026.

LLESD Accepted into the League of Innovative Schools

At the September Board meeting, Superintendent Burmeister shared exciting news: Las Lomitas Elementary School District has been accepted into the Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools, a national network of districts working together to advance innovative, student-centered approaches to teaching and learning.

The League brings districts from across the country together to learn from one another, tackle shared challenges, and explore what is possible for students. Members share promising practices, visit one another's schools, join research and pilot projects, and collaborate on common problems of practice.

That spirit aligns closely with where LLESD is headed. In our application, the District highlighted work underway to create more flexible, competency-based math pathways; strengthen research-based literacy instruction; design learning around student variability; expand real-world and project-based learning; and support the whole child

through SEL, restorative practices, and inclusive learning environments. LLESD also applied because great districts never stop learning. Membership gives teachers, coaches, leaders, and students new ways to connect with peers nationwide, from school visits and national convenings to professional learning and student experiences centered on agency, creativity, and curiosity.

Learning travels in both directions. We look forward to bringing great ideas back to our classrooms and sharing the innovative work happening here, including our successes, lessons learned, and the programs our community can be proud of.

Acceptance into the League recognizes the work already happening across LLESD and offers an opportunity to keep pushing forward. We are excited to learn, contribute, and bring new ideas home to our students.

[Learn more about the League of Innovative Schools.](#)

Proud Member of the
League of Innovative Schools!

Las Lomitas Elementary School District



Superintendent for the Day: Maria Takes the Lead

What happens when a seventh grader gets the keys to the District for a day?

La Entrada's Maria D. found out when she joined Superintendent Erik Burmeister as LLESD's **Superintendent for the Day**, an experience made possible by the generous support of the Las Lomitas Education Foundation (LLEF).

And this was no ceremonial title. Maria had a full superintendent's schedule. She started with announcements at La Entrada, then headed to Las Lomitas for a visit with the Atherton Police Department, meetings with District leaders, more announcements, and even yard duty. Next came Menlo Park Fire Station 4, followed by lunch with Menlo Park Vice Mayor Jennifer Wise. Back at La Entrada, she squeezed in another round of yard duty, met with Board President Kimberly Legg, and finished the afternoon writing and filming a PSA for KPAW.

Of course, being superintendent comes with a few perks. When asked what surprised her most, Maria had an immediate answer: "I got to give out 'Paws' to anyone I wanted. It was very fun to visit my classes and visit my former teachers."

Paws are La Entrada's way of recognizing students for good choices, leadership, and positive contributions. Celebrating her peers brought Maria real joy and taught her one of the best parts of leadership: noticing others' good work and taking the time to recognize it.



But the biggest adventure was the visit to Fire Station 4.

"I really liked visiting the fire department because the firemen were really welcoming and let me do a lot of stuff like operate the ladder and save a fireman," Maria said.

The fire department truly rolled out the red carpet. And while Mr. Burmeister doesn't regularly put out fires or operate a ladder truck, the visit highlighted a real part of his job: building strong relationships with the community partners who help keep our schools and students safe and connected.

So what would Maria do as Superintendent every day?

"I would have lunch with the vice mayor and visit the Atherton police and Menlo fire. I would also like to give out Paws and stop by classrooms."

That may be a pretty good job description.

Experiences like this are about more than fun or a behind-the-scenes look. They let students see leadership up close, understand the impact leaders can have, and begin to picture themselves in those roles.

LLESD is grateful to LLEF for making this possible and for continuing to invest in opportunities that expand what learning can look like. Leadership begins by giving young people the chance to lead, and Maria certainly made the most of hers.



District Updates

Summer Session 2027

We're excited to offer Summer Session again in 2027! From **June 21 through July 16**, students will have opportunities to keep learning, build confidence, and prepare for the year ahead.

Summer Session will include support to strengthen grade-level skills, a math bridge program, and Extended School Year (ESY) services for eligible students with IEPs. Enrollment details to come.

Free Parent Workshop

The LLESB Student Services Department, in collaboration with the Las Lomas Inclusion Initiative (LLII), is excited to invite our parent community to **Building Meaningful Connections**, a free parent workshop presented by Project Cornerstone. Join us on **October 8 at 9am at La Entrada**.

This engaging workshop will offer practical strategies for connecting with your child, building trust and expressing care, and strengthening relationships within your family, school, and community.

All LLESB parents, guardians, and caring adults are welcome. Please see the attached flyer for additional information and registration details. We look forward to seeing you there!



Food Service Program

Our new food service vendor, Revolution Foods, has been a hit with students! We're serving approximately 700-800 meals a day across the District, up from around 600 last year.

Favorites include dumplings, tamales, pupusas, grilled cheese, Wowbutter sandwiches, bean and cheese burritos, hot dogs with fries, pizza, and taco sticks. Many of these items have multiple components students must select to qualify as a reimbursable meal, which takes a little extra time and staff attention during service.

Thank you for your patience as we learn student preferences and adjust order quantities to better match demand. We're thrilled with the growth and grateful for your support.

Bus Stop Safety Reminder

For everyone's safety, please remind students to **stay at the bus stop and wait for the bus to arrive**. We have received reports of students running into the street when they see the bus approaching their stop, which can be extremely dangerous.

Students should **never run into the street to catch the bus**. Instead, they should remain safely at the designated bus stop until the bus has stopped and the driver is able to use the stop sign to alert traffic and safely assist students in crossing the street. Thank you for helping us reinforce these important safety habits to keep our students safe!



LEARN CONNECT THRIVE



A Parent Workshop with YMCA Project Cornerstone and Las Lomas Elementary School District

FREE

Building Meaningful Connections

Thursday, October 8, 2026

Are you struggling to connect with your child?
Do you want to build a stronger, more meaningful
relationship? Our workshop, "Building Meaningful
Connections," is here to help!

In this workshop, you'll learn:

- ✓ Actionable ways to connect with your child on their level
- ✓ Proven frameworks to build trust and express care
- ✓ Strategies to strengthen relationships within your family, school, and community

Join us to create lasting bonds and a supportive environment for your child to thrive.

Sign up today and start building a stronger connection with your child!

When:
9:00am -10:30am

Sponsored by:
LasLomasElementary
School District

Where:
LaEntradaMiddle School -
MUR
2200 Sharon Rd,
Menlo Park, CA

Who:
Parents, guardians, and
caring adults of children
in the Las Lomas
Elementary School District.

REGISTER TODAY

For more information, contact
workshops@projectcornerstone.org



"I learned how to understand the difference between empathy vs sympathy, how to express care, validate, and how to identify love languages to find ways to bond through similar interests."

PARENT PARTICIPANT



What \$2,500 Makes Possible

For 40 years, Las Lomitas families have invested in their children's schools.

Property taxes fund most of what our schools spend, but there is a gap of \$2,500 per student between tax revenue and the cost of the education our children receive. LLEF helps close that gap, and families see the difference every day.

Last year, our community raised over \$1M, including \$90,000+ for Apple for the Classroom (AFTC).

This year, LLEF invites every family to give \$2,500 or more per child, at whatever level you can, by October 30. The first \$200 goes directly to your child's classroom through AFTC.



Field trip funded by Apple for the Classroom

Where your \$2,500 per child investment goes

\$200

\$2,300+

First \$200

Apple for the Classroom

Field trips, visiting artists, and hands-on tools from your child's teacher's wishlist.



"These aren't just fun extras: they're the moments that turn curiosity into real understanding."

– Tish Whiteley, Principal, La Entrada

The rest: \$2,300 & beyond

Educational Excellence

Classes of 20–24; four world languages; full-time librarians, counselors, nurses.

"We could not offer the breadth, depth, or quality of this educational experience without the partnership and generosity of LLEF and our community."

– Erik Burmeister, LLESD Superintendent

Invest by October 30

llef.org/invest

Pledges made by October 30 can be fulfilled by April 30, 2027

Questions?

Dan Bergeron, Executive Director: danb@llef.org
John McGrory, President: president@llef.org

Stay Connected

Important Dates

Wednesday, October 7

Field of Dreams survey closes, 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, October 8

Parent Workshop: Building Meaningful Connections, 9-10:30 a.m., La Entrada

Wednesday, October 14

Board Meeting (Field of Dreams)

Friday, October 23

Student Enrichment Fund applications due

Friday, October 30

LLEF Apple for the Classroom deadline

Wednesday, November 4

Board meeting, 6:30pm, LE Mur

District Links

Superintendent Contact

eburmeister@llesd.org

Board Contact

schoolboard@llesd.org

Kimberly Legg: klegg@llesd.org

District Website

<https://www.llesd.org>

Helpful Resources

Student Enrichment Fund

[Download an application](#) and submit it to Dr. Debbie Petish, dpetish@llesd.org

Field of Dreams Survey

[Take the survey](#)

Free Parent Workshop (Oct 8)

Visit projectcornerstone.org or email workshops@projectcornerstone.org

Las Lomas Education Fund (LLEF)

Annual Campaign & Apple For the Classroom

[Invest by October 30](#)

Las Lomas PTA

<https://www.laslomaspta.org>

La Entrada PTA

<https://www.laentradapt.org>



**Las Lomas
Elementary
School District**

Inclusive. Engaging. Inspiring.