

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation



Covering the Redondo Beach Unified School District

Volume 17, Issue 133

November 2023

RBUSD and RBEF Go the Extra Mile!



Team RBUSD represents at the Skechers Pier to Pier Friendship Walk with more than 3900 in-person and virtual walkers.

Board of Education



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Superintendent



Dr. Nicole Wesley
Superintendent

Let's Keep the Conversations Going!

Last month, we saw students and staff with crazy hair styles because “Being Healthy Rocks”, neon or tie-dye swag to “Say Peace Out to Bad Choices”, team jerseys to “Team Up Against Mistreatment”, hats and caps to “Put a Cap on Substance Use”, decorated classroom doors, red ribbons everywhere, and more. This week-long campaign aimed to raise awareness about the dangers of substance abuse and promote a healthy lifestyle among students. Originating in 1985 to honor the memory of DEA agent Enrique “Kiki” Camarena, who lost his life while combating drug trafficking, Red Ribbon Week (RRW) has since become a crucial part of the educational calendar throughout the US.



A primary objective of RRW is to educate students about the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and in some grades the risks associated with substance use. In RBUSD, students in 7th grade participate in Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) and high school students learn about the negative impact of substance use through lessons with counselors. Both include lessons on the effects of nicotine & controlled substances on the body and mind along with addiction prevention strategies.

RBUSD has a strong partnership with RBPD and BCHD, as we all aim to provide preventative programs for students. While our schools celebrated RRW in October, I am writing this article to keep the age-appropriate conversations going at home. This collaborative effort strengthens the community’s resolve to combat substance abuse. Parental involvement is particularly important, as it plays a vital role in reinforcing the message of a drug-free lifestyle.

RRW stands as a testament to the collective commitment of our schools, families, and community to empower our youth with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions about their well-being. Together, we can shape a brighter, substance-free future for our youth. Let’s keep the conversations going!

Board of Education



Raymur Flinn
Vice President

Beware of FUD: Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt

Our district has adopted a strategic plan for the next three years. This plan carries ambitious goals, not only to combat the learning loss experienced during the pandemic but also to elevate the educational standards for all our students. In these trying times, we must remember that we are a team, a passionate and dedicated one, united by our unwavering commitment to our students.

We must resist the allure of sowing discord and misinformation from within. In doing so, we divert our collective attention from the true focal point - our students. Our passion should be channeled constructively, and we must always remember that we are in this endeavor together. Instead of attacking each other, we should ask the right questions, seek answers, and maintain open lines of communication.

The entire administrative team and school board stand accessible to the RBUSD community at all times. Engage with us; we are here to address your concerns and work together toward our common goal.

Our challenges are multifaceted, from budgetary constraints to learning loss, increased classroom behaviors, and rising student anxiety. These are tough issues that require collective action and a solution-focused mindset. We must collectively confront these challenges, respecting the past to inform our future without assigning blame.

RBUSD is on an exciting journey to shape the future of our students, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that we do so without succumbing to FUD: Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt. Let us check ourselves, engage in constructive dialogue, and work harmoniously, all while maintaining our unwavering commitment to the well-being and education of our students. Together, we can overcome our challenges and create an even brighter future for the children of RBUSD.

Board of Education Meeting Dates

2023

December 12*

2024

January 23*

February 13

February 27

March 12

March 26

April 30*

May 14

May 28

June 11

June 25

*** Due to holiday/local holiday schedule, only one Regular Board meeting in November, December, January and April.**

Beach Cities Health District

514 N. Prospect Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/374-3426 • www.bchd.org



Emory Chen,
MSW, MA Ed
Director
Youth Services

Commitment to Youth Substance Use Prevention and Mental Health

As a recipient of the Drug-Free Communities grant and in alignment with our substance use health priority, Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) and the Beach Cities Partnership for Youth Coalition are raising awareness of youth substance use by providing information and resources to educate our students, families and school community.

On October 18, the Beach Cities Partnership for Youth Coalition convened more than 60 participants, including parents, school administrators, emergency responders, substance use professionals, mental health providers and elected officials from each of the three Beach Cities. These stakeholders assessed the Coalition's purpose and goals to ensure we are addressing our local conditions with local solutions that effectively reduce youth substance use in the Beach Cities.

One of the five workgroups in the Coalition is the Youth Advisory Council. Mona Cho, a Youth Advisory Council member and 15-year-old Redondo Beach resident, was one of 15 teen girls from around the nation honored on October 11 at The White House for her work combatting



online harassment during the first "Girls Leading Change" celebration hosted by First Lady Jill Biden. The White House Gender Policy Council selected the honorees for their efforts in "leading change and shaping a brighter future in their communities across the United States." For more information on the Coalition, visit bchd.org/partnership.

BCHD and the Beach Cities Partnership for Youth Coalition also utilized social media to raise awareness during Red Ribbon Week (Oct. 23-31) and Youth Substance Use Prevention Month in October. Follow us on social media @BeachCitiesHealth to view information and resources on alcohol, tobacco, vaping, cannabis and illicitly manufactured fentanyl. BCHD maintains our commitment to fighting the opioid overdose crisis through participation in the California Department of Health Care Services' Naloxone Distribution Project and is providing community partners with training and doses of naloxone, the potentially life-saving opioid reversal medication. For more information, visit bchd.org/opioids.

join us as allcove Beach Cities turns

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Saturday, November 18, 4 – 7 p.m.

location

allcove Beach Cities, Located at Beach Cities Health District
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Come celebrate our 1-year anniversary with us. There will be live music, art show and contest, jewelry making and other interactive activities. Food will be provided. Ages 12-25 and their families are welcome.



[Register here](#)

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



Submit your artwork here

Redondo Beach Educational Foundation

409 N. P.C.H., #310, Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/954-2004 • www.rbef.org



Doris Donlou-Richmond
President

Preparing Our Students For Graduation And Beyond

Believe it or not, preparation of our RBUSD students for their post-graduation goals starts from their first day of Elementary School. The Redondo Beach Educational Foundation is proud to provide the kind of unique additional opportunities throughout the educational journeys of all our K-12 students to help them discover additional interests they may have not been exposed to otherwise.

Asking our students not who they want to be, but what problem do they see in the world that they would want to solve allows them to imagine themselves as productive members of our community. RBEF funded additional curriculum and programs are essential to help our students start to make these connections between where their personal interests lie and how those interests may be of consequence to the communities in which they live.

Because of RBEF:

A 5th grader picks up an instrument for the first time in the RBEF funded 5th grade band and it ignites a love of music within that carries throughout high school jazz band and beyond.



Our Kids.
Our Community.
Our Legacy.

An 8th grader participates in the RBEF funded CyberPatriot program and suddenly sees themselves interested in the field of cyber security for their future.

A High Schooler creates a business plan through Project Echo launching them towards the world of entrepreneurship or attends CPR training and is inspired to take further CTE classes at SCROC to become an EMT. The possibilities are endless...

This 2023-24 School year, the Redondo Beach Educational Foundation is proud to grant a historic \$1,105,000 to the Redondo Beach Unified School District to support the educational journeys of all our students. We thank you all for your generous support throughout the year because your investment in RBEF is really what helps ignite the spark that sets our students up for a lifetime.



RBEF Board of Trustees presents \$1,105,000 check to RBUSD for the 2023/24 School Year.

Redondo Beach Council PTA

1401 Inglewood Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • www.rbusd.org



Sondi Kroeger-Foley
President

Reflections: It's All About The Arts

Fall is an exciting time for PTA in Redondo Beach!

Students have an opportunity to participate in the Reflections Art Program which focuses on promoting access to quality Arts education for all students in California, allowing them to express themselves creatively and receive positive recognition for original works of

art inspired by each year's unique theme; all while increasing community awareness of the importance of the arts in education.

The theme for the 2023-2024 school year is "I am Hopeful Because..." and all students are encouraged to submit original artwork in any or all of the following six areas: Dance, Choreography, Literature, Photography, Film Production, Music Composition, and Visual Arts. Students may submit as many times as they like.

- Reflections encourages students of all ages to:
 - Unleash creative talents and be inspired
 - Express themselves imaginatively in their artwork
 - Experience the fun and joy of making art
 - Tap into critical thinking skills to create art inspired by the annual theme
 - Receive positive recognition for their original works of art
- The Reflections Program was established in 1969 by



National PTA board member Mary Lou Anderson. Since that time, more than 10 million students have participated in the program. The program's longevity and participation figures attest to its strength. The excitement and enthusiasm that the program generates for children, parents, schools, and communities is unmatched. Allowing students this valuable opportunity for their voices to be heard is just one of the many ways that PTA supports students and their families in our community!

Holiday 40 Years Festival

NOVEMBER 28 - DECEMBER 3, 2023

Located in the white tent at Skypark Drive and Medical Center Drive

Public Exhibit – Boutique Shopping

Tuesday, November 28.....	1:30 - 3:30 pm
Wednesday, November 29.....	10 am - 8 pm
Thursday, November 30.....	10 am - 8 pm
Friday, December 1	Closed to Public
Saturday, December 2	10 am - 8 pm
Sunday, December 3.....	10 am - 4 pm

\$5 General Admission. Children 5 and under are free.
TorranceMemorial.org/HolidayFestival • 310-517-4606

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South Bay Hands On Art

South Bay Hands on Art 2023-24

By Jessica Wong and Michelle Herrera,
2022-2023 Co-Chairs



At the end of September South Bay Hands on Art docents enjoyed the first workshop of the 2023-24 school year, "Gorey's Guest," by our own Sandi Arthur. Inspired by a visit to Edward Gorey's Elephant House on Cape Cod and Gorey's book, The Doubtful Guest, Sandi delighted the docents with Gorey's larger than life background, influences, and voluminous creative output. Our docents have spent October in classrooms teaching the pen-and-ink illustration project that is both spooky and silly, and perfect for the Halloween season. Training



for our second project, "American Campfire," brought to us by Jake Tedesco, happens in early November. Students will paint nighttime scenes with tempera paint in the style of the 19th century German-American painter Albert Bierstadt.

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Debra Duardo,
M.S.W., Ed.D.
Superintendent

Congratulations to 16 Awardees Selected as “Los Angeles County’s Teachers of the Year.”

In September, the Los Angeles County Office of Education honored dozens of educators during the 42nd Annual Teachers of the Year Awards banquet, held at the Universal City Hilton. Sixteen of them were selected as LA County’s Teachers of the Year.

I was excited to be at the event, to thank our teachers for the tremendous job that they do every day, and for the way they support and make sure that our students have access to a quality education.

“The work that you guys do is often thankless, but I know that it’s incredibly rewarding, to see the impact that you have on your students, to watch them grow and learn and to know that you played a role in shaping their lives is truly something special... and so is the People’s Choice Awards for Best Comedy”, said actor Adam Shapiro, who added humor as he addressed the teachers.

See **TEACHERS OF THE YEAR** • Page 9

PERSONAL CHEF & WEEKLY MEAL PREP

Stop the kids from asking “What’s for dinner?”
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musicrhapsody.com/open-house-week

TEACHERS OF THE YEAR • From Page 8

“It feels amazing, it’s such an honor to be with colleagues from all around LA County and I’m so thrilled that my principal, my partner teachers and my family could be here to experience this moment with me”, shared Kimberly Min, a teacher at LAUSD who was selected for the prestigious honor.



Courtney Baker
RBUSD

**Please join me in congratulating the 2023-24
L.A. County Teachers of the Year:**

- Melissa Ellis**
Bellflower Unified School District
- Alanna Grimaldi**
Burbank Unified School District
- May DeGuzman**
Centinela Valley Union High School District

LACOE’s Teachers of the Year Program is the largest local competition in the state and nation. It is part of the oldest and most prestigious honors contest in the U.S. for public school teachers. The 16 Los Angeles County educators will advance with other county winners from around the state to the California Teachers of the Year competition this fall.


- Kirsten Neill**
Downey Unified School District
- Hannah Rodriguez**
Duarte Unified School District
- Bryan Johnson**
Keppel Union School District
- Kimberly Furman**
Lancaster School District
- Drew Lewis**
LAUSD
- Marcella Lopez**
LAUSD
- Kimberly Min**
LAUSD
- Daniel Leonard**
Manhattan Beach Unified School District
- Alison Meloserdoff**
Monrovia Unified School District
- Danielle Burson**
Norwalk-LaMirada Unified School District
- Courtney Baker**
Redondo Beach Unified School District
- Casey Cuny**
William S. Hart Union High School District
- Aimee Glotz**
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RBUSD Alternative Education

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Jens Brandt
Principal

The Power of Praise

Ready for a stating-the-obvious moment? Researchers have discovered a significant amount of evidence supporting the power of praise!

As described in the Harvard Business Review, taking a moment to share a compliment or express gratitude, the impact is clear: a mood-lifting effect, a better sense of well-being, and an overall culture of positivity.

At PDHS, our students and staff regularly appreciate the power of kindness and recognition. A simple greeting at the beginning of the school day—"Thanks for being on time," "I see you working at it"—or feeling valued for one's efforts—"Congrats on finishing five more credits. You're on a roll!" are simple examples of our ongoing efforts to appreciate one another.

One of the best opportunities to celebrate happens during our monthly assemblies. Through collaborative discussions among our teachers and staff, we honor students with excellent attendance as well as those that have completed the greatest number of classes in a month.

We recognize students for making improvements, getting involved, and achieving academic gains. We also choose two outstanding students for our PDHS Students of the Month. These students exemplify the best of Dreizler in terms of attendance, academics, and school spirit! Additionally, our Students of the Month are leading candidates for our PDHS Student of the Year. Like all RBUSD student honorees, our Student of the Year is recognized at a special districtwide luncheon and usually speaks at our PDHS graduation.

Our Dreizler students pay it forward during our assemblies by voting on a Staff Member of the Month. Not only do our students vote but they also include compliments such as "Cares about students," "Always takes the time to listen," and "Gets to know our challenges." When our staff members and students are applauded by colleagues and peers, the positive vibes are clearly appreciated by all.

So, whether a student, a friend, a colleague, a visitor, a family member, or a neighbor is around, be sure to share some kindness and gratitude. They'll feel better, and so will you!



Our September PDHS Students of the Month: Caitlyn and Omar.

RBUSD Educational Services

1401 Inglewood Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/937-1221



Dr. Susan Wildes
Assistant
Superintendent

Enhancing School Achievement

School-home partnerships play a crucial role in enhancing academic achievement for all. By fostering collaboration between teachers and families, we co-create learning environments where students can thrive. There are many ways in which this strong partnership can make a significant impact:

1. **Improved Communication:** Ongoing communication between teachers and parents allows for a better understanding of a student's needs and progress. This open exchange of information helps teachers tailor instruction to suit each child's unique learning style. Open communication promotes shared accountability for positive student outcomes.
2. **Homework Support:** Families can provide valuable assistance with homework, reinforce learning, and nurture organizational and time management skills.
3. **Attendance and Punctuality:** When families are actively involved in their child's education, they tend to prioritize school attendance. Positive attendance is correlated with positive achievement.

4. **Social and Emotional Development:** Strong partnerships support students' emotional well-being. Together, teachers, staff, and families can work to identify and address any social, emotional, or behavioral issues that might negatively impact academic progress.

5. **Resource Sharing:** Families often have unique skills and resources that can benefit classrooms or community. Tapping into these resources can enrich the learning experience through extracurricular activities, programming, and special projects.

6. **Parental Engagement:** When families are knowledgeable about the learning within the classroom, rich conversations and extended learning opportunities are able to occur outside of the school day. Classroom and school newsletters and learning tip-sheets open the door for these conversations to occur.

School-home partnerships create a holistic and nurturing environment that support the whole-child growth and development. The phrase "it takes a village to raise a child" from an African proverb holds as true today as ever. To maximize the benefits of these partnerships, it is crucial to protect clear channels of communication, nurture parental involvement, and offer meaningful resources.



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RBUSD Child Development

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Theresa Van Dusen
Director

Music to Our Ears

By Mrs. Sonoya Wynne, Site Supervisor at Alta Vista and Tulita CDC

The Alta Vista Child Development Center's preschool program is designed to meet the needs of the whole child by using varying forms of learning and enrichment opportunities. One of the children's favorite enrichment experiences is music class. Music is not only fun, it also helps grow effective skills for school readiness, including intellectual and social-emotional growth, fine motor skills, language, and overall literacy.

Music helps the body and the mind work together.

Exposing children to music during their early development can help them learn about the sounds and meanings of words, and it also exposes them to various genres of music and instruments.

Every week our preschool students get a visit from Mrs. Gretchen Axton, who comes to each of the preschool classes for their music. Mrs. Axton is a board certified

music therapist and music educator, and who the students look forward to seeing during her visits. The children begin working on sound awareness through activities with instrument exploration. Sounds surround us in our daily lives, but it is only through intentional listening, such as focusing on specific ones, that we can become "tuned in" to the complexities of music. This is what our students are learning now in preschool.

The students are also learning music through numerous rhythmic activities involving whole body movement, fine motor skills, and cognitive awareness. They also listen to a wide variety of music, such as folk songs, classical selections, and excerpts for listening, and fun, integrated musical games. All of these activities help each child to

intellectually understand and make music.

As you and your child listen to various pieces of music, talk to them about it. Discuss the distinctions between the sounds of each instrument, and then ask them about their preference for soft, low, or loud sounds. Early exposure to a wide variety of music will ensure your child's acceptance and appreciation of music for a lifetime, and we start this in preschool!



Music is fun with scarfs.



Musical Name Game.

South Bay Adult School

3401 Inglewood Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/937-3340 • www.southbayadult.org



Dr. Suzanne Webb
Director

Inclusive Learning Environment

South Bay Adult School (SBAS), located in the northern part of Redondo Beach at the intersection of Hawthorne and Lawndale, serves a diverse adult student population in various programs: English as a Second Language (ESL), Citizenship Preparation, Adult Basic Education, GED Preparation, High School Diploma, and various career pathways in conjunction with El Camino Community College. SBAS' mission is to empower and encourage students to be lifelong learners while meeting the diverse needs and interests of the community.

In light of the turmoil taking place around the world, South Bay Adult School proudly provides a safe, inclusive community space where individuals from various countries and cultures work together collaboratively to learn English. Students from countries at war with each other are able to share their experiences in an environment where their cultural differences are celebrated.

SBAS offers six levels of ESL: beginning literacy (orientation), low beginning, high beginning, low intermediate, high intermediate, and advanced. Every level of ESL focuses on speaking, listening, reading, and writing English. As students become more proficient in the four focus areas of ESL, they are encouraged to enroll in GED Preparation, High School Diploma, and College and Career Pathways.



Teacher Will Martinez working one on one with students at the Orientation English as a Second Language where students are learning and practicing the pronunciation of simple, monosyllabic words.



Several Spanish speaking countries, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, Iran, Brazil, Vietnam, and Italy are all represented in this High Intermediate English as a Second Language course.

Adams Middle School (6–8)

2600 Ripley Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8636 • www.adamsmiddle.org



Andrew Estrada
Principal

Staying Connected

When you visit Adams and ask our students what they love about our school, a common response you will receive is the many ways in which they feel connected with everything. Part of our mission at Adams is to ensure that every student

feels connected as a community, and this is accomplished through our various clubs, intramural sports, student groups, and more.

One of our favorite days of the year is Club Rush Day. Here our student-led clubs come together at lunch to promote their unique groups and recruit other students who might have similar interests. Starting in the fall, students can also try out and join our various intramural sports teams, which is now 10 teams and growing!

Fall is also robotics season, where students can build their skills in coding and also have the opportunity to compete against other schools. Student groups such as ASB, WEB, and PEER meet throughout the year to establish and promote kindness, school spirit, and leadership.

Finally, this year will be the pilot year of the Adams Student Advisory Team, where students will meet with me regularly to give input on various aspects of our school to help make lasting improvements.

All of these opportunities to connect are intentional, as the research is clear that students who feel a connection to their school are more likely to excel both academically and social-emotionally. The work of creating new ways for students to be connected is never done, and we continually review and analyze our Panorama Education Survey results very closely to determine where we can do better in providing even more opportunities for students to feel connected.

We encourage visitors, parents, and others in the community to ask our students, “How are you connected at Adams?” Their answers will make you smile!



ASB promotes Club Rush during lunch.

Alta Vista Elementary School (K-5)

815 Knob Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8650 • altavista.rbusd.org



Karin Sato
Principal

Fall Kickoff

By Caroline Alvarado, Assistant Principal

Fall is the occasion for the changing colors of leaves, rolling back time, and preparing for the cozy months ahead. It can also be a time of great traditions like holiday baking, family visits, and gathering to reflect upon what we are thankful for.

A tradition at Alta Vista Elementary was resurrected this fall: our Alta Vista Nation kicked off the fall season by hosting a Fall Carnival to help bring families together and reconnect with old and new friends alike.

The Fall Carnival was made possible by our PTA and other volunteers to help bring into one place our school community and staff members. The evening consisted of a multitude of bounce houses, face-painting stations, food trucks, and many fun games, to name just a few of the events.

But the hit of the evening was watching our brave staff members take part in the much-anticipated dunk tank. Here they braved the rigid water and cool weather to take their turns at being dunked. Our proud principal, Mrs. Sato, led this effort by being the first one in the tank. The night was a huge success!

The past several years has limited our ability to come together as a community and interact with each other in person. So this Fall Carnival was not just an event, it was a celebration of our school community.

Students at Alta Vista have many opportunities to interact with their fellow students and help build a strong sense of community, while also learning new skills and gaining information. After-school activities such as sports and clubs help give our students an opportunity to make connections and hopefully eliminate those feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Let's keep the spirit of togetherness and joy alive throughout the school year. I am looking forward to more memorable moments with all of you. Wishing you a beautiful season ahead.



Some Alta Vista Nation members enjoying the evening.



Alta Vista students hanging out at the carnival.

Beryl Heights *Elementary School (K-5)*

920 Beryl St., Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8611 • beryl.rbusd.org



Joshua Stern
Principal

Making Good Choices

Beryl Heights students pride themselves on making the kind of choices that will set them up for success in life. With our PBIS program, we give students good examples of how making the right choices can positively affect them in school and beyond.

At Beryl, “Showing your PAWS” means being Positive, Accountable, Working Hard, and being Safe and Responsible. This is the heart of the PBIS program that we are establishing at the school. Through these concepts, we can focus on the positive attributes of what our students should be doing rather than what they should not be doing. We help them make choices so that they can become successful academically, social-emotionally, and in living a healthy lifestyle.

As part of our philosophy of teaching students how to make good choices, we were recently able to bring in a BMX team that not only showed them some incredible aerial acrobatics, but also focused on how they could make the right choices. The message was about staying drug-free (which closely aligns with Red Ribbon Week), setting big goals, being motivated and working hard, respecting others, and building resilience in school.

PAWS is not only focusing on themselves but also on their classmates and others. During our social-emotional learning lessons, the students are taught appropriate grade-level topics on making goals, interacting with one another, and coping with difficult conversations, among other important ideas. We also focus on the little things, such as how to apologize and accept an apology.

Our students demonstrate these attributes every day, and we both celebrate and reinforce them with reminders throughout the week. Our Beryl students know how to show their “PAWS.”



Birney *Elementary School (K-5)*

1600 Green Ln., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8626 • birney.rbusd.org



Eileen Leckenby
Principal

We All Win With WIN Time!

At Birney, we believe in every child. At different points in their educational paths each student will have different needs. Some students need a new challenge. Others need some review of foundational skills to grow as mathematicians and readers. Our goal is to meet each student where they are and then give them the right support and enrichment to develop their academic skills.

This year we rolled out a new program called What I Need (WIN) Time. Three times a week, teachers in grades three to five pause their regular instruction for about 30 minutes so that their students can attend a WIN class. For five weeks the children get the opportunity to explore fun and enriching subjects that are designed to support their needs as learners, before they then rotate to a new WIN session.



Animal Research - Third graders are hard at work on their animal research project during WIN time with Mrs. Wilson.

During Session 1, our amazing teachers in grades three to five and kindergarten each taught a WIN session. Students loved CS coding with Mrs. Lemmer, and worked avidly on making their digital stories come to life. Academic debate was also a hit too, as students had to prepare an argument that covered both sides of a debate topic, which is a great skill to help children consider multiple perspectives on issues.

In addition, we also have a WIN session for extra reading support called Just Words. This program is an excellent evidence-based reading intervention that is designed to develop our students' phonemic awareness, phonics skills, and spelling abilities.

At Birney, we all win with WIN time!



Readers Theater - Fourth grade students are hard at work reading their scripts for their Readers Theater Performance. Readers Theater is a fun way to engage students in repeated reading, which is an academic practice that increases oral reading fluency and comprehension.

Jefferson *Elementary School (K-5)*

600 Harkness Ln., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8631 • jefferson.rbusd.org



Jeff Winckler
Principal

First Steps with Second Step

At Jefferson and across RBUSD, we are fortunate to have a variety of value-added curricular initiatives and programs that allow us to further develop students holistically. We are committed to enhancing our students' social-emotional wellness in particular. Children in all grades at Jefferson benefit from dedicated social-emotional learning (SEL) time, as it is important to help them develop the skills they need to connect and thrive. This year, we have begun

implementing a new SEL curriculum for all students in grades TK-5 called Second Step. Second Step is a leading research-based SEL curriculum that helps build a foundation for a positive, inclusive culture through developing social-emotional competencies, which include perspective-taking, learning empathy, processing emotions, understanding, and resolving conflicts, and building positive relationships. Team Jefferson is thrilled to have this common piece in place in all of our classrooms as we navigate further into the fall and through the balance of the school year as we all *Learn, Grow and Thrive*.



Mr. Winckler with Jefferson students as they Learn, Grow, & Thrive.

Lincoln *Elementary School (K-5)*

2223 Plant Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8631 • lincoln.rbusd.org



Marvin Brown
Principal

'Friends Coaching' Sports Group

We are very excited to join forces with Adams Middle School and bring Friends Coaching Sports to Lincoln Elementary School this school year. Lincoln FC Sports Group, modeled after Adams Middle School FC Sports Group, is a student leadership program that focuses on inclusivity, using sports-themed events. FC Sports Group was created to provide opportunities for our Special Day Class (SDC) students to participate in athletic activities designed by their general-education peers.

Student leaders known as coaches work with and prepare their SDC peer athletes for athletic events that coaches host. The goal is to create awareness and opportunity for our general-education students to show

how they can have a positive impact on their school community by demonstrating kindness, care, and compassion through inclusion outside the classroom. Lincoln FC Sports Group is led by special education teacher Chloe Mowbray and Lincoln fifth-grade teachers Michelle Hess, Kim Caywood, and Elvia Ventura.

On Oct. 12, Adams Middle School hosted our first sports event, World Series Baseball. We brought approximately 30 students from SDC classes in grades K-5 with 30 students from Mrs. Hess' fifth-grade class. The event was a huge success, with students from all levels learning new skills and experiencing baseball with their peers.

We plan to host a football event in January and a golf event in April. We owe a special thank-you to Adams Middle School staff members Jenell Tanaka and Chris McBride for bringing FC Sports to Lincoln Elementary.



A Lincoln 2nd grade student athlete celebrates a home run!

Madison Elementary School (K-5)

2200 MacKay Ln., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8623 • madison.rbusd.org



Denine Hollow
Principal

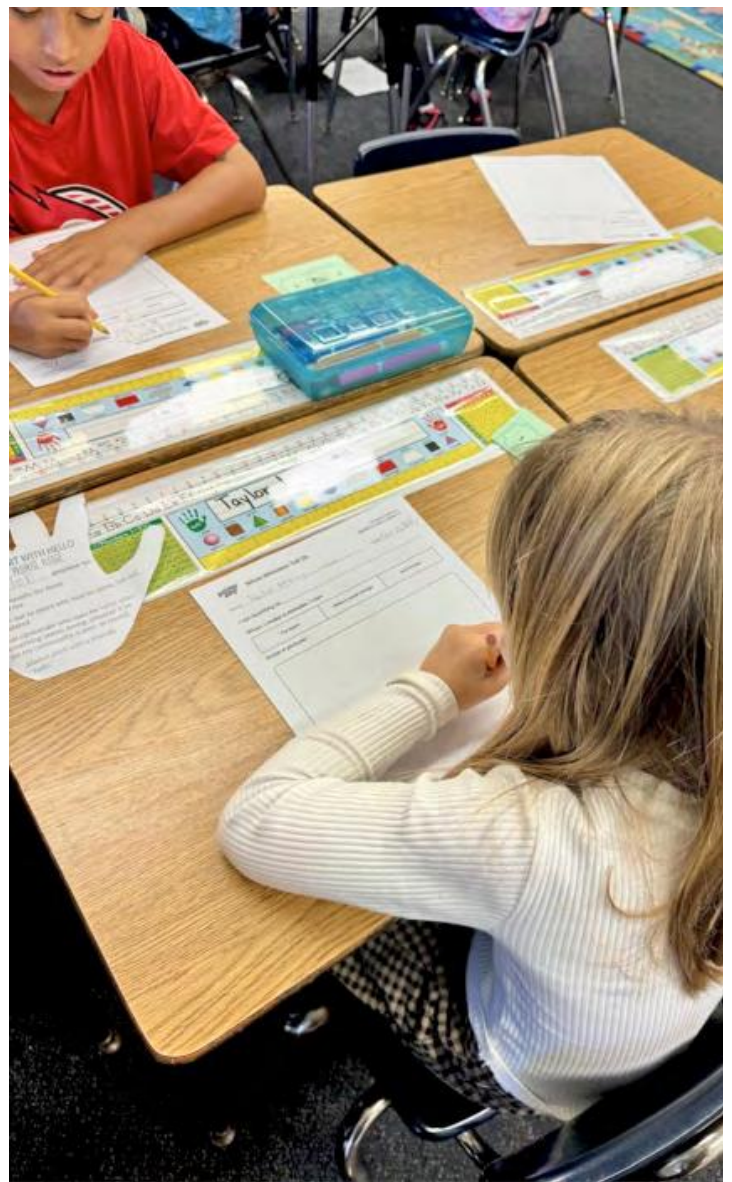
Second Step

The Madison Staff have cultivated a supportive and whole child approach to social emotional learning (SEL). In October, we began teaching Second Step, a research-based social-emotional program designed to improve children's SEL skills. Research continues to indicate that SEL is beneficial for students in several ways.

The program focuses on growth mindset and goal setting, emotional management, empathy and kindness, and problem solving. On this particular day, Mrs. Branta's second-grade class was working on "What

Mistakes Tell Us." The objective of this lesson was to be able to give at least one example of something they can do when they make a mistake. A mistake tells us that something is not working. The lesson encourages students to try again, and then after they've tried again, if it's still not working, to make a small change. A further step would be to ask for help.

The skills that Second Step and teachers are reinforcing can be used on a daily basis in the classroom, on the playground, and even outside school. Teachers can extend the learning to include Anticipate, Reinforce, and Reflect, all of which create a mindset that mistakes are learning opportunities to try again, make a small change, or ask for help.



The students are filling out the Second Step handout based on the classroom lesson about "What Mistakes Tell Us." This will help them identify the benefit of making a mistake and strategies to use after making a mistake.

Parras Middle School (6-8)

200 N. Lucia Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8616 • www.parrasmiddle.org



Kathleen Shaw
Principal

The Power of Kindness

This fall, the Parras Middle School community has focused on the power of kindness, empathy, and inclusivity. Even small acts of kindness can have an impact on our emotional wellbeing, both for the person engaging in the act of kindness and the person receiving it. This may be as simple as a smile, caring gesture, or a compliment. Through campus wide lessons and student-led activities, we are cultivating a culture of kindness and respect. During Inclusion

Week, student leadership groups called on all students to engage in acts of kindness to help promote a more inclusive environment. They also educated their peers through lessons and bulletin boards on neurodiversity, cultural inclusion, and being “curious not judgemental” about our differences. Our focus on kindness also included teacher-led lessons on being an upstander in instances of hate or bullying. Being an upstander means recognizing unfair treatment of others, speaking up to stop the behavior, and reaching out for support when needed. When we highlight the value of kindness and give students tools to stand up for kindness, we are nurturing the compassionate leaders of tomorrow.



Student leaders educated their peers on neurodiversity through lessons and a bulletin board for Inclusion Week.



Student leaders encourage their peers to approach our differences with curiosity.

Redondo Union *High School*

One Sea Hawk Way, Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8665 • www.redondounion.org



Anthony Bridi
Principal

Nurturing and Navigating in the Nest

By Kyle Garrity, Assistant Principal

Redondo Union High School's College and Career Center, affectionately known as "The Nest" (we are Sea Hawks, get it?), is a tremendous resource of knowledge and guidance that benefits students who are searching for the most ideal post-secondary life. Throughout the college application process, our students and families have access to a wide range of supports, including individual counseling meetings, 11/12th-grade student/parent information presentations, college application workshops, college visits, financial aid information, community college outreach, and more!

Our Nest team includes Sea Hawk alumnus Cristina Bishop, who graduated from UCLA, returned to RUHS in 2015 working as an AVID tutor, and then joined the Nest team in 2022. Most recently, Katie Menschner joined the Nest team after a journalism degree from Drake University. She worked in television for 10 years and then spent eight years working in college admissions for Drake University and New York University.

The RUHS college- and career-going culture is as strong as ever in the Nest, and on campus! The counseling team has shifted their caseload focus to grade levels, and now each grade has two counselors who support the students' specific grade-level needs. To start the fall, grade-level assemblies were also conducted to celebrate each class, boost class spirit, and highlight the many counseling resources available for each academic Sea Hawk level.



Ms. Menschner discussing college options with families.



Ms. Bishop hosting a college seminar.

RUHS has recently expanded its rigor and opportunities by offering a diverse and comprehensive menu of courses. RUHS is now an Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone Diploma School, has furthered opportunities in vocational education through its partnership with the Southern California Regional Occupational Center (So Cal ROC), and has solidified its Career Technical Education (CTE) Pathways in culinary arts, computer science, media arts, and business and finance.

If you are looking for more information about our amazing RUHS counselors and course offerings, look no further. Visit redondounion.org and click on the Counseling/Nest tab!

Tulita Elementary School (K-5)

1520 Prospect Ave., Redondo Beach, CA 90277 • 310/798-8628 • tulita.rbusd.org



Alexandra Glunt
Principal

Morning Exercise Experts

The beginning of the school year is such an exciting time. Teachers and students practice routines to make sure the rest of their year runs smoothly. A well-run classroom has a routine for everything: turning in homework and classwork, what to do if a pencil needs sharpening, how to hand back papers, lining up to go to recess; there's so much to learn at the beginning of the year!

Now that the hustle and bustle of back to school is behind us, Tulita is focusing their efforts on refining a few other routines: Morning Exercises. All of Tulita's students

and staff have been starting their morning moving, stretching, and breathing. Students are cheering on their classmates and being role models for their younger peers. Every week, two students from each class are selected to be Morning Exercise Experts.

These leaders have helped re-shape the Tulita school community. For 8 minutes each morning, our school moves as one. Morning Exercises have brought our students together and our Morning Exercise Experts give us a perfect opportunity to highlight the positivity and hard work of our Tidalwaves. There's no better way to start our school day and get our students' mindsets ready for academic success!



This week's 3rd grade Morning Exercise Experts (M.E.E.).

Washington Elementary School (K-5)

1100 Lilienthal Ln., Redondo Beach, CA 90278 • 310/798-8641 • washington.rbusd.org



Dr. Alyssa O'Grady
Principal

The Power of Run Club

I want to start by introducing myself. My name is Dr. Alyssa O'Grady, and I am the new principal of Washington Elementary School. I am humbled by the opportunity to be a leader within the RBUSD, and am thankful to Dr. Nancy Kelly for opening the school at the beginning of the year. She is a strong leader and has taught me a lot about Washington.

During my first month here I have had the opportunity

to get to know our students, families, and staff. There are so many wonderful events and such an amazing community at Washington. I feel very fortunate to be your principal.

I want to highlight one of my favorite programs on the Washington campus: the Run Club! We have a Run Club on every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings before school that is run (no pun intended!) by some of our dedicated parents.

When I first heard about the Run Club I was expecting to see about 10 to 20 students. But we have over 200 students who are registered for it! This is an incredible program, and I am so proud to have it at Washington.

Together as a school, we have so far run over 2,525 miles. The Run Club program helps our students with their overall physical and mental health, and on Run Club days, we also have less than 3 percent of our students tardy!

It has been fun for me to be able to build relationships with our students and parents while running laps. I also want to give a special shout-out to Dylan, who was encouraging me to sprint on some of those laps! She was an amazing running buddy. Thanks Dylan, and thank-you to the Washington school community.



Our fabulous parents helping to track our students' laps.



Our runners doing our Washington Stretch.