

# LBSD

THE  
STORIES  
THAT  
**shaped**  
**us**

2018 - 2019  
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY  
LAGUNA BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



## CABINET



**JASON VILORIA, ED. D.**  
Superintendent of Schools



**LEISA WINSTON**  
Assistant Superintendent,  
Human Resources and  
Public Communications



**JEFF DIXON**  
Assistant Superintendent,  
Business Services



**ALYSIA ODIPO, ED.D.**  
Assistant Superintendent,  
Instructional Services

## PARTNERSHIPS



**SARAH DURAND**  
President,  
SchoolPower

**CHRIS CLARK**  
President,  
SchoolPower Endowment



**SHEILA PARKER**  
President,  
Laguna Beach Council of PTAs



## A LOVE OF LEARNING

■ JASON VILORIA, ED.D.,  
Superintendent of Schools

Each student's educational journey helps shape their goals, aspirations, and future. As educators, it is our job to help students identify their strengths, passions, and envision their future selves to become a lifelong learner and producer in a competitive and interconnected world.

As I reflect on my journey, I am reminded that as educators, we play an essential role in helping our students



## UN AMOR AL APRENDIZAJE

■ JASON VILORIA, ED.D.,  
Superintendente de Escuelas

*El viaje educativo de cada estudiante ayuda a moldear sus metas, aspiraciones y futuro. Como educadores, es nuestro trabajo ayudar a los estudiantes a identificar sus fortalezas, pasiones y a imaginar su futuro para convertirse en un aprendiz y productor de por vida en un mundo competitivo e interconectado.*

*Al reflexionar sobre mi propio viaje, se me recuerda que como educadores, jugamos un papel esencial en ayudar a nuestros estudiantes a descubrir su potencial. Recuerdo varios casos en mi proceso educativo cuando un educador extraordinario se tomó el*

*unlock their potential. I can recall several instances in my educational process when an extraordinary educator took the time to encourage me to explore teaching as a career path. These individuals identified qualities and potential in me that I did not see at the time. A specific instance I remember was my ninth grade geography teacher, who noticed my enthusiasm for social science and encouraged me to explore careers in education. He saw in me something I had yet to discover, a passion for helping others and a love of learning. The short conversations we had before class helped me identify a path forward in my life. As we know, our direction in life is not always straight, and there were detours along the way, but ultimately I found myself*

*doing what I enjoyed the most, doing for other students what this teacher did for me. It is those special moments that we all remember.*

*tiempo para animarme a explorar la enseñanza como una trayectoria profesional. Estos individuos identificaron cualidades y potencial en*

*mí que yo no veía en ese momento. Un ejemplo concreto fue mi profesor de geografía de noveno grado, quien se dio cuenta de mi entusiasmo por las ciencias sociales y me animó a explorar carreras en la educación. Él vio en mí algo que todavía tenía que descubrir, una pasión por ayudar a los demás y un amor por aprender. Las cortas conversaciones que tuvimos antes de clase me ayudaron a identificar un camino hacia delante en mi vida. Como sabemos, nuestra dirección en la vida no siempre es recta, y hubo desvíos a lo largo del camino, pero finalmente me encontré haciendo lo que más disfrutaba, haciendo por otros estudiantes lo que este maestro hizo por mí. Son esos momentos especiales que todos recordamos.*

*Ya sea en mi papel de maestro o administrador, siempre he trabajado para asegurar que establezcamos*

*Whether in my role as teacher or administrator, I have always worked to ensure that we establish connections with our students, to find out about their interests and passions, and to instill hope in their lives about their potential and future, like the countless educators that did that for me.*

*In LBUSD, our staff continually strives to build relationships with our students whether in the classroom, on the sports field or dance room, through music or drama, hosting an after-school club, or just out and about around campus. I am proud of the work we have accomplished thus far and will continue to undertake.*

*I have shared my philosophy with our team of educators-- we want to be remembered for our hard work, our student-focused decisions, and how regardless of the situation, we help our students develop a love of learning and aspiration for their future.*

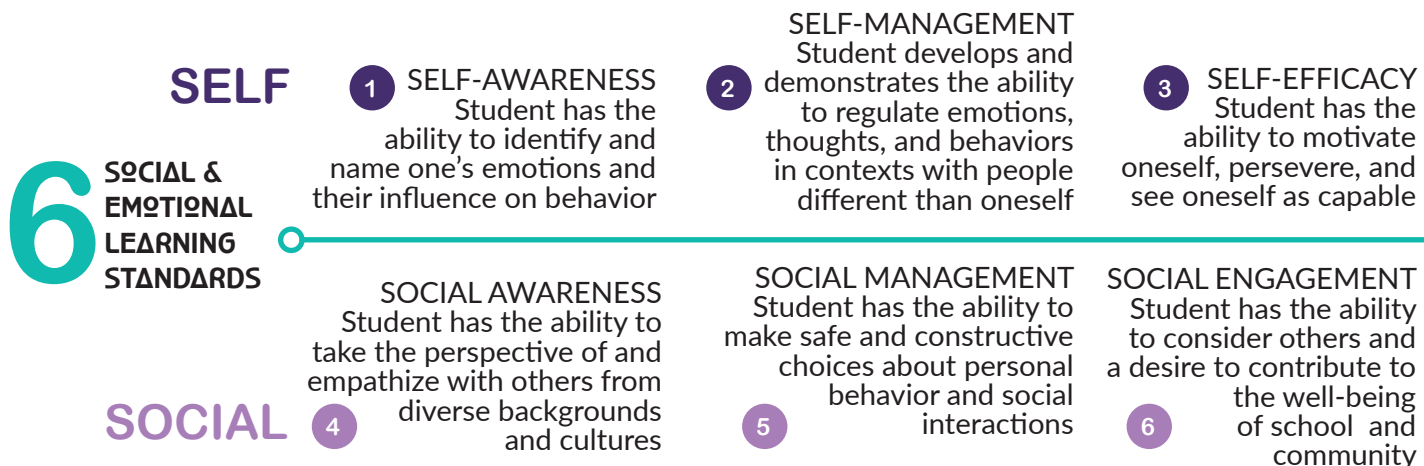
*conexiones con nuestros estudiantes, para conocer sus intereses y pasiones, e inculcar esperanza en sus vidas sobre su potencial y futuro, al igual que los innumerables educadores que hicieron eso por mí.*

*En LBUSD, nuestro personal se esfuerza continuamente para establecer relaciones con nuestros estudiantes, ya sea en el salón, en el campo de deportes o sala de baile, a través de la música o el teatro, la celebración de un club después de la escuela, o simplemente fuera y alrededor del campus. Estoy orgulloso del trabajo que hemos logrado y continuamos a realizar.*

*He compartido mi filosofía con nuestro equipo de educadores-- queremos ser recordados por nuestra dedicación, nuestras decisiones enfocadas en los estudiantes, y cómo sin importar la situación, ayudamos a nuestros estudiantes a desarrollar un amor por el aprendizaje y la aspiración para su futuro.*

# The Whole Child

Social-emotional systems of support for every student, every day.



## UNIVERSAL SCREENING K-12

In the 2018-2019 school year, **more than 85 percent** of all Laguna Beach USD students participated in the best-practice universal social emotional learning screening. The screening:

- Measures student social and emotional strengths & needs
- Identifies students for follow-up
- Provides essential data for program evaluation

## STUDENT SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

 **1,600** student contacts in grades 6 - 12

## SECOND STEP SEL CURRICULUM

 **11,500** hours of instruction in grades K - 5

Skills for Learning | Empathy | Emotion Management | Problem Solving



*"I believe that the foundations we create today will support students to be their best selves now and in the future. In my role as the Director of Social Emotional Support, I lead and collaborate with an incredible team on districtwide prevention and early intervention efforts to improve the social and emotional strength of all students. Our mission is to support students to thrive while in school and throughout life."*

- Michael Keller, Ed.D., Director, Social and Emotional Support

## STAFF TRAINING

To ensure that all schools provide students a climate of care, teachers and staff participated in the following professional development opportunities in 2018-2019:

- Suicide Prevention, Risks & Warning Signs
- Trauma-Informed Care in Classroom
- Restorative Practices
- Monthly Wellness Activities

## K-12 EXPERTS ON STAFF

**7** SCHOOL COUNSELORS

**4** SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

**2** STUDENT SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

## PREVENTION

In-class presentations are used to support students' social and emotional growth, such as:

- Suicide Prevention, Risks & Warning Signs
- Stress Management & Healthy Coping
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Second Step Curriculum
- Botvins Life Skills
- Mindful Mondays

## ENCONTRANDO EL CAMINO

■ ARIANA CARDONA, padre de familia con estudiantes en el distrito

Cuando recién llegamos a los Estados Unidos, comenzamos a ver una gran diferencia en todos los pasos que tendríamos que tomar para que nuestros hijos comenzaran a estudiar. Nos dimos cuenta de que el sistema era totalmente diferente al de nuestro país de origen y era un reto bastante grande ya que nosotros como familia nadie hablaba ni entendía el idioma del país. Cuando



## FINDING THE PATH

■ ARIANA CARDONA, parent with students in the district

*When we first arrived in the United States, we began to see a big difference in all the steps we would have to take for our children to start studying. We realized that the system was different from that of our country of origin, and it was quite a challenge as we as a family did not speak or understand the language of the country. When our children started school we faced the next challenge, they had to adapt to the school system in the United States, and we as parents also had to support them*

nuestros hijos comenzaron la escuela nos encontramos con el siguiente reto, ellos debían adaptarse al sistema escolar de Estados Unidos y nosotros como padres también para apoyarlos y al mismo tiempo aprender sobre el dicho sistema escolar.

Uno de los mayores obstáculos que enfrentamos como familia latinoamericana fue el idioma y, a la vez, encontrar información en español. Sin embargo, buscando ayuda en los enlaces comunitarios del distrito escolar de Laguna Beach, ha sido mucho más fácil de sobre llevar. Las personas en ese departamento nos han ayudado enormemente a poder involucrarnos más en las actividades e iniciativas en las escuelas de nuestros hijos.

Una de las mayores preocupaciones que tenemos como familia es entender el sistema educativo en Estados Unidos para poder ayudar a nuestros hijos a alcanzar sus metas. Como padres debemos transmitir a nuestros hijos que la educación a todo nivel es sumamente importante. Esto nos

*and at the same time learn about the school system.*

*One of the biggest obstacles we faced as a Latin American family was language and, at the same time, finding information in Spanish. However, seeking help from the community resources in the Laguna Beach school district has made it much easier to overcome these obstacles. The people in that department have greatly helped us to become more involved in the activities and initiatives in our children's schools.*

*One of the biggest concerns we have as a family is to understand the education system in the United States so that we can help our children achieve their goals. As parents, we must convey to our children that education at all levels is extremely important. This motivates us more and more to stay informed of what is happening at school, in the district, and around it, to achieve our*

motiva cada día más a informarnos de lo que está pasando en la escuela, en el distrito, y a su alrededor para lograr nuestra meta final de que nuestros hijos asistan a la Universidad-- y que cuando llegue ese momento ellos estén seguros de las decisiones que tomen. Debemos unirnos como familia para poder apoyarlos y tomar las mejores decisiones educativas y sociales.

Como padres debemos quitarnos el miedo a ir a la escuela y preguntar lo que no sabemos. Debemos involucrarnos más en las escuelas.

Uno de los mayores motivos para seguir luchando cada día por nuestros hijos es que ellos alcancen sus metas tanto educativas, sociales y personales. ¡Sé que como familia Hispana es más difícil, pero no es imposible!!! Lo podemos lograr.

*Ariana Cardona es de Guatemala, un país en América Central. Tiene dos hijos en el distrito, uno en El Morro Elementary y otro en la preparatoria de Laguna Beach.*

*ultimate goal of having our children attend college-- and that when that time comes, they will be sure of the decisions they make. We must unite as a family so that we can support them and make the best educational and social decisions. As parents, we have to get rid of the fear of going to school and asking what we don't know. We need to get more involved in schools.*

*One of the biggest reasons to keep fighting for our children every day is for them to achieve their educational, social, and personal goals.*

*I know it's harder as a Hispanic family, but it's not impossible!!! We can make it.*

Ariana Cardona is from Guatemala, a country in Central America. She has two children in the district, one at El Morro Elementary and one at Laguna Beach High School.



# Student & Family Support Services

*Bridging home, school, and community.*

## STUDENT



### JUNTOS

A mentoring and tutoring program that matches struggling English-learners in grades 2-5 with students in grades 7-12.



**33** mentors  
**17** mentees



**1,040**  
hours of community service

Family-school partnerships improve student motivation and learning. A key dimension of a successful partnership is connecting learning at home and at school. Parent presentations are intended as a venue for parental self-growth, learning, and the development of new skills. Speakers that joined LBUSD in 2018-19 included:

- Dr. Jerry Weichman, certified psychologist and adolescent specialist
- Dr. Denise Pope, co-founder of Challenge Success and author
- Hector Meza, family and school counselor
- Paul Kanarek, Collegewise CEO and co-founder of the Princeton Review



## FAMILY

District and site-based committees were designed to ensure that teachers, parents, and other community members have an active voice in local education matters. Parent engagement opportunities currently include:

- Community Advisory Council (CAC)
- Career Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Group
- Curriculum Council
- District English Learner Advisory Committee
- Parent Mentors
- Local Control and Accountability Plan Advisory Committee
- School Site Council



## COMMUNITY



*"As the Community Liaison for Laguna Beach USD, the majority of my work is centered on fostering a climate of understanding and collaboration between the school, parents, and community. My effort is guided by the diverse and complex experiences our families bring to this exceptional community. Discovering and creating opportunities for parents to feel empowered to support their children's education drives my daily work. Whether I'm providing community-based referrals to families, offering interpretation/translation services to our Spanish speaking parents, coordinating Club Juntos or the District English Learner Advisory Committee with my colleague Yadhira Rojas, I'm truly grateful to support all families in this capacity."*

*- Ivonne Cortez-Redard, Community Liaison*

## COURAGE TO GROW

■ CAROLINE CANNAN '12 is an alumna of LBHS

As graduating seniors of Laguna Beach High School in June 2012, my classmates and I were asked to submit a quote to share with classmates for the LBHS yearbook. After searching, I chose this quote by Walt Disney: *"Dreams can come true if you have the courage to pursue them."*



Of course, I wanted other students to agree with the sentiment, but I also hoped it would be a great reminder for myself. Since the second grade, I have dreamed of becoming an elementary school teacher. I loved going to school and, realizing I could do it for the rest of my life; it seemed like the perfect career choice for me. Throughout my time as a student in Laguna Beach Unified schools, I was involved in the classroom and the community mentoring, tutoring, and coaching children. The more time I spent working with younger students, the more I knew that teaching was my calling.

As I prepared to graduate from LBHS, I felt nervous. Everything had gone as planned up to that point. I was successful in school, had a supportive group of family and friends, and I had been accepted to my first-choice university. Thinking about college, I couldn't help but be wary of the unknown. I wondered- *How would I do living away from home? How would I find where I belong on a campus with over 40,000 students? How would I balance everything?*

Leaving the comfort of home in Laguna was daunting, but having courage, by definition, is not easy. To truly have courage, one must be willing to persevere in times of danger, fear, or difficulty (Merriam-Webster).

In spite of my nerves, I didn't want to limit myself when I arrived at USC. I began to say "yes" to new opportunities and get involved across campus. By the end of my first month of college, I carried 18 units, became immersed in dorm life, attended each home football game,

My hope for my students  
Is as simple as this:  
Have the courage to try-  
Even if you miss.

I hope you'll take chances  
Give it your best shot;  
For success comes  
When you've given all you've got.

I hope you reach for your dreams  
And follow your heart-  
Although not always easy,  
There's no better way to start.

So get out there and do it.  
Even in times of fear,  
Just continue to have courage,  
And always persevere.

Walt Disney was right...  
If you set goals to pursue,  
With hard work and courage  
Your dreams can come true.

pledged a sorority, joined USC Troy Camp, played intramural soccer, and volunteered at the local church. Long story short, I was overwhelmed. My assignments escalated, service, and social activities filled my afternoons, and I failed to satisfy the level of quality I knew I could reach. I feared that maybe I couldn't do it all. As negative thoughts of doubt filled my mind, again, I had to relate to the idea of having *courage*.

I took the lessons I learned as a student in LBUSD and put them into practice. I knew I had the skills I needed to be successful, but I would have to take a step back, think about it, and make it work. I reset my priorities:

academics first, service, and social activities I loved second, all while ensuring there was time to maintain physical and mental health. I worked to get organized and make a routine schedule that would work best for me, and the pieces of the puzzle began to come together. I used what I had learned growing up, and I accepted no limits on my potential.



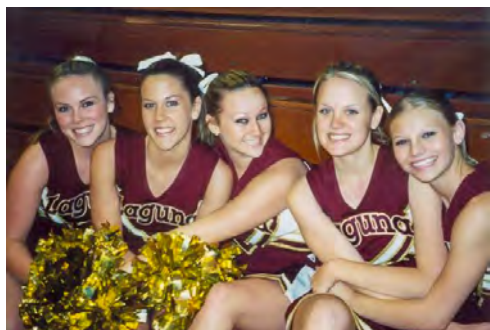
Fast-forward five years, I graduated from USC, Magna Cum Laude with my Bachelors Degree in Social Sciences, a Master of Arts in Teaching, and a Multiple Subjects Credential. I was yet another step closer to achieving my dream. With continued determination and hard work, I moved home to Laguna Beach to work as a substitute teacher back in my hometown.

One year later, my dreams became my reality, and I am now proud to be a first-grade teacher at El Morro. While I have reached my childhood dreams, it is my goal to now play a small role in helping my students do the same. As a teacher, I try to motivate my students to have the courage and not give up. We often speak about maintaining a growth mindset and learning from our mistakes. I encourage them to think big and continue to work toward their goals. I hope they too feel empowered to give it their best, follow their hearts, and persevere.



## We Asked LBHS Alumni

What advice would you give your high school self?



"...other than telling myself to never use Sun-In in my hair sophomore year-

You're stronger than you think you are- believe in yourself more. You will get through things."

Hillary Converse '03

*"...never stop learning, growing and challenging yourself! Also, it's okay to be you. Focus on the people and activities that most interest you and go for it! It's never too early or too late to get organized and begin making plans or goals for your future! This is the time!"*

Brittany (Clark) Charnley '07



"...IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO TRY SOMETHING NEW. SOMETIMES THAT ONE SMALL STEP CAN LEAD YOU DOWN A PATH THAT WILL BRING YOU A LIFETIME OF HAPPINESS."

Steffanie Gapp '88



*"...wear sunscreen and a hat whenever in the sun."*

Jamie Jameson '98

"DON'T TAKE YOURSELF TOO SERIOUSLY. YOUR LIFE IS A CONTINUUM. WHO YOU ARE WILL CHANGE AND IT IS UP TO YOUR ATTITUDE TO DETERMINE WHICH WAY YOU WILL GO. THE PATH YOU THINK YOU HAVE CHOSEN WILL CHANGE AND YOU NEED TO EMBRACE IT. CHANGE IS NOT THE END OF THE WORLD, IT IS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ONE. BE KIND."

Jonathan Todd '87





## WHY TEACH

■ JIM GARVEY, LBHS foreign language teacher

I am very fortunate that *many factors* have impacted my philosophy as a teacher. My mom will forever be the one who has most influenced every aspect of my life. I am the product of a strong and incredible single Mom. Having come from a blue-collar family, my mom always emphasized how important a *good education* was. She also taught me the value of a strong smile, hope, initiative, a strong work ethic, integrity, and treating others the way you wish to be treated. I have also had the blessing of many caring teachers and coaches along the way. Combining my upbringing and my education, my teaching philosophy gradually evolved. There is no single moment or event that molded my philosophy. Instead, it has been a multitude of life experiences and nurturing individuals along the way.



I was raised in South Gate, California, until age 10 and come from a very humble upbringing. As a student at every level, I continued to learn the impact a teacher can have on a student.

I believe to my core that education is the great equalizer. Educating oneself is preparing oneself to overcome the difficult situations life sometimes springs on us. No matter what the color of one's skin, religious beliefs, or socio-economic background, a good education can allow anyone to transcend one's predestination.

My high school Spanish teacher, Mr. Reginald Dorff, taught me to expect

more from myself than anyone else expects. My high school basketball coach John Fien taught me that leaders are people who humbly sacrifice themselves. Dr. Marquez and Dr. Aparicio at the University of Redlands taught me that every student can and will learn. Dr. Watson guided me to adopt the mantra of looking for the gift in each child and not just the gifted child. During these same formative years, I was a summer laborer for a construction company, and the school of hard knocks here taught me it is much better to work with my mind than with my back.

As my college experience came to an end, we had to do a quick write in our student-teacher seminar titled "Why Teach?" I think my philosophy was well on its way to being developed when I wrote:

Does it matter if I sacrifice a little of myself? That makes teaching that much more attractive. ➤

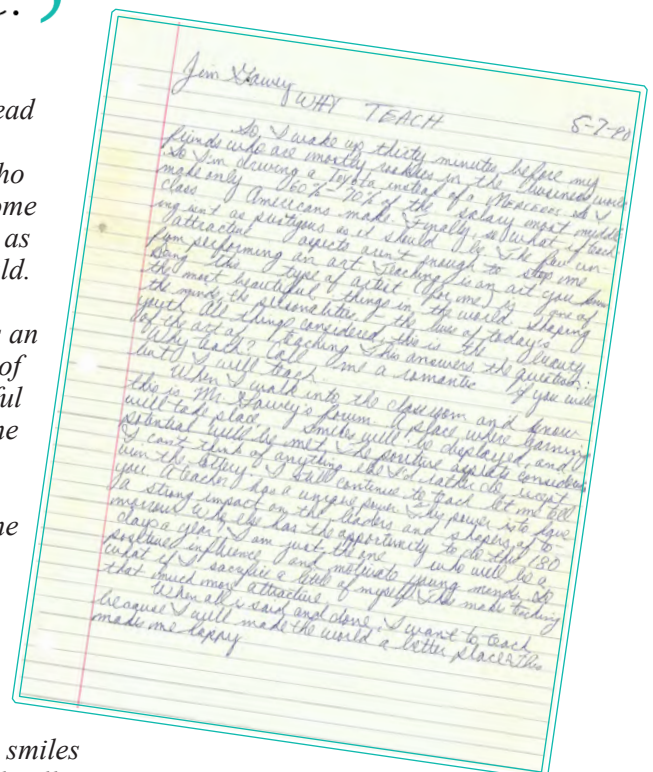
"So I am driving a Toyota instead of a Mercedes. So I make less money than my good friends who are businessmen. So what if some people don't consider teaching as prestigious as I think they should. None of this will stop me from performing an art. Teaching is an art, you know. Being this type of artist is one of the most beautiful things in the world. Shaping the young minds, the personalities, the lives of today's youth make teaching the art it is. That is the beauty of teaching. It answers the question, why teach? Call me a romantic if you will, but I will teach. When I walk into the classroom and know this is Mr. Garvey's forum: a place where learning will take place, smiles will be displayed, and potential will



be met. I can't think of anything else I'd rather do except win the lottery. A teacher has a unique power. This power is to have a strong impact on the leaders and shapers of tomorrow. Who else has the opportunity to do this 180 days a year? I am just the one who will be a positive influence and motivate young minds. Does it matter if I sacrifice a little of myself? That makes teaching that much more attractive. When all is said and done, I want to teach because I will make the world a better place. This makes me happy."

I wrote this on May 7, 1990.

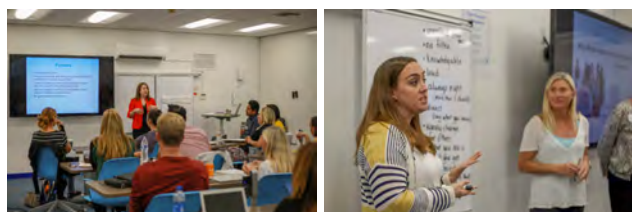
It has almost been thirty years since I wrote those thoughts and I just can't help but think: "Dang, I love teaching!"





The LBUSD Leadership Academy provides a professional development program for interested employees designed to build essential leadership skills for use in the employee's current assignment, a future leadership role,

or to explore career paths in administration. Topics included: knowing yourself and others, team dynamics, conflict management, coaching, creativity, innovation, and presentation skills.



**ROCKET READY** is a staff development initiative in which the primary activity requires teachers to integrate the latest technology into lessons that allow students to solve real-world problems and explore global, local, or even classroom issues. The three essential outcomes are (1) expanding the teacher's personal learning network; (2) expanding the teacher's technology skills in blended learning; and (3) solving a real-world problem with students.

*Placement Spanish class for a school in Sonora, Mexico felt so much more relevant than teaching about poverty from a textbook. We created a project around the driving question: How can we make an impact in the fight against poverty and its effect on education in the Latino community?*

*We developed a global action plan with La Escuela Nueva Creacion, an elementary school in a low-income community in the Sonoran Desert. Students took leadership of the project and carried out several initiatives to raise funds for the students in this school. There were GoFundMe websites, cookie sales, etc. In the end, we were able to donate boxes full of school supplies and backpacks. In the interviews with my students, they talked about how inspired they were to continue helping with similar projects. Two of my students took a second trip to Mexico before the end of the first semester!*

*This success also inspired us to begin a local action plan in our community this semester. Students are currently raising funds for a variety of organizations and schools with a Latino population.*

*Completing this project has changed the focus of my teaching by allowing students to make more decisions in a variety of projects (with my general guidelines). I feel energized and inspired by watching these young leaders make a difference in the world. It makes a lot of sense to take the focus off of ME to see how WE can make a difference.*

- Carita Garcia, LBHS foreign language teacher

## Employee Growth & Wellness

*Cultivating leaders to build a brighter tomorrow.*



In 2018-2019, LBUSD introduced a new Employee Wellness Program designed to

increase well-being and encourage a balanced lifestyle. Throughout the year, staff participated in district-wide health challenges, free biometric screenings, and had the opportunity to earn incentives for exhibiting and logging specific healthy behaviors.

*Completing a Rocket Ready Service Project with my Advanced*







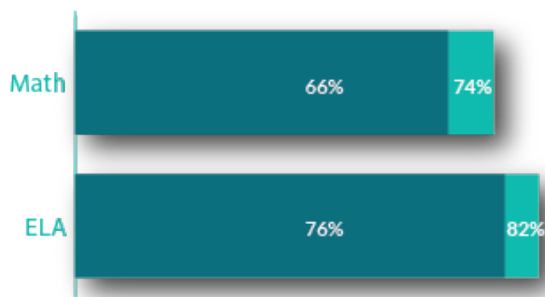
## California School DASHBOARD

The **California School Dashboard** is an online tool that shows parents and communities how well schools and districts are meeting the needs of all students. It reports performance on both state and local measures that reflect California's accountability system, which is based on the ten priority areas of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). According to the Dashboard, in the Laguna Beach Unified School District:

- 90 percent of English Learners are scoring Well or Moderately Developed (English Learner Progress)
- 70 percent of graduates are placing in the Prepared level for the College & Career Indicator (College/Career Readiness)

### CAASPP SCORES

Overall proficiency, 4-year growth (2015-2018)



## District Achievement Data



*"We are continuously working to improve student learning and interventions. One of my most significant responsibilities is to work collaboratively with schools and staff in utilizing data and research to help inform decision-making. Data is collected throughout the year from surveys, observations, research studies, individual feedback, formative and summative assessments. Providing a safe, supportive, and meaningful learning environment for students is the foundation that empowers students to be successful in school and life."*

- Chad Mabery, Ed.D., Director of Accountability and Assessment

### ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)

Number of students taking AP exams, 4-year growth (2015-2018)



**51%**

OF GRADUATES HAVE TAKEN AND PASSED AN AP EXAM

**90%**

AP EXAM PASS RATE

**ACT**  
2018



**97%**  
GRADUATION RATE

**96%**  
DAILY ATTENDANCE RATE

**74%**  
OF GRADUATES MEET THE UC/CSUA-GREQUIREMENTS

## FINANCE & FACILITIES



**4** SCHOOLS



**2,855**

STUDENTS ENROLLED



**341**

**EMPLOYEES**

167 CLASSIFIED

174 CERTIFICATED

Certificated Salaries	\$23,727,881
Classified Salaries	\$ 8,777,322
Employee Benefits	\$14,013,691
Books & Supplies	\$ 2,536,376
Services & Operating	\$ 9,510,938
Capital Outlay	\$ 1,478,000
Other Outgo	\$ 335,800

## EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL

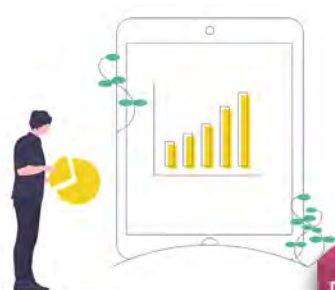
Per audit report in 2018



Instruction Related	\$14,775
Student Support Services	\$ 2,422
Administration	\$ 1,589
Facilities & Operations	\$ 2,317
Other	\$ 1,050

## EXPENDITURES

Per Second Interim Report (3/12/19)



## SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION

**21** FACILITY PROJECTS

- ROOFING REPLACEMENT PROJECTS
- SAFETY & SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS
- HVAC UPGRADES



LBHS STADIUM RESTROOM-STORAGE BUILDING

**14** CLASSROOM UPGRADES

Laguna Beach USD 4CLE (Collaborative Learning Environments) classrooms are redesigned by teachers to promote collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, and use of technology.

**4** SCHOOLS

Participated in the **School Assessment Project** with the Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center and OCDE, a united effort to collect information from OC schools to ensure the safety of all students.



## DEAR PAPA

■ RYAN SMITHERS, LBHS  
class of 2019

At your bedside, I felt such an overwhelming torrent of emotions. You were frail and weak, but you still had that beaming personality. You smiled at me.

*Twenty-four to 72 hours.* I squeezed your hand and wiped tears off my face “I love you, Papa.” My face lowered into my lap and I squeezed my leg with my other hand. I cried. *This isn't fair.* Regrets. Pain. Pity. There was so much going through my head in those final moments I spent with you, Papa. I was so grateful to be with you, but it hurt seeing you go. I wanted you to know how much I loved you, but sometimes I didn't know what to say. I would sit by you and caress your hand softly, repeating that I love you so much. A part of me wishes I told you my life story in those final moments, told you about every internal battle, loss, and victory that I bottled up inside. I wish I told you my story, from my birth to your bedside, so here it is.

For a long time, I didn't understand. I was staring out the window of our leather seated Volvo on my way home from school. With wide eyes, I saw men and women crowding the sidewalk, holding signs. Curious and excited, I raised my small hands and waved. You and Dad immediately told me to stop, and I didn't understand why.

Watching you and Dad get married ten years ago at the courthouse, I was confused. We didn't have a big celebration like every other couple, didn't have the marriage within a church. It was just us, close family and friends, a legal intertwining and then a car ride home. A part of me was upset that it wasn't celebrated as something more, that was until I learned why.

In middle school, I realized those men



and women with signs were protesting against marriage equality. I discovered that you married in a courthouse because you didn't have time to plan a big wedding—you were afraid that marriage equality would be overturned. Middle-school changed my perception of how I felt we fit into this world.

I felt like a black sheep in a white herd; positive in my mind that I would be judged for having gay parents.

“YOU TAUGHT ME THAT LIVING  
SOMEONE ELSE'S DREAM IS NOT LIVING  
AT ALL.”

Throughout middle school, I tried to keep the reality of having gay parents a secret. When I started to realize my attraction to guys in the 7th-grade, I suppressed it at first. I knew there were people who didn't like us, and I just wanted to fit in.

I was struggling internally to find my place in a society that I felt didn't accept me or my family. Over time, I began to understand what living was supposed to be like.

Papa, you had this iconic laugh that would make everyone turn and smile. Even if some people stared, that didn't change anything. On all of our family trips, dinners, movie nights, your laugh would radiate in the air. You would embarrass yourself in

public just to make me crack a grin. You were so comfortable being yourself. You were my friend, my guidance, my Papa.

It took me a while Papa, but I'm growing into my own shoes. You taught me that living someone else's dream is not living at all. I dropped soccer to pursue my innate passion for running. I dropped Spanish to double in a field I love, science. I

opened up to others about my family, regardless of their judgment and opened up to others about my own sexuality, regardless of someone else's opinion.

When I came out to you a couple of days before you passed away, I didn't just do it for me, I did it for you—to tell you that I'm comfortable with who I am.

You passed away two weeks ago Papa. It's been difficult to process the fact that I'll never get to speak with you again. I already miss your voice, your laughter, your smile;

these are things that I will always miss about you. While you aren't physically with me anymore, you will always be a part of me.

You taught me to be diligent in the face of failure, to be selfless with those I love, and to remain positive even in times of hardship. Your incredible work ethic in running a preschool coupled with your genuine love for the kids are lessons in themselves. I will take these things with me, not only to my future at Yale but to every facet of my life.

Papa, I love you so much. I miss you; you will always be a part of me. I love you, to the moon and back.

## CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)

Scan the QR code using your smartphone camera to learn more about CTE at LBHS.



A **CTE Pathway** is a sequence of two or more CTE courses within a student's area of career interest. Pathways are designed to connect high school classes to college, industry certifications, and/or a career. Laguna Beach High School currently offers pathways in **drama**, **dance**, and **multimedia production**.

In each of these areas of study, students learn the technical skills and soft skills making them employable in the arts, media, and entertainment industries.

**Future Ready**  
Foundations for success.



"Ideally, we want every student experience to have relevancy and connection to the outside world. We want a student's learning journey to be filled with things that are expected and unexpected, as in life. Based on these experiences, students are able to affirm or recalibrate their interests."

- Jason Allemann, Ed.D., Laguna Beach High School Principal

## K-5 COMPUTER SCIENCE

Scan the QR code using your smartphone camera for a Digital Literacy update from LBUSD.

In 2018-2019, Laguna Beach Unified School District began implementation of the Computer Science and Content Standards adopted by the State Board of Education in 2018. The standards include the following concepts: computing systems, networks and the internet, data and analysis, algorithms and programming, and the impacts of computing.



**26,562+**  
hours of code



## DIGITAL LITERACY

More than **100 in-class presentations** on *research steps, boolean searching, databases, and MLA formatting* were delivered to students throughout 2018-2019 to teach soft skills in **research** to increase college and career readiness. They build on the **4Cs** of 21st century learning: collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity.



The **Passion Project** at Thurston Middle School are designed to give students insight into the paths they may want to follow as adults. Students visit a variety of business locations that target various personality traits and interests. The six sites selected in 2018-2019 represent the six different Holland code categories: artistic, conventional, enterprising, investigative, realistic, and social. Career talks throughout the year highlight these codes, along with the site visits. Students visited: Sony Studios (artistic), Angel Stadium (realistic), Vans/Oakley Headquarters (enterprising), Virgin Orbit (investigative), Finance Park (conventional), and the Village of Hope/the Giving Farm (social).



## PASSION PROJECTS



## VISION

WE TAKE OWNERSHIP OF EACH CHILD'S LEARNING IN OUR SCHOOLS, ACCEPTING NO LIMITS ON POTENTIAL.

## MISSION

EACH STUDENT GAINS THE KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE, WORLD PERSPECTIVES, AND SKILLS NEEDED TO BECOME A LIFELONG LEARNER AND PRODUCER IN A COMPETITIVE AND INTERCONNECTED WORLD.

## SCHOOL PRINCIPALS



Chris Duddy  
El Morro Elementary



Mike Conlon  
Top of the World Elementary



Jenny Salberg  
Thurston Middle School



Jason Allemann, Ed.D.  
Laguna Beach High School



    
@LagunaBeachUSD

[www.lbusd.org](http://www.lbusd.org)