



Congratulations to the 2024 graduating fifth grade class!

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

It's hard to believe that we are nearing the end of the 2023-2024 school year. It seems like the first day of school was just yesterday. I recall feeling a sense of excitement as we welcomed parents and students onto our newly refreshed campus. I enjoyed spending time mingling with parents after their children were settled into their new classrooms. We were all excited by the promise of the school year ahead.

Rebuilding our wonderful community was my main focus this year. As a staff, we worked on creating and nurturing a positive school climate and culture. We welcomed parents back onto our campus during arrival and dismissal, leading to a better sense of connectedness between families and staff. We also established common, school-wide expectations centered on our core value of respect, which we taught, celebrated, re-taught, and refined.

Although the end of a school year is always a bit bittersweet, it also provides us with an opportunity to reflect and plan for the year ahead. It's this time of year that I excitedly jot down ideas about how to improve the experiences of our students, families, and staff for the year ahead.

Before we get to the new school year, however, I'd like to wish everyone a wonderful summer. May you enjoy time away from the daily grind, time together as a family, and

time enjoying our beautiful city.

Finally, as we close this school year, I'd like to thank our Friends Foundation and PTO Presidents, Elizabeth Van Clief/Sonal Patel and Carolina Tiller for their unwavering commitment to our community. I'd also like to thank both of our Boards and all of our amazing volunteers. You truly make La Jolla Elementary the amazing school it is.

Thank you for a wonderful year together! I'm excited to continue our adventures in the fall.

Warmly,

 *Stephanie Hasselbrink*, Ed.D

Stephanie Hasselbrink,
Principal

MESSAGE FROM THE OUTGOING PTO PRESIDENT

Dear LJES Families,

As the school year ends, I am writing to express my gratitude, as I step down from my role as PTO President of La Jolla Elementary School.

Serving our school community has been an extraordinary privilege. Our success as a school and strong community is due to the unwavering commitment of our incredible volunteers and board chairs.

To our amazing chair volunteers: thank

you for your tireless efforts and selfless contributions. From the kindergarten BBQ and Back to School Picnic to Family Wellness Night, Family Movie Night, Science Night, Family Dance Night, and the Talent Show, your dedication has created lasting memories for our children and families.

To the PTO Board: your leadership and dedication have been invaluable. Your hard work behind the scenes ensures our events run smoothly and our goals are met. I am continually inspired by your commitment to make our children's elementary school experience a very special one.

Thank you also to the teachers, staff, and administration of La Jolla Elementary School. Your support and collaboration have been instrumental in our success.

As I transition from PTO President to the Friends' Annual Giving Campaign, I encourage all parents and community members to continue their support in making our school continue to excel in enriching our kids' education, avoiding grade combo classes, keeping class sizes down, and so much more that is only possible with your contribution.

It takes a village to raise a child, and La Jolla Elementary is the most amazing of the villages because of each and every one of you.

Have a great summer.

Carolina Kotzias



FAREWELL FROM LJES STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT, COLIN MIAO

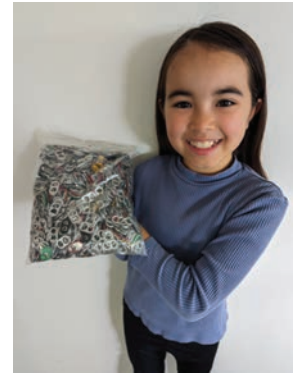
Hi everyone! I hope your year has been as action packed as mine has been. I made new friends and hung out with old friends. It's been awesome. A lot happens in fifth grade so all you fourth graders, prepare yourselves for exciting times and unforgettable memories. I wanted to share that over the past few months, the Student Council has been busy brainstorming ways to make LJES a more inclusive and safer place. We started the "No Place for Hate" campaign, which is about bringing awareness of bullying and how harmful words and actions can be very hurtful. The Student Council hopes to spread the message about kindness and supporting each other. Please help spread the word and stand up against bullying. We have less than a week left before we break for summer vacation so let's make the most of the time we have left. I think I can speak for the fifth graders when I say we look forward to celebrating the end of the year and to a fun summer vacation. Wish you guys a great summer!



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Helping Those in Need

My name is Akemi and I'm a third grader at LJES. I collect soda can tabs for a school in Japan that services students who have a range of disabilities. The can tabs can be melted and made into parts of a wheelchair. If I can collect over or close to 1,600,000 tabs they can make a whole wheelchair for a needy student! Every year I go on a trip to Japan where the tabs are being transformed into wheelchairs. In the summer school I attend they collect tabs from kids and then send them to the school for special needs kids. The next time you are drinking a can of soda or anything with a tab, please consider sending them over in a bag to Ms. Skommessa's third grade classroom. I'll be taking all the tabs that I collect with me when I go to Japan this summer. Thank you!



Another LJES Student Wins!

By Ms. Skommessa & Priya Pandya

Priya Pandya, a 3rd grader, entered a StoryWork contest called "Axolotl" from her classroom magazine. The task was to use details from an infographic to persuade the principal to change our school mascot to an axolotl. She was able to convey her ideas clearly, thoughtfully, and creatively in an organized way using descriptive language and well-chosen details that linked her ideas. Priya learned she was the winner of the Axolotl contest on April 15, 2024.

When I entered the contest I looked at the infographic over and over again. I looked up facts about axolotls to include in my paper, wrote a rough draft, and once I felt confident with my work I submitted it. I was so happy and proud of myself. I was even more excited when I got an eGift card to Scholastic.

Congratulations Priya, we are all so proud of you!



Spelling Bee Champs

On April 24th, second through fifth grade students from nine La Jolla elementary schools competed in the 3rd annual Coastwise Spelling Prize to see who had the best spelling skills. Congratulations to Julia Schlachetzki and Alexis (Lexi) Masters from Ms. Pollen's class who took first and second place in the older age group!



FOURTH GRADERS CELEBRATE 49ER DAY!

Gold fever struck La Jolla Elementary in early May. Fourth graders concluded their unit on the Gold Rush with 49er Day, a treasured annual event. Dressed as 1849 prospectors, students tried to strike it rich, and collect gold, during a Gold Rush themed school-wide treasure hunt.



1ST GRADE FLOWER FIELD FUN

The 1st graders took a field trip to the Carlsbad Flower Fields this April where they examined worms, planted sunflowers, learned about different types of bugs, and took a ride through the beautiful flowers in a wagon pulled by a tractor. A favorite part of the day was trying to find their way out of the tricky floral maze. A great time was had by all!



GROUCHY LADYBUGS

On Thursday, May 2nd the K1 Friends performed the Grouchy Ladybug show for their families.

In this story a grouchy ladybug learns the hard way that it is better to be friendly to others. I turned this story into a musical by creating lyrics that match the story set to a few popular tunes. This year the K1 Friends' favorite song to perform was, "Yakety Yak". The K1 Friends were absolutely fantastic on stage! I am so grateful to all of the parents that pitched in to decorate the stage and help get them into their costumes.

By Jessica Sandoval



SECOND GRADE SPRING SING

Are those the voices of angels singing Spring time songs? Nope, it's the Second Graders, serenading family and friends during their Spring Sing event.



FAMILY DANCE

LJES was GLOWING during the annual PTO sponsored Family Dance. Families danced the night away to ELECTRIC tunes spun by the DJ, while flaunting their NEON dance outfits. Thank you to Dana Hourani for organizing this FIRE event.



INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Colorful flags, delicious food and fun games filled LJES at the PTO's International Festival. Students, families, teachers and staff browsed the 27 country booths in celebration of the diversity across our community. Thank you to all the volunteers, and especially to PTO International Festival Co-Chairs, Andrea Russell, Kim Custard, and Megan DeMott.



FAMILY SCIENCE NIGHT

Eureka! Families discovered a fun time at the PTO's Family Science night. Alka Seltzer rockets and giant bubbles soared, reptiles slithered, slime oozed, robots waved, and lava lamps bubbled. After all that activity, everyone appreciated the refreshment provided by the fifth grade. Thank you to Samantha Oblander for organizing Science Night, and to all the volunteers who helped support the event.



GARDENING CORNER

Return of the Garden Program

Have you noticed anything new growing on campus? Gardening is back at LJES! Each class has been diligently planting, watering, and pruning their raised garden and the gardens are thriving. Huge thank you to all the Classroom Garden Coordinators for taking on this fun and educational project.

Look Out for GIANT Cabbages!

The Bonnie Plants' 3rd Grade Cabbage Program returns to LJES. In this program, 3rd graders learn about the cycle of life through plants and then care for and harvest their very own Colossal Cabbage. They even can enter their cabbage into a statewide competition. Good luck growing 3rd graders!



LIBRARY CORNER

Library Tuesdays have been going strong with Ms. Liz at the helm! With the help of a dedicated team of parent volunteers, the library remains a beloved space for many of our students. From captivating read-alouds to organizing fun-filled library events, Ms. Liz is on hand to guide our young readers.



Check it out!

Here are Ms. Liz's top library book picks:

- Knight Owl* by Christopher Denise
- High Five* by Adam Rubin
- The First Cat In Space Ate Pizza* by Mac Barnett
- What's Inside a Flower* by Rachel Ignotofsky

LJES WINS BIG AT JUNIOR OLYMPICS

Team LJES had an amazing day at this year's La Jolla Kiwanis Junior Olympics! We had over 160 athletes representing our school in the Track & Field Events, National Anthem Choir, Relay Teams, and Fastest Girl and Boy of La Jolla Race.

Special Congratulations to the Girls Relay Team, 3rd place, the Boys Relay Team, 2nd place, Jane Rice, 3rd place in Fastest Girl race, and Bas Kevorkian, 2nd place in Fastest Boy race.



GIRLS ON THE RUN COMPLETES SPRING SEASON

Our Girls on the Run season was incredible, with the girls showing amazing dedication and growth. They exceeded all expectations, making every moment a joy to coach. It's truly been a blast witnessing their progress and enthusiasm! - Coach Stephanie Silverberg

Thank you to the Girls on the run coaches, Nancy Rice, Catie Houle, Nassim Wills and Stephanie Silverberg, for leading this incredible program!



CO-PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear LJES Families,

It has been such a joy and privilege to serve as Co-Presidents of the Friends of La Jolla Elementary School foundation this year! We feel incredibly lucky to be a part of the community of teachers, staff and volunteers that go above and beyond for each one of our children at LJES. We want to thank the parents at our school for their support and generous contributions to Friends this year.

The mission of our foundation is to enhance and enrich the education of each and every child at La Jolla Elementary. Thanks to your donations, we were able to fund a record number of teachers this year, reducing our student-teacher ratios and avoiding combination classes. Our investment in our teachers directly benefits our children's class experience and ensures more individualized attention for each child.

Your generous contributions made it possible for Ms. Hannah to continue being our school's beloved full-time enrichment teacher. Ms. Hannah incorporates art and music into our enrichment program, fostering creativity and exploration in our kids' growing minds.

In addition to funding teachers and enrichment, Friends has funded field trips and workshops throughout the year. Field trips are wonderful opportunities for children to have hands-on experiences off campus. These include visits to cultural and science museums which have exhibits and talks from experts in their field. Friends coordinated several workshops this year, offering opportunities for our students customized by grade level. The kids loved ballet and Mad Science to name a few! Workshops were a great way to inspire our kids and have experts in their field share their knowledge on campus.

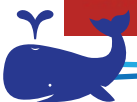
And here is what we can look forward to next year... Friends is excited to contribute to LJES' Makerspace! Ms. Polen is leading the charge to create a collaborative work space for making, learning, exploring and sharing! The Makerspace will help our kids develop critical skills in all fields and foster creativity and a love of learning.

Your donations to Friends have made this all possible! We will continue to rely on your generosity and support to continue providing vital teachers and enrichment opportunities to our children's education. Thank you to each and every family's commitment to the success of La Jolla Elementary School! The best way to support LJES and your child's education over the summer is to visit the Farmer's market!

Elizabeth Van Clief, Mom of Duke (2nd grade), Chance (3rd grade) and Hali (5th grade) and *Sonal J. Patel*, Mom of Kaia (3rd grade), Sia (7th grade) and Anya (9th grade), Co-Presidents of Friends of LJES



School is almost out for summer! A break from school doesn't mean you need to take a break from supporting our kids. The market is open all summer long and on the street featuring fresh produce from the best local farmers, unique items from talented artisans and a fantastic gourmet food court with the best breakfast, lunch and brunch in La Jolla! Make us a part of your summer routine and all year round every Sunday from 9am to 1pm.



SPARKLING AND SHINING

On April 27th, our wonderful school community gathered to celebrate our students and teachers at the La Jolla Elementary School Sparkle & Shine Gala! Hosted in the Museum of Contemporary Art, this fabulous night featured sunset cocktails, dinner, dancing, and opportunities to fundraise for our school! The evening raised money for smaller class sizes, support teachers, and enrichment opportunities for our students next year! In addition to this fantastic outcome on fundraising, a great time was had by all. Thank you to everyone who underwrote, donated, volunteered, and attended! We couldn't do it without you!



CREATIVE CORNER

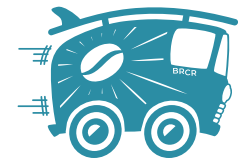
From Picasso and pointillism to collages and sculpture, Ms. Hannah has helped our kids create beautiful works of art while learning about different styles and techniques! A talented musician, she also teaches music and rhythm. We are so grateful to have her! It's because of our families' generosity that Friends of LJES can fund her position and supplies, so thank you for making sure our kids have this creative space!



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