Dear Families,

As an eternal optimist, I have a tendency to focus on silver linings, as doing so helps me to stay positive and to feel a sense of excitement as I look toward the future. That being said, it is undeniable that living with the pandemic over the past year has been challenging. When it comes to our children, I think it’s fair to say that we are all concerned about the impact it has had - and may likely continue to have - on their emotional well-being.

Although I’ll provide some thoughts, tips, and resources below, it’s important to acknowledge that some children’s needs may extend beyond the scope of what your family and our school can support. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to your child’s pediatrician or mental health experts for additional assistance.

**Taking Care of Ourselves**

In order to care for others, we must first care for ourselves. Exercise, eating well, breathing/meditating, and getting plenty of sleep are well-known stress reducers. It can be difficult to incorporate these strategies into our lives, especially when life is busy, but doing something small - even a five minute walk out in the sunshine - can help to reduce stress and center oneself. Connecting with friends not only gives us an outlet for expressing our feelings, but it can also provide us with an opportunity to laugh, which is a great way to decompress. Finally, being constantly inundated with information about the pandemic, economy, or politics can compound one’s stress, so taking breaks from the news can help.

It’s worth noting that when people are under stress, they tend to be more reactive and have more difficulty navigating situations. Children are keen observers who tend to adopt the behaviors, mindsets, and language of the adults around them. When children observe an adult who responds to a situation with anger or frustration, for example, they may adopt and use that response the next time they’re faced with a challenging circumstance. Conversely, children will likely be better equipped to handle difficulties when they observe adults who model calm, flexible, proactive problem-solving behaviors/strategies.

**Supporting Children at Home**

Keeping a regular schedule and engaging in routines can help children to feel safe and happy. Getting up at a consistent time, participating in the regular school day, having an afternoon movement break, spending quality time with family in the evening, and going to bed at a decent time can help children feel calm and a sense of normalcy.

Engaging children in open, ongoing conversations is another tool for supporting their emotional well-being. Talking about COVID-19 with children can enable them to feel safe and empowered (check out the CDC’s tips for talking with children). Conversations that elicit children’s feelings and emotions may assist them in expressing and making sense of their feelings, while at the same time providing adults with a window into their children’s feelings. For example, an adult can express that it’s normal to feel angry, sad, or worried, and they can ask their child if they’ve recently felt any of those emotions. Children can also be encouraged to discuss their feelings related to staying home from school or returning to school, and what they most often find themselves thinking/worrying about. Providing children with an outlet can help them to better understand their own emotions, and it can give adults an opportunity to offer support.

**Important Upcoming Dates**

**MARCH**
- 19 Art Show
- 29-31 Spring Break/No School

**APRIL**
- 1-2 Spring Break/No School
- 16 Family Science

**MAY**
- 3-7 Teacher Appreciation Week
- 23 Spring Gala

*Please note that all dates are tentative and subject to change. See for latest updates. [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Vp1T6D0J-Hm5eNOlYhPpi/XmgVWhz2PmEgKZeE3nB8k/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Vp1T6D0J-Hm5eNOlYhPpi/XmgVWhz2PmEgKZeE3nB8k/edit#)
Thank you for all of your caring, love, and hard work to
Thank you for all of the fun “All School Friday Pledges”!
A Message from Ms. Allison & Mr. Hugh

Jolla principals and I are working with
emotional well-being, and the other La
about how to support our children’s
have engaged in ongoing discussions
into community and online resources,
such as the CDC’s Parental Resource Kit,
California’s Parent & Youth Helpline & Online Parents Anon-
ous® Support Groups, which was re-
cently launched to offer free trauma-in-
formed, evidence-based emotional
support to parents, children, and youth.

Warml.
Stephanie Hasselbrink, Ed.D
Stephanie Hasselbrink, Principal

I have loved every day of being a teacher.

After teaching for 41 years, our beloved Ms. Allison retired at the end of 2020. Ms. Allison has been a ray of sunshine shining through our campus. She dressed in bright clothes that were often outmatched by the smile on her face and the flower in her hair. She always took the time to connect with each child and offer them a warm hug at the end of the school day. Her classroom was stacked floor to ceiling with teaching materials that helped spark a joy of learning in each and every one of her students. After receiving her own education at San Diego Unified Schools with amazing teachers, Ms. Allison knew that she wanted to spend her career as an educator. She has taught every grade from TK up to Graduate programs and loved each of them. Ms. Allison transferred to La Jolla Elementary School 30 years ago to develop new programs and materials that helped spark a joy of learning in each and every one of her students. She always took the time to connect with each child and offer them a warm hug at the end of the school day. Her classroom was stacked floor to ceiling with teaching materials that helped spark a joy of learning in each and every one of her students.

A Message from Ms. Allison & Mr. Hugh
Thank you for sharing your children and lives with us!
Thank you for all of the fun “All School Friday Pledges”!
Thank you for all of your caring, love, and hard work to make LJES and the world a better place!!

We will love you always,
Ms. Allison and Mr. Hugh

2021 LJES Talent Show

“It’s Showtime! Music, dancing, visual art...and for the first time, skiing, ice skating, and roller skating plus a surprise at the end... see it all at our annual 2021 LJES Talent Show!

2021 LJES Talent Show
Students captured the holiday spirit through poetry and created mini-farm projects as part of their studies in Social Sciences.

Ava Kuykendall – TK
“to school all day in person.”

Beatrice Wierzynski
“COVID.”

Rhett Pugh – 4th grade
“be in his class ever since I met him when I was in TK.”

Andrew Dulgeroff – Kindergarten
“A large focus of my practice is on prevention of dental issues and education of children and families. In teaching and involving parents in their child’s dental care, we establish lifetimes of healthy practices which are then reinforced at home. A large focus of my practice is on prevention of dental issues and education of children and families. In teaching and involving parents in their child’s dental care, we establish lifetimes of healthy practices which are then reinforced at home.

Dr. Scoma and our team are non-judgmental and seek to meet families where they are. We listen, encourage questions, and strive to build trust with each child and their parent. Our community celebrated Great Kindness Challenge Week by showing acts of kindness at both home and school.

LJES BSS
“I have routinely witnessed acts of kindness from our new BSS Halvin Spearman. He skips his lunch breaks and stays late to ensure that our campus is clean and safe for our students and staff. He also recently treated our office staff to lunch – just because he thought we’d enjoy it!”

Dr. Hasselbrink

Keea Tettenburn – 3rd Grade
“I helped my friend with her homework, and I made a kindness card and gave it to my friend.”

Ford Becerra – 4th Grade
“Last week I visited Ms. Rebecca Habib’s class, and the way Ford Becerra greeted me was so kind! He said hello to me and said, “It’s nice to see you!” Ford’s kind words made me feel cared for.”

Dr. Hasselbrink

Roshni Dhanekula – 3rd Grade
“I helped my sister with her homework.”

Mrs. Dyer

Duke Kantner – 3rd Grade
“I helped my mom water the plants.”

Ms. Boyle

Roshni Dhanekula – 3rd Grade
“I helped my sister with her homework.”

Mrs. Dyer

Sponsor Spotlight:
Seaside Pediatric Dentistry – We treat early to teen and everything in between!

About us: Our dedicated team works one-to-one with families to ensure they receive the care they want and achieve their treatment goals. Dr. Scoma and our team are non-judgmental and seek to meet families where they are. We listen, encourage questions, and strive to build trust with each child and their parent.

What we do: A large focus of my practice is on prevention of dental issues and education of children and families. In teaching and involving parents in their child’s dental care, we establish lifetimes of healthy practices which are then reinforced at home.

Why choose a pediatric dentist?: Pediatric dentists are specialists in treating the unique needs of children. A pediatric dentist has completed two to three years of specialty training beyond dental school in psychology, behavior modification, and pharmacology. Pediatric dentists are also trained to explain preventive care, hygiene, and treatments in simple, easy-to-understand terms for the comfort of both parents and children.

We can conveniently located in La Jolla at the corner of Prospect Street and Fay Avenue. Please click HERE for an appointment or call us at 858-551-9700.

Our Students are Learning and Growing…

Looking Forward to Most in 2021…

“I am most looking forward to Christmas and going back to school all day in person.”

Ava Kuykendall – TK

“I am most looking forward to seeing all my friends in school in 2021. I’m also looking forward to Christmas!”

Ryan MacDonald – 1st Grade

“I am most looking forward to seeing all my friends in school in 2021. I’m also looking forward to Christmas!”

Veda Sampora Mommaneni – 2nd Grade

“I am most looking forward to back to school, starting gymnastics, and seeing this year!”

Andrew Dulgeroff – Kindergarten

“I am most looking forward to my Oma and Papa coming to visit from Seattle”

Beatrice Wierzynski – 3rd grade

“I hope we can have a fifth grade graduation celebration in 2021!”

Brannon Horn – 5th grade

“I am most looking forward to most in 2021 is the day I finally get to walk into Mr. Naylor’s class for school. I’ve wanted to be in his class ever since I met him when I was in TK.”

Rhett Pugh – 4th grade

“So getting vaccinated for a new President and people getting vaccinated for COVID.”

Beatrice Wierzynski – 3rd grade
Dear La Jolla Elementary Families,

This year has brought many new challenges to La Jolla Elementary families. With the pandemic imposing a “new normal” on us all, there were certainly a lot of disruptions and changes that we were asked to absorb—and then we in turn asked our children to adjust to them as well. For some of our youngest learners, most being brand new to La Jolla Elementary, this was no different. Our children were assigned to K2, the beloved Ms. Allison’s class. Soon after starting virtual school and getting used to their teacher and the Zoom-learning environment they had recently started, Ms. Allison had to step away from teaching to care for a loved one. Our 5 and 6-year-olds were then asked to adapt to a new teacher—which they did remarkably well. After acclimating again came the announcement that Ms. Allison would be retiring mid-year and our children would be asked to make even more adjustments. Sadly, these kids’ very brief school careers would be riddled with inconsistencies and forced changes brought on through no fault of their own.

But who swooped in to save the day?? Friends of La Jolla Elementary School

Friends of La Jolla Elementary, Inc. (Friends) is the school’s fundraising group. It is a non-profit organization that benefits the children of LJES. Run by a group of hardworking volunteers, their mission is to enhance and enrich the education of each child at La Jolla Elementary. Powered by generous donations by YOU, the LJES families, businesses, and our community, this group was asked whether they would fund the teacher and enable her to remain with the students of K2 so no other classes would have to be disrupted and so that these children would be able to have some stability during this uncertain time.

THEY SAID YES.

This is your money at work; it makes a real difference; those funds go directly to help LJES students. Because of your donations to this amazingly generous organization, Friends was able to say “yes” to help these young learners. Because of families’ generous contributions, Friends was able to retain a teacher for the K2 class and mitigated undue disruption, stress, frustration for LJES students and families. Your donations to Friends, whether it be through the Annual Giving Campaign, patronage to the weekly Open Aire Market or participating in the Annual Gala (which is upcoming and going virtual this year), every dollar is important and goes directly to OUR CHILDREN!

From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU for your continued contributions and support—LJES is a better place for our young learners because of it and because of each of you.

-Sonal, Catherine, and Andrea
Parents of K2 students

Stay tuned for information on our first Virtual Fundraiser, coming soon!
PLEASE SUPPORT OUR PEARL SPONSORS

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SEASIDE PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY & ORTHODONTICS

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PLEASE CONTACT
AMY GOIN
AMYOLSONGOIN@GMAIL.COM

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