Dear Families,

The past couple of years have brought about unprecedented times, unanticipated challenges, and unreal situations. Like many of you, I’ve been eager to get back to some semblance of normalcy; thankfully, the 2022-2023 school year seems to have brought with it a return to just that! Family events are back on, and parent volunteers are able to come back onto campus - this is going to be a wonderful year!

As I’ve mentioned numerous times, one of the very best things about La Jolla Elementary School is our community. It is beyond special, and I am grateful to be part of this incredible community. For those of you who don’t know, I first came to La Jolla Elementary in 2011 as a fifth grade teacher with ten years of teaching experience; at that time, I was in awe of LJES’ parent involvement and opportunities for family engagement, as it was like nothing I had ever experienced before. I was struck by the amazing monthly PTO family events and the high level of fundraising by our Friends foundation (and, of course, what the funding afforded our students). In addition, I was so grateful to have parent volunteers who made photocopies for my students each week, who supported my students' literacy and math achievement via volunteering in the classroom, who drove and chaperoned on our many field trips each year, and who recognized my hard work and dedication to their children.

Regardless of your schedules, availability, and time constraints, I highly encourage you to get involved in our amazing community in some way. Whether it’s attending our monthly PTO events, contributing to our Friends foundation, volunteering in the community or classroom, volunteering or prepping work at home, supporting the teacher in other ways, or just communicating with the teacher, your time, dedication, and involvement make a positive difference in our community.

Welcome to another wonderful school year together, and thank you for all you do!

Warmly,

Stephanie Hasselbrink, Ed.D
Stephanie Hasselbrink, Principal
We asked the LJES student experts, aka, the 5th Graders, to share some insights with us, as we start the new school year.

1. What are you most excited about during your final year at LJES?
2. What is your favorite activity or memory so far at LJES?
3. What advice do you have for the younger students at LJES?

**Cairo Cornett**
*Mrs. Quartuccio*

1. The thing that I’m most excited about is that I’m going to be moving on to sixth grade after this year. I’m excited that I’m going to have different teachers for every subject and get to have a locker. Also, I’ll get a quick break in between each class.
2. One of my favorite memories from LJES is making new friends and meeting new teachers. I enjoyed getting to know everyone.
3. The advice I have for younger students is to listen to your teacher, focus on the task you’re doing, and not sit by friends in class.

**Grace Hickey**
*Mrs. Mitchell*

1. I am most excited about all of the field trips like Biztown, and the Floating Lab. Last year we only got to go on one Field Trip, so I am excited to go on more this year. Especially since it is my last year at LJES!
2. My favorite memory so far was 49er’s day. I liked how we each got maps, and had to read out clues, to find other clues. Our clues finally led us to gold!
3. Always remember to work hard, and only worry about yourself and the work in front of you. It’s okay if other people finish first, just do YOUR best!

**Emma Mitchell**
*Mr. Naylor*

1. To be the oldest in the school.
2. PE, after school programs, and hanging out with friends.
3. Just be yourself because no one else can!

**Abbey Witt**
*Mr. Naylor*

1. To graduate from elementary school and begin my journey in middle school.
2. Hanging with my friends and learning new things.
3. Be the change you want to see in the world - Mahatma Gandhi

**Soraya Yamini**
*Mrs. Mitchell*

1. I am most excited about all of the 5th grade events and promotion at the end of the year. I can’t wait to do Spirit Days, so I can dress up and go all out! My favorite memory so far at LJES is 4th grade because we got to dig for gold. We also got to dress up as miners! I also loved the schoolwide Spirit Day decorations in our classrooms, it was so fun to see them.
2. Try your best and be kind. Always remember to work hard, and learn from your mistakes!

**Beatrice Wierzynski**
*Ms. Polen*

1. I’m most excited for the promotion activities and the fun field trip opportunities! I still cannot believe that I have already reached my last year with this amazing school.
2. My favorite memories would probably be walking into a new classroom each year and seeing all my friends and my new teachers.
3. Some advice I have for the younger students at LJES: try to keep a positive outlook and you will have the best years ever here.

**Diya Gluth**
*Ms. Polen*

1. I am very excited to go to BizTown this year in 5th grade. It’s going to be so much fun to get to have a job, earn money, vote for mayor, write checks, and get to be an adult for the day. It’s going to be the best field trip ever!
2. My favorite memory so far at LJES was family movie night. We got to be in our PJs, bring blankets, be with our friends, buy treats at the bake sale, and watch a movie. It was so fun.
3. You should try hard on every assignment and test and have fun in elementary school.
As the school year has gotten underway you may have noticed some new faces on campus!
We asked them a few questions to get to know them better.

Ms. Caroline Blank—Kindergarten Teacher
1. Where did you teach before coming to LJES, and can you tell us a little about your education or experience? I grew up in San Diego and am a product of the Poway Unified School District! In 2020, I obtained my bachelor of science degree in Liberal Studies from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Then I moved back to San Diego to obtain my Multiple Subject Teaching Credential from San Diego State. This past year, I had the unique opportunity to be the Resident Visiting Teacher at Boone Elementary. There, I worked with students in grades K-5 to strengthen any skills weakened or lost during the pandemic. This position allowed me to work with an incredibly diverse set of learners, which prepared me to take on my own class this year. I could not be happier to have ended up teaching kindergarten at La Jolla Elementary this year!
2. What is your favorite sport, activity, or hobby? I love taking my German Shepard Husky, Trevor, to the dog park or beach!
3. What do you enjoy doing most in your free time? I am extremely lucky to be able to spend weekends and any free time with my parents and my older brother, who still live in the San Diego area.

Ms. Cheyanne Harmer—First Grade Teacher
1. Where did you teach before coming to LJES, and can you tell us a little about your education or experience? I attended SDSU and received my bachelor’s degree in Liberal Arts with an emphasis in elementary education. I received my teaching credential from SDSU, working within the San Diego Unified school district. This spring, I finished the first year of my master’s degree in Teaching Language Arts. Before LJES, I taught second grade at Zamorano Fine Arts Academy and Kindergarten at Hancock Elementary!
2. What is your favorite sport, activity, or hobby? My favorite activity is having a picnic while watching the sunset! I love going to the beach and boogie boarding — this is where I find myself the happiest!
3. What do you enjoy doing most in your free time? In my free time, I like to relax at home and play with my dog, Kamba.

Mrs. Jori Dabill—Resource Teacher for 3rd/4th Grades
1. Where did you teach before coming to LJES, and can you tell us a little about your education or experience? I taught 4th and 5th grade in Hawaii for 2 years. Then I taught 5th-8th grade math in Las Vegas for 5 years. I was a support/resource teacher here at La Jolla Elementary for 4 years and I taught 5th grade here at La Jolla Elementary for 1 year. Then I taught 4th grade at Franklin Elementary for 2 years. Now I’m back at La Jolla! I have also been a math tutor on and off for the past 14 years.
2. What is your favorite sport, activity, or hobby? Surfing and snowboarding.
3. What do you enjoy doing most in your free time? Surfing, hiking, camping, and going to the beach.

Mr. Kerem Esteban—Education Specialist
1. Where did you teach before coming to LJES, and can you tell us a little about your education or experience? Last school year, I worked at iHigh Virtual Academy. It was a great experience but I missed the connection you make with students, staff, and parents when you teach in person. I was born and raised in Hawaii, so I jumped at the chance to work near the ocean! I've worked in SDUSD for three years as a multi-site Education Specialist, working with students in TK-4 through high school. Prior to SDUSD, I have worked at schools in Hawaii, Arizona, and Texas. I've had fantastic opportunities as an educator and served in roles as an RTI Coordinator, Instructional Coach, and an Interim Vice Principals.
2. What is your favorite sport, activity, or hobby? I am a big fan of the University of Hawai'i's sports teams. I love the UH Volleyball teams. Go Bows! This summer, I had time to practice the French horn, an instrument I played since middle school. I am looking to perform with a group again. I haven't played in a band or an orchestra since the pandemic.
3. What do you enjoy doing most in your free time? In my free time, I enjoy going to the gym and I enjoy running. I am working up to run another half marathon soon. I am also a big science fiction fan and enjoy watching Marvel shows and movies. I plan to get a dachshund soon and spend a "few" minutes watching dachshund videos each day.

Ms. Julissa Valdez—Education Specialist
1. Where did you teach before coming to LJES, and can you tell us a little about your education or experience? Prior to LJES, I worked as an Inclusion Specialist and Resource Specialist Program Teacher at Franklin-McKinley District in San Jose, CA. I was employed at FMSD for 4 years prior to moving to San Diego this summer. I received my B.A. in Legal Studies and Sociology at UC Santa Cruz and received my M.S. in Special Education (Mild/Moderate) at National University.
2. What is your favorite sport, activity, or hobby? My favorite pastime activities include playing sports. I have played basketball since the age of 5. I also have experiencing coaching sports teams and was the Basketball Coach at my previous school in San Jose. Other hobbies include reading, listening to music, hiking, cooking, and traveling.
3. What do you enjoy doing most in your free time? I enjoy spending my free time with my puppy. As we are new to San Jose, we spend our free time exploring the city and its’ beautiful beaches!

Ms. Katie Paul—School Counselor
1. Where did you teach before coming to LJES, and can you tell us a little about your education or experience? I am a proud graduate of the University of Cincinnati for my Bachelor’s degree, and Northern Kentucky University for my Master’s degree. I started my school counseling career as a counselor in Cincinnati Ohio. I have been in San Diego for a little over three years. I was the Resident Visiting Teacher last year at Correia Middle School as I waited for my school counselor license to transfer to California. I am very excited to be the new counselor at LJES!
2. What is your favorite sport, activity, or hobby? I am a huge University of Cincinnati Bearcat fan. I grew up going to all the basketball and football games as my parents were alumni, and had season tickets.
3. What do you enjoy doing most in your free time? In my free time I enjoy spending time with my amazing daughter who moved out here with me. She is 22 and is attending school locally. I moved to San Diego for the weather and to live a more outdoorsy lifestyle. I love the beach, camping, kayaking and hiking.
It's so exciting to welcome back all the students and families to La Jolla Elementary this fall! I'm so honored to be part of this incredible community, and we have so many wonderful things in store for the school this year.

Many of you may already be familiar with Friends of La Jolla Elementary and the work that we do for the school. Where the school identifies a need beyond what it can meet through federal, state, and local funding, Friends steps in to fundraise from the school's parents and community to provide these programs to the students at La Jolla Elementary. We rely on the incredibly generous support of our community to unlock opportunities for enriched educational experiences for every child at the school.

Our funding makes a huge difference in the quality of our children's education. This year, Friends of LJES supports the school by funding two full-time teachers, plus four additional support teachers, teacher accounts for classroom supplies, our Everyday Math curriculum, and much more. Every year, our community's incredible generosity allows us to provide these programs and give our children the best possible environment to learn in.

This year, I am thrilled to announce that we are bringing back the school's enrichment program in full force. For many of us, the robust enrichment opportunities that LJES offers were a huge part of why we chose to enroll our children. But for the last two years, because of Covid, we have had significantly reduced enrichment opportunities. I am thrilled to announce that Friends of La Jolla Elementary has funded a full time enrichment teacher for this school year, allowing for weekly enrichment classes in the visual arts for every student in the school.

If you are able to, please show your support for La Jolla Elementary by donating to our Annual Giving Campaign! The money we raise through this campaign goes directly into funding programs for next year, so we can continue to provide these incredible educational opportunities to our student body. Additionally, we would love your support as a business sponsor, or as an attendee at the La Jolla Open Aire Market and the La Jolla Art and Wine Festival! The funding from these community events directly impacts our students – and they are lots of fun as well!

Finally, save the date for our Spring Gala on April 15th! This is always the event of the year and this year promises to be better than ever. If you'd like to contribute an auction item or if you're interested in volunteering to help, please reach out!

Thank you so much to all of our incredible parents, teachers, staff, and everyone who supports our kids. Welcome back!
This year marked the return of a much anticipated and loved event for LJES—the Back to School Family Picnic! It’s hard to believe it has been three years since we have had this fabulous event. Families brought chairs and blankets and enjoyed food by Belinda’s Familia, delicious treats from the 5th grade bake sale, lots of games, face painting, balloon animals, dancing to DJ Ron, and lighting up the night with glow sticks. Everyone enjoyed connecting with old friends, meeting new ones, and spending time with our wonderful LJES community. Many thanks to the event co-chairs, Mele Leaverton and Sara Carpenter, the PTO, and the many volunteers for their hard work kicking off the school year with this fun-filled evening!
LA JOLLA OPEN AIRE MARKET

Fall at the La Jolla Open Aire Market is so much fun for the kids and families of our school!

Join us for the Harvest Festival on October 23rd. A Mini-Pumpkin Patch, Pumpkin Decorating Station, live music, balloon artist, face painting, games and prizes all await you! Our families will get to enjoy an easy Sunday morning at the market with great food and lots of fun!

Remember to visit our market every Sunday. Come find unique gifts from our amazing local artists, clothing, jewelry, flowers, farm fresh produce for your meals, or have a delicious brunch or lunch at our food court.

As always, proceeds from the market support and enrich the education of our children at LJES.

LA JOLLA ART & WINE FESTIVAL – THIS WEEKEND!

Everyone gets into the spirit of the La Jolla Art & Wine Festival! The 14th annual LJAWF takes place Oct 8 & Oct 9 in the heart of the village of La Jolla from 10AM - 6PM.

Check out amazing art from 170+ artisans, sample sips in the Wine & Beer Garden, hear live music, enjoy roving entertainment, shop at the two-day silent auction, adopt a furry friend and play in the Geppetto’s Family Art Center.

All proceeds from this FREE family friendly event benefit the five local public schools. Since inception, the festival has donated more than $1 million to the public school students of La Jolla!

Tickets are needed for entry to the Wine & Beer Garden. Grab them at LJAWF.SimpleTix.com

For more information, sign up for their newsletter at LJAWF.com.

COACH’S CORNER WITH COACH KELLY WISKUS

Welcome back! I hope you all had a wonderful summer filled with family, friends, and fun! It has been so great to see all of the familiar faces again this fall, and so lovely to meet all of our new staff, students, and families as well. As I begin the year with reflecting and planning, I realized that this is my 15th year as a Physical Education teacher at LJES! Time sure flies when you are having fun, and I feel so fortunate to be a part of such an amazing, supportive community of staff, students, and families!

In PE we have started the year focusing on our PE rules, and building community in our “classroom” through cooperative games, as well as learning and reviewing the recess games and practice with basic exercises and movements. It has been great to see our students working together and focusing on skills that will set them up for success throughout the school year. In addition to PE once a week, students have been actively engaged in recess games and our 5th grade students do a daily morning walk/run.

Our official Run Club will begin soon thanks to our fabulous PTO’s sponsorship of the Student LapTracker Program. Due to construction, we are still not able to resume a school-wide morning program, however teachers will be able to work in run/walk times throughout the week.
La Jolla Elementary is not your “ordinary” public school. It is an extraordinary school by any standard, public or private.

This is due in large part to the generosity of our parents, extended family, and community who contribute to the Friends Annual Giving Campaign.

We are 51% of the way toward our goal of $200,000! Please consider a donation in any amount that is appropriate for your family: https://donate.onecause.com/ljes

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FAMILIES FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF LJES AND FRIENDS!

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Please note that our recognition list reflects donors as of September 29, 2022. We are grateful for all support!
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