



# school bulletin

ISSUED BI-WEEKLY SEPTEMBER THROUGH JUNE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

September 4, 2020

## A Time of Change And Opportunity

By Jill Baker, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools

I am deeply honored that our Board of Education chose me to serve as superintendent of the Long Beach Unified School District. I have come to know and love LBUSD after working here for 28 years, first as a teacher, then as a school principal and central office administrator. I can also appreciate our district from a parent perspective, having had my own son graduate from our schools in 2018.

Our school district is a storied place of learning, excellence and resilience. Much like our nation, LBUSD also is a big idea. We firmly believe in the innate talents and abilities of all, and we strive to help our students reach their fullest potential despite any barriers they may face.

If we truly wish to live up to our ideals, then America has work to do, as evidenced by recent unrest and discord on the national scene. Here in our schools, we also have much work to do, whether in the classroom or in the virtual learning settings that have become our new reality.

Long Beach schools remain among the best in the nation, but we intend to build upon our hard-fought gains in student achievement, especially for students who, for a variety of reasons, may need extra support. Ensuring equity and closing achievement gaps requires honest dialogue about the challenges our students and

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### SCHOOL STARTS ONLINE ONLY –

For the first time, the Long Beach Unified School District began its school year entirely online this week due to the ongoing global coronavirus pandemic. The school district has developed contingency plans for a return to in-person learning when it's safe to do so. Find updates and the school district's School Opening and Safety Plan at [lbschools.net/coronavirus](https://lbschools.net/coronavirus).



Baker

## New Assignments Fill 63 Key Positions

A total of 63 administrators start new assignments at schools and offices in the Long Beach Unified School District this year.

Promoted to deputy superintendent is Tiffany Brown, was assistant superintendent, School Support Services.

Promoted to assistant superintendent are Christopher Brown, Research and School Improvement, was director, High School Office; and Erin Simon, School Support Services, was director of School Support Services.

Kristi Kahl becomes assistant superintendent, Office of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development, was assistant superintendent, Research and School Improvement. Brian Moskovitz becomes assistant superintendent, Early Learning and Elementary Schools, was assistant superintendent, Elementary Schools.

Promoted to director were LaShell Diggs, Head Start, was principal, Grant; Damita Myers, Elementary Schools, was principal, Gompers; and Ed Samuels, High Schools, was assistant to the superintendent, Office of the Superintendent.

Lucy Salazar becomes



T. Brown



C. Brown

director, Organizational Equity and Engagement, was director, Community Partnerships. Claudia Sosa-Valderrama becomes director, Student Support Services, was director, Head Start. Kelly An becomes director, Equity Leadership and Talent Development, was director, Leadership Development. Angelica Gonzalez becomes director, OCIPD, was director, Elementary Schools.

Michelle Thomassian becomes administrator, Business Engagement and Strategic Partnerships, was administrator, K-16 Collaboration and External Programs.

Promoted to principal are Miruna Ouatu-Lascar, Avalon, was assistant principal, Lakewood; Helen Makridis, Burcham, was acting principal, Burcham; Paula Spenser, Naples, was assistant principal, Robinson; Stacey Benuzzi, Lindbergh, was assistant principal, Middle and K-8 Schools; Kaisha Irving, Jordan, was vice principal, Millikan; Bev Moutet, Emerson, was assistant director, Deputy Superintendent Office; Liseeth Ramos, Los Cerritos, was vice principal, Measure E/Elementary Schools; Katria Hernandez, Birney, was program administrator, Human Resource Services; and Linda Reynolds, Gompers, was assistant principal, Nieto Herrera.



Simon

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## Recommitting to the L.B. College Promise

Leaders of the Long Beach Unified School District and partnering agencies announced a recommitment to The Long Beach College Promise this week with a renewed focus on racial equity.

Since its inception in 2008, The Promise has earned national recognition for increasing educational and employment opportunity for young people. LBUSD's partners on the Promise include Long Beach City College, Cal State Long Beach, the City of Long Beach and the Port of Long Beach.

Elements of The Promise have included increased access to early childhood education; college tours for 4th and 5th graders; a middle school pledge by students and parents committing to college readiness; a tuition-free first and second year at Long Beach City College; and guaranteed admission to Cal State Long Beach for qualifying students.

This year saw a transition in Long Beach public education leaders with LBCC's Board of Trustees appointing Lou Anne Bynum as Interim Superintendent-President, and LBUSD's Board of Education selecting Jill Baker as superintendent. This transition coupled with the implementation of an equity lens marks a new era for The Promise.

"As I begin my work as Superintendent, I want to assure our communities that LBUSD is

firmly committed to building upon the progress we've made with our Promise partners," Superintendent Baker said. "Working together, we will build upon our hard-fought gains in college and career readiness, with a greater focus on racial equity."

Baker participated in a virtual news conference about The Promise this week with Bynum, Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia, and Cal State Long Beach President Jane Close-Conoley.

The Promise and related LBUSD programs such as the Urban Math Collaborative, Male and Female Leadership Academies, and open access to Advanced Placement courses and exams, have helped Black students to see significant gains. The graduation rate among LBUSD's African American students is 85.6 percent, compared to the statewide rate of 76.8 percent for the same demographic group. The college participation rate among graduating African American students is 70.2 percent, compared to 59.7 percent for their counterparts statewide. LBUSD ranks first nationally on the percentage of African American male students who took one or more Advanced Placement courses.

In anticipation of formalizing a policy on equity, LBUSD's Board of Education last

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**Benuzzi**



**Hernandez**



**Irving**



**Makridis**



**Moutet**



**Ouatu-Lascar**



**Ramos**



**Reynolds**



**Spenker**

## • New Assignments

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Reassigned principals are Mona Merlo, from principal on special assignment, High Schools, to Lakewood; Christopher Lounsbury, from Avalon to Fremont; Troy Bennett, from Beach to Hughes; Thomas Espinoza, from Keller to Hudson; Dawn Lomeli, from Lindbergh to Keller; Veronica Coleman, from Jordan to Sato; Cheryl Cornejo, from Cabrillo to CAMS; Wendy Poffenberger, from CAMS to Cabrillo; Veronica Madrigal, from Henry to Grant; Rose Vitetta, from Emerson to Henry; and Alisha Gamboa, from Los Cerritos to Roosevelt.

Tammy Lavelle becomes assistant to the superintendent, Office of the Superintendent, was principal, Roosevelt.

Shawn Abbate becomes Measure E Liaison, Facilities, was principal, Lakewood.

Promoted to program administrator is Seema Paul, School Support Services, was administrative assistant, School Support Services. Luana Wesley becomes program administrator, School Support Services, was principal, Birney.

Promoted to assistant principal are Elieth Lund, Cabrillo, was teacher on special assignment, Washington; Agustin Vieyra, Marshall, was teacher on special assignment, Henry; and Jenny Salazar, Lakewood, was teacher on special assignment, High School Office.

Reassigned assistant principals are Torrie Baker, from Lindbergh to Robinson; Daniel Jimenez, from Cabrillo to Lindbergh; Karen Grunst, from Muir to Harte/Muir; Linda Reynolds, from Hudson/Lafayette to Nieto-Herrera; and Cheryl Savio, from Avalon to Millikan. Cassandra Richards becomes assistant principal, Cubberley/Measure E, was principal, Fremont.

## • Supt. Baker

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their families face, whether related to poverty, race, language, disability or other factors. We are committed to listening and acting in the best interests of our students.

The year 2020 has brought many extraordinary changes to our daily lives, including changes to the way we teach and learn. One thing has not changed, and that's our steadfast commitment to our students and their families.

As the school year progresses, we'll provide more ways to stay connected and updated. I encourage you to visit our website frequently, and you can follow us on these social media channels: Twitter @LBSchools; Facebook @LongBeachUnifiedSchoolDistrict; Instagram @LongBeachUSD; and YouTube at lbschools.net/youtube. I also invite you to follow my personal Twitter account @jbaker000.

I look forward to building upon our proud tradition of educational excellence. With the help of everyone in our school communities, the best is yet to come.

Reassigned head counselors are Gayle Mashburn, from Poly to Millikan; and Lolo Saldana, from Millikan to Poly.

Promoted to program specialist are Elizabeth Turner, OCIPD, was teacher on special assignment, OCIPD; Enrico Bischoch, OCIPD, was teacher on special assignment, OCIPD; Rochelle Martin, OCIPD/School Support Services, was teacher on special assignment, OCIPD/School Support Services; Leonardo Ramos, OCIPD, was teacher on special assignment, OCIPD.

Promoted to administrative assistant is Susan Caskey, School Support Services, was teacher on special assignment, School Support Services. Reassigned to administrative assistant are Marybeth Murray, School Support Services, was assistant principal, Harte; Sherita Clemons, Elementary Office and EEACR, was administrative assistant, Elementary Office; Dulnari Edirisinghe-Aga, Elementary Office, was administrative assistant, EEACR; and Carmen Hernandez, EEACR, was administrative assistant OCIPD.

Christopher Itson becomes assistant director, Marketing and Media Services, was administrative assistant, Education Services. Raquel Welch-Kitchen becomes assistant director,

Leadership Development, was assistant principal, Lakewood.

Promoted to early learning center manager, Head Start, is Keokuk LaGarde, was teacher on special assignment, Head Start.

Promoted to activities specialist, Millikan, is Grant Robinson, was teacher on special assignment, Millikan.

Joining the school district as a new hire is Vanessa Carroll, mentoring supervisor, Educare.

## • College Promise

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month directed staff to develop a district equity leadership team consisting of students and other stakeholders such as parents, employees and community partners such as The Promise partners. This equity leadership team will make recommendations for policy, practices, funding and future initiatives.

CSULB's President Conoley said that while The Promise has transformed the lives of students and the city, "the next step in The Promise's evolution must include a focus on diversity, equity and opportunity for all." She discussed expansion of outreach to underrepresented students, and building upon several of the university's programs designed to help students graduate in a timely manner.

At LBCC, Bynum noted that the college's trustees recently adopted a Framework for Reconciliation resolution. LBCC plans to strengthen current equity programs, increase college-wide input and scrutinize data with "with a clear eye on racial inequities."

Mayor Garcia, who is an educator and a CSULB alum, said, "I know that access to a quality education is transformational for young people and their families. The Long Beach College Promise must be a promise for all, and we must ensure that our Black and students of color succeed at the same rates as other students."

## School Nurse of Year

McBride High School nurse Nancy Blake recently earned the School Nurse of the Year Award from the Long Beach School Nurse Association. She has been a registered nurse for 43 years and a school nurse for 20 years.

Blake is described as a kind, compassionate and caring nurse who helps to engage special education students so that they can thrive mentally, physically, academically and socially. She has served the medically fragile special education population for the past 20 years. She has also engaged students in leadership opportunities and mentored students in the Health and Medical Pathway at McBride.



**Blake**

### SCHOOL BULLETIN

Official publication of the Long Beach Unified School District issued bi-weekly during the school year from the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 1515 Hughes Way, Long Beach, California 90810. (562) 997-8000. www.lbschools.net

JILL BAKER, Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

DIANA CRAIGHEAD, President  
JON MEYER, Vice President  
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FELTON WILLIAMS, Member

## In Memoriam

**Janis C. Siegel**  
former intermediate office assistant  
March 18, 2020

**Patricia S. Duvall**  
former teacher  
May 28, 2020

**Jennifer L. Cozens**  
former teacher  
June 2, 2020

**Beverly A. Schilz**  
teacher, Alvarado  
June 8, 2020

**Rosemary E. Ferrin**  
former teacher  
July 2, 2020

**David E. Swenson**  
former plant supervisor  
July 6, 2020