



# school bulletin

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

April 16, 2021

## N.Y. Times Notes School Reopening

In a recent story on school reopenings nationwide, the New York Times noted that the Long Beach Unified School District was the largest district in California to begin offering in-person instruction to elementary students.

LBUSD began allowing about 14,000 elementary students back into school buildings five days a week on March 29, with secondary grades scheduled to resume in-person learning in April.

Long Beach was able to open earlier than other large California school systems in part because the city was able to start vaccinating teachers earlier than other districts in the state, the Times reported. LBUSD partnered with Long Beach Health and Human Services to provide vaccination appointments for school district employees in prioritized sequence, starting with the early grades and progressing to secondary schools, eventually offering vaccinations to all employees who wanted them.

“A city with its own health department has the ability to be more nimble,” LBUSD Superintendent Jill Baker told the Times, calling the return to classrooms “exciting and momentous.”

## Tincher Lauded as ‘School to Watch’

For the fourth time, Tincher Preparatory School has earned the “School to Watch” honor recognizing academic excellence in the middle grades. The honor is given by the California Middle Grades Alliance.

Tincher was recognized for its success in four areas: implementing best practices focused on academic achievement; responding to the developmental needs of adolescents; offering an equitable education for all students; and instituting processes and procedures that sustain academic growth.

The award applauds high-performing schools as models that demonstrate success in the four key areas. Model schools host visitors from California and around the world who are looking for replicable practices that improve student achievement.

To be named a model middle school, school administrators must conduct a self-study evaluation and complete an extensive narrative application. Each site is then reviewed by a team of middle grades experts. To retain the designation, each school is re-evaluated every three years.

“Long before our district launched the Equity and Excellence Initiatives, Tincher Preparatory began its journey towards equity and excellence by making a concerted effort to ensure that all students had access to

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**REOPENED –** Superintendent Jill Baker takes a photo as students arrive at Alvarado Elementary School. Students in grades TK-5 were the first to return to classrooms in-person after a year of distance learning due to the coronavirus pandemic. **View more photos at lbschools.net.**



## Students Honored In Global STEM Contest

A team of eight juniors from Jordan High School earned third place in the Americas region in the Made to Move Communities global student challenge hosted by Otis Worldwide Corporation. The Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) competition partnered teams from 14 schools across nine countries and regions with Otis mentors to develop sustainable solutions to real-world mobility challenges seen in their communities.

The student team from Jordan focused on improving the challenges found within the public transportation system during the coronavirus pandemic by reimagining the transit bus system. The team proposed an app to track the number of city bus passengers and identify the best and safest time to ride. The proposal also researched air filtration and purification systems to help riders feel safe.

“We applaud the dedication and ingenuity that each participating student demonstrated while developing solutions to mobility challenges facing communities hit hardest by the COVID pandemic,” Otis President and CEO Judy Marks said. “At Otis, we care deeply about nurturing a passion for STEM education for future

generations, and we are committed to equitable access to mobility for all. We are excited to celebrate the accomplishments of all who participated.”

This year marked the inaugural year of the challenge and included student teams from Brazil, China, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Russia, Spain and Singapore. Students spent eight weeks working with teachers and Otis mentors and presented their ideas to a virtual panel of Otis leaders, who then carefully evaluated the presentations and selected the winners.

“This was quite a challenge to organize a group of students in our current teaching situation, but this group of individuals came together to create something outstanding and truly meaningful to our community,” Jordan Teacher Kelly Meade said. “Their collaboration and dedication to the project showed great resilience in a time of uncertainty. We would also like to thank Long Beach Transit’s Mike Gold and Jocelin Padilla for their contribution to student research. Our students are made to move communities!”

## Worldwide Audience For Equity Podcasts

The Long Beach Unified School District’s myPD Unplugged podcast has launched a new Equity Thought Leader Series to help educators build a deeper understanding of multicultural education, equity and social justice pedagogy. In partnership with the nonprofit Learning Forward, the series will continue its focus on equity-themed discussions and welcome local and national leaders such as author Dr. Ghodly Muhammad and Salman Khan, founder of Khan Academy.

The myPD Unplugged podcast, produced by LBUSD, launched in 2018 with support from Learning Forward

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**STEM CHALLENGE WINNERS –** Students Andrea Lopez-Hernandez and Jayda Freeman were part of Jordan High School’s winning team.

## Names in the News

**Marsha Bullock**, a Long Beach Unified School District teacher recently published a children's book titled "Corona and Glitter" about the coronavirus. The book educates children on the severity of the virus without creating a sense of fear. Bullock, a pre-K teacher, wrote the book to share important aspects of the virus and teach children how to protect themselves. "The virus is being a virus [in the story] and the children learn that there are things they can do, like socially distance and wash their hands, to take care of themselves," Bullock told the Long Beach Post. Read the full story at [lbpost.com/hi-lo](http://lbpost.com/hi-lo).

**Sara Slater**, assistant director at Fiscal Services, is featured in the spring 2021 edition of California School Business, published by the California Association of School Business Officials. Slater has worked for LBUSD for more than 21 years and serves as state chair for CASBO's Facilities Professional Council.

**David Miranda**, executive director of Facilities, Development and Planning, is featured in a recent edition of Blueprint ([bpcmag.com](http://bpcmag.com)), which focuses on the construction industry. The article describes significant progress on local school upgrades during the pandemic, the development of safety protocols for the reopening of schools, and how Miranda has served as a resource for other school districts developing COVID-19 safety plans.

**Kathleen A. Brown**, literacy specialist and Reading Recovery teacher leader, recently authored a piece titled "Learning Loss: Myth or Reality (Check)" at [readingrecovery.org](http://readingrecovery.org). The article discusses the need to plan strategically for how to deal with students' learning loss caused during the pandemic "without watering down our teaching and spending too much time on remediation."

## Financial Education

A new Financial Education program is now available at myLBUSD for all Long Beach Unified School District employees. The free, interactive program provides employees with learning modules covering a variety of financial topics. LBUSD's Personnel Commission developed the program in partnership with Schools First Federal Credit Union and Long Beach Schools Financial Credit Union.

To access the program, log in to the myLBUSD portal, select "Applications" on the bottom menu, select the "My Employee Info" folder and then select "Financial Education."

## Office Depot Cards

The Long Beach Unified School District will provide \$100 Office Depot back-to-school cards to all current teachers (including teachers on special assignment), teacher librarians and nurses. Accompanying each card will be an Office Depot discount card, which will allow the user of the back-to-school card to receive special school district pricing on most items purchased at Office Depot stores.

The cards are intended for purchases to support instruction and support services for students. The school district plans to distribute the cards by April 19. All purchases must be made by June 30, 2021.

## School to Watch

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accelerated classes leading to our first Schools to Watch designation in 2009," Tincher Principal Alma Black said. "Tincher teachers are dedicated and nurture our Tincher Tigers from TK through eighth grade each and every day within our small learning community. I am honored to be a member of this special school."

## Dates to Remember

May	
1-31	Asian Pacific American Heritage Month
1-31	National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
1	Law Day
1	Loyalty Day
2-8	Be Kind to Animals Week
2-9	National Music Week
3-7	National Teacher Appreciation Week
4	National Teacher Day
4	Horace Mann's Birthday
5	Cinco de Mayo
5	Anniversary of the First American Man in Space
5	National Bike to School Day
7	School Lunch Hero Day
8	VE Day
9	Mother's Day
12	California Day of the Teacher
12	National School Nurse Day
17-21	Classified School Employees Week
17-21	Public Schools Week
18	Open House — Elementary Schools
19	Open House — Middle Schools
20	Open House — High Schools
20-21	Lindbergh Flight Anniversary
25	Ralph Waldo Emerson's Birthday
31	Memorial Day — Holiday
31	World No Tobacco Day

## In Memoriam

**Anne Tubridy**  
former program facilitator  
January 15, 2021

**Jeanne Yugar**  
psychologist, OSSS-Stephens  
January 26, 2021

**Charlene Smith**  
former principal  
February 17, 2021

**Charlene L. Sugarman**  
former assistant principal  
February 26, 2021

**Roy Anderson**  
former teacher  
February 27, 2021

**Mady Weiss**  
former teacher  
March 5, 2021

### SCHOOL BULLETIN

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## Podcasts

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as part of an innovative professional development effort for teachers to learn about topics relevant to education. Since its launch, the podcast has received more than 40,000 streams worldwide, with New Zealand, Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and France showing the most interest.

To find the podcast series, perform a Google search for myPD Unplugged. The podcast also can be streamed through the podcast app on your phone, and for employees, through the myPD page found on the myLBUSD Portal.

## Open Enrollment in May for Benefits, FSA

From May 1 to 31, employees can enroll in or make changes to their medical, dental, vision and Flexible Spending Account plans for the 2021-22 plan year. The new plan year starts July 1 and ends June 30, 2022. For employees who do not make changes, current elections will continue for the 2021-22 plan year, with the exception of the FSA plans. By IRS rules, current FSA enrollment does not carry over to the next year. For those with a current plan year (7/1/20 – 6/30/21) FSA, you have until 9/15/21 to use your available balance, and until 9/28/21 to submit those expenses to WageWorks. Enrollment packets are being mailed to home addresses on file. Enroll online at [lbsdbenefits.com](http://lbsdbenefits.com), or call 866-844-9744, option 4, Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Although open enrollment and web access (to view and change benefits) ends at 11:59 p.m. on Monday, May 31, the call center access for enrollment support and other questions ends at 5 p.m. Friday, May 28.

## Retirement Planning Employee Workshop

A virtual retirement workshop for LBUSD classified employees, supervisors and managers planning for or nearing retirement will be held 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Thursday, April 22.

Join representatives from CalPERS, LBUSD payroll and risk management as they cover retirement benefit topics including how to plan and select a retirement date, how retirement benefits are calculated and how sick leave converts to service credit.

To register, find the registration form under Personnel Commission in the A-Z index at [lbschools.net](http://lbschools.net) and select the section "Classified Staff Development."

The workshop is a classified staff development event subject to district release time with manager's approval. Please obtain your manager's authorization prior to registering.

Questions? Contact the Personnel Commission at 435-5708.

## Weight Watchers

The WW (formerly Weight Watchers) Free Fresh Start Kit promotion is now open for registration through Monday, May 31. Your free kit will be automatically sent to the shipping address you enter when you sign up for WW at [www.com/us/LBUSD](http://www.com/us/LBUSD) while supplies last.