

Free Afterschool Language Program Expanded for Younger Los Alamitos Unified Students

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¡Hola a todos! Proficiency in multiple languages is a skill that will be ever more valuable to our kids as they grow up. That is why we are so excited to partner with the nonprofit Los Alamitos Education Foundation (LAEF) in expanding our free, afterschool world language classes for younger learners.

Last school year, LAEF began offering afterschool classes to second graders at all six elementary schools. The classes filled up quickly, and families were very grateful for this opportunity. Now, with support from its donors, LAEF has added classes for third graders in Spanish, French, Mandarin, Japanese and American Sign Language. Altogether, 229 students are enrolled in 14 classes.

These are the LAEF classes being offered at our elementary schools:

- Hopkinson – Spanish for second grade, Mandarin for third
- LAE – Mandarin for second grade; American Sign Language for third
- Lee – Spanish for second grade; Japanese for third
- McGaugh – Spanish for second grade; Spanish and Japanese for third
- Rossmoor – Mandarin for second; Mandarin for third
- Weaver – Spanish for second; French for third

Research has demonstrated that young children are the most adept at learning new languages. A 2018 Scientific American article, for example, described a large study which showed children are proficient at learning a second language up until the age of 18 but that they have the best chance of becoming fluent if they start by age 10. The LAEF classes were selected because they are offered at Los Alamitos High School. Giving elementary students early language exposure will give them an advantage later on.

The expanded language classes are just part of our rich partnership with LAEF, which offers 130 afterschool classes at all nine of our campuses with 1,285 students getting the chance to enhance their learning and explore new possibilities.

For more information about the language classes or any of LAEF's programs, visit them at www.LAEF4Kids.org/afterschool, email info@laef4kids.org or call 562-799-4700 x80424.

Au revoir, Los Al!



Students practice writing Mandarin characters in Rossmoor Elementary language class.