

LOS ALAMITOS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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NEWS RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

Major Change, Major Progress

• **Los Alamitos Unified superintendent makes annual State of the District community presentation.**

Speaking to a packed room of 280 community residents, government officials and school staff, Superintendent Dr. Andrew Pulver laid out the goals and achievements that have made the Los Alamitos Unified School District one of the top two in Orange County for more than 20 years and described projects that will transform the high school over the next few years.

In his annual State of the District presentation, Pulver said the district school board has adopted five priorities for this year:

- Passionately pursue academic excellence from all students.
- Ensure an inclusive, safe, healthy, secure, and substance-free environment.
- Enhance communication processes to engage, inform, and educate all stakeholders.
- Provide high quality facilities to meet the needs of students.
- Manage and allocate financial resources to maximize students' educational experiences.

Pulver then highlighted the “national caliber results” the 9700-student district has posted and credited highly skilled teachers and staff, ongoing professional training, targeted intervention for students in need, and a culture of innovation across the district.

Pulver said that in addition to the top ranking on annual state assessments, the nine schools in the district has notched achievements in the areas of athletics, activities and the arts as well. He highlighted the following:

- 92 percent of Los Alamitos High graduates go on to enroll in post-secondary education.
- 77 percent of graduates completed University of California admission requirements this year, up 9 percentage points since 2011. “Students who complete the entrance requirements while in high school,” Pulver said, “are twice as likely to graduate from college.”
- 87 percent of graduates have taken at least one Advanced Placement course, a Career and Technical Education class or a community college class while still enrolled in high school. The rigor of a student’s high school curriculum is one of the single best predictors of college and career success, Pulver said.
- 74% of LAHS students are connected to at least one extracurricular activity, club, or service group. Students who are connected to school have better attendance, better grades, are happier, and are more likely to graduate from high school and pursue post-secondary education, Pulver said.

He also pointed out that every school in the district has been designated as California Distinguished School and a Gold Ribbon school, athletic teams have accumulated more than 290 Sunset League championships and

more than 20 CIF championships, and arts programs also won honors and championships as well, including the Los Alamitos High show choirs that have been national champs for nine consecutive years.

As strong as these achievements are, Pulver said, the district is committed to doing better.

“We believe that 100% of our students can be proficient, connected to school and the community, and complete college entrance requirements.” In fact, he said, 30 classrooms in grades 3-5 have scored at 100% proficient on state testing in at least one content area in the last two years.

As part of the district’s goal of ensuring an inclusive and safe environment, Pulver said, a Human Relations Task Force made up of community members and school staff is developing recommendations for strengthening district policies and programs to promote diversity of perspectives and the dignity of every person in the areas of professional development for teachers and administrators, hiring practices, discipline and restorative practices, parent and community education, and use of social media.

While celebrating current achievements, Pulver said, the district is also looking to the future with an ambitious implementation of the \$97-million Measure G bond issue approved by voters last year. Four major projects are underway for the 51-year-old Los Alamitos High School campus:

- Replacement — nearly complete — of deteriorating electrical and data transmission infrastructure with up-to-date underground systems.
- Replacement of the inadequate pool with a \$9.2-million aquatics center capable of supporting competitive swim, dive and water polo teams. The center will open in Fall 2020.
- Construction of an 83,000-square-foot, three-story classroom building that will transform the front of the Cerritos Avenue campus and allow for removal of 26 deteriorating, inadequate portable classrooms. The \$52-million facility will open in Fall 2022.
- Construction of a new gymnasium that, in concert with the old facility, will be able to support the school’s extensive athletic program when it opens in 2023.

In addition, Pulver said, the district is replacing elementary school playgrounds across the district and building new restroom facilities at Los Alamitos and Hopkinson elementary schools.

Pulver took time in his presentation to honor the district’s Heroes of the Heart, “special people who go above and beyond to make Los Alamitos Unified a great place for students to learn, grow, and thrive.” The volunteers represented all schools and the district itself and for many years have helped students in ways ranging from being room parents, to leading the PTA, to organizing fund raising to benefit the entire district. Those recognized included:

- **Carol Manning** - Hopkinson
- **Laura Hall** - Weaver
- **Jenny Platt**- Lee
- **Jennifer Arvizu**- LAE
- **Janet Murphy** – Rossmoor
- **Leanne Voigt** - McGaugh
- **The Global Culture Education Foundation** - Oak
- **Lee Nestlerode** - McAuliffe
- **Maureen Wauters** – LAHS
- **Rob Wigod** - Los Alamitos USD

The State of the District event at the Navy Golf Club in Cypress was hosted by the Los Alamitos Education Foundation, a nonprofit organization that raises funds to support local schools. This year the foundation donated \$115,000 to support academic and arts programs and mental health services.

The event was underwritten by donations from corporate sponsors, including Alamitos Eye Care, Adams Photography, BNSF Railway, Erickson-Hall Construction, Knowland Construction Services, National Geographic Learning/Cengage Learning, Oranje Builders, Pacific West Energy Solutions, Rachlin Partners, RS Crum Inc., Sean Payne Certified Financial Planner, Southland Credit Union, Terracon, TGR Geotechnical, Universal Asphalt, West Coast Air, and Westgroup Designs.



Superintendent Dr. Andrew Pulver reviews district academic goals and progress.



Los Alamitos Unified honored its 2019 Heroes of the Heart volunteers. From left, Lee Nestlerode, Dr. Jim Chang, Jennifer Arvizu, Jennifer Hewitt, Jenny Platt, Carol Manning, Janet Murphy, Laura Hall, Rob Wigod, Leanne Voigt.

Article and photos by Robert Ostmann, Los Alamitos Unified School District