

# UPDATE – OCTOBER 2016

## Superintendent's Message

### College and Career Readiness Month

As we transition into fall, there is a natural shift to focus on learning. For families with high school seniors, the conversations about next steps echo the changes brought with the season. Leaves are beginning to turn colors. The nights and early mornings have a chill. Many are planting their winter gardens. For seniors, it's time to plan the next steps.

This month, the focus of our Hero's Journey is to understand and cultivate a culture of College and Career Readiness. For those of us who are parents and grandparents, we were offered choices to either prepare for college or a career. These were distinct pathways with different provisions. For today's students, the paradigm has shifted. Whether students today plan to enter college or choose a career, the same level of preparation is required. Many vocations are just as demanding as the academic pathways in what foundations are required, such as higher math skills. Holding on to the former paradigm can become a danger for our students if we let the nostalgia of the past prevent us from embracing the changes necessary for our students to be successful in their future.

Whether for college or career preparation, our focus today is on personalized learning. In contrast to the model of instruction that required all students to be on the same page on the same day, whether they were ready or not or whether they were ahead of their time, we are focused on the intersection of learning and the individual. The integration of three key tools--devices, appropriate furniture, and targeted instructional strategies--allow us to provide personalized learning in the classroom.

Preparing for post-secondary education in college and career does not begin in high school. It begins in elementary school with exposure to the variety of careers and a focus on rigorous academics. From career fairs to parents and volunteers speaking to a classroom of students, the opportunity to learn about the careers that exist today is important for our students. Allowing students time to research and take classes on a variety of pathways in middle and high school may pique a student's interest and inspire them to prepare for a specific career pathway. It may be in a more traditional pathway of hospitality or transportation, or it may be in a newer pathway of games, coding or robotics. Whatever pathway the student chooses, the skills necessary to be successful remain the same.

On October 19, high school sophomores and juniors have the opportunity to take the PSAT, which is one of the first steps on the college pathway. Be sure to encourage your student to sign up for the test. Bonita High Schools offers the PACE program, Purposeful, Active, Career Exploration for their seniors, San Dimas High School seniors participate in the “San Dimas Connection Project,” and Chaparral High School offers a Career and Life Skills course. These programs are designed to provide students with opportunities to explore careers and examine their skills and abilities before they invest dollars into their post education. By using personality inventories and career interests, students can take a more focused approach to planning their future. There is a free website that is a source for college and career planning at <https://CaliforniaColleges.edu>. It provides students, parents, and even those contemplating going back to school as adults, access to online tools and resources to a variety of careers and occupations specifying the education and pathway necessary for a particular field of interest. By understanding and engaging with students in these resources, you can join us in supporting our students as we continue on this “Hero’s Journey” together.

Please take a moment to reflect on the following video, [Did You Know 2016](#), and what it may mean to yourself, your children or grandchildren in the future. It reminds us how fast the world is changing, and how technology plays a key role in the way we live with each other. Let’s prepare our students for their future. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqZiIO0YI7Y>

Sincerely,

Christina (Christy) Goennier Ed.D.  
Superintendent



Twitter: @BUSD4kids

# **Soroptimist International Sponsors Back to School Shopping for Students in Need**

The San Dimas / La Verne Chapter of Soroptimist International sponsored a shopping **day** at Target in La Verne on September 14 to purchase back-to-school clothes for 75 students.

“As a former school secretary at Shull Elementary, I have accompanied our selected students on several occasions for this phenomenal event,” Secretary of Curriculum and Instruction Jennifer Flores said. “The joy and excitement that this shopping experience brings helps to add to the positivity of the new school year. It is truly an honor to help coordinate and work with the Soroptimist International chapter.”

Soroptimist International improves the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. Over the last 28 years, the San Dimas/La Verne chapter has provided scholarships for high school seniors, teacher grants to enhance learning opportunities in the classroom, financial support for San Dimas Library and the La Verne Library Literacy Outreach Program, and provided clothes for over a thousand children in the community for back to school.

# **District sends 80 to Educational Technology Conference in Covina**

Eighty Bonita Unified School District teachers, co-educational classified staff, and administrators, including Superintendent Christy Goennier, will be attending the San Gabriel Valley CUE Event, an educational technology conference organized by the SGVCUE affiliate, on October 15, 2016, at Covina High School. CUE, which originally stood for Computer Using Educators, inspires innovative learners by fostering community, personalizing learning, infusing technology, developing leadership, and advocating educational opportunities for all.

The conference theme is “Finding Ed Tech...Just Keep Learning...Just Keep Learning.” Hall Davidson, a former bilingual math teacher who left the classroom to work as part of an Emmy-winning team creating math and technology programs, will make the keynote address.

Seven BUSD teachers will be among the 50 unique learning sessions presented at the CUE Event. “The local talent in Bonita USD has become a resource to our surrounding districts,” Director of Educational Technology Kris Boneman said.

Sessions will include topics such as integrating Google Apps into the classroom, Tweeting to Learn, Building a Genius Hour for Students to explore and learn, and Coding. There will be a green screen playground for participants to learn to use green screening and video techniques

through hands-on activities. There will also be a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) playground with programmable robots for another hands-on experience.

“This conference provides an opportunity for Bonita staff to learn alongside other San Gabriel Valley educators about pedagogy that is transforming learning with educational technology tools,” Boneman continued.



**Photo 1: Eighty Bonita Unified teachers, co-educational staff, and administrators will attend the San Gabriel Valley CUE Event October 15, 2016, at Covina High School. Pictured here are last year’s attendees.**

## Schools in the Spotlight

### *Shull Elementary School*

#### Shull Pilots a Bring or Buy Your Own Device (BYOD) Program

Shull Elementary School is the first school in Bonita Unified School District to implement a Bring Your Own Device or Buy Your Own Device program for three grade levels. The program will help the third, fourth and fifth grade classrooms achieve a 1:1 student to device ratio. Currently the school has been able to purchase enough devices to give a 2:1 student to device ratio.

Students, parents, and teachers are excited to see what changes can happen in classrooms where content can easily be delivered digitally. Teachers will be using Chromebooks in class regularly to access Google Classroom and the new math curriculum. They will also accomplish tasks such as writing, reading, vocabulary practice, projects, assessments, and digital citizenship on the Chromebooks.

Ciara Richards, a technology lead from Shull, shared that “at a recent training, presenters said that there will be one million unfilled computer programming jobs by 2020. I believe that it is important for us, as educators, to open the door for our students to explore the many facets of computer technology and to teach students how to take charge of their learning.”

In order to facilitate the BYOD program, Shull Elementary School will provide any necessary training for students and parents. One benefit parents will have is that they will have greater access to their child’s work in Google Classroom.

The Bonita Unified School District has created a Bonita USD Parent Purchase Program to help parents easily purchase devices that are similar to the ones currently being used at Shull. Parents are under no obligation to purchase devices, but already over 50 families have shown interest! Shull Elementary School staff truly appreciate this level of support.



**Photo 2: Shull Elementary third grade students Deegan Martinez, Ava Aguiar, and Ashley Kraal have brought their own electronic devices to school as part of a pilot Bring Your Own Device program.**

## ***Oak Mesa Elementary School***

### **First Day of School**

The first day of school was outstanding for students, parents, and staff. Many students shared their excitement to return to school after enjoying their fun filled summer. Students were thrilled to see their friends, meet their new teachers, and hear the exciting learning opportunities their teachers will provide them during the school year.

“Being new to Oak Mesa, I especially enjoyed the heart felt welcome by students and parents,” Principal Steven Patterson said. “Getting to know students in the classroom, on the playground, meeting parents during student drop off, and pick-up was the highlight of my day!”



**Photo 3: New Oak Mesa Principal Steven Patterson poses with Ollie the Owl on the first day of school.**

### **Oak Mesa Library**

The Oak Mesa Library was open over the summer and many students and their families came in to check out books and take Accelerated Reader (AR) quizzes. Students checked out 456 books over the summer so there was a lot of awesome reading going on! The library staff added over 200 new titles to our library and students have been very excited about all of the new books!

Family Reading Nights resumed in September and continue every Monday from 5-7 PM except for holidays. During these times students are able to exchange books as well as take AR quizzes. “We had lots of families that really enjoyed Family Reading Night last year, and we hope to have many more!” Patterson continued.



**Photo 4: New book titles in the Oak Mesa Elementary School Library attract attention!**

### **Improvements at Oak Mesa**

The District Maintenance & Facilities Department was hard at work during the summer. Oak Mesa students are enjoying the resurfaced and restriped upper grade playground along with a new “Buddy Bench” on the lower grade playground. In addition, Oak Mesa joined other schools in the District having solar panels installed in our staff parking lot. Oak Mesa and BUSD look forward to this “green” approach to save in energy costs so that money saved can go back to the classrooms.

Oak Mesa students and teachers are enjoying the 20 iPads that were purchased last year by PTA. Additionally, Oak Mesa received one more Chromebook cart with 35 computers. These computers are being used to enhance classroom instruction for many of our students. With these purchases, Oak Mesa is approaching our goal of having sets of computers in every classroom. “We would like to say thanks to the community members and Oak Mesa families who support us in achieving this goal!” Patterson said.



**Photo 5: Students pose around Oak Mesa’s new Buddy Bench.**

### ***Bonita High School***

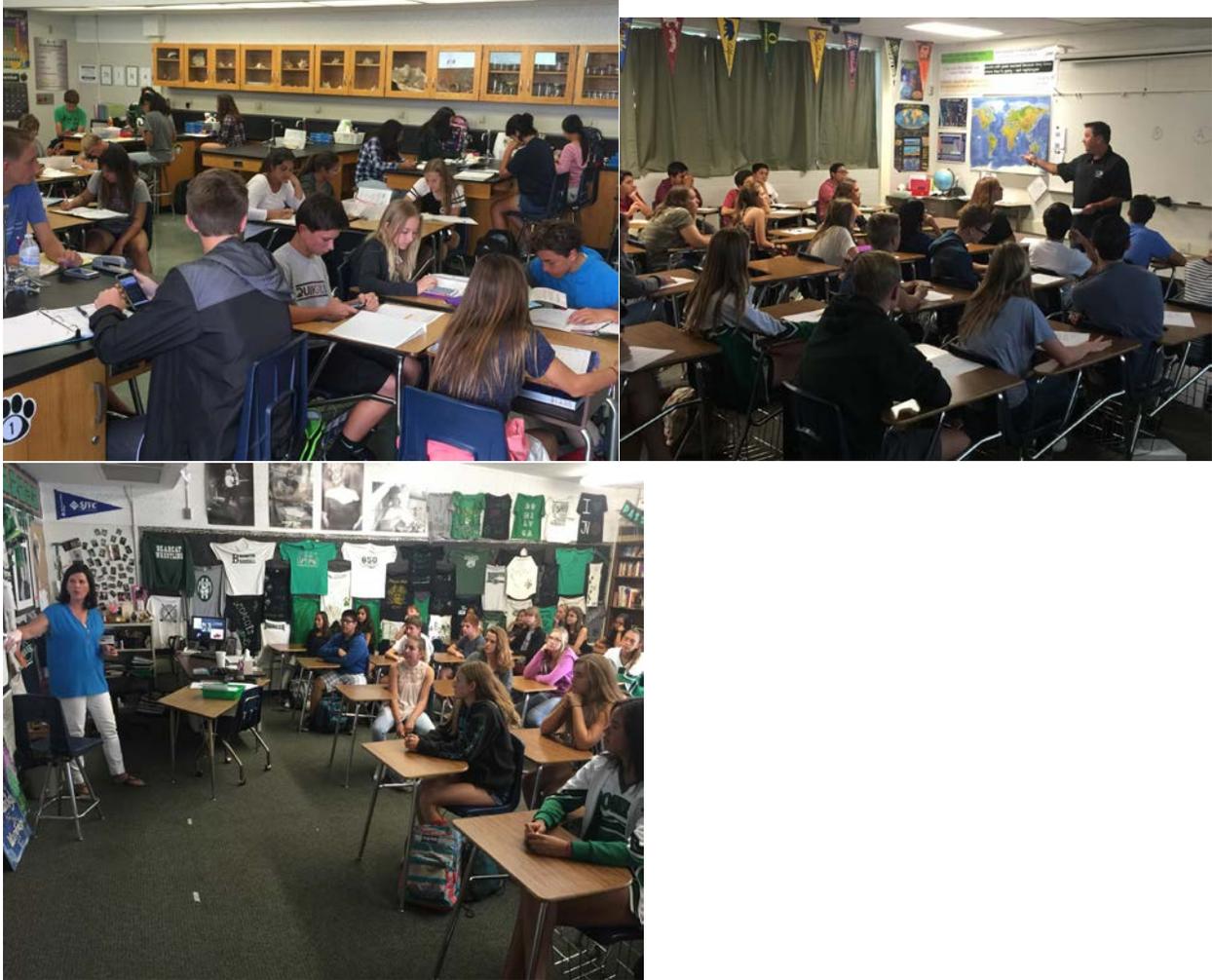
Bonita High School is excited to announce the startup of a new Honors Program for the incoming freshman class. The program, appropriately titled “APEX,” features cross-curricular teaching and project based learning in the areas of AP Geography, Biology, English and Technology. These courses will engage freshman into the rigorous Advanced Placement course work, where they will have the opportunity to earn college level credits. It will also allow students early access to a University of California A-G required lab science classes for the first time at BHS.

In addition to the standard academic rigor of the program, students will work closely with teachers Deanna Bowman (Biology), Mandy Ray (English) and Tony Arriola (AP Geography) to develop projects and apply their knowledge through a variety of hands-on experiences. Projects scheduled for this year include a robotics competition in conjunction with Roynon Elementary, a rollercoaster design project, and a fieldtrip to the Eastern Sierras.

The robotics competition will give the BHS students the opportunity to teach basic robotics and coding to fifth grade students ending in a showcase and a friendly competition. In the rollercoaster design, students will design a ride for an amusement park and present this to ThinkWell Engineers in a business proposal format. Finally, while on the field trip to the Eastern Sierras, students will have the opportunity to study a variety of geographical and biological conditions that are unique to the region. Each of these projects will focus on the use of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, namely the four C's Collaboration, Communication, Creativity and Critical Thinking.

“The program offers assignments and projects that give us the freedom to apply our knowledge and work with our peers as we are challenged to think critically” Freshman Taylor Abate said.

“APEX is a dynamic and demanding program, but these students love the challenge!” Teacher Mandy Ray said. “This program is everything that I believe education is supposed to be. Gain knowledge . . . but then *do* something with it! Create something! Solve a problem! I enjoy the role of coach and mentor in my APEX classes. My entire focus is guiding my students to think critically and encouraging, questioning, and focusing them as they tackle their projects. I’m on their side and I want to help them produce their very best work.”



**Photos 6-8: Bonita High School teachers Deanna Bowman (Biology), Mandy Ray (English) and Tony Arriola (AP Geography) work with freshman in a new Honors Program called APEX.**

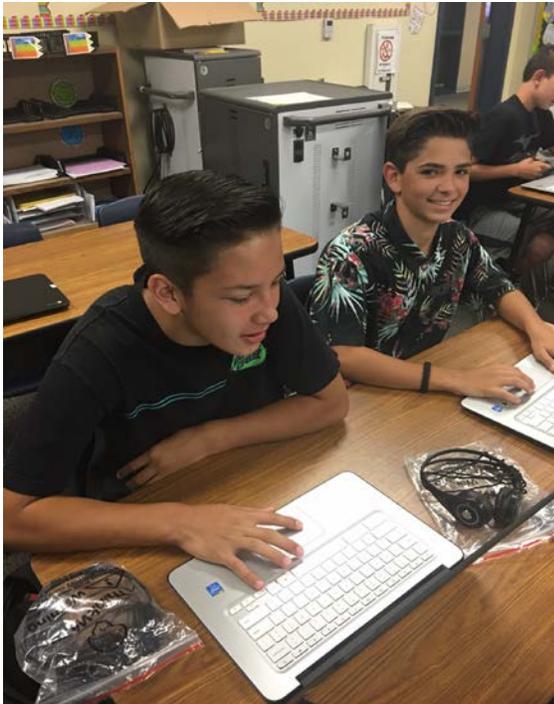
## ***Lone Hill Middle School***

### **Change is in the Air**

The new school year brings a lot of change to Lone Hill Middle School. New Lions include Principal Jason Coss, formerly of Oak Mesa Elementary School, and new Assistant Principal Jeff Stevens from Chino Hills High School. Amber Wagoner from Shull and Sara Gilbert from Nogales High School join the English department. Maria Alvarez-Hernandez comes to Lone Hill from Yorba-Linda Unified, joining the History department. Martha Williams joins our school all the way from Georgia where she has 15 years of experience in specialized services. Mayra Moran takes over in Science joining Lone Hill from Bassett Unified.

### **Technology in the Classroom**

This year two math teachers at Lone Hill have an opportunity to pilot a new Integrated Math 1 digital program. Integrated Math I combines Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, and analysis into one class. Students will soon be exchanging their math textbooks for Chromebooks. The teachers will be delivering all of the work in an online format that students will be completing and turning in digitally. This 1:1 technology program is an exciting time for our students and teachers who will now have technology at their fingertips daily.



**Photo 9: Students use technology to access new math curriculum.**

### **Guest Speaker**

Former teacher and motivational speaker Tyler Durman spoke to the Lone Hill staff, students, and parents during the opening week of school. Durman has traveled the United States and Canada for the past 25 years speaking to over 200,000 students, educators and parents each year. His message is meant to inspire teachers, motivate students to be positive role models on campus, and help parents better understand their children.



**Photo 10: Former teacher and motivational speaker Tyler Durham speaks to the Lone Hill student body.**

### **Facilities Update**

Over the summer, Lone Hill had many construction projects taking place on campus. The parking lot was regraded and paved. In the North field, the solar panels are up and should be completed soon. The gym is moving forward, and everyday progress can be seen. The completion date is set for late spring of 2017.



**Photo 11: Lone Hill Middle School gymnasium project**