

SLOCOE e-News



Monthly News from the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education



"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning." ~ Albert Einstein

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Unity Is Strength

by James Brescia, County Superintendent

November is the month to remind us to be thankful for the many positive things happening in our lives, to hope for tomorrow, and to question how we can positively influence the world. I want to thank our employees who assist with our changing protocols, keeping each other safe, and maintaining a positive attitude. By coming together, by supporting the work of local school districts, by delivering specialized student services, and by providing countywide leadership and advocacy, we promote student success for all children.

I am grateful for the dedicated employees here at SLOCOE and throughout the county that serve students and the community under challenging circumstances. I am thankful for our healthcare workers who serve the sick in our community. I am grateful for the families who have stepped in

to assist during our COVID-19 restrictions. I am also thankful for our youth, who continue to move forward on their educational journeys, even though the path has presented some major turns.

SLOCOE's cabinet leadership team is committed to engaging faculty and staff in meaningful conversations that are open and honest about the challenges we face. We commit to supporting each other and working together as a team. We commit to making students, faculty and staff our top priority. We are committed to communicating and completing forward our progress.



I encourage you to read the COVID-19 protocols, provide any suggestions for improvement, and ask your supervisor or Human Resources if you have any questions. Thank you for your service to our county, and to SLOCOE. It is an honor to serve as your superintendent.

~Jim Brescia

Unity is strength. . . . When there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved. ~ Mattie Stepanek

What Will You Give Thanks for this Thanksgiving?

Simple Things

Every so often, we stop.
The noise of the world gets quiet.
Allowing us to see through what holds us back,
creating a path to ease us forward.
It's the simple things.
The laugh of a child.
The warmth of the sun.
The sight of an old friend.
The smell after a good rain,
And the taste of a familiar homemade sweet.
These moments are fleeting but stirring.
They bring us hope, comfort and gratitude.
Love those minutes . Cherish those moments.
Stop to move forward. Stop to remember why.

- Keppi Serpa

I am grateful for having a job, for a supportive husband,
and for my family that is healthy. - Shirley Marshall

Every good that has come out of some stressful months.
- Jennie Curto

This year I will be more grateful than usual for my family
and all that God has done for me. This year has shown
me the value in simple things and time spent with the
ones we love, how to let go of things that really don't
matter, and how good it feels to help others in need.

- Wendy Johnson.

My husband and I are grateful for
our wonderful, supportive family
who help us every day, and our
beautiful, wonderful son! I am very
thankful for SLOCOE and our
amazing staff and team.

- Andria Gibson



I have been thinking of what COVID did *for* me. I am grateful for more alone time for beach walks, and more time to read some really good books. Also for times to visit with family that are less hectic than our usual times together. I hope you all have a nice Thanksgiving. I miss seeing you all. - Diane Ward, Board Trustee

Meet Danielle Mitchell

Administrative Assistant II, Educational Support Services

Danielle is so happy to be here! Not just "here" as in SLOCOE, but also "here" as in San Luis Obispo County. Like many people born and raised locally, she grew up feeling a need to experience other environs, moving to San Francisco and then LA, before returning happily to the unique place we all call home. While away, she earned an undergraduate degree from Cal-State LA, and served as an apprentice teacher in a classroom of 37 first-graders.



The intense classroom experience led to a career adjustment, and Danielle accepted a grant-funded position in Youth Programs for CAPSLO. Now with SLOCOE, Danielle supports Raising a Reader, and professional development for teachers. She frequently monitors and coordinates the chat and the "room" functions of Zoom sessions on behalf of her program directors and facilitators. "The people I work with are so welcoming, supportive and organized!" she says.

Danielle credits the passionate commitment of her Grover Heights Elementary School librarian and other teachers for inspiring her interest in education. The librarian, she says, loved visiting classrooms and sharing stories, adopting characters' voices as she read out loud. Danielle volunteered in that library as a high school student and now thinks she may pursue a masters degree in Library Science.

In her spare time, Danielle loves to read and to run with her dog Jackson, a black labrador/golden retriever mix whom she adopted as a puppy unexpectedly from a friend reconsidering her ability to care for both a puppy and a new baby.

Welcome to SLOCOE, Danielle! May your time with us bring you many rewards.

SLOCOE Wildlife Sightings

Below Left and Right: You never know whose eyes may be watching you! Can you spot the wildlife peeking out from the brush? **Below Center:** An egret surveys the world from SLOCOE's roof top.



Photo by Thomas Alvarez



Photo by Wendy Johnson



Photo by Lindsey Eckersley

Maintenance Adds to SLOCOE's Safe Walking Paths



Left: Jim Price, Tom Wood and Arturo Rojas apply the top layer for an addition to the safe pathway between the main office, conference facilities, and additional parking.

Above Right: Regular walkers Thomas Alvarez and Lindsey Eckersley test the new addition to the walking path.

STAFF TRANSITIONS & NEWS

WELCOME TO SLOCOE!

Amy Embree, Administrative Assistant II, Homeless & Foster Youth Coordinating Services, Educational Support Services

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Catherine Oden, Payroll Retirement Specialist, Business Services

WELCOME TO ANOTHER SEPTEMBER BABY

Everly Willow Pearson, born September 17 to Forrest Pearson, Teacher, Grizzly Youth Academy (shown with big sister Amelia). Fatmah Elmasri, Program Supervisor for the First 5 Early Learning Center in Paso Robles, is Everly's doting grandmother.

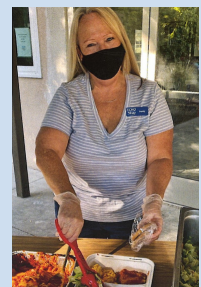


CONGRATULATIONS!

Brenda Thomas, promoted to Mental Health Specialist, Chris Jespersen School, Student Programs & Services

Aracely Enriquez, promoted to School Counselor, Alternative Education, Student Programs & Services

Wendy Johnson, highlighted in ECHO's (El Camino Homeless Organization) Fall 2020 newsletter for her compassionate volunteer services. "Wendy has been volunteering at ECHO for over ten years" says the article. The full article can be read [here](#), courtesy of ECHO.



Sheldon Smith, honored with the AESA E. Robert Stephens Award for critical work on the *Emergency Recovery Guide for California County Offices of Education*. AESA is the Association of Educational Services Agencies. Sheldon accepted the award via video technology, assisted by the expertise of Michael Garrett, in SLOCOE's Board Room.

