

SLOCOE e-News



Monthly News from the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education



SLOCOE staff gathered on the lawn at Rancho El Chorro on August 18 to celebrate the start of a new school year.

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Program Specialist,
Support Systems,
Educational Support
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Italy's Slogan Can Be Ours Too

by James Brescia, County Superintendent

A previously shared slogan that went viral when Italy began to deal with ever-increasing numbers of coronavirus cases was "Andra tutto bene!" which translates as "Everything is going to be all right!"

As classes begin in schools across the United States, public health experts warn that the politics around preventative mitigations hinders the nation's fight against COVID-19. There is significant researched evidence that safety measures work in reducing the spread of COVID-19. In Georgia and Hawaii, where schools opened earlier than in California, public health experts report that classes continue with minimal disruption when schools follow preventative measures.

The noise bombarding us from the political arena gets in the way of enjoying many positive things, and reminding ourselves of reasons to hope for tomorrow. We can positively influence the world! We can control our attitudes,

actions and outlook. By coming together, we support the work of our local school districts, deliver specialized student services, provide countywide leadership, and advocate for education.

In places where the schools have highly communicative, collaborative relationships with educators and parents and community members, and they have an ongoing almost constant system of communication about the factors around their safety plans and reopening; things are going better.

~Kim Anderson, Executive Director, National Education Association



Please join me in congratulating your colleagues who were nominated and selected as Employees of the Year, thanking newly hired employees, and acknowledging those who have retired. I also thank all who continue to do their part during COVID-19, and all who communicate ways we can improve service.

I thank you for your continued flexibility, patience and kindness. It is an honor to serve as your county superintendent. *Andra tutto bene!*

~Jim Brescia



Meet Eileen Higgins

Program Specialist, Support Systems, Educational Support Services

Eileen first aimed her career goals at the dramatic arts. She holds a BA degree in Dramatic Art from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Her path took a turn, however, when she mysteriously did not follow through in mailing an application for graduate school. The program was located in Manhattan where she would have been when the Twin Towers came down on 9/11. Instead, Eileen took a job as a preschool aid and discovered her love of children. A long-term substitute position in special education inspired her to work toward a teaching credential, a masters in special education, and an administrative credential.

Steeped in years of experience with local school districts and Almond Acres Charter Academy, Eileen now enjoys working with Melanie Crawford in Educational Support Services to address systems of support for all students with a focus on social/emotional learning and behavior. Extensive training in MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) as well as experience as a Special Education Director and Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator enhances Eileen's ability to form the connections needed to support districts on a countywide scale. "I enjoy forming connections, getting to know the story of someone else," she says.



Eileen has two children, aged 12 and 14. She loves to travel, garden and bake scones, and is never intimidated by trying something new.

Welcome to the SLOCOE family, Eileen! We wish you a great year of new connections.

SLOCOE Celebrates a New School Year with Breakfast

Staff Received Service Year Pins and Enjoyed Breakfast Burritos at Rancho El Chorro



Balloons, smiles, raffle tickets and breakfast burritos greeted SLOCOE staff on August 18, as all gathered to celebrate the start of a new school year. Spirits were bright in spite of the drippy, cool weather. Dr. Brescia and administrators welcomed staff while vocalist Talia and her jazz combo provided music. Many staff received pins honoring their years of service to SLOCOE, with the highest awarded for over 30 years.

Dr. Brescia complimented staff on diligence in providing a high level of service, flexibility in response to changing pandemic requirements, and dedication to the needs of our students.







Click [HERE](#) for more photos (with thanks to Jennie Curto),

STAFF TRANSITIONS & NEWS



WELCOME!

Alysen Barron, Human Resources Technician, Human Resources

Kaitlin Cruse-Poe, Mental Health Therapist, Loma Vista Community School, Student Programs & Services

Alberto Gonzalez, Mental Health Therapist, Loma Vista Community School, Student Programs and Services

Maureen Huckler, Job Placement Specialist, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA)

Stacy Summers, Director of Program Monitoring, Categorical Support and Data Analysis, Educational Support Services

Linda Vela, Administrative Assistant, Grizzly Youth Academy

Naomi Yamagata, Registrar, Student Programs & Services

WELCOME BACK!

Jaclyn Ford, Interpreter for the Deaf, Special Education, Student Programs & Services

CONGRATULATIONS!

Sonia Stuart, Promoted to Classified Coordinator, Business Services

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Janene Barnewolt, Paraeducator, Grizzly Youth Academy

Ron Linscott, Information Technology Support Specialist, Information Technology Services

Ercilia Martins, Behavior Intervention Services Specialist, Student Programs & Services

Karen Moreno Sandoval, Administrative Assistant, Grizzly Youth Academy