Superintendent's Message

Dear Livermore Community,

Our Vision for 2020 - one focus, every child, every school - has guided our work for over 100 days! As we pass the halfway mark and see June in the distant horizon, we take time to celebrate the learning and growth of our students in our classrooms, on athletic fields, and on performance stages. Wherever I go in our district, I am met with the palpable enthusiasm of our students and staff.

February offers many opportunities for our community to share in the excitement of learning in our schools. I invite you all to visit the 20th Annual Science Odyssey on February 13th at Junction Avenue K-8 School. This STEM celebration is our signature event in keeping with our Board’s Resolution and our City of Livermore’s Proclamation designating February as Science and Engineering Month.

We also honor the legacy of Black History this month and the contributions of so many African Americans who have shaped our world for the better. And we remain inspired and hopeful, as we carry forward and put into daily practice the unifying ideals of service, courage, and respect, as put forth by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This is also the month when we begin planning for our next school year. Preparations are underway to welcome new families and approximately 1,000 incoming students from the Classes of 2033 and 2034, during our annual TK/Kindergarten Registration Fair on February 19th and 20th. That same week, Livermore High School opens its doors to showcase high school programs to incoming freshmen during its annual Expo.

Finally, this is the time of year when we celebrate our loved ones. And it is the first year that we will miss seeing Mr. Leo Croce at our school events. With deep sadness, we bid farewell to a man who has loved our students, our families, our staff, and our community throughout his long life. I am grateful to have learned from Mr. Croce, and to be able to follow in his hard-to-fill footsteps in public service, as superintendent of Livermore schools.

With Gratitude,

Kelly Bowers, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Pictured above and below: Mr. Leo R. Croce with Superintendent Kelly Bowers at the annual Croce Hoe Down.
In Remembrance of Leo R. Croce

May 14, 1923 - January 27, 2020

“Mr. Croce,” as most refer to him, led an amazing life and filled every one of his 96 years with passion, commitment, leadership, and a heart of service. To the many who knew him during his career as an educator, it is awe-inspiring to learn he was a highly decorated member of the U.S. Air Force during WWII.

When he returned from the war, Mr. Croce focused on the field of education and graduated from UC Berkeley (Go Bears!) with a teaching credential and then taught in Oakland for the next 25 years. He brought with him the same intensity, grace, and honor he exhibited in the military. He was a teacher, coach, counselor, administrator, and superintendent. In 1973, he became superintendent of Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District and served in this position for 16 years, the longest tenure of any superintendent in our district. He left an indelible mark on our school district and the many administrators and educators he hired and mentored during his career.

Upon his retirement, Leo R. Croce Elementary School was named after him and he and his family created the Leo R. Croce scholarship. True to his nature, he was a fixture at the school as he attended spelling bees, the annual HoeDown, and many other events over the years. He was a Rotarian for 45 years, Livermore Rodeo Grand Marshall, active member of the Livermore Chamber of Commerce, and was founder of the Chamber’s Business and Education Committee.

He was loved by all, and especially by the students, staff, and families of Leo R. Croce Elementary. His presence will be missed, but his influence remains. His legacy lives on as new generations of Croce students learn to sing the school song with words that embody Mr. Croce's essence of character. Though he never described himself as a hero he was a hero to all of us who knew him.

Leo R. Croce School Song

We’re the cheetahs who
Are strong and true
You can ask anyone that you know

We are scholars, athletes,
and artists as well
We are good and we follow the rule

That we should always do our best
We are here at Leo Croce School! Yeah!
Math Mindset - Equivalent Explanations

If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough. - Albert Einstein

When many people think of math, they tend to focus on the individual skills that students will learn such as adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing. The California State Standards for Mathematics actually have two important elements. There are the “content” standards relating to the specific topics and skills students will learn, and then there are the “practice” standards relating to how students will engage with mathematics. There are eight mathematical “practice” standards, for grades K-12, as listed below:

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
4. Model with mathematics
5. Use appropriate tools strategically
6. Attend to precision
7. Look for and make use of structure
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

(For a complete description of the Mathematical Practice Standards see http://www.corestandards.org/Math/Practice/)

When looking at these standards, we can see the emphasis is on understanding rather than rote computation. This difference drives the need to discuss math in several different ways. This can prove challenging for many students and they may need additional support to express their understanding of the math they are learning. Sentence stems are one tool that students at all levels can use as they develop their mathematical discourse skills. Here are some examples:

Sentence Stems
Express an Opinion
I see it in a different way. . .
The standardized tests that students in grades 3-8 and 11 will take in Spring 2020 are based on both the content and the practice standards. What many people do not realize is that students are not scored solely on “computation skills,” they are scored on “claims.” A student’s performance on the claims determines the actual score. For example, in the list below, Claim #1 deals with computation and Claims #2 - 4 are measured by a student’s completion of performance tasks, or more complex application problems that are hand-scored. This helps clarify why the emphasis in our mathematics instruction has broadened to include more problem solving, data, and academic discourse.

Claim #1 - Concepts & Procedures
Students can explain and apply mathematical concepts and interpret and carry out mathematical procedures with precision and fluency.

Claim #2 - Problem Solving
Students can solve a range of complex, well-posed problems in pure and applied mathematics, making productive use of knowledge and problem solving strategies.

Claim #3 - Communication Reasoning
Students can clearly and precisely construct viable arguments to support their own reasoning and to critique the reasoning of others.

Claim #4 - Modeling and Data Analysis
Students can analyze complex, real-world scenarios, and can construct and use mathematical models to interpret and solve problems.

Performance tasks require that students apply mathematics to solve problems that arise in everyday life. They usually involve the use of data in tables or charts. Students must interpret the data and use it to answer questions. These problems are multi-part where students must use what they solve in one problem to solve another. The students must explain their answers to show that they understand the mathematics and the context of the problem. The answer must be logical enough to demonstrate understanding to the hand-scorers.
Parents can help their children develop the skills needed to engage in this difficult work. Here are some tips: Talk about math at home. Let your children see you struggle with and figure out real world mathematical situations. Allow children to work things out and come to their own solutions. Ask questions to help them evaluate their thinking. Children need to know that people work hard at math, and that it doesn't just come naturally. Read books with mathematical themes. There are hundreds of books at the public library. The button below will take you to a website with many recommendations, sorted by mathematical themes and reading levels.

One of the books read aloud each year at elementary schools in our District, is *The Math Curse*, written by Jon Scieszka and illustrated by Lane Smith. It is based on the premise that “you know, almost everything in life can be considered a math problem.” Finally, use mathematical vocabulary. Students need to hear words like quantity, more, fewer, shapes, and fractions. Engage in “think alouds” where you make the invisible work of your own problem solving visible to your children.

[Livermore Library’s Math Books for Kids]

**It’s Time to Enroll New Students for 2020-21**

Parents with students who will be entering TK through Grade 5 or who will be new to our district in 2020-21 should plan to register in person at our annual LVJUSD TK/Kindergarten and Elementary Registration Fair on Wednesday, February 19th or Thursday, February 20th.

The Fair will be held in the Cresta Blanca Room at the Robert Livermore Community Center, 4444 East Avenue from 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm on February 19th, and from 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm on February 20th. Arrive at the most convenient time slot for you, as these are drop-in hours. Everyone will be served.

Parents and guardians can choose to attend either date. All LVJUSD elementary and K-8 schools will be represented. Principals, teachers and support staff from each school site will be on hand to welcome you, answer questions, and help with the registration process for Fall 2020.

In addition to completing registration, families will have the opportunity to speak with LVJUSD nurses about immunizations, allergies, and other health concerns. Our Child Nutrition Department will share information about our school lunch program. Representatives of our Special Education Department will also be available to answer questions.

For complete information about registering students of all ages for the 2020-21 school year, please visit [Student Enrollments & Transfers for 2020-21](#) on our website.

**Black History Month**

This month, we celebrate the heroes, leaders, and role models of the African American community who teach and inspire us and our students. We also study and acknowledge the vital contributions, civil rights struggles, and triumphs of those less famous, but equally important. The inclusive world we...
educate our students to be a part of and to contribute to is the world envisioned in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s dream. Our students learn from the wisdom, courage, and lens of experiences of Frederick Douglass as they study our country’s history. The persistence and bravery of Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks are, for every student, an example of the level of character we should try to exhibit each day.

We revere these individuals, among so many others, as vital touchstones in our nation's rich history. In recognizing their contributions and what they stood for, we come to a better understanding of who we are and should continue to strive to be, as a community and a country. Our students will be celebrating Black History Month in various ways, in their classrooms, clubs, and spirit assemblies. Please visit Livermore Schools on Facebook and Instagram to see examples of how our students are participating in this month of recognition.

Here's What's Happening at the Livermore Library for Science and Engineering Month

Remember that LVJUSD middle and high school ID cards are also a library card! Your library card is your passport to many free resources available online. Access the library at - [http://www.cityoflivermore.net/citygov/lib/](http://www.cityoflivermore.net/citygov/lib/)

**February 1 – 29 in the Civic Center Library Art Gallery**
A month-long exhibit promoting local *Girls Who Code* clubs, in partnership with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District.

**Saturday, February 15, 2:00 p.m. at the Civic Center Library**
CODE: Debugging the Gender Gap documentary screening and discussion. CODE is a film that exposes the dearth of American female and minority software engineers and explores the reasons for this gender gap. Join us for a post-screening discussion with members of the Livermore science community.

**Saturday, February 29, 2:00 p.m. at the Civic Center Library**
Cobotics: When People and Robots Collaborate. Learn about the innovative ways robots and people work together (just like in Sourdough) in this fun interactive program presented by students from the Del Arroyo 4-H Club.
National Counseling Week - “School Counselors: Helping Build Better Humans”

National School Counseling Week, which takes place February 3-7, focuses attention on the unique contribution of school counselors within our U.S. school systems. National School Counseling Week provides an opportunity to recognize the tremendous impact school counselors have in helping students achieve school success and plan for career or college after high school. Thank you to all of our school counselors in LVJUSD! We are grateful for your work each and every day!

Livermore Valley Education Foundation and Make Time for Music - A Festival of Choirs

Choir students from LVJUSD middle and high schools performed on Friday, January 31, 2020 at the Festival of Choirs, held at Livermore High School. This Make Time for Music annual performance is hosted by the Livermore Valley Education Foundation (LVEF). Proceeds from ticket sales and donations are redirected back into LVJUSD music programs and over the years have made the expansion of vocal and instrumental programs possible. Livermore High School Choral Teacher, Christopher Filice, stated, “Make Time for Music provides the audience with an amazing experience and the opportunity to see the progression of skills under one roof.”

The Make Time for Music program hosts the Festival of Bands on April 1, 2020 and the Festival of Orchestras on April 2, 2020. Tickets can be purchased by visiting the LVEF website (see button below) or are available at the door.
Science and Engineering Month - Celebrating 20 years of Science

This free family-friendly event takes place on Thursday, February 13, 2020 from 5:00 - 7:00 PM at Junction Avenue K-8.

The very first Science Odyssey included music, community sponsors, volunteers, t-shirts, and a science project and science demonstration fair. Now, 20 years later, the Science Odyssey of 2020 includes all these elements and new ones like engineering and art categories and the trashion show, where students design and model outfits made from used, recycled, thrown-out, found, and repurposed items.

Funding for the Science Odyssey started with a grant proposal to INTEL and in the fall of the same year $20,000 was awarded to LVJUSD. Several years passed with a full team of teachers who
volunteered their time to put this event together and it continued to grow. Soon, it became clear that the Science Odyssey was here to stay and a teacher on special assignment was assigned to manage the program. Kelly Bowers, Denia Segrest, and Susan Johnston, comprised the original Odyssey grant co-writing team. They applied for the INTEL grant a second time and for the first time in INTEL's history the grant was awarded to the same school district twice. Whether in her role as a teacher on special assignment, Curriculum Director, Assistant Superintendent, or Superintendent, Dr. Bowers has remained a strong advocate of this event from day one, which has been enhanced over the years by our Science Specialists and amazing teacher leaders such as Susan Johnston, Alane Loisel, Frankie Tate, Becky Collins, Denia Segrest, Jan Bennett, Jo Lucas, Elizabeth Lopez, Jeff Hale, Terry Greenaway, Amy Robbins, Pauline Huben, Pam Ferrucci, and Regina Brinker, among countless others.

At this year’s 20th anniversary of the Science Odyssey, LVJUSD has over 300 students in grades 1-12 registered to present projects related to science, engineering, computer science, and mathematics/data analysis. Special awards will be given by generous community supporters for top projects in behavioral science, robotics, solar energy, cyber security, water quality management, and innovation. Over 20 community agencies will have informational tables for the public to visit and there is also a planetarium show, food, and music. Join us and help celebrate 20 years of Science!

24th Annual MATHCOUNTS Competition

On January 11, 2020 middle school students gathered at Granada High School for the 24th Annual Livermore City MATHCOUNTS competition hosted by the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District (LVJUSD). Click the button below to read about all of the excitement and drama from this year’s competition.
Dream Makers and Risk Takers

Seven Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District Granada High School students were awarded the Innovation Tri-Valley 2020 Dreammakers and Risktakers Award on January 23, 2020 for their work on vaping policy change and advocacy. Alessandra Beltran, Kelly Burke, Ahalya Rejesh, Ariella Stewart, Dario Stewart, Will Taggart, and Meadow Walton are all peer Health Educators and keenly focused on the vaping epidemic that is spreading among the youth in our community. The group, under the guidance of GHS Teacher Doreen Aubel, moved far beyond education and awareness into political advocacy, and channeled their collective student voice to make effective policy change in order to save lives and improve all school campus climates.
Livermore Reads Together - Sourdough

February 1, 2020 kicks off the Livermore Reads Together community reading program, spearheaded by the Livermore Library, with the book titled, Sourdough, written by Robin Sloan.

The Livermore Library has "baked in" events related to the book to immerse the community in this read. Hear from Erica J. Peters, author of San Francisco: A Food Biography, and Laura Smith Borrman, author of Iconic San Francisco Dishes, Drinks and Desserts and from University of the Pacific (UOP) Professor of History Ken Albala who will talk about Bread: A Slice of History. Visit the Livermore Library website for dates and times.

Spotlight on our Schools

Christensen Middle School hosted the 2020 Christensen Science Olympiad Invitational on Saturday, February 1, 2020. Competitors came from 14 different schools making up 28 teams. Each team consisted of students who participated in the extra-curricular science club at their own school site. Students in grades 3-12 competed in one of the three divisions which offered events in the areas of biology, Earth science, chemistry, physics and technology. Founded in 1984, Science Olympiad is one...
of the premier science competitions in the nation, providing rigorous, standards-based challenges to nearly 8,000 teams in all 50 states.

One of Christensen's three teams of talented students earned third place overall. See the list below for a breakdown of the results of the Science Olympiad awards. Students from each team competed in 23 events that ranged from testing devices that were built to taking tests, and were evaluated on a point system. Students then move on to their regional tournament and those top tier teams then move on to State and national tournaments.

Drew Kirian, CMS teacher and club advisor, stated, "Science Olympiad is the activity that engages students into related STEM careers. It produces doctors, nurses, engineers and scientists. All three of my children are engineers because of the Science Olympiad." We are proud of our CMS cougars and their commitment to stretching themselves as fierce competitors. For more information, please visit soinc.org.

**CMS Science Olympiad Results**

**Overall Third Place Team: Christensen Middle School**

**First Place Awards**
- Anatomy and Physiology: Nina Nowicki and Yeonjun Kim
- Heredity: Ruman Das and Yeonjun Kim
- Ornithology: Zak Bouzid and Nitin Pramnath

**Second Place Awards**
- Elastic Launched Gliders: Andrew Kramar and Arvin Grewal
- Reach for the Stars: Marielle Mullen and Nick Cayado

**Third Place Award**
- Disease Detective: Ruman Das and Arvin Grewal

**Fourth Place Awards**
- Boomilever: Andrew Kramar and Nick Cayado
- Density Lab: Samridhi Singh and Marielle Mullen
- Water Quality: Nina Nowicki and Zak Bouzid
- Write It-Do It: Marielle Mullen and Samridhi Singh
- Ping Pong Parachute: Margo Tolla and Pranav Kotamraju

**Fifth Place Awards**
- Experimental Design: Yeonjun Kim, Nick Cayado and Kevin Speroni
- Ping Pong Parachute: Gabriel Suriben and James Paap
- Write It-Do It: Margo Tolla and Tejas Jaura

**Sixth Place Award**
- Mission Possible: Andrew Kramar and Ronan Tolla
Learning good dental hygiene early will develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime. Because Livermore remains a non-fluoridated community, the Alameda County Public Health Department Office of Dental Health (ODH) is providing free dental care for third grade students who qualify at Junction K-8, Jackson Avenue, and Marylin Avenue Elementary schools. The program provides dental sealants for eligible students and will also link those in need of acute as well as routine restorative care with a local dental provider or a Federally Qualified Health Center with a dental clinic. Nurse Catherine Aurther states, “Dental sealant programs generally target more vulnerable populations less likely to receive dental care that could benefit from sealants. School based sealant programs have been associated with reducing the incidence of decay by 40-60%.”

Even with good and regular brushing and flossing, there are still depressions and grooves that trap food and plaque. Sealants can help protect your child’s primary and permanent teeth and act as a barrier to cavity-prone areas or by “sealing out” food and plaque. Ask your dentist whether sealants are an option for your child’s dental health.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has some recommendations for keeping teeth bright and healthy.

- Brush twice each day with an ADA-accepted fluoride toothpaste
- Clean between teeth daily with floss or another interdental cleaner (i.e., small brushes that reach between teeth or under braces)
- Eat a balanced diet
- Visit a dentist regularly
- Ask your dentist if sealants will help your child

Visit the American Academy of Pediatrics for more information.
ATTENTION TO ATTENDANCE
A MESSAGE FROM STUDENT SERVICES
We LOVE seeing our students at school.

February 2020

This month is when school sites notice a spike in absenteeism. We suspect the cold and flu virus is what keeps our students from the classroom. Below is information to help you decide whether or not to keep your student home.

Remember to call the school’s attendance line to excuse the absence.

LVJUSD ILLNESS PROTOCOL . . .
- A fever of 100 degrees or higher within the past 24 hours
- A runny nose when mucous is thick and green or yellow when accompanied by a fever
- A rash of unknown origin or contagious rash requires a certificate from a physician stating that a student may return to school
- Diarrhea or vomiting within the previous 24 hours (Alameda County Public Health)
- Severe headache
- Conjunctivitis - red, irritated or burning eyes with watery or mucous thickened drainage

ATTENDANCE ZONES . . .

- Satisfactory Zone: Students who miss 9 or fewer days are considered to be in the “Satisfactory Zone.”
- Warning Zone: Students who miss between 10-17 days are considered to be in the “Warning Zone.”
- Chronic Zone: If your student is missing 10%, or about 18 days, this is considered the “Chronic Zone.”

Thank you for supporting your child’s success through your attention to attendance.
- Scott Vernoy, Director, Student Services

Contact your school for site-specific attendance information

Resources for attendance improvement from the California Department of Education

Board Recognitions
January 14, 2020

Students who have attained National Merit Scholar semi-finalist and commended student standing were recognized.
Vineyard Alternative School National Merit Commended: Angela Traugott

Livermore High School National Merit Commended: Timothy Blanton, Eugene Ha, Jacob McMillin, Ranjini Nair, Avni Vachhani, Austin Weinshelbaum, Jessica Weise, Colin Wiese, Devan Zika

Livermore High School National Merit Semi-Finalists: Elliot Ha, Sai Priyanka Iragavarapu

Granada High School National Merit Commended: Rebecca Bauman, Kassadi Holloway, Sejal Sahu, Jesse Watson

Granada High School National Merit Semi-Finalists: Theodore Dean, Andy Shu

**Junction K-8** Principal Dayna Taylor recognized her office staff for their dedication to students and families.
Rosanna Quesada, Cheryce Johnson, Laurie Bibly, Brenda Gallardo, all wearing Junction purple.
Christensen Middle School Principal Pat Avilla and Vice Principal Brian Scharmann recognized Gregorio Sampayan, new head custodian and Pablo Ayala and Fernado Izon, night crew of as the new team of custodians at CMS. These gentlemen go above and beyond to keep the campus safe, clean, and welcoming. They embody teamwork and keep students at the forefront of the work they do at CMS. Also pictured: Rey Sanchez, Jr., Maintenance Operations Manager.

**Save the Date!**

- February: Black History Month
- February 3-7: National Counseling Week
- February 8, 15, 22, 29: **Science on Saturdays**
- February 11: 7th and 8th Grade District Spelling Bee
- February 13: **Science Odyssey**
- February 17: President’s Day
- February 19: **Livermore High School Expo**
- February 19-20: **Kindergarten Enrollment Fair for All New Students, TK - 5th Grade**
- February 27: End of Trimester 2
- February 28: No School
- March 18: Granada High School Expo

The [2019-20](#) and [2020-21](#) District calendars are available to download on our website.

To be notified of upcoming events, be sure to download the Livermore Schools app from the App Store or from Google Play. Follow your schools, and see all of the calendar dates through the app!

For site-specific information on events and celebrations, please visit school websites.

Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District

Each student will graduate with the skills needed to contribute and thrive in a changing world.

Facebook: [@livermoreschools](#)  
Instagram: [@livermoreschools](#)  
Twitter: [@livermoreschool](#)  
Website: livermoreschools.org

![LVJUSD Logo](#)

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