

Press Release

Lake Tahoe Unified School District

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The Lake Tahoe Unified School District has completed its 2021-22 school year. Congratulations to the 2022 Graduating Class of South Tahoe High School and Mt. Tallac High School!

As we conclude the 2021/22 school year, we would like to thank our students, parents, and community for your continued unwavering support, patience, and resilience through these past few years. We have overcome so many challenges and yet our LTUSD community has persevered to find success. Our students could not be successful without your help! Thank you to our community, families, and staff for supporting our students this year!

With the Caldor Fire and a delayed start, the 2021-22 school year kicked off in September with much excitement and joy. This has been a year like no other, filled with both obstacles and opportunities. In spite of many challenges, LTUSD has much to celebrate as we finish the year! Last spring we created a new district Vision and Mission, and approved our three year Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) which focused on implementing the following three district wide goals:

1. Improving student learning and success.
2. Increased professional learning and collaboration for staff.
3. Improving school climate and enhancing support for students and parents.

In addition to our focus on educational goals, we also faced a variety of challenges related to both the Caldor Fire and COVID. In spite of a late start to the school year, and staffing shortages at all schools, we persevered and had a successful year!. We are grateful for our staff who stepped up to help. Substitute and existing staff went above and beyond this year to fill gaps when no staff were available. We know that this was not easy and presented many challenges to our LTUSD staff.

Our district also leads the way with a variety of innovative programs to best serve the needs of our students. In addition to our site-based programs, the district also established our virtual learning school, Elevated Academy, to serve the needs of our students who need a more flexible and customized approach to learning. Although this school was born in the pandemic, it will expand to include K-12 virtual learning opportunities to students in Tahoe and beyond. School can be everywhere with Elevated! This program provides a unique opportunity to serve our students and families in the future.

Parent involvement increased in LTUSD this year: parents for the first time participated in the Parent Institute of Quality Education (PIQE). This program presented tools and techniques to families who in turn can better support their students in their education.

Dr. Cutler also connected regularly with staff, students, and community members. Dr. Cutler shared his gratitude saying, "I'm honored to be part of this District team where every day teachers and support staff rise to meet the challenge of the day. I am impressed by their hard work and dedication."

Celebrating student involvement this year: Six STHS students served on the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council, meeting regularly to provide input to the District and to learn how to lead and make a positive difference. The high school and middle school also re-activated groups such as Club Live and the Honor Society providing opportunities for support and enrichment.

## **Personnel**

Another opportunity to celebrate: a variety of new positions were created to better serve our staff and students to increase academic achievement and to support their social emotional learning.

This year, LTUSD added two counselors and created a full-time Wellness Center at the High School to provide mental health support. New funding from the county supported this endeavor and we are hoping to add a Wellness Center at the Middle School next year.

Content Area Specialists in Math, Reading and English language acquisition worked to improve curriculum alignment and instructional strategies at the K-8 level by providing professional development opportunities for teachers and doing the work around aligning instructional maps to be rolled out next year.

Career Technology Education specialists were hired to support all K-8 students in discovering and exploring careers, inspiring curiosity, and preparing students for diverse futures, especially in the fields of science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics. From hands-on learning to engaging field trips, our students had increased opportunities to learn and explore this year.

Our district has been engaged in hiring several positions this spring and summer with highly qualified candidates to fill open positions.

Professional learning and collaboration was also a focus this year: for the first time each Wednesday afternoon provided time for site teams to collaborate around the important work of improving instruction for students. Trustee Kemper said, "I see teachers working together, sharing ideas using research and student data to better serve our students."

- All school sites developed Single Site Focus Plans as part of the three year Local Control Accountability Plans.
- Each school created an individual plan and proposal to use funds to better serve students and meet goals established in the Local Control Accountability Plan.
- The plans support additional training, family engagement nights, field trips for students and much more.

## **Curriculum**

Last year, the Board of Trustees approved curriculum to support student learning in a variety of areas:

- Updated health curriculum for middle school and high school ensuring our students have the knowledge and information to make good decisions about their health
- Music expanded to all grade levels
- Approved new science curriculum and staff training for K-8. This updated curriculum will provide materials for all school sites including bilingual curriculum for Bijou School.
- Next year, all elementary schools will deliver robust science lessons, including environmental science, to all students.

Board of Trustees President Turnbull remarked, "It's wonderful to see students doing hands-on science experiments and interacting in person with other students and teachers."

## **Facilities**

This year the Board of Trustees approved a Facilities Master Plan identifying the needs at each school site. Health and Safety improvements are identified as the highest priority need followed by modernization of classrooms and outdoor play areas to improve our learning environments.

Ongoing maintenance funds along with some additional COVID-related funds have allowed LTUSD to conduct maintenance, repair and upgrade many of the HVAC systems at our schools. These efforts have improved heating and cooling efficiencies, lowered electricity costs, and most importantly, improved the indoor environments.

This summer our maintenance and facilities crews will be focused on improving safety features at each of our school sites, specifically making certain that all alarm and speaker systems are fully functional, all windows have coverings/blinds, all door locks are appropriate and functional, working toward single points of access. Along with these facilities measures the district continues to refine and revise all safety plans for the 22/23 school year.

Our Information Technology Department has made many improvements to systems and equipment in all buildings, as well as ensuring each and every student has a working laptop computer to access their lessons and resources.

LTUSD has also purchased six electric buses, aligned with our commitment to being an environmentally friendly district.

How can you help?

The Lake Tahoe Unified School District is hiring! Check out [www: edjoin.org](http://www.edjoin.org) for job descriptions. If you want to volunteer in our schools, please contact your school site at the start of the year and request a volunteer application packet. Join us in serving our students!