



Presenting MBUSD's 2018 Teachers of the Year

Every spring, employees in each school in the Manhattan Beach Unified School District nominate teacher of the year candidates, then one teacher is selected for each school. It is one of the ways that we recognize and celebrate excellence in teaching in our District. We are proud to announce this year's Teachers of the Year in MBUSD! Please join us in recognizing these outstanding individuals at the Board Meeting on June 6, 2018. We celebrated our Classified Employees of the Year at our May 16 Board Meeting and we will be sharing their amazing stories in our next communication.



Karen Mamakos, MB PreSchool Teacher of the Year

Karen Mamakos embodies the MB Preschool teacher of the year because her students' education is her number one priority. Her lessons are always top notch and engaging with her students needs in mind. Ms. Mamakos is able to serve a diverse range of students and accommodate each individual students needs. She always takes time to hear her students, teach them something new, and make them feel important. Ms. Mamakos has a special way of teaching so that students are learning new concepts, building self confidence, and enjoying school. Ms. Mamakos is the kind of teacher who makes getting ready for kindergarten easy. She is an outstanding choice for MB Preschool's

Teacher of the Year.



Carrie Fairbrother, Grand View

Carrie Fairbrother teaches 4th grade at Grand View. She has been teaching in MBUSD since 2002. Ms. Fairbrother meets children where they are and lifts them as far as possible in the time she has with them. Children feel empowered and safe, which promotes risk-taking, collaboration, and critical thinking. She has a growth mindset and believes that all children can succeed. Ms. Fairbrother has been on the forefront of the instructional changes we have seen over the last few years. She uses a variety of strategies within a workshop environment which supports student understanding and

growth. Walk into her classroom and you will see best practice, exemplified.



Lauren Walsh, Meadows Teacher of the Year

Mrs. Walsh has been a fantastic addition to the Manhattan Beach Unified School District. Parents and colleagues know the lengths she goes to meet the needs of each of her students, and the children *feel* it. She welcomes each of them with genuine warmth and creates an environment in which they feel safe to learn and grow. In the last three years, Mrs. Walsh welcomes every challenge and assignment with grace and enthusiasm. She is the epitome of a team player and as a result has earned the respect of her peers. Mrs. Walsh has a passion for learning, a love for teaching, a heart of gold, a fierce sense of humor, and a love for students.



Nanci Schnebly, Pacific Teacher of the Year

Nanci Schnebly's classroom reflects a sense of community with each student feeling a special and unique connection to their teacher. It is wonderful to observe her support for struggling students and the encouragement of independent and critical thinking. Nanci is a first-rate communicator who works closely with families and staff to increase student involvement and progress. Her zest for teaching radiates enthusiasm, which has a positive effect on all around her. Students are inspired by her enthusiasm for learning and thus strive to achieve their personal best. Among her peers she is always positive, entertaining, a valued instructional leader and strong child advocate. Nanci Schnebly epitomizes all that makes education a caring profession.



Linda Hunt, Pennekamp Teacher of the Year

Linda Hunt is a beloved third grade teacher. She has been a teacher for 34 years, with the last 27 years teaching 3rd grade at Pennekamp. Students thrive in her classroom because she sets high expectations. Mrs. Hunt also creates a supportive and collaborative learning environment where every student knows that they are an integral part of the class. She encourages students to do their very best in the face of challenges and to never give up. Pennekamp Elementary is so lucky to have Mrs. Hunt as part of their teaching community.



Kim Holz, Robinson and MBUSD Teacher of the Year

Mrs. Holz has long and wonderful history in MBUSD. She attended Robinson Elementary, Manhattan Beach Intermediate, and graduated from Mira Costa. She was a teacher in Long Beach USD until she moved to Grand View in 1995. She moved to Robinson the following year and she has been there ever since. Mrs. Holz helped shaped literacy instruction in MBUSD as an Early Literacy trainer. She has high expectations for students and engages them using a variety of techniques. She presents information in interesting and fun ways and teaches students how to take notes, write paragraphs, and become fluent in California history. She is embracing the shifts toward more inquiry-based, student-centered instruction in History-Social Studies. When asked what she likes most about teaching, she answered, "I love watching kids discover the power of knowledge, the depth of their thinking, the compassion in their hearts and the joy of discovery." We are fortunate indeed that Mrs. Holz is part of our teaching and learning community.



Sandy Casey, MBMS Teacher of the Year

We all remember learning about Sandy Casey's tragic death in Las Vegas on October 1st of this school year. Ms. Casey worked with a diverse group of students who were highly impacted by their disabilities. She did an outstanding job of helping her students draw on their own life experiences and interests to connect with the material that she presented in her Special Day Classroom. Ms. Casey would often reflect/collaborate with the Special Education team at MBMS to help her better serve her students. She had whatever "it is" that makes everyone around her feel valued. She is so deserving of this recognition as MBMS Teacher of the Year. Ms. Casey made a lasting impact on her students, their families, and her colleagues in MBUSD.



Jonathan Westerberg, Mira Costa Teacher of the Year

Jonathan Westerberg has been teaching English at Mira Costa High School since 1999. He creates engaging activities that not only challenge his students, but encourage them to be both creative and analytical. Mr. Westerberg does a great job of learning and acknowledging the unique and diverse interests and personalities of his students. He gives students options when it comes to interpreting/writing about books, giving them the chance to bring in their personal opinions and perspectives. When students are struggling to understand concepts, he often rearranges his plans to provide more time for students before moving on. His students love and respect him and feel inspired to do well in his class. He has truly found the balance between holding kids accountable and inspiring greatness from them.

Mike Matthews
MBUSD Superintendent

Follow Us!



