



# NEWS RELEASE

**Lake Elsinore Unified School District**  
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Save the date! LEUSD's annual appreciation and awards reception is on Wednesday, May 8

## TEACHER OF THE YEAR & EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

LAKE ELSINORE—Seven district *Employee of the Year* honorees, three district/county *Teacher of the Year* nominees, plus site honorees from 23 schools and district departments will be recognized during LEUSD's annual *Employee Appreciation Reception* on Wednesday, May 8, 2019, 3 p.m., at *Pins and Pockets*, in Lake Elsinore. Retirees in 2019 will also be recognized. Admission is free.

"Honorees exemplify top tier professionalism and commitment to all students," said Superintendent Dr. Doug Kimberly. "Their dedicated service to students and community is a powerful catalyst for college and career success."

Seven LEUSD *Employees of the Year* (listed below) will be recognized by the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) at the annual *Celebrating Educators* luncheon in May, 2019. However, the district's top three *Teacher of the Year* honorees, **Jean Verrell** (William Collier ES), **Andrew Kice** (Terra Cotta MS) and **Richard "Rick" Wolter** (Elsinore HS), denoted by an asterisk below (\*), have been selected one year in advance to synchronize with county and state *Teacher of the Year* awards, and will be celebrated by RCOE in 2020, following official announcements of the county's top school employees and teachers.

### **LEUSD EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR & TEACHER OF THE YEAR HONOREES FOR 2019**

- JEAN VERRELL,\*** *William Collier Elementary School, Grade 3* .....Teacher of the Year-Elementary
- ANDREW KICE,\*** *Terra Cotta Middle School, Grade 8 Science* .....Teacher of the Year-Middle School
- RICHARD WOLTER,\*** *Elsinore HS, Mild-Mod Biology, Enviro. Science* .....Teacher of the Year-High School
- JULIE EDMUNDS,** *Director, Assessment and Accountability* .....Certificated Administrator
- MARK DENNIS,** *Coordinator, Community and Media Relations* .....Classified Administrator
- BIRDIE (AURORA) GUERRA,** *Dispatcher/Bus Driver, Transportation Dept.* ...Classified Employee
- MARY GRIGGS,** *Superintendent's Secretary* .....Confidential Employee
- BRIDGET GROSS,** *SEL Support Provider, Rice Canyon Elementary* .....Site Support Employee
- VICTOR BOND,** *Ortega High School* .....Counselor of the Year
- DR. PRESTON PEREZ,** *Lakeland Village School* .....Principal of the Year

**MORE...**

School and site *Employee of the Year* and *Teacher of the Year* honorees were nominated by a vote of their peers, or, in some cases, by administrators. School and site honorees are listed in the table below.

<b>SCHOOL OR DISTRICT SITE</b>	<b>LEUSD EMPLOYEES &amp; TEACHERS OF THE YEAR</b>	<b>CATEGORIES (EOY, TOY, DENOTES RCOE RECOGNITION)</b>
Cottonwood Canyon Elementary	<b>Tracy Barackman</b> , <i>Grade 4</i> <b>Jane Hodges</b> , <i>Secretary III</i> <b>Sara Egbert</b> , <i>SEL Support Provider</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i> <i>Site Support</i>
Donald Graham Elementary	<b>Janet Valadez</b> , <i>Grade 5</i> <b>Isabel Cuevas Soler</b> , <i>Paraeducator III/Special Ed.</i> <b>Kevin Kinney</b> , <i>Behavior Intervention Specialist</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i> <i>Site Support</i>
Elsinore Elementary	<b>Janis Walker</b> , <i>Grade 3</i> <b>Laurie Snider</b> , <i>Clerk III: Assignment</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i>
Earl Warren Elementary	<b>Joni Matteis-Ferguson</b> , <i>Grade 3</i> <b>Elizabeth Schuelke</b> , <i>Secretary III</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i>
Machado Elementary	<b>Denee Selman</b> , <i>Grade 4/5</i> <b>Aurora Aureoles</b> , <i>Paraeducator II/Bilingual</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i>
Railroad Canyon Elementary	<b>Rachel Hall</b> , <i>Grade 1</i>	<i>Teacher</i>
Rice Canyon Elementary	<b>Daniel 'Dan' Schiro</b> , <i>Grade 2</i> <b>Dorothy Garcia</b> , <i>Paraeducator I</i> <b>Bridget Gross</b> , <i>SEL Support Provider</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i> <i>Site Support/EOY</i>
Ronald Reagan Elementary	<b>Trina Santelices</b> , <i>Kindergarten</i> <b>Debbie Neary</b> , <i>Health Technician</i> <b>Jennifer Edquist</b> , <i>Nurse</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i> <i>Site Support</i>
Tuscany Hills Elementary	<b>Jennifer Gurule</b> , <i>Elementary</i> <b>Laura Dickerson</b> , <i>Paraeducator III/Special Ed.</i> <b>Judy Jordan-Roney</b> , <i>Speech/Language Pathologist</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i> <i>Site Support</i>
William Collier Elementary	<b>Jean Verrell</b> , <i>Grade 3</i> <b>Jennifer Patrick</b> , <i>Secretary III</i> <b>Tracy Taylor</b> , <i>Speech/Language Pathologist</i>	<i>Teacher/TOY</i> <i>Classified</i> <i>Site Support</i>
Wildomar Elementary	<b>Gay St. Yves</b> , <i>Kindergarten</i> <b>Delia Leon</b> , <i>Paraeducator II/Bilingual</i> <b>Luz Angel Paez</b> , <i>Speech/Language Pathologist</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i> <i>Site Support</i>
Withrow Elementary	<b>Karen Howard</b> , <i>Kindergarten</i> <b>Kris Hubbard</b> , <i>Paraeducator I</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i>
Lakeland Village School K-8	<b>Elizabeth Pettit</b> , <i>Grade 3</i> <b>Elaine Lynch</b> , <i>Paraeducator III/Special Ed.</i>	<i>Teacher</i> <i>Classified</i>

SCHOOL OR DISTRICT SITE	LEUSD EMPLOYEES & TEACHERS OF THE YEAR	CATEGORIES (EOY, TOY, DENOTES RCOE RECOGNITION)
(continued) Lakeland Village School K-8	<b>Amanda Murphy,</b> <i>Speech/Language Pathologist</i>	<i>Site Support</i>
Luiseno School K-8	<b>Karen Halderman,</b> <i>Grade 4</i> <b>Melissa Salgado,</b> <i>Campus &amp; Study Hall Supervisor</i> <b>Janet Calva,</b> <i>Psychologist</i> <b>Colleen Centeio</b>	<i>Teacher Classified</i>  <i>Site Support Counselor</i>
Canyon Lake Middle School	<b>Melissa Upton,</b> <i>PE, 6,7,8</i> <b>Mary Maxwell,</b> <i>Secretary III</i> <b>Denise Smith,</b> <i>Psychologist</i> <b>Ed Surman,</b> <i>Counselor</i>	<i>Teacher Classified</i>  <i>Site Support Counselor</i>
David Brown Middle School	<b>Susan Reilly,</b> <i>Grade 8 Science</i> <b>Todd Thomas,</b> <i>Campus &amp; Study Hall Supervisor</i> <b>Ryan Forgette,</b> <i>Speech/Language Pathologist</i> <b>Robert Suttan, Jr.,</b> <i>Counselor</i>	<i>Teacher Classified</i>  <i>Site Support Counselor</i>
Elsinore Middle School	<b>Tisha Scott,</b> <i>Math, Grade 7</i> <b>Debra Castanon,</b> <i>Library/Media Assistant III</i> <b>Cheryl Bartel,</b> <i>Nurse</i> <b>Corinne Bodnar,</b> <i>Counselor</i>	<i>Teacher Classified</i>  <i>Site Support Counselor</i>
Terra Cotta Middle School	<b>Andrew Kice,</b> <i>Grade 8 Science</i> <b>Kasey Seymour,</b> <i>Library/Media Assistant III</i> <b>Katherine Daugherty,</b> <i>Psychologist</i> <b>Maria Finazzo,</b> <i>Counselor</i>	<i>Teacher/TOY Classified</i>  <i>Site Support Counselor</i>
Elsinore High School	<b>Richard "Rick" Wolter,</b> <i>Mild/Mod Biology, Environmental Science</i> <b>Kimberly Johnson,</b> <i>Library/Media Assistant III</i> <b>Michelle Vandenburg,</b> <i>Psychologist</i> <b>Rico Borrero,</b> <i>Counselor</i>	<i>Teacher/TOY Classified</i>  <i>Site Support Counselor</i>
Lakeside High School	<b>Amy Cecilio,</b> <i>French</i> <b>Robin Lacasse,</b> <i>Bookkeeper: HS</i> <b>Valerie Geason,</b> <i>Counselor</i>	<i>Teacher Classified Counselor</i>
Temescal Canyon High School	<b>Robert Parks,</b> <i>Engineering Design, IB Design</i> <b>Autumn Crawford,</b> <i>Library/Media Assistant III</i> <b>Natalia Barraza,</b> <i>Psychologist</i> <b>Kebra Deckert,</b> <i>Counselor</i>	<i>Teacher Classified</i>  <i>Site Support Counselor</i>
Keith McCarthy Academy	<b>Art McMahon,</b> <i>Math Middle</i>	<i>Teacher</i>
Ortega High School	<b>Lisa Callaway,</b> <i>English</i>	<i>Teacher</i>

SCHOOL OR DISTRICT SITE	LEUSD EMPLOYEES & TEACHERS OF THE YEAR	CATEGORIES (EOY, TOY, DENOTES RCOE RECOGNITION)
	<b>Sandra Marquez</b> , <i>Senior Computer Lab Assistant</i> <b>Victor Bond</b> , <i>Counselor</i>	<i>Classified</i> <i>Counselor/EOY</i>
<b>DEPARTMENTAL RECOGNITIONS (FROM PARTICIPATING OFFICES)</b>		
Children & Family Services	<b>Avelina Lorenzo</b> , <i>Social Services Coordinator: Head Start</i>	<i>Classified</i>
Information Technology	<b>Jason Covarrubias</b> , <i>Technology Support Specialist</i>	<i>Classified</i>
Maintenance & Operations	<b>Pablo Casillas</b> , <i>Senior Maintenance Worker</i>	<i>Classified</i>
Student Support Services	<b>Crystal Cerasaro</b> , <i>Clerk III: Assignment</i>	<i>Classified</i>
Transportation Services	<b>Birdie (Aurora) Guerra</b> , <i>Dispatcher/Bus Driver</i>	<i>Classified/EOY</i>

“On behalf of the Board of Trustees, all site and district honorees announced today are highly respected and worthy of this *Teacher of the Year* and *Employee of the Year* distinction,” said Board President Stan Crippen.

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*The Lake Elsinore Unified School District covers more than 144 square miles and serves TK-12 students from the cities of Lake Elsinore, Canyon Lake and Wildomar, plus several unincorporated Riverside County communities, including Lakeland Village, Horsethief Canyon, and The Farm. The district serves over 21,300 students and operates 23 schools, along with alternative education and blended learning programs. LEUSD offers a Dual Immersion program at the elementary level, and the rigorous International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme at Temescal Canyon High School, a fully certified IB World School. The district’s mission of preparing students for college and career success is evident every day at every school.*