

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE 2021

June 2021

I would like to thank the entire community for playing such a critical role in supporting our schools and students, especially during this challenging global pandemic. Over the past year, our amazing community of teachers, staff, parents, students and neighborhood leaders came together to ensure all students received an excellent education, whether they learned at home online or returned to our campuses for in-person instruction.

Community engagement and support for our schools and students is one of the reasons our neighborhoods are wonderful places to live. For nearly 30 years our community has supported our award-winning schools with voter-approved, local parcel tax funding to deliver the excellent education we've come to expect in the Los Altos School District.

For decades, state funding for our schools has been uncertain and unstable. Locally-based revenues from our parcel taxes help sustain core academic programs, expand innovative STEM programs, attract and retain top-quality teachers and many more critical services. Thanks to your ongoing support, our school district consistently ranks in the top 1% of more than 1,000 districts across California.

We truly appreciate your ongoing support and vote of confidence in our schools. Thank you for helping keep our schools among the very best!

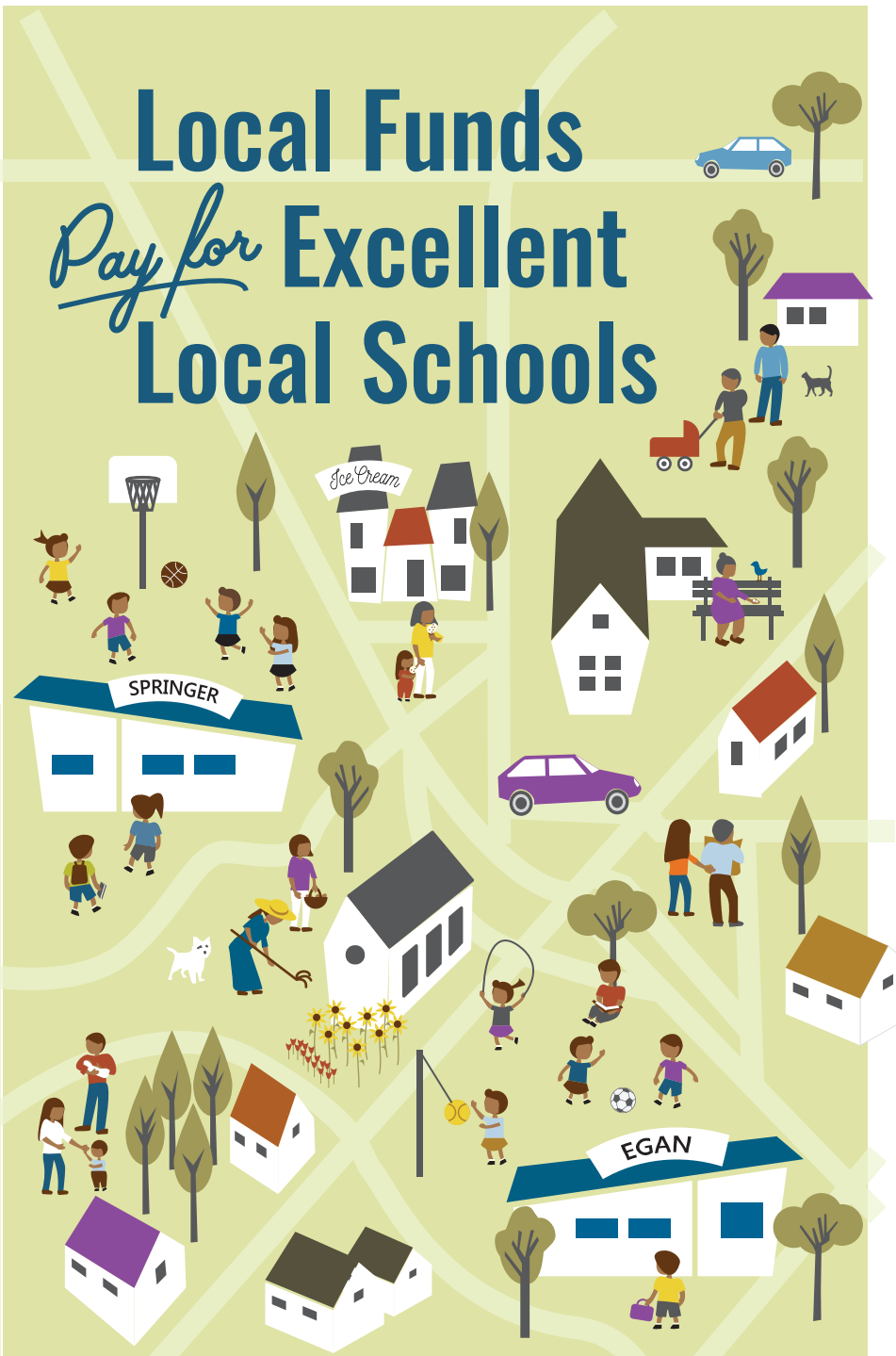
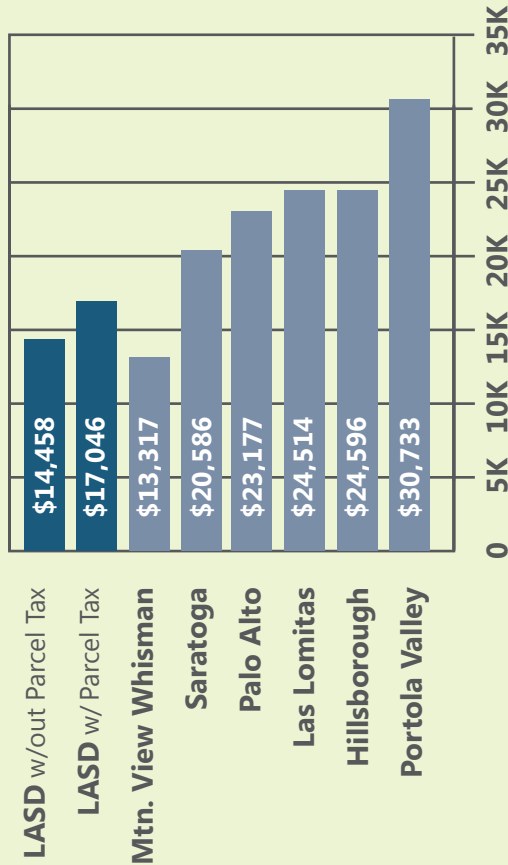
Jeffrey Baier, Superintendent

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 26
LOS ALTOS
CARRIER ROUTE,
PRE-SORT

LASD
Los Altos School District
201 Covington Road
Los Altos, CA 94024

POSTAL CUSTOMER

2019-20 REVENUES PER STUDENT
LASD Compared to Similar Districts



Los Altos School District
REPORT CARD TO THE COMMUNITY
Annual Accountability Report To Taxpayers

93% OF LASD FUNDING COMES FROM OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Los Altos School District (LASD) revenues come mostly from our property taxes, parcel taxes, and developer (impact) fees.



Property taxes are about 67% of the total and are based on the assessed value of a property

Parcel taxes are fixed amounts per parcel

Developer fees are one-time assessments collected when owners improve their properties

Parent/Donor funding provide sizable annual grants from PTAs and the **Los Altos Educational Foundation (LAEF)**.

OUR PARCEL TAXES PROVIDE 16% OF LASD FUNDING

A voter-approved permanent special tax assessment of \$597 per parcel generates over \$7.5 million annually. Voters approved and recently reauthorized a second tax of \$223 per parcel, which will expire in 2025. In total, parcel taxes provide approximately \$10 million annually to LASD.

Seniors who are owner-occupants of their homes may apply for an exemption from parcel taxes. For more information, contact LASD at 650-947-1150 or www.losaltos.k12.ca.us.

2019-2020 PARCEL TAX EXPENDITURES

Class Size / Electives.....	6,148,000
Small School Size.....	914,000
Enrichment / Teacher Training.....	138,000
Health / Safety / Cleanliness.....	1,253,000
Facilities Upkeep.....	204,000
School Support Staff.....	411,000
Technology Support.....	718,000

TOTAL PARCEL TAX INCOME.....\$9,786,000

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a report card was not issued last year. The district received \$9,812,000 in parcel tax income in 2018-2019 with proceeds being spent similarly to the above.

PARCEL TAXES ALLOW LASD TO INNOVATE AND EXPAND PROGRAMS

LASD has been a top-performing, innovative school district for many years. Parcel taxes allow LASD to maintain outstanding core academic programs and attract and retain high quality teachers. They allow the district to explore leading edge STEM programs and new modes of learning to keep LASD at the forefront of education in California. Additionally, parcel taxes help lower class sizes; fund teacher training in new techniques, content and curriculum; provide technology in our classrooms; and support junior high electives. Funds also keep our schools safe and clean by paying for custodians, grounds maintenance, counseling services, nurses, and emergency supplies.

CACF PROVIDES OVERSIGHT OF PARCEL TAX USES

The Citizens' Advisory Committee for Finance (CACF) is an independent committee of community members appointed by the Board of Trustees to provide oversight and

accountability for parcel tax uses. Over the years, the district has implemented policies supported by the CACF around staff recruiting, funding medical premiums and its current reserve policy.

OUR DISTRICT FACES FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

The COVID-19 pandemic has clearly impacted district operations this school year. The district has managed this year's financial impacts and anticipates continued pandemic impacts next year. CACF is trying to estimate those budgetary impacts but there remain areas of uncertainty.

- Enrollment dropped 10% this year from 2019-20, but will those students return next year? We may need to keep teachers on payroll in preparation for their possible return.
- We have seen solid growth in property tax revenue over the last several years but need to be cautious based on past recessions. We prepare budgets for a range of future outcomes.
- COVID safety steps have led to completely new expenses this year and the state has provided funding. We may need to continue those changes next year and hope the state funding will be adequate.
- Districts have noted learning losses from this year and we expect increased costs next year as we attempt to mitigate the impact.
- Accelerated retirements due to pandemic fatigue have impacted other industries and could impact LASD, so we need to be prepared for additional recruiting costs.

In the past, the district has maintained healthy reserves to blunt short-term impacts of adverse economic events. Our reserves this year remain at a healthy level. CACF continues to work with the district preparing multi-year budget projections to help district planning.