

Acalanes High School • Bentley School • Burton Valley • Camino Pablo Campolindo • Contra Costa Jewish Day School • Del Rey Donald L. Rheem • Glorietta • Happy Valley • Joaquin Moraga

Lafayette Elementary • Los Perales • Miramonte • Orinda Academy Orinda Intermediate • Saklan Valley School • Sleepy Hollow Springhill • Stanley Middle • St. Perpetua School • Wagner Ranch

# Lamorinda Schools

SCHOOL CALENDAR	
<b>Acalanes Union</b> High School District Board Room AUHSD Office 1212 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lafayette Wednesday, November 17, at 7:30pm	<b>Orinda Union School District</b> OUSD Office 8 Altarinda Road, Orinda Monday, November 15, at 4pm
<b>Lafayette School District</b> LAFSD Office 3477 School Street, Lafayette Wednesday, November 17, at 7pm	<b>Moraga School District</b> Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School Auditorium 1010 Camino Pablo, Moraga Tuesday, December 14, at 7:30pm

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## Lafayette Elects a New School Board

By Jean Follmer

In a race of five candidates for three spots, tension was high and campaign signs were everywhere. Teresa Gerringer sought re-election, Art Kapoor vied for the spot he was appointed to two years ago, and David Gerson, Berch Parker and Saveth Soun battled for the seat being vacated by Ann Appert. Gerringer and Kapoor held on to their seats and Gerson pulled far enough ahead to win Appert's seat.

Candidate	Percentage/Number of Votes
Teresa Gerringer (i)	31.44%/4,376
David Gerson	15.53%/2,161
Art Kapoor (i)	38.61%/3,982
Berch Parker	12.12%/1,687
Saveth Soun	11.98%/1,667
Write-in	0.33%/46

Gerson, a Springhill Elementary School parent, was relieved to move beyond the election. "I'm happy to get it over with and I look forward to working with the other School Board members; I think it will be a good working relationship. I have a learning curve ahead of me and I look forward to absorbing how it (the school district) works from the inside out," said Gerson. In the short-term, Gerson plans to help the District with its efforts to pursue additional funding sources. He also plans to address the issue of families who live outside District boundaries but attend Lafayette schools by using false addresses.

Gerson said it's not fair to Lafayette residents or to those students who attend our schools as Allen Bill or interdistrict transfer students. "I appreciate all those who supported me and I look forward to going to work for this community," said Gerson.

Gerringer echoed Kapoor's gratitude to the voters and shared thoughts about Ann Appert and David Gerson. "I would like to personally thank Ann Appert for her many years of service - she will be missed. I look forward to getting to know and work with David Gerson. There is a steep learning curve, but David showed during the election that he is willing to take the time to study the issues and to listen. Both are important qualities in a board member," said Gerringer.

## Lamorinda Schools Seek to Reduce Student Stress

By Jean Follmer

The message is clear: our kids are more stressed-out than ever before. The rate of depression amongst our kids continues to increase as they strive to "do more" and to "do more better." Wake up calls like Lafayette film director Vicki Abeles' *Race to Nowhere* have brought the discussion to the forefront for parents, teachers and school administrators across the country.

such balance is sought. "In general, we do have guidelines for the number of anticipated minutes of homework per grade. Our policy has been in place for many years and it becomes a bigger issue at Orinda Intermediate School. We try to stagger project due dates in different classes and the focus is on assigning meaningful homework," says Lisa Bissell, Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Orinda Union School District.

The Lamorinda school districts recently joined forces to bring renowned pediatrician Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg to Acalanes High School to discuss the need to build resilience in our children - they need to experience failure so they can learn from their mistakes. Ginsburg is on the board of Challenge Success - formerly Stressed-Out Students - a Stanford University Department of Education project. The Lafayette and Orinda school districts have adopted the Challenge Success program, the goal of which is to address the concern that adolescents often compromise their mental and physical health, integrity and engagement in learning as they contend with performance pressure in and out of school.

Rachel Zinn, Lafayette School District's Director of Curriculum and Instruction, echoes those sentiments. "Homework should not be just busy work; the work needs to be purposeful and consistent with class material," she says.

Are our high performance expectations realistic or desirable?

Children show stress in a number of ways. Headaches and stomachaches that aren't addressed in the younger years may lead to cutting and drug use in later years. A student may sail through elementary and middle school and hit an academic wall in high school.

The effort to provide students with outstanding academic opportunities while minimizing the negative effects of high community expectations begins at the elementary level. Homework is an area in which

This doesn't mean homework isn't valued. "We believe students and staff should view homework as both expected and appropriate," says Sharon Pincus, the Moraga School District's Director of Pupil Services. "The focus should be a little less on volume and a little more on quality," said Dr. John Nickerson, Assistant Superintendent of Education Services for the Acalanes Union High School District.

## Congratulations to Lamorinda's National Merit Scholar semifinalists!

Acalanes:	Campolindo:	Miramonte:
Baker, Trent W.	Hickey, Alan P.	Abramson, Rose A.
Barton, Katherine M.	Hsu, Lynn	Beal, David O.
Ellsworth, Emily E.	Ludwig, Connor H.	Bluford, Zachary S.
Frank, Rebecca S.	Meng, Cynthia S.	Boyd, Margo E.
Lee, Nicole M.	Min, Jung-Gi	Breen, Benjamin I.
Marciarille, Gianna D.	Perez, Sophia	Chang, Philip
Michels, Alec W.	Sanders, Clay M.	Chiu, Jerlon
Takahashi, Junya	Svedberg, Erik R.	Hass, Eric M.
Zelin, Matthew S.	Willmore, Lindsay C.	Klingman, Catherine A.
		Liu, Eric V.
		Shamash, Philip N.
		Vazquez, Olivia I.
		Yao, Jessica L.

(Information submitted by Aileen Liu)

## Ask Dr. Harold Holidays

By Dr. Harold Hoyle, Ph.D.

I recently did a parenting talk at an elementary school and during the questions a parent asked, "What do you recommend I do with my kids during the holidays?" So here are a few suggestions for holiday time for families.

### Plan for family

One of the less healthy dynamics in the modern American family is the lack of intergenerational interaction at holidays. Sociologists tell us that our sense of community has decreased with the amount people move and the lack of interaction we have with our extended families. Plan to have activities for the kids to do with the grand parents or other extended family. These activities can be centered around the theme of the holiday. You could have all of the people share what they are thankful for or make a thankful poster with drawings and writings. Prepare kids to share some of their school or other accomplishments so that the family can give them positive reinforcement. Prepare a grandparent by asking them to bring an important family story to tell. Start a tradition or revive one that has not been part of the family for a while. Have tasks for people to help. It feels good to be helpful so plan to have helpers.

### Give your kids time

For adults, the concept of quality time can work quite well. For kids it doesn't work. You can plan quality events. But for kids, quality time doesn't exist, there is only time. Plan time with your kids

while they are out of school and quality things will happen. Find out what they want to do and do that activity. Play a weekend long game of Monopoly. Watch that show that they can't go without. Have a contest with them on their favorite touch app or play their favorite video game with them. Time might be the greatest gift you can give to yourself as a parent.

### No lessons, please

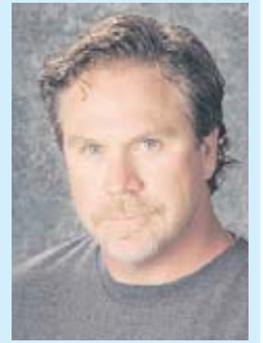
If you have decided to take the first step and give your kids time, here is your next challenge. No life lessons and no fixing things. Kids like to hang out with other kids because their friends are not always telling them what to do or how what they just did will relate to the rest of their life. They just want to be with you. So your challenge is to separate your doing from your being. You might be able to fix something for them if they make a mistake but it is possible that they just need you to be with them during their mistake. This is done most commonly by listening. So plan big chunks of time and just be with your kids; you will have plenty of time to fix things and tell lessons later in life.

### Get outside

It is very difficult to find a psychological publication that does not include a new study talking about how exercise and being outside aids in stress reduction and mental health. Hike, walk, bike, play, and do as much of these types of activities with your kids as you can. Do these things even if the

kids are looking at you and saying, "Really dad? You want me to do what?" And do them without saying this will be good for you or a good lesson for you.

Maybe you can plan an intergenerational activity that is done outside and no one makes it into a lesson. Give it a try and send me the ones that work.



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Harold is licensed clinical psychologist and a lecturer and in the School of Counseling Psychology, Education, and Pastoral Ministries Santa Clara University. With his wife and two children he is a 14 year long resident of the Lamorinda area. He is a sought after speaker in the areas of parenting, education, behavior with adolescents and children. He has a local small private practice.

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