



Independent, locally owned and operated!

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Published June 23rd, 2021

Principal movements in AUHSD

By John T. Miller

Three of the four high school principals in the Acalanes Union High School District will be leaving their posts, with only John Walker at Campolindo High School remaining in place.

Travis Bell will vacate Acalanes to pursue a mid-career choice; Dr. Julie Parks, principal of Miramonte, has accepted the job of superintendent of the Moraga School District (see article, Page A9), and Tiffany Benson, Las Lomas, has been offered a position with the Travis Unified School District.

Bell will be retiring from public service for the opportunity to work in the family-run business, the Lapham Company based in Oakland, a part of the Residential Real Estate Brokerage and Management Industry. After nine years at Acalanes - four years as associate principal and five years as principal - Bell summed up his experience: "It's been a joy. I've loved working with the community, watching the community rally around our students. I've had the privilege of working with a dedicated staff with high caliber teachers. I'm proud of the way our school adjusted and shifted, which includes adding the Academy period to help students, the implementation of our wellness center and adjustment of curriculum to be more inclusive of all students and multiple perspectives."

Bell described the mid-career change as an excellent opportunity that presented itself. "I wanted to see if it would work for me while also being more accommodating for my family." Bell has three children in the lower grades.

A statement from AUHSD Superintendent John Nickerson said, "Bell offered extraordinary leadership to usher through so many school initiatives to improve academic achievement and the school experience of all students." Dr. Parks will be leaving Miramonte after eight years, and will transition to working with the K-eighth grade programs. "I'm excited about working with the younger population," said Parks, "and feel I can bring in the perspective of how the high school works to better prepare the students for the transition."

"I've loved every moment of my time at Miramonte working with all these amazing people," Parks added. At the same time however, she regrets leaving now and missing the opportunity to help rebuild the school after the changes brought about by the COVID pandemic. "It's particularly hard to separate after we've been through so much together."

Like Bell, she is proud of the intervention programs put in place designed to help all students, including opening up the wellness center.

Nickerson praised Parks, saying, "I'm sure she will work with the staff to ensure all students achieve at high levels, have a sense of belonging, and have a positive experience."

After four years at Las Lomas, Benson was named director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Travis Unified School District. In a statement from her new employer she was recognized as "an experienced educator and administrator who has been working in Bay Area schools for the past 15 years. As a teacher, her focus on global education brought her to many different countries for both research and career, including China, Russia and Germany, and she brings that passion for broad perspectives to all of her work." Eric Shawn, most recently a house principal at James Logan High in Union City, has been named as the new principal at Acalanes. Nickerson called him "an accomplished school leader with qualities that are a great fit for the high school."

Replacing Benson at Las Lomas will be Sara Harris, who most recently worked as an associate principal at Miramonte since 2018. Harris is a Las Lomas grad and a former history teacher at Alhambra High.

Nickerson announced that the district will start the process to search for a new principal for Miramonte in the next few weeks, recruiting across the state and beyond, with input from teachers, staff, and parents.

Reach the reporter at: john@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA