



San Luis Coastal Family Communication

News and Updates from the Superintendent's Office

SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE - Dr. Eric Prater, Superintendent

I have been thinking lately about fear. Not the kind that comes and goes quickly, but the quieter kind - the uncertainty that settles into our lives when the world feels unsettled and the future a little harder to predict. There is plenty of that right now.

We worry about our children, our families, and our finances. We watch events unfold across our country and around the world and wonder where things are headed. Technology is changing faster than most of us can fully understand. And the news arrives constantly, often reminding us of everything that is wrong before we have had much opportunity to notice what is right. If we are not careful, uncertainty can become anxiety, anxiety can become fear, and fear can convince us to stand still.

A close friend told me of a remarkable story told in *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer. William grew up in a farming family in Malawi. When drought and famine struck, his family's crops failed, hunger became real, and his parents could no longer afford to send him to school.

William had every reason to be afraid. But he kept moving. Unable to attend school, he spent time in a small library, where he found a book about energy. Teaching himself from pictures and diagrams, William eventually used bicycle parts, discarded machinery, and scraps of metal to build something extraordinary: a windmill.

The wind that had always blown across his village suddenly became something different. It became possibility. I love that story because William didn't make the drought disappear. He couldn't control the weather or the circumstances surrounding his family. Instead, he seemed to ask a different question: Given the circumstances in front of me, what can I build?

That feels like an important question for all of us right now. There is much in the world we cannot control. But there is still so much that we can. We can control how we speak to one another. We can choose curiosity over judgment. We can notice the child sitting alone or call the friend who is struggling. We can disagree without becoming disagreeable. We can put our phones down and really listen to our children. And we can continue creating schools and communities where young people feel known, challenged, supported, and loved.

Perhaps that is how we keep uncertain times in perspective - not by pretending difficult things aren't happening, but by refusing to allow uncertainty to determine how we live.

After more than three decades in public education, I remain incredibly hopeful about young people. They are remarkably resilient when the adults around them provide steadiness, perspective, expectations, opportunity, and love.

And our children are watching us.

They notice whether we approach the future with fear or possibility. They learn from us whether setbacks are permanent, whether disagreement requires anger, and whether difficult problems are reasons to retreat or invitations to become creative. That doesn't mean we need to have all the answers. We don't. I certainly don't. Sometimes the most honest thing we can say to a young person is, "I don't know exactly how this will turn out. But we're going to figure it out together."

Our job isn't to eliminate every headwind our children will encounter. Our job is to help them build their windmills - to give them knowledge, confidence, compassion, and the ability to think for themselves. And, perhaps most importantly, to make certain they know they will never face the winds alone.

William Kamkwamba could not stop the wind. So he built something with it. There is wisdom in that for all of us. What will we build with the wind we have been given?

With gratitude,
Eric

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES UPDATE - Lisa Yamashita, Assistant Superintendent

Every student deserves to feel safe, valued, understood, and included at school. In support of this commitment, our Student Support Services team has created a new [Neurodiversity Resources for Families](#) webpage. California Senate Bill 939 (SB 939) strengthens anti-bullying and educational equity protections for students who are neurodivergent or perceived to be neurodivergent. The new resource page brings together information and resources to help families better understand neurodiversity and access support. Families are invited to explore this resource and learn more about how we can work together to ensure every student has a strong sense of belonging, connection, and opportunity to thrive.

This commitment to supporting students and families continued throughout the summer, when more than 2,300 San Luis Coastal students participated in engaging learning opportunities designed to help them learn, explore, and grow. More than 1,800 students participated in the K–8 Summer Experience, which offered a wide variety of courses and activities. In addition to academic courses in English Language Arts and Math, students explored their interests through hands-on STEAM, career exploration, outdoor education, arts, and wellness experiences. More than 500 students participated in the 9–12 Summer School program, which provided both credit recovery and credit advancement opportunities in English Language Arts, Math, History, Physical Education, and Health. Together, students earned more than 500 credits toward their graduation goals. We are grateful to the educators, staff, and families who made these summer learning experiences possible and helped our students make the most of their summer. [Click here](#) to learn more from the School Board meeting presentation.

As we begin the new school year, families will also have additional opportunities to connect and access support. Beginning September 23, [Corazón Latino](#) will bring its culturally responsive Emotional Support Groups directly to San Luis Coastal Unified School District families as part of Connected Resources: Schools and Nonprofits in Partnership for Families. These groups will provide a welcoming, supportive space where parents and caregivers can connect with one another, share experiences, build community, and access tools and resources to support their own well-being and their families. A separate series of meetings will also be offered for students, creating additional opportunities for connection and emotional support. All families are welcome

Classes begin September 23, 2026

Sessions will be held in H1 at 1500 Lizzie Street, San Luis Obispo

Dinner and Childcare will be provided.

For more information or to RSVP please call or text Maria Pille at 805.621.0666