

Dear Live Oak Charter School Families,

I hope you are enjoying the summer and remembering to conserve water (more on that later). We have been busy bees so far this summer and wanted to send out news regarding some new additions that we have lined up for the fall and some other bits of information. Please read on for more information:

### **Live Oak Summer Updates:**

#### **HR News:**

Music is such a joyful way to interact with life. To have had the chance to know and work with Mr. Michael over the last two years as Live Oak's music teacher has truly been a gift. Michael was at a crossroads in life, and I deeply respect his choice to part ways with Live Oak and focus on bringing music to students in Sonoma Valley. This will give Michael the opportunity to expand in sharing his music talents, patience, and wonderful disposition with so many students who would not otherwise have a chance to learn music.

Below is Michael's heartfelt letter to the community:

*To the Live Oak community,*

*After much consideration, it is with a full and heavy heart that I must announce that I will be unable to return to Live Oak for the 2021-22 school year. Although for me it feels much too soon to depart, I have chosen to re-focus my efforts as the Artistic Director of ViVO Youth Orchestras in Sonoma Valley where I live. In recent months, it has become increasingly clear that I am needed here where the school district is currently working to establish and sustain music instruction for students K-12. Since joining the Faculty at Live Oak in 2019, my experience has truly been a joyful one, full of opportunities to learn and grow alongside my colleagues. It feels like a blessing in my life to have gotten to spend this time with our students. They are incredibly special, and I will hold them dearly in my heart as I go forward. As I deeply understand the responsibility and purpose of bringing music into the lives of others, it is imperative that the giver has the energetic and emotional reserves to be fully present and attentive to the mission. I am confident that Mr. Tomola, along with the diligent members of the leadership team, will find and welcome someone to nurture this aspect of the LOCS experience. I will help in all ways that I can. It is not my wish to become a stranger to the LOCS community, but rather, forever a friend. I wish you all great peace, strength and courage as you welcome a new year.*

*Blessings and my deepest gratitude to you all,  
Michael Fecskes*

As we bid thee farewell to Michael, Muriel, and Jane...we also give a big hello and welcome to three new Live Oak team members!

For starters, Patrick Boyd, who is a Live Oak parent and has been working with us during distance and hybrid learning and as a volunteer then more recently as a paid IT Specialist in

supporting simultaneous teaching. Now he is moving into the Admin Coordinator role. Although there will be many similar aspects of the job to what Muriel did, we are also excited about Patrick's ability to continue providing IT support and help in other ways using his diverse skill sets. Patrick has already "moved in" and is putting his own spin on the new office space. Welcome aboard Patrick, we are happy you joined the team!

Next up is a new return to Live Oak. Please join me in welcoming Season Petering who will be our new RTI Coordinator. Season was a class teacher at Live Oak for four years before moving to the City and taking a job at a Waldorf school. She took a small break to be with her children and we are thrilled that she is returning to education now, which is such great timing for us! This is such a wonderful role for Season who has a ton of Waldorf experience including both of her parents as Waldorf teachers, and the ability to put her advanced degree in Remedial Education to work. Season is already thinking about ways that she can connect with students and families, looking at summer RTI professional development, and she is jumping into this new position with both feet forward ready to start running in the fall.

Lastly, we are blown away by the timing of finding a new music teacher so quickly after Michael's departure. No rest for the weary! Please help welcome Jeff Castro who was offered the music teacher position on his birthday! Congratulations Jeff! Jeff impressed the hiring panel with his enthusiasm and love for music, great letters of references, care and compassion, creativity, high caliber of musicality, and all around seems to be a good fit for our school culture. Jeff is transitioning out of being a private music teacher for many years. Jeff is set to get his music teaching credential with an emphasis in Jazz from Sonoma State this summer.

### **Fairgrounds Survey:**

The Board of the 4th District Agricultural Association along with the Staff of the Sonoma-Marin Fairgrounds are conducting a public study about how the community uses the Fairgrounds. Also, this is an invitation to share what is most important to you about the fair, and provide input regarding "non-fair" events and services they use and would like to see added.

Since it has not been possible to hold that annual large event, the 4th District Agricultural Association is reaching out to the community at large to gather input that will help guide programming, events offerings, and budgeting. They hope to connect with a larger audience using this process.

[CLICK HERE](#) to take the survey. It will be open through **July 15th**.

### **ASP: After School Program**

Being a parent of elementary school students and being in a house where both parents work, I am keenly aware of the need for some type of after school program to help working parents. Therefore, our current plan is to offer ASP with our wonderful Ms. Denise at the helm for the 2021/22 school year. However, we are still in collaboration with the County Office of Education regarding COVID protocols specifically about our ability to mix stable groups and cohorts. Thank you for your ongoing patience and more information and clarity will be forthcoming.

## **Saving Water**

My top five tips for saving water:

1. Turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth
2. Fix leaky faucets
3. Drive a dusty car
4. Use a reusable water bottle
5. Take showers using 2.0 GPM or lower shower head