



# The Lion's Roar

## McKinley Monthly Newsletter

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# McKinley Highlights and Accomplishments this Month!

## McKinley Selected as an Exemplary School to Model the Benefits of Inclusion of Students with Special Needs in a Worldwide Educational Video

Currently 4<sup>th</sup> grade's Deep Learning Global Citizenship Service Learning Project is on inclusion. Ms. Buckner's 4th grade class and Ms. Cubillas's Life Skills Special Ed class had a unique additional opportunity as part of their Deep Learning project. Inclusion Matters by Shane's Inspiration, who creates inclusive playgrounds, and Edutopia, who creates worldwide educational videos about best teaching practices, selected McKinley to create a video to show the benefits of social inclusion and the value of children of all abilities playing together.

I am so proud and honored that McKinley was selected for this important video, and I look forward to our students being role models and spokespeople for the benefits of inclusivity. I was able to share with the SMMUSD Board and leadership last week about this exciting partnership and opportunity, as well as share about the many things we do at McKinley to promote inclusion.

Below are links to a behind-the-scenes video I made of the experience. It was really wonderful to see how kind and supportive our students were.

Actual Edutopia video, which will reach over 12 million educators worldwide, coming soon!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdBFAMMpEog&feature=youtu.be>  
(also on twitter and the school website)

- Dr. Benjamin, Principal

## McKinley Earns Digital Safety Certification

McKinley teachers completed the rigorous Common Sense certification process and earned McKinley our schoolwide Digital Common Sense Certification! We will be receiving a banner to hang outside showing that we teach students how to be safe and responsible digital citizens.



## McKinley Earns Energy Star Certification

McKinley achieved 2018 U.S. EPA Energy Star certification signifying superior energy performance. Energy Star certified buildings are verified to perform in the top 25% of buildings nationwide, use an average 35% less energy, cause an average 35% fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and are less expensive to operate. We will receive a decal for the office window showing our positive impact on sustainability and the climate.



## McKinley Receives Niche Ranking of Top 5 Schools in Santa Monica with the Best Teachers!





# What's Been Happening at McKinley October-November!



Families had a great time at our annual **Costume Parade**.



Families enjoyed the **Harvest Festival** and Haunted House fun.



We had a wonderful **Family Literacy Night**! Students participated in literacy games and activities and guest authors shared their work.





Students helped the environment on **Bike it Walk it Days.**



Wonderful volunteers made our campus beautiful on **Campus Beautification Day.**



The local organization Skywell helped our students learn about **sustainability** through their generous **donation** of reusable water bottles and atmospheric water generators.



We had a successful **Great CA Shake Out Drill!** All emergency centers were activated, and students and staff practiced simulated situations so everyone knows what to do in the case of an earthquake!



Students were captivated at **school assemblies!** MetroLA talked to students about train, bike, scooter, and walking safety. Got Rhythm from Music Center LA taught us about the history of tap. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders met the horses and officers of the SMPD Mounted Unit.





Students showed off their talent in front of a huge crowd at **Talent Show**.



Students submitted amazing art and writing for the **PTA Reflections Art Contest**. Participants celebrated at an awards breakfast.



4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders bravely presented speeches for their peers at **Student Council Elections**.



4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> **student enrichment** opportunities began. Teachers volunteer to lead Green Team, STEM Club, and Film Club during lunch recess.



**Deep Learning** projects began. 5<sup>th</sup> grade had Path Partners from downtown LA present about homelessness. 2<sup>nd</sup> grade got inspired to learn about bees.



Students posed for lovely photos on **Picture Day**.



Students went on a variety of fun **field trips**.



For our monthly **schoolwide outdoor assemblies** 2<sup>nd</sup> grade presented about respect and 4<sup>th</sup> grade presented about citizenship. Students also shared about our monthly shared reading books.



Teachers shared progress reports at informative **Parent/Teacher Conferences**.

Prospective families got to see our wonderful school during **School Tours**.

The **Special Ed Parent Resource Group** had their fall meeting. The McKinley special education team shared about their roles and answered questions.



Thank you to organizations who **donated** hundreds of new books to our library, and red buckets of food and gift cards for families in need.



Instructional Aides were **trained** in how to support the implementation of the **Second Step curriculum**, the effective research-based program that explicitly teaches social skills.



Families enjoyed **Thanksgiving festivities**.



Our teachers are life-long learners continuously participating in **Professional Development**. Teachers had trainings on the Next Generation Science Standards, the Olweus Anti-Bullying Program, and how to support students with special needs. We also had Max Drummy from Deep Learning fly out for a special training on how to teach citizenship. The organization Cotsen funded a special learning lab on interactive read alouds and innovative practices like sketch-noting and emotional times. Teachers also analyzed assessment data to guide instruction.



Students **engaged** in wonderful active learning.