This school year has brought unprecedented changes, challenges and opportunities for all of us. Together we learned new skills, adapted, and persevered. For more than a year, we conducted school online, only dreaming of the day that our students and teachers would return to campus. On April 12, 2021, 93% of our student body returned to campus and participated in onsite instruction; and we ended the most difficult chapter in our careers and households: educating our children during a pandemic. To experience in-person the smiles, laughter, and joy of learning, is a great way to end the school year!

As the school year begins to wind down, parents begin asking about next year and new grade level/classroom assignments. I would like to explain the process we use for placing students into classes. Class placement is done as a team. In order to achieve the best result for the maximum number of students, our school district subscribes to the practice of heterogeneously grouping students. Research into students’ learning supports the practice of creating classes that are relatively balanced with high, average, and below average achievers, boys and girls, etc. The following criteria will be used to create “balanced” or heterogeneous classes:

1. Balanced boy/girl ratios
2. Balanced distribution of student abilities
3. Balanced distribution of students with identified learning problems/special needs

(Continued on page 5)
A Note From The Editor:

In order to showcase more of our students evenly across the many grade levels, this Hawkeye issue is focusing on grades TK / K, 4, & 5. The fall issue featured grades 1, 2, & 3. Enjoy, and Happy Summer Break to you all!

PTA President Kasey Tocco

Can it be? Can the school year really be over when it feels like it just started? I honestly cannot tell you whether I am overjoyed or bereft to put this year to bed. I also can’t tell you how we did it... any of it!

Parents: I don’t know how you juggled the demands of work and distance learning. Grandparents: I am in awe of how you stepped in to assist your children and grandchildren during this unprecedented time.

To our teachers: It was an honor to be brought into your virtual classrooms and to see how much work you have put in to engage our students in a new way. We have witnessed firsthand how sharp you have been in both listening and teaching to each of our students’ unique situations. Wow!

Principal Saipe: I am amazed how you managed to stay connected to your students and staff. Thank you for constantly reworking the wheel to get our students safely back on campus for as many hours as possible.

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To our office and custodial staff: Things certainly were not any easier on you. Whether it was the endless hours at distributions, fielding phone calls and emails from worried parents, or just trying to keep all the parts in motion; you showed up for our community, and we are so grateful.

To our PTA and parent community: We raised the highest amount ever in our spring fundraiser. We were able to fund our choral music program for the entire year through PTA funds. We allocated teachers enrichment dollars for Arts Attack, classroom supplies, and plain old FUN!

Here is what I do know for certain: Our community endured; our children proved resilient; we innovated new ways to get the important stuff done; we took care of our neighbors and friends; we worked through challenges; and we DID IT.

Thank you to all of our 5th grade parents that will be moving on to middle school. Your contributions and legacy to our Holmes community have been tremendous! To those of us who will call Holmes “home” for a few more years, I am looking forward to seeing you in a few short months!

A L L  M Y  B E S T,

K A S E Y  T O C C O

Hawkeye
Images of a 100th Day of School *(Celebrated in distance learning)*

Holmes Student Council *(By Audrey V. & Karis M.)*

“This year has been one of the most productive and enjoyable years of the Student Council,” stated Principal Saipe on May 24, 2021. We agree that Student Council has done many things this year, even though it has been a little different. The Holmes Student Council has helped fund events to support our school, such as the Food Drive, Valentine cup grams, and Spirit Week. Another priority of the Student Council is to keep students safe. This is why we practice fire and earthquake drills, and hold assemblies that focus on school safety. We also enforce the rules for students to follow. The Holmes Student Council has a Mission Statement, which states: “We the Student Council work on school projects, increase school spirit throughout Holmes, are role models and leaders, and inform the school about special and important events.” In conclusion, the members of Student Council do all they can to improve the school and make sure that students, teachers, and all of the staff are heard.

The Many “Faces” of Social Distancing...
Sincere THANKS (you rock!) to Our Corporate Sponsors!
Minutes in Motion (Continued)

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Principal Saipe

(Continued from page 1)

4. The clustering of identified GATE, resource students, and English Language Learners into teachable groups for support
5. Equal class sizes
6. Separation of students that have a history of not working well together
7. The nature of the teacher, i.e. specialized training, skills, interests, or presentation style

The teachers and I dedicate much time and effort toward achieving a “balance” in each classroom. Each student’s current teacher completes a profile describing the student’s academic performance data, on-task behavior, ability to work independently, special program participation, class conduct, and other students that should not be in the same class. We are fortunate to have an outstanding teaching staff that works closely with parents to meet the unique needs of each and every student. We find that most students can perform well with any number of teachers. If you have specific concerns regarding your child’s health or learning needs, you may provide me with an email or written note regarding the type of environment you feel would enhance your child’s learning. Please do not make a request for a specific teacher. Due to the extreme difficulty of balancing classes, we cannot honor parent requests for specific teachers. Please also note that because one child in a family has had a specific teacher, it does not mean that another child in the family will have the same teacher. Thank you for your cooperation.

I feel like the luckiest principal to work in a school community with such strong traditions of academic excellence and parent involvement. Let’s all hold on to the new skills and discipline we learned this year and continue to read this summer so we are prepared for next year. Please stay connected with important updates by checking the San Diego Unified School District website and our school website frequently at https://holmes.sandiegounified.org. Enjoy your summer and I can’t wait for next year!
The Spring Holidays/Fun Days
Holmes Time Capsule!

The Holmes Student Council, along with the PTA, are working together to create a time capsule to commemorate this special year. Unique and depicting items from this historic time, such as a Holmes face mask, the 2020-2021 yearbook, both issues of the Hawkeye newsletter, and many more items will be included. There are sure to be some surprises when the capsule resurfaces at its future date. Each grade level will also contribute an item that reflects a special project or memory that they collaborated on / created together this year.

The current plan is that this year’s Kindergarten class will have the honor of opening the time capsule at the end of their 5th grade year, and that the current 5th grade class will return to be present for the ceremony. How exciting it will be to see how much has changed by the year 2026! We look forward to opening the time capsule in five years!

KARIS M., 2020-2021 STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT & KRISTINE MANDANI, 2020-2021 PTA HISTORIAN

Fifth Grade Festivities

Promotion: Great news! Holmes will have an in-person 5th grade promotion! The promotion will be located outside on the primary playground this year. Stay tuned for further details.

T-Shirt: The 5th grade recently held a competition for the design on the 5th grade shirt. There were many great entries, with one in particular standing out to the majority of the 5th graders. This year’s design has been drawn by Sophia A. from Room 11 (McTaggart), whose artwork spoke to the students after a year of learning from home.

The 5th grade class chose this shirt because they thought it represented their achievements as 2020-2021 “graduates!” Now, every Wednesday the students try to wear their 5th grade t-shirts to show their school pride.

5th Grade Legacy Gift: At Holmes, it is customary for the 5th grade class to present a lasting gift to the campus. This class has decided to place inspirational quotes like “mini murals” around the school for positive influence, and that students and teachers can make a goal to find. Information will be available soon about these newly applied quotes.
The HAWKEYE is a quarterly newsletter sponsored on behalf of Holmes Elementary School by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

The PTA is a committed group of volunteers, usually parents of current students, that support Oliver Wendell Holmes Elementary, a Clairemont neighborhood school in the San Diego Unified School District. A collaboration of parents, teachers, administrators, and students, the Holmes PTA is devoted to building an equitable school community. We fund and implement positive learning experiences through strategic programs aimed at providing educational enrichment for students, and that will develop well-rounded, engaged learners. To join these efforts, contact president@holmespta.org.