



School Nominee Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

School and District's Certifications

The signatures of the school principal and district superintendent (or equivalents) on the next page certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of their knowledge. *In no case is a private school required to make any certification with regard to the public school district in which it is located.*

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades early learning to 12.
2. The school has been evaluated and selected from among schools within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
3. Neither the nominated public school nor its public school district is refusing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district wide compliance review. The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is not subject to the jurisdiction of OCR. The nominated DoDEA schools, however, are subject to and in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements to comply with Federal civil rights laws.
4. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the public school district concluding that the nominated public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
5. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the public school or the public school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
6. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the public school or public school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or public school district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.
7. The school meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools 2015-2018

Public Charter Title I Magnet Private Independent Rural

Name of Principal: **Mr. Michael Conlon**

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name: **Top of the World Elementary School**

(As it should appear on an award)

Official School Name Mailing Address: **21601 Tree Top Lane, Laguna Beach, CA 92651**

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

County: **Orange** State School Code Number *: **30 66555 6028922**

Telephone: **949-497-7790** Fax: **949-494-5397**

Web site/URL: www.lbusd.org

E-mail: mconlon@lbusd.org

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space*

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.



Date: March 8, 2018

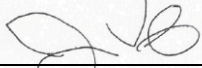
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent: **Dr. Jason Vioria**

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in official records)

District Name: **Laguna Beach Unified School District**

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.



Date: March 8, 2018

(Superintendent's Signature)

Nominating Authority's Certifications

The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades Pre-K-12.
2. The school is one of those overseen by the Nominating Authority which is highest achieving in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
3. The school meets all applicable federal civil rights and federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: **California Department of Education**

Name of Nominating Authority: **State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson**

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify to the best of my knowledge that the school meets the provisions above.



Date: March 30, 2018

(Nominating Authority's Signature)

SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications, narrative summary, documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars, and photos should be submitted online according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509

Expiration Date: March 31, 2018

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0509. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 37 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit P.L. 107-110, Sec. 501, Innovative Programs and Parental Choice Provisions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.



Top of the World Elementary School

California Nominee to

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools



Prepared by
California Department of Education
School Facilities and Transportation Services Division
[Green Ribbon Schools Award Program](#)
March 2018

PART II – SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Top of the World Elementary School, Laguna Beach, Calif.

Placed-based education begins with school buildings and grounds

Top of the World Elementary School, called TOW by the local community, is nestled in the hills of Laguna Beach and has been providing a robust and innovative education for students since its inception 50 years ago. TOW has always had a focus on developing environmentally and socially conscious students by providing opportunities for them to make positive impacts on the local and global community.

TOW has one of the oldest school garden programs in all of Orange County, which is situated south of Los Angeles on California's coast. There are three on-site gardens totaling 0.5-acre, which are used as outdoor classroom spaces. The first site serves grades 3–5 with 30 vegetable plots, 25 fruit trees, an outdoor amphitheater, a fire-safe garden, fruit tree guild plantings, a composting corner, an 18-foot geodesic dome greenhouse, and an outdoor cooking station. The second site serves grades 1–2 with eight plots, a five senses garden, a pollinator garden (Certified Monarch Waystation #13330), a waste sorting station, and a cooking station. The space also features a Window to the Canyon learning area. Kindergartners have a raised vegetable bed, worm bin, and apple tree in the play area for continuous access during recess. TOW works with 75 parent and community volunteers who contribute 2,800 hours maintaining the gardens annually. Students visit the gardens on a weekly basis participating in lessons aligned to the California State Standards. During the 2016-17 school year, students spent a combined 10,000 hours learning outdoors.

TOW's garden features an 18-foot geodesic dome greenhouse that functions as a model of sustainability, funded by a Seeds of Change™ Grant. The Growing Dome is designed as a self-sufficient, net zero energy structure where students can interact with sustainable design in a hands-on manner. Its passive solar design allows it to heat up during the day and stay warm overnight. It features an above ground pond, automatic vents controlled by beeswax, and solar ventilation fans. Students learn about weather, aquaponics, seed propagation, green design, and engineering principals in the Growing Dome.

The Laguna Beach Unified School District has partnered with Schneider Electric to help implement energy conservation district-wide. Schneider Electric implemented several conservation measures at TOW. The first phase of the energy efficiency project included interior LED lighting upgrades to all existing interior lamps. This LED installation was 34% better than California Title 24 lighting power density requirements. The interior lighting project also included the addition of occupancy sensors installed in shared spaces. Next, all the exterior lighting fixtures were upgraded to LED fixtures around campus. A 35 kW solar photovoltaic system installed in 2002 was updated in 2015 to restore production capacity.

Several classes partnered with Waste Management to create a better recycling program on campus, learning about the importance of reducing the amount of trash sent to landfills. TOW participates in Waste Management's "The Yellow Bag Program." The hauler provides the school with 46-gallon yellow bags for food waste that are stationed around the perimeter of the student eating area and in the food service kitchen. The food waste from the yellow bags is eventually liquefied to create Engineered BioSlurry, which is useful in creating renewable energy products. Every classroom has recycling bins, ensuring all paper waste is being recycled as well.

TOW uses 1:1 devices and Google Documents; students do many assignments online to save paper and teachers share documents online in professional learning communities. PTA, Principal, and District announcements are all sent digitally, reducing paper waste. Another class spearheaded a campaign to divert uneaten pre-packaged food items from the trash cans into a collection bin that gets donated to the Laguna Beach Friendship Shelter. These multi-pronged efforts have greatly reduced the amount of trash TOW is sending to the landfill. Students are paying it forward by helping the less fortunate and positively impacting the environment.

TOW partners with local agencies and initiatives to continuously promote improved sustainability efforts. For example, the school works with the Laguna Beach County Water District to implement measures aligned with waterwise landscaping and garden applications.

In 2017, TOW replaced three portable classrooms with new, permanent, modular buildings from American Modular. The buildings consist of five classrooms in the company's Gen7 series, which is designed to meet Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for green schools.

TOW uses place-based environmental education through buildings, grounds, and the neighborhood. Students observe erosion on campus slopes and design solutions, study natural landforms of the adjacent canyon, sample soil types around campus, use the solar power generated from a demonstration solar array on the shed roof to power a blender and make smoothies and run the irrigation system, take phenology observations of California Poppy in the gardens and report to Project BudBurst, involve students in the daily emptying/consolidation of recycling bins and collection of unopened food, and collect weather data for analysis through a school-wide WeatherBug system on building roofs.

TOW's Student Nutrition Advisory Committee (SNAC) is a PTA committee focused on promoting health and wellness at schools and in the community, with a particular focus on promoting healthy eating and body image. The committee meets quarterly with administration, parents, and nutrition services. Some examples of SNAC actions include attending the 2017 Good Food Showcase, the 2017 California Farm to School Conference, and the 2016 Edible Schoolyard Academy. SNAC programs include Harvest of the Month and a range of parent education efforts. TOW was recognized by the *Orange County Register* for the "Freshest Meal" in the elementary school category in September 2016.

TOW has numerous opportunities for stakeholders to meet to discuss, plan, and implement ongoing green efforts. These initiatives are discussed in monthly PTA meetings, weekly staff meetings, School Site Council meetings, and a nutrition committee that meets quarterly. TOW's current recycling program came out of ideas suggested by staff and parents. Interested stakeholders met and brainstormed how to implement the program. Staff and parents reached out to community partners including Waste Management and the Laguna Beach Friendship Shelter, to help work through the logistics. TOW's green efforts are advertised to all stakeholders through garden tours at Back to School Night, in the principal's weekly newsletter, and whole-school assemblies.

PART III – DOCUMENTATION OF STATE EVALUATION OF SCHOOL NOMINEE

Top of the World Elementary School (TOW) serves approximately 600 K–5 students in the Laguna Beach Unified School District. The school is located in Orange County, south of Los Angeles, on Temple Hill in the Sheep Hills mountain range.

Approximately 7% of students at TOW are “unduplicated pupils” for purposes of California’s Local Control Funding Formula, meaning the school receives supplemental grants in order to provide targeted services for students who are English learners, foster youth, and/or income eligible for free or reduced-price meals. About 25% of TOW students are from communities of color.

Pillar I: Reduce Environmental Impact and Costs

Element IA: Energy

- In 2014, Laguna Beach Unified School District created a comprehensive 10-year facilities master plan. The plan includes capital improvements, maintenance, repairs/replacements, and energy efficiency improvement projects for all district-owned sites.
- TOW has shown a 12% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions since September 2015 using electric data received from Southern California Edison and gas data received from Southern California Gas. The year 2015- 2016 used 306,838 kWh and 1,155 therms and the year 2016–17 used 245,698 kWh and 1,397 therms. The conversion rates of 0.00027105 metric tons of CO₂/kWh and 0.0058 metric tons of CO₂/therm were used. The student population in 2015–16 was 639 and in 2016–17 it was 604.
- TOW has a 35 kW solar photovoltaic system in use. It is estimated that 18% of the school’s energy is obtained from the on-site production from the PV system. The original system was installed in 2002. In 2016, new inverters were installed to help the system produce more efficiently. It was estimated that the PV system produces 54,059 kWh/year. This upgrade saved TOW \$7,889 in annual electric bills.
- The local electric utility is Southern California Edison. The annual power content label reported the actual 2016 power mix to include 28% eligible renewables.
- Laguna Beach USD has \$612,927 in Proposition 39 funding and selected Schneider Electric to help implement energy conservation measures for the district. At Top of the World Elementary, Schneider Electric implemented several of these conservation measures (below). The total energy savings of these conservation measures is 134,059 kWh/year at the TOW campus. This equates to an annual cost savings of \$23,456.
 - Upgraded interior LED lighting achieve 34% better than Title 24 lighting power density requirements;
 - Added occupancy sensors in shared spaces;
 - Upgraded all exterior lighting fixtures to LED; and
 - Upgraded the school’s PV system as described above; ventilation fans at the lift stations of the PV system were also replaced in this project to improve efficiency.
- TOW works to reduce the heat island effect by using trees and vegetation cover to provide shade and cooling on campus. This can also help to reduce erosion and storm water runoff. The school’s white roof helps to reflect heat and sunlight away from the building.
- All air conditioning units are turned off at the end of the day and set to 70°F. The units will remain off until manually turned on.
- On March 10, 2017, TOW hosted a solar/battery power kit demonstration for the students with Schneider Electric. They provided a Goal Zero Yeti 1250W Solar/Battery kit to be used at the school. The demonstration included showing how the battery could power a Wolf blender. This provided a real-life example for the students to see how the

electricity conversion from solar power worked. Smoothies were made and served from the school's garden to the students. As a regularly used resource, this kit will save Top of the World Elementary 221 kWh/year or \$33 per year, which has an impact equivalent to planting 2.5 trees per year. The solar/battery kit is a great tool that brings both the STEM students and the Culinary Academy together in the garden for a farm to table experience while utilizing renewable energy.

Element IB: Water and Grounds.

- TOW has reduced indoor water use by 21.2% since 2014. The reduction in water use is tracked on a monthly basis and evaluated in coordination with the local water department.
- Although TOW does not meter outdoor water separately, measures have been taken to reduce water consumption in the outdoor classroom. TOW replaced overhead spray with drip irrigation in 2015. In 2017, the school upgraded to EPA WaterSense Certified Smart Controllers with rain sensors, local weather data and Wi-Fi capabilities. Smart Controllers are estimated to reduce outdoor water use by 30%.
- TOW employs many water reduction measures: rainwater capture, surface mulch, and metering faucets.
 - Three 50-gallon rain barrels were installed for rainfall capture in the wet months. Students spend a session in the outdoor classroom learning how to calculate the rainfall catchment area of the roof, and the inches of rain needed to fill the rain barrels. This water is used in a hands-on way, with students filling watering cans and watering the school gardens with it.
 - Surface mulch is used on all school garden plantings. Students spread straw and bark mulches on all exposed soil each fall and spring to help reduce the amount of water needed for successful growth by holding in moisture. Students spend a session in the outdoor classroom comparing and contrasting garden beds with and without mulch, for moisture levels, soil temperature and water retention. Before summer break, they plant daikon radish as a cover crop to reduce moisture loss and soil degradation over the warm months.
- TOW maintains an active relationship with Laguna Beach County Water District to look for ways to educate students about water use reduction. Families take the My Water Pledge, a friendly competition between cities across the US to see who can be the most water-wise. In 2017, Laguna Beach was named the "Nation's Most Water-Wise City" for the third year in a row. The school also exhibits at the SmartScape Expo, an annual community event to educate residents about responsible water use.
- The TOW campus was built so that the slope of the hardscape directs all water to the turf areas and primarily to the large grass field used for PE. Rain catching barrels have been added to the garden to serve watering needs of the many varieties of vegetation housed within it. On the large slope surrounding the campus, native plants that survive without the need for irrigation are maintained so that the existing irrigation system could be abandoned. Jute netting, straw waddles, and succulents have been added to barren areas of the slope to prevent erosion and to give the existing native plants time to expand.
- 16% of the school grounds are devoted to ecologically beneficial uses. The total school grounds are approximately 384,000 square feet, or 8.8 acres, and grounds devoted to ecological uses are 62,300 square feet.

- TOW has a Monarch Watch certified pollinator garden (Monarch Waystation #13330). Each of the school gardens has a natural outdoor seating area, outdoor cooking area, storage and shade. Recycled materials are used throughout gardens (e.g., logs from the old play structure are used for seating, edging; recycled concrete is used for low retaining walls). The school gardens border a 3,700-acre wilderness preserve, Aliso-Wood Canyon, and an informational “Window to the Canyon” station allows students to observe this natural landscape below.

Element IC: Waste

- TOW documents a 52% diversion rate; the monthly waste rate is 0.0573 cubic yards/person.
- Compost is made in the school garden’s “Compost Corner” using seven different bins of three different types: vermicomposting bins, compost tumblers, and above-ground soil saver compost bins. There is a dedicated parent volunteer assigned to help with the school compost weekly. He uses a leaf chipper, inoculant, and sifter to aid in decomposition, producing lots of compost to use in the vegetable beds. Students help with many steps of the compost process; adding to the bins, turning the tumblers, making compost tea, sifting compost, and spreading the finished product. Organic material that is not fit for the compost pile is put into the city’s Waste Management green waste bins. A student-created system is used of Behren 20-Gallon steel trashcans painted red (landfill), green (compost) and blue (recycle) in each of the school gardens to signal to students how to separate their waste when in the garden.
- In addition to compost produced on-site, TOW locally sources mulch and compost from Serrano Creek Soils, 15 miles from the school. Leftover compost and mulch from the city’s residential compost giveaway is donated to the school.
- TOW participates in “The Yellow Bag Program” provided by Waste Management. The hauler provides the school with 46-gallon yellow bags for food waste that are stationed around the perimeter of the student eating area and in the food service kitchen. The food waste from the yellow bags is eventually liquefied to create Engineered BioSlurry, which is useful in creating renewable energy products.
- TOW works closely with Waste Management to periodically review and adjust waste and recycling services. Since there is no cost for recycling pick-ups, the school has been implementing as much recycling and food waste procedures as possible to eliminate the need for trash pick-ups.
- TOW does not promote the use of any hazardous materials. Cleaning products are used that are safe and effective and that are diluted alternatives to harsh chemicals such as bleach. In addition, the pest management company does not use chemical poisons, but rather they rely on trapping. School employees trained on how to identify and use green products.
- The school has other programs in place to reduce environmental impact:
 - The Annual PTA Book Swap has run since 2006 and swaps/donates 4,000-5,000 books each year. In 2017, we swapped 4183 books and many classes had 100% participation.
 - TOW keeps unwanted, unopened food out of the waste stream by collecting food in cardboard boxes and delivering it bi-weekly to the Laguna Beach Food Pantry. This program collects/diverts 13 pounds of food each week.
 - TOW uses 1:1 Devices and Google Documents; students do many assignments online to save paper and teachers share documents online in professional

learning communities. PTA, Principal, and District announcements are all sent digitally, reducing paper waste.

- Green Luncheons hosted by the PTA use real dinnerware instead of disposables.
- Recyclable cafeteria trays are 100% compostable in the Food Waste recycling
- Two water bottle filling stations promote reusable water bottles; students are also encouraged to bring reusable lunch containers from home.

Element ID: Alternative Transportation

- 85% of students use green transportation to school, walking, riding, taking the bus, or carpooling. By observing and counting students as they came to school, TOW found that: 12% of students walk to school; 0.8% ride their bike or skateboard; 12% carpool with other students; and 61% take a school bus or other public transportation.
- When TOW participated in National Walk to School Day on October 17, 2017, 75 students walked to school. The school provides supervision and regular email communications emphasizing safe walking and drop off routes. Locked storage for bikes and skateboards is conveniently located.
- Last year TOW eliminated the maintenance truck, reducing the total district fleet from 5 to 3 maintenance vehicles. Since LBUSD is relatively small and schools are in close proximity of one another, maintenance staff shares the vehicles now as both a means to reduce the total usage and promote safety as they are required to work in teams. “No Idling” signs are posted and the policy is communicated through regular communications from the principal. School bus drivers turn off their engines and wait outside on school benches for dismissal.

Pillar II: Improve the Health and Wellness of Students and Staff

Element IIA: Environmental Health

- The district has incorporated Integrated Pest Management (IPM) procedures for the control of structural and landscape pests. Pesticides are used only after nontoxic and other safer methods have been considered.
 - TOW worked with The Hungry Owl Project to install a barn owl box. Once populated, this is a sustainable way to help control rodents on school grounds as owls can consume 3,000 rodents each mating season.
 - TOW uses safe and effective alternatives to harsh cleaning chemicals normally used to combat germs and viruses; harsh chemicals are avoided as part of the efforts to optimize indoor air quality.
- For twenty years, the city of Laguna Beach has employed Agotilio Moreno and his goat herd of two hundred to reduce the fire danger on the hillsides surrounding the school site. The goats arrive on campus at the end of August and stay into September providing a sustainable way to cut down on the dry brush before red flag fire season. The goats eat native plants such as coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and mustard weed to clear fire breaks. It has become a tradition for the students to look for the goat families at the playground fences to start off each new school year.
- On May 9, 2017, Laguna Beach became the first city in Orange County to ban smoking. It had previously only banned smoking at beaches and parks. The ban now includes sidewalks, bike paths, alleys, and parking structures. State laws have banned smoking at school sites for a number of years.

- The school site has been surveyed in compliance with the State AHERA program and asbestos and lead containing materials have been abated, including mercury containing substances.
- All classrooms and buildings at TOW were modernized in 2004 and the specifications related to high quality acoustics, daylighting, and humidity control were addressed at that time. In 2014, the mechanical unit filters were changed to HEPA filters to further promote improved IAQ. This year, construction was finished related to replacing old portable classrooms with new, highly efficient Gen7 modular buildings that are constructed to LEED certifiable levels and are consistent with the sustainability standards of Laguna Beach. Teachers are given information about indoor plants that have been proven to provide higher levels of oxygen than other plants.
- School ventilation systems are monitored for performance by a dedicated onsite maintenance technician at each site. Routine service and maintenance is performed on units as needed to ensure the units are operational and running efficiently; filters are replaced twice annually. When required, air balancing of the system is utilized to adjust the system and provide optimal engineered air ventilation volumes.
- In 2016, TOW conducted water testing for lead, both at the primary entry source and multiple water faucets to ensure water was far below California's maximum allowable levels for drinking water. TOW will continue to perform testing in partnership with the local water agency.
- Chemicals routinely used in schools are managed by the district IIPP which outlines the cataloging and management of the chemicals. Staff are trained in the use of chemicals and Material Safety Data Sheets for specific products are available to each staff member.
- Outdoor environmental quality is carefully safeguarded at TOW. School buses do not idle when they arrive, rather drivers turn off engines and wait on a bench together for student dismissal. The school also enforces a no-idling policy for student pick-up, using signage and parent communication. At drop-off, staff and volunteers help open car doors to make sure the line moves quickly.
- Five new trees were planted on the school fields recently. Other large, healthy trees like the California Sycamore protect students during recess from sun, heat, and air pollution. According to The Nature Conservancy, large trees reduce particulate matter (pM) in the air by 7-24% and lower temperature by 3.6°F near the trees. Benches and seating have been placed under these large trees. The school is also protected from air pollution as it's located in a residential area, away from busy roads, bordered by homes on one side and a natural preserve on the other side.

Element IIB: Nutrition and Fitness

- TOW participates in the USDA's Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetable Pilot Program (UFVPP) and the school salad bar features local fresh fruits and vegetables, organic whenever possible. In addition, burgers are made from grass fed beef, hot dogs contain no nitrates/nitrites, and approximately 65% of breakfast and lunch entrees are clean label [USDA products makes up the other 35%].
- Nutrition education for staff, students, and families comes primarily through the Harvest of the Month program, the on-site garden program, the District website (which offers nutrition education information, resources for teachers, healthy snack and menu

suggestions, etc.), Kids Run the OC incorporated into the PE program, as well as after school programs.

- The school offers nine different after-school classes, each 8 weeks long, on nutrition topics such as cooking and gardening. Several classrooms also participate in the Dairy Council of California nutrition program.
- TOW has three on-site gardens totaling 0.5-acre as described in Part II. Unique partnerships to maintain the on-site gardens include: Garden Mentor Program, where an elderly volunteer from Laguna Beach Garden Club, shares her 40 years of edible gardening experience during maintenance visits; Annual Mulch & Compost Donation, made possible through partnerships with Laguna Beach County Water District, Waste Management and Kellogg Garden Products; and Wi-Fi Smart Irrigation Timers, to allow for water-efficient adjustments to irrigation schedules to be made quickly and easily by garden leaders.
- TOW's garden supplies something unique to the cafeteria each quarter. In the past this has included Daikon radish (fall), Fuyu persimmon (winter), and peaches (spring). The school garden supplies smaller quantities of food for the after school cooking class, *Junior Gardeners: Grow, Cook, Eat!* and support club for low-income students, *Juntos*. The school also provides food to the Laguna Beach Food Pantry through the Giving Garden program. In the past this has included excess tomatoes ready before school starts or bumper crops of peaches, persimmons, or mandarin oranges.
- All students K-5 have lessons in the garden six times per year taught by a paid Garden Educator in conjunction with their classroom teachers and aligned to their grade curriculum. These Outdoor Classroom visits are scheduled in advance. Teachers also reserve time online with a variable schedule (e.g. weekly, bi-monthly, during down times) to take their classes to the garden for outdoor reading groups, garden maintenance, or other topics of interest led by parent volunteers. During the 2016-2017 school year, students spent a combined 10,000 hours learning outdoors.
- TOW students in grades 1-5 participate in 100 minutes of supervised PE weekly with a Credentialed PE Teacher and 3 highly-trained professional PE Coaches; kindergarten participates in PE once a week. LBUSD has an Adaptive PE Teacher and Physical Therapist on staff to facilitate PE participation in an atmosphere that is safe and enjoyable for all students.
- Due to temperate climate, at least 95% of students' annual physical education takes place outdoors. In the event of rain, excessive heat, or wild fires, there is access to the MPR or classrooms where lessons can still be performed.
- This year, TOW began integrating the Kids Run the O.C. program into Physical Education classes (traditionally, it has been an after school class).
- 5th graders take the California Healthy Kids Survey yearly. The data collected from this survey helps inform TOW and the district with a better understanding of the relationship between students' health behaviors and academic performance, and is frequently cited by state policymakers and the media as a critical component of school improvement efforts to help guide the development of more effective health, prevention, and youth development programs.
- TOW's Credentialed PE Teacher is piloting an inquiry-based unit around the CA Physical Fitness test. He meets with one 5th grade class two times each month to discuss strategies and methods to improve their own personal physical fitness, health, and food/beverage choices. They discuss standard 3, students assess and maintain a level of physical fitness to improve health and performance and the 7 sub standards that

follow. Students will do this for the first 15-20 minutes of class and then go outside for their lesson. They collaborate in their groups through teacher-led instruction to communicate with each other and other groups about their ideas and solutions to health, exercise, and food/beverage choices and how these can help or hurt their health, overall fitness, and performance in daily life and their state testing.

- LBUSD also hosts an annual Dodgeball fundraising tournament through the Schoolpower Organization that encourages parents, staff, and students to participate in the fall.
- TOW's Student Nutrition Advisory Committee (SNAC) is a PTA committee focused on promoting health and wellness at schools and in the community, with a particular focus on promoting healthy eating and body image. The committee meets quarterly with administration, parents, and nutrition services. Some examples of SNAC actions include attending the 2017 Good Food Showcase, the 2017 California Farm to School Conference, and the 2016 Edible Schoolyard Academy. Some of the programs SNAC provides include:
 - Back to School Night - parent lunch line education dinner and student lunch account activation
 - Harvest of the Month - monthly tasting of the featured local/seasonal/organic produce at lunchtime
 - Parent education - nutritional tips, harvest of the month and recipes featured in weekly school email
- TOW hosts a Family Wellness Night where families gather for health & wellness tips and farm-to-fork cooking experience.
- TOW adheres to our District's Student Wellness Policy BP 5030. The Governing Board recognizes the link between student health and learning and desires to provide a comprehensive program promoting healthy eating and physical activity for district students. The Superintendent or designee shall build a coordinated school health system that supports and reinforces health literacy through health education, health services, nutrition services, psychological and counseling services, health promotion for staff, a safe and healthy school environment, and parent/guardian and community involvement.
- TOW offers a variety of classes after school that promote wellness, including cooking, gardening, sports, running/Kids Run the OC, yoga, and dance.
- TOW recently began a partnership with the John Wayne Cancer Foundation's Skin Cancer Education Program "Block the Blaze."
- All students spend 45-60 minutes each month in the school gardens during formal outdoor education. Students also engage in 55-67 minutes of child-directed, physical play during daily recesses. Students enjoy a 5-mile hike in the canyon adjacent to school as part of the 5th grade promotion.
- TOW's Fit Club is a daily morning exercise program for students who may benefit from extra sensory input in the morning through fun and creative group activities. Activities may include yoga/stretching, jogging, relay games, and team-building activities. Fit Club is an intervention that has been offered for roughly 3 years. It is offered each morning and is considered a Tier 2 intervention (invitation only), targeting students that have difficulties with arousal/energy levels. The data shows improvements in executive functioning and attention of roughly 50% on average.

- Opportunities for recreation exist after school, too. PTA offers a robust year-round program offering 125 different classes students can join each year. Classes run for 8 weeks and over 60% of students participate in the program. Classes that promote physical activity include martial arts, Balinese dance, running, volleyball, tennis, golf, gardening, yoga, and cheerleading.
- The school PTA provided a personalized hat to each teacher to help reduce sun exposure and plans a healthy cooking class for staff annually to expand good nutritional habits. For example, a local chef hosts quick salads demonstrations over lunch in the school gardens, showing knife skills, how to make a fresh salad dressing, and salad composition.
- *The Growth Mindset Coach* by Annie Brock was given to all staff and mini reminder lessons are presented at staff meetings for each month's topics by the School Psychologist. A staff Haiku page also contains resources each month so staff can implement Growth Mindset monthly topics in their classrooms, including goal setting, grit, empathy, persistence, the Power of Yet, self-talk, self-worth, mistakes are learning opportunities, accepting feedback, and gratitude. TOW staff has created a "tree of gratitude" in the staff lounge where teachers can express gratitude to each other in a small gesture.
- TOW's PTA council puts on a monthly parent speaker series, CoffeeTalk, in conjunction with community partner, St. Joseph Health. The series focuses on many health and wellness topics relevant to parents. For example, topics this year included "Strategies for managing childhood anxiety and stress"; "Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age"; "Being mindful in a fast-paced society"; and "Teaching our kids how to have resilience and grit". The school PTA is also hosting a Family Wellness Night this year, where families will make farm to fork recipes in the school garden together.
- TOW has a school counselor and school psychologist, as well as several mental health and wellness programs that are targeted to support all students on campus. Teachers have been trained in Second Step, a social-emotional learning program, and have also used "The Incredible, Flexible Me" in kindergarten and first grade. Both of these programs help to create a common language that all staff and students can access to promote social-emotional wellness around campus. Several other social groups have been created to promote kindness on campus, including the KC Club, PALS, and Rachel's Challenge activities. There is also a "friendship circle," a circular planter on the playground where students can sit to find a friend. The students are encouraged to check the friendship circle and, if they see someone sitting alone and looking for a friend, to invite them to play.
- LBUSD follows a Coordinated School Health format.
- TOW partners with Western Youth Services to offer mental health support and counseling for staff and families. The agency also has social workers who are available to come to the school site to give presentations on topics of choice, run counseling groups, or see individual students in crisis. Families may be referred to WYS by our school counselor and psychologist when they are in crisis or when they are unable to access mental health resources on their own. TOW has also partnered with the Anaheim Angels MLB team to bring players to school each year. The players talk to the students about goal-setting, hard work, and perseverance.
- LBUSD's local fire department, lifeguards, and police department are also available to come give presentations to students about safety and healthy choices. Last year the LB Police department brought a police dog to TOW and spoke with students about making healthy choices when it comes to saying "no" to drugs and alcohol, and the LB

Lifeguards spoke to first grade about water safety. All of the Kindergarteners visit with the local fire department to learn about community workers and fire safety. Additionally, third grade students take a field trip to downtown Laguna Beach to meet with the city community service departments, including the City Council, Fire Department, Police Department, Water District, and Lifeguard Station.

- The school counselor is a trained Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL) facilitator and has taught skills in relationship building, social facilitation, and conflict mediation to 4th and 5th graders for three years. This year a group of 38 PAL students participated in a field trip to the OC Ropes Course where they learned about trust, courage, and resilience. They use the skills they learn to help younger kids in grades 1st-3rd on the playground during their recess. Some PALs have also become “big buddies” to younger students needing mentor support, and also help younger students who feel nervous on the bus. The PALs are also available to mentor new students who come to TOW midyear.
- LBUSD has partnered with the Anti-Defamation League to become a No Place for Hate School. Students take part in activities throughout the year that promote empathy and conversations. Recently classes “buddied” up in the library to read the book *We’re All Wonders* and learn about having empathy for people who are not like them.
- Classes in grades 3-5 are offered at least six 30-minute lessons in the PTA sponsored Let’s Draw program each year. This program aims to promote drawing confidence by rewriting the negative inner dialogue with personal creativity and growth mindset. These lessons inspire students to take on difficult visual challenges in their environment by keeping a positive and fun atmosphere using playful games and demonstrations.
- KC Club students in grades 3-5 meet once a week after school to work collaboratively to spread kindness to people at school and in the community. They conduct uplifting campaigns, activities, and projects that focus on the fact that little things can make a big difference.

Pillar III: Provide Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education

Element IIIA: Interdisciplinary Learning

- California’s *Blueprint for Environmental Literacy* gives a guideline for making pledges at TOW, defining an environmentally literate person as someone who “has the capacity to act individually and with others to support ecologically sound, economically prosperous, and equitable communities for present and future generations.”
- In the spring, most classrooms recognize and celebrate Earth Day, making pledges to be environmentally aware and responsible. Ocean Week activities in 2017 also included a photo booth and pledge-making stand in which students pledged to be eco-friendly and made posters with ideas of ways they could make changes that would affect the environment.
- Through the school’s Rocket Ready program, 3 teacher groups worked with grades 1, 3, and 5 to seek out environmental issues in their area and develop a solution to the problem. They researched, analyzed, shared their knowledge about the problems with the entire campus at several monthly assemblies, got the community involved by hosting themed fundraising and information sharing events, held student-led TED talks, shared information on a local radio station, and more. These projects resulted in a partnership with the local Waste Management Center, a campus recycling program, and food donation program with the Laguna Food Pantry, and more. All students were invited to participate in a trash can painting contest to raise awareness about the recycling

program, made videos about their findings that were shared with the LBUSD Board and administration, as well as with their families.

- Education about the environment and sustainability is embedded in each grade level's language arts, history, and science programs:
 - Kindergarten learns about interdependent relationships between plants, animals, and their environment; they look for patterns in what plants and animals need to survive, how plants and animals can change the environment to meet their needs, and communicate solutions that will reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment. They also study the effect of sunlight on Earth's surface, and build structures to reduce the warming effect of sunlight on an area.
 - First grade studies structure, function, and information processing in nature; how plants and animals use external parts to survive, grow, and meet their needs, and how biomimicry can be used to help us solve problems.
 - Second grade focuses on ecosystems: interactions, energy, and dynamics. They plan and conduct investigations to determine if plants need sunlight and water to grow, and develop models to mimic plants and animals working together in dispersing seeds or pollinating plants. They also learn about biological evolution, observing plants and animals to compare the diversity in different habitats. Additionally, in their study of Earth's systems, they develop and compare multiple solutions designed to slow or prevent weathering and erosion.
 - Third grade studies life cycles and traits, developing models to show commonalities among life cycles, the inheritance of traits, and show that traits can be influenced by the environment. Third grade also focuses on fossils to interpret data about living organisms and the environment in which they lived long ago, while also constructing arguments that some organisms survive better than others in various environments. They also must develop a solution to a problem caused when the environment changes and the types of plants and animals that live there may change.
 - Fourth grade learns about the structure and function of living organisms. In their study of Earth's systems, they make observations to analyze, study, and evaluate the effects of weathering over time and on landscapes, and create and compare solutions to reduce the impacts of natural Earth processes on humans. They also learn about natural resources and their uses and effects on the environment. Fourth grade also studies the California Gold Rush, including effects on the physical environment.
 - In fifth grade, the students study energy in ecosystems, which is based upon the relationship between living organisms and our environment. They develop models to describe the movement of matter among plants, animals, and the environment, including air, water, decomposed materials in the soil, and so on. Fifth grade also studies the atmosphere and how the geosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and/or atmosphere interact, while also studying and comparing fresh water, salt water, and the distribution of water on Earth. They then obtain and combine information about ways individual communities use science ideas to protect the Earth's resources and environment.
- All of these topics are accessed through topic-based literature, videos, discussions, STEM activities, research projects, and more. The language arts texts incorporate these themes into a reading program, which students then write and reflect upon, making

California's Environmental Principles and Concepts an integrated element of instruction across disciplines.

- TOW has an outdoor classroom master plan which gives conceptual plans for development of school gardens over a 1-5 year period. TOW's school garden program is integrated in the curriculum. In this program, students visit the Outdoor Classroom for hands-on lessons taught by a garden educator and classroom teachers. The program has standards-based, outdoor curriculum matched to each grade level's math, science, ELA and/or social studies. The science teacher and garden teacher often co-teach. Every class visits the outdoor classroom monthly, spending a combined 10,000 hours in experiential, sustainable experiences growing food each year.
- TOW uses the environment and sustainability as a context for teaching the California Next Generation Science Standards (CA NGSS). A sampling of examples includes:
 - Students learn how to save seed from tomatoes, beans, carrots- NGSS Standards: LS2.B Cycles of matter and energy transfer in ecosystems.
 - Students also learn about seed spacing to ensure plant needs are met, design a planting template with # of seeds per square foot - NGSS Standards: LS1 Structure & Function: Plants have different parts that help them survive and grow.
 - In the fall, students learn about Thomas Jefferson's pea growing contest and design a plant teepee to grow climbing peas and beans. They monitor the performance of their design over the growing season. In the spring, they continue their study of Jefferson as horticulturist and plant heirloom seeds from Monticello. NGSS Standards: 3-5-ETS1 Engineering Design; 5th grade Social Studies CA Framework – Making of a Nation.
 - Students explore clear, transparent, and opaque materials as they relate to how much light can pass through. Knowing that plants need light to survive, students will study plants that have been covered with each type of materials and make conclusions on light waves. Students will visit the school greenhouse to observe the concept in action. NGSS 1-PS4-3. Plan and conduct an investigation to determine the effect of placing objects made with different materials in the path of a beam of light.
 - Students collect seeds from flowering plants like nasturtium and California Poppy. They look at how humans move seeds around with three projects: packaging into seed envelopes to take home, making seed bombs to throw onto our canyon slopes and replanting in border beds. NGSS 2-LS2-2. Develop a simple model that mimics the function of an animal in dispersing seeds or pollinating plants.
- All teachers were given the opportunity to attend the CA STEM Symposium in Anaheim, CA in 2016 if they hadn't previously attended in 2015. This school year, TOW's TOSA and STEM Lab teacher attended the CA STEAM Symposium in San Francisco in 2017. Also, all teachers will be attending the UCI History Project Training in January, 2018.
- Fourth and Fifth grade identified GATE students at Top of the World meet once a week after school to work collaboratively in small groups, researching the United Nations seventeen different Sustainability Development Goals. The SDGs are goals the UN originally created for our world in 2000 at the Millennium Summit, but have since been revised and updated in 2015 to reflect the current state of the world. After all of the students have presented their goal research, they will be creating a "Community Action Plan" for the local community.

- TOW has multiple field trips each year for each grade level: 5th grade students visit the Pacific Marine Mammal Center and go on a Laguna Canyon Foundation hike; 4th graders visit Mission San Juan Capistrano and have an Ocean Institute Pilgrim Overnight field trip; 3rd grade students go to the Environmental Nature Center for Tongva Trail and visit the Waste Management Recycling Facility in Irvine; 2nd grade students visit the Crystal Cove State Park for Animal Adaptations, the Dana Point Marine Institute for Animal Adaptations, and the Shipley Nature Center for Animal Adaptations; 1st graders also visit the Waste Management Recycling Facility in Irvine, and the Discovery Center Star Lab; and Kindergarteners visit the Centennial Farm, Ocean Institute, and the Aquarium of the Pacific.
- TOW uses place-based environmental education (through buildings, grounds and the neighborhood) in the following ways: observing erosion on campus slopes and designing solutions, studying natural landforms of adjacent canyon, sampling soil types around campus, using the solar power generated from a demonstration solar array on the shed roof to power a blender and make smoothies and run the irrigation system, taking phenology observations of California Poppy in the gardens and reporting to Project BudBurst, involving students in the daily emptying/consolidation of recycling bins and collection of unopened food, and collecting weather data for analysis through a school-wide WeatherBug system on building roofs.
- TOW's garden features an 18-foot geodesic dome greenhouse, which functions as a model of sustainability. The Growing Dome is designed as a self-sufficient, net zero energy structure where students can interact with sustainable design in a hands-on manner. Its passive solar design allows it to heat up during the day and stay warm overnight. It features an above ground pond, automatic vents controlled by beeswax, and solar ventilation fans. Students learn about weather, aquaponics, seed propagation, green design and engineering principals in the Growing Dome.

Element IIIB: STEM Content, Knowledge, and Skills

- Students visit the STEAM lab on campus once a week for 45 minutes. Lessons incorporate STEAM activities and learning rationale with support from STEMScopes, Mystery Science, and other hands-on curriculum. Some of the STEAM lab projects are listed below:
 - 1st Grade: Grow Your Own- Students compare and contrast some items grown in the garden with those from the grocery store and explore the meaning of "Food Miles." They will construct explanations regarding benefits to the environment of growing your own food. We will prepare the table with freshly harvested flowers and a table cloth and enjoy a spring salad together.
 - 2nd Grade: Pollinator and Native Plants Field Study- Students participate in a field study, recording visiting pollinators to the garden and observing the native plants blooming in the canyon and garden, like the California Poppy. Students will construct explanations of why native plants are beneficial for the garden, canyon, and Earth.
 - 3rd Grade: Water Conservation & Role of Mulch - Students conduct investigations of the soil of raised beds with and without mulch. They will look at various types of mulch and apply to beds and fruit trees. They will construct explanations of the role mulch has in the garden.
 - 4th Grade: Sustainable Solutions to Pests and the TOW Barn Owl Box- Students study the design of the barn owl boxes. They will construct explanations of the

food web that exists in the garden. They will learn about ecological solutions to manage pests.

- 5th Grade: Water Conservation & Our Rain Barrels - Students study the design of a rainfall capture and greywater system in the garden and calculate rainfall catchment area. They will then design new solutions that could increase grey water quantity.
- Students and staff are encouraged to use the outdoor classrooms and campus as much as possible, and can often be found buddy reading out on the grass, using the garden to search for geometric shapes, and writing in chalk on the blacktop. Most grade levels have some form of walking field trip, with 1st and 2nd grade walking to a local park about half a mile away, 3rd grade taking a walking tour of downtown Laguna Beach, 4th grade taking a walking tour of the San Juan Mission and spending the night working and sleeping on the Ocean Institute's Pilgrim ship, and 5th grade hiking through Laguna Canyon. 3rd grade enjoys their visit with the Giddy-up Petting Zoo on the field, and several art lessons are centered upon appreciating and exploring the landscapes in the area. TOW's artwork partnership with LOCA centers upon art based on nature and things in the environment. The K-5 VAPA TOSA is available for lessons incorporating art into the curriculum, and these include several outdoor projects such as solar system projects with 1st grade, Plein Air landscapes with 4th grade, aviary portraits and historical landscapes with 3rd grade, and more.
- TOW hosted a STEM science fair in September, and students of all ages were encouraged to submit a project and visit the projects created by their peers. The projects featured the engineering design process in a "design your own shoe" project; coding and robotics stations; projects with Scratch, Dash and Dot, and Osmo; physics lessons with DIY Newton cradles; a wave machine; pendulum painting; and STEAM careers such as those in work with drones, and game coding and design. Other student projects incorporated instant challenges with aeronautics, jet propulsion, and engineering structures.
- TOW's STEMScopes science program incorporates career connections for each learning scope. To elaborate on standards, each scope introduces students to STEM careers and the 21st century skills needed to succeed in those fields. For example, 1st grade students learn about arborists in conjunction with their study of plant survival, while 2nd grade students learn about geologists in their study of the effects of wind and water on the environment. 3rd grade students study environmental changes and effects, and learn about the career of a farmer. Students participating in the Rocket Ready program also worked first hand with many experts in environmentally centered careers, including scientists at the Pacific Marine Mammal Center, and experts at the waste management center who help TOW recycle paper goods and food to create bioslurry.
- TOW's garden is the ideal environment for learning about green technologies in context, and it is used not only for agriculture but also for other science curriculum. For example, the students participate in weather tracking and graphing, incorporating both science and math concepts at several grade levels. 3rd grade used an anemometer to gather data on wind, and first grade visits the garden to test their sundials in their research on patterns in space. The students use the garden for many cross curricular pursuits at all grade levels, counting and comparing seeds to promote math concepts, comparing plant growth with different units of measurement, graphing observed data, writing about changes and utilizing thinking maps to track those changes, incorporating iPads and technology in garden journals.

Element IIIC: Civic Knowledge and Skills

- The students are strongly encouraged to participate in civic/community engagement projects integrating environmental and sustainability concepts throughout the school year. These opportunities are available to all students at all grade levels, but primarily focuses upon grades 1-5. Students participate daily in a recycling program, both during playground and classroom time. All students have been told how the recycling program works, recycling food waste in the yellow food waste containers, paper goods in blue recycling bins, and help to donate unused lunch items to the Laguna Food Pantry. Each classroom has student volunteers who are responsible for emptying classroom recycling containers into the larger outdoor recycling bins, and the students are also encouraged to reduce plastic bottle waste with the installation of a reusable water bottle refilling station. Students and teachers are also encouraged to remember to conserve electricity with labels on classroom doors reminding staff to turn off the air conditioning.
- In 2017, seven teachers from TOW (in grades 1, 3, and 5) and their students participated in civic and community projects through LBUSD's year one Rocket Ready program whose goal is to create world changers through professional growth. Teachers earned micro-credentials by working through classes, online videos and activities, then showing evidence of learning through screenshots or projects. Teachers and students then researched a real world problem that their class wanted to focus on for the year and applied strategies related to the curriculum to solve the problem. Teachers tweeted their progress along the way and produced a culminating project video for all of the other participants to see. This video showcased their involvement with their coach, mentors, colleagues, other organizations, other grade levels, and other schools sites.
- TOW's 5th grade Ocean Warriors focus on finding a way to reduce the environmental impacts upon the ocean. They have held several beach clean ups, done extensive research to figure out the extent of the problem, shared their learning about the ocean's positive impact on lives and the negative impacts through student TED talks and flag assembly skits, and even participated in a local radio program to get the message out. They visited the City Council to formally invite council members to join them in their Ocean Awareness Night, a night they hosted to raise awareness and money for the Pacific Marine Mammal Center, a local nonprofit organization that rescues, rehabilitates, and releases injured sea lions back into the oceans. They raised enough money to make a difference, and participated in the release of a rehabilitated sea lion in Laguna Beach.
- Students in grades 3 and 5 established the food donation program that directs uneaten lunch items to the Laguna Food Pantry. TOW also participates annually in a food drive during Thanksgiving, and uses crops and vegetables from the school gardens to raise funds for garden needs and encourage students to try new fruits and vegetables.
- First and 3rd grade students created TOW's Green Team to help protect the oceans and establish a recycling program. Students researched Trash Island and sea life, skyped with experts at the Pacific Marine Mammal Center, conducted a campus clean up for a week after lunch to find out where most trash had collected and analyzed the trash to see if there were any patterns that could be resolved. This trash data was compared with a school in New Zealand, and the students compared their recycling and environmental sustainability program to see how the New Zealand students reduced their lunch trash. Students also participated in the Wyland Environmental mural challenge, using the trash collected at the campus clean ups to create a 3D collage, and worked with LOCA and artists to sculpt a permanent ocean mural off the lunch patio to remind students to protect the oceans by recycling trash. This recycling program helped the students to also

learn about what can and can't be thrown away, and they began recycling batteries on campus as well.

- TOW participated in California's annual celebration of Living Schoolyard Month with several projects/activities throughout the spring. The school's garden program incorporated ecological and environmental concepts through cross-curricular activities, including greywater lessons, planting trees, analyzing parts of plants, growing and harvesting vegetables, farm-to-table lessons, and designing (and building) a greenhouse for the large garden. The students and classes are constantly maintaining the plant life, harvesting and planting, and setting ecological goals.
- TOW's Green Team hosts an Ocean Week that focuses on reducing, reusing, and recycling to improve the environment and campus. During Ocean Week, students recycle plastic bottles to make jellyfish, reuse cereal boxes to make puzzles, award prizes for campus clean up participants, have an environmental pledge/photo booth station, upcycle old jeans into shoes for the needy through the Sole for Hope program, and more.
- TOW has many local partnerships that support the mission in the 3 pillars. Funding from Seeds of Change, Whole Kids Foundation, Laguna Canyon Foundation, Laguna Beach Greenbelt, Laguna Beach County Water District, Laguna Beach Garden Club, LOCA, Western Growers Foundation, and California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (12 grants total awarded since 2014), have helped fund ecological facility upgrades and purchase teaching materials. Technical support, formal training and expertise from University of California Master Gardeners of Orange County, The Ecology Center, CA Farm to School, and The Edible Schoolyard have helped continually improve the quality of environmental education offered. TOW also has partnerships with nonprofit and for-profit entities: Laguna Food Pantry, Whole Foods, Kellogg Garden Products and Waste Management. A unique partnership with The Ecology Center (over a three year period in the Grown Your Own program) resulted in the formation of garden guilds. Garden guilds bring together school garden leaders from across the district and region to share best practices and curriculum. In these guild meetings, TOW serves as a model school, and support school garden capacity-building for schools with fewer resources.
- TOW is also working towards a reduction in paper use by increasing digital collaboration and instruction. In 2014, 32% of students had never used online space for documents, versus only 3% in 2017. 39% of students in 2014 used online space weekly for documents, compared to 74% in 2017. The Rocket Ready program strongly encourages staff to become more adept at utilizing the technology available to both teach and monitor student learning, resulting in tech-savvy students and assignments. With more and more staff participating in the program, it's encouraging to see this trend continue to grow.