

# School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation



Covering the Long Beach Unified School District...and more!

Volume 24, Issue 149

April 2023



**Laura L. Doud**  
City Auditor

## Importance of Community in Crisis Response

Why is community important? Community unites people in shared needs, interests, experiences, and goals. Community is important for social connections, support, safety, and health. As we've experienced before, community is vital during times of crisis. Currently, Long Beach, like many other communities, is facing a homelessness crisis. And this complex crisis needs a strong collaborative community response.

The City has long been dedicated to homelessness and has partnered with community organizations and non-profits to provide outreach, medical and mental health support, emergency shelter beds, and various other basic need services to individuals experiencing homelessness. The City also has prioritized diversion and homelessness prevention, rental assistance, and permanent housing programs. As homelessness has greatly increased in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City has declared a local state of emergency to be able to quickly and efficiently expand homelessness and housing services. While the City continues to work diligently, it has asked the community to help. So, my Office and I are doing what we can to help during this crisis.

In the beginning of this year I joined fellow community leaders and members for Long Beach's annual point-in-time homeless count. It was heartening to see over 250 people volunteer to help determine how many individuals are experiencing homelessness so that we may define existing resources and identify gaps. With our outreach teams assigned, instructions in hand, and the sun still below the horizon, we canvassed the City with the task to survey and provide information on service resources available to individuals experiencing homelessness.

I along with members from my Office are also committed to the City's coordinated emergency response to homelessness. We are participating in the City's Community Partnership Committee which is identifying and coordinating efforts with various non-profits and faith based organizations for resources such as food, blankets and hygiene kits. My Office is also undertaking an audit to assist the Health Department, per their input, in reviewing the performance of service providers that provide direct services to homeless individuals.

As Hellen Keller said, "Alone, we can do so little, together we can do so much." Working together we can build a stronger, supportive community to address this crisis. Find out more on what the City is doing and ways you can join these efforts at [www.longbeach.gov/homelessness](http://www.longbeach.gov/homelessness).