



DORSEY High School students Kei'Shawn Henderson, left, Braxton Jordan, Maki Draper and Caleel Smith say they have been helped by the Black Student Achievement Plan, which the L.A. school district has now amended after a legal challenge.

GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

State joins Kern River fight

Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta throws his support to environmentalists after thousands of fish die from water shutoff.

BY IAN JAMES

California officials have joined a legal effort to restore water to the Kern River after an abrupt shutoff of water dried up the river and killed thousands of fish in Bakersfield.

The decision by state officials and Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta to intervene in the court case gives new impetus to environmental groups as they try to compel the city of Bakersfield and agricultural water districts to bring back a flowing river.

Bonta announced Monday that he and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife filed a brief supporting the environmental groups in the case before the state's 5th District Court of Appeal.

"California's waterways and ecosystems are the lifeblood of our state's rich and diverse wildlife and natural habitats," Bonta said. "Yet, in Bakersfield, the sudden loss of Kern River flows due to the city officials' decisions to divert all water away from the river is leaving behind a dry wasteland where fish are dying in droves."

The river suddenly dried up along several miles of its channel in Bakersfield starting in late August. Those who first noticed the abrupt loss of water included Rae McNeish, an associate pro-

[See Bakersfield, A7]

Program to lift Black students gets mired in culture wars

Backers criticize LAUSD for revamping plan in response to conservative Virginia group's complaint that race was illegally included among criteria

By Howard Blume

Under pressure after a conservative group took legal action, the Los Angeles Unified School District will overhaul a \$120-million academic program for struggling Black students by eliminating race as a factor in determining which children will be helped.

The decision has outraged supporters of the district's Black Student Achievement Plan, who are demanding that officials stand by the original program, which had begun to yield some early, positive results.

The Virginia-based group Parents Defending Education — whose mission is to oppose "destructive practices" in schools, including policies related to race, sexual orientation and gender identity — had filed a complaint in July 2023 with the federal Office for Civil Rights against BSAP.

It alleged the program violated the Constitution and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by providing extra education services based on a student's race.

Over months of dialogue, federal officials told the district that a race-based program was legally unsustainable in light of multiple Supreme Court decisions, including the June 2023 ruling that struck down the consideration of race as a factor in college admissions.

The Virginia group's trustees include Edward Blum, who founded the organization behind the lawsuit leading to the 2023 Supreme Court ruling, according to tax filings.

[See Students, A10]



ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

WITH POLICE watching from above, a nonlocal surfer walks down the cliff toward Lunada Bay in Palos Verdes Estates, defying intimidation by the Bay Boys.

Will settlement end surfer harassment at Lunada Bay?

Some are skeptical a promise to protect public access will stop decades of hostility.

BY CLARA HARTER

Lunada Bay is the stuff big wave surfers' dreams are made of.

During a heavy swell, 20-foot waves unfurl in a perfect right-hand line, delivering a potent blend of adrenaline and serenity.

"It feels like a little hit of a drug, honestly, because it's just so beautiful, so magical," surfer Sofly Matturi said. "The wave is your canvas."

When the surf's up, only a dozen or so surfers can be found riding the waves, tucked in a cove beneath the cliffs of the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Visiting Lunada Bay is like taking a time machine back to 1960, before hundreds of surfers crowded Southern California's coastline.

Many surfers say there's

a reason for that.

For six decades, a group known as the Bay Boys has sought to rule the waves here, slashing the tires of nonlocals, pelting rocks at surfers descending the steep cliffside trail and physically harassing anyone brave enough to paddle out.

The Bay Boys' reign has sparked years of controversy and emerged as a flashpoint for beach access in the upscale community of Palos Verdes Estates, culminating with a landmark lawsuit de-

[See Surfers, A7]

It's time to listen to Trump's escalating, violent rhetoric

ANITA CHABRIA

Today we're talking F-words: fear, fascism and what has become the dirtiest word in the American vernacular, facts.

In 2018, many of us (apparently about 50% of us) found it distasteful when Trump referred to El Salvador, Haiti and some African nations as "shithole countries" and began experimenting with the rhetoric that Black and brown immigrants were dangerous.



Though it hadn't been widely reported yet, Trump had by then already started his brutal systemic policy of forcibly separating children from parents at the border — a tactic meant to deter families from coming to the U.S. without documentation, but which left thousands of parents with no way to reunite with, or even locate, their kids.

Cruelty, of course, was the point, not the byproduct — but six years ago we were so much younger and naive. So on we went, thinking it could not get much worse.

This year, with the help of his lap/attack

[See Chabria, A5]

Ocean preserve will be unique

The Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary will have Indigenous input in its management. CALIFORNIA, B1

Man denies plot to kill Trump

The suspect arrested near Coachella rally says he was carrying guns only for self-protection. CALIFORNIA, B1

Weather

Turning sunny; cool. L.A. Basin: 73/59. B5

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ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

DODGERS ARE SET BACK

Mark Vientos' grand slam powered the Mets over the Dodgers 7-3 in the National League Championship Series, now tied 1-1. SPORTS, B10



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