

**SUPERINTENDENT**



**Our Journey to the Palmdale Promise**

The purpose of the Launch Pad is to keep you informed of all the wonderful things happening around the school district. I have been writing about the Palmdale Promise

**Raul Maldonado**

for the past year as we get ready to implement the actions. In October 2014, the Palmdale School District and Board began conversations about the need for a district strategic plan that would set the direction for the district and put student achievement front and center. By December 2014, the decision was made to engage all stakeholders and district staff to design and create the strategic plan.

This school year, I have a new process to visit all schools and have positive conversations about the new direction for our school district. We call these meetings Breakfast with the Superintendent. Each school has

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## Project Lead The Way

*By Frances Ufodu, Ed.D., Director Local Control Accountability Plan.*

The Palmdale School District (PSD) continues to challenge and prepare students for high school, college, career, and the global world through the implementation of Project Lead The Way (PLTW) in all of our middle schools. PLTW provides a comprehensive approach to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. Through activity-, project-, and problem-based curriculum, PLTW gives students a chance to apply what they know, identify problems, find unique solutions, and lead their own learning. PLTW catalyzes a lifelong interest in science, technology, engineering, and math.

For educators, the engaging, rigorous, professional-development model for teachers provides a tool to empower students and transform the classroom into a collaboration space, where content comes to life. Six PSD teachers—Mark Weiss, Sheik Aslam, Edward Warren, Monique Armstrong, Melissa Henry, and Eric



**Cactus Intermediate Students**

Smith—attended the Summer Core Training at El Camino College last summer in preparation for the launching of PLTW.

PLTW Gateway is the middle school curriculum and a strong foundation for further STEM learning in high school and beyond, challenging students to solve real-world problems, such as cleaning oil spills and designing sustainable housing solutions. Using the same advanced software and tools as those used by the world's leading companies, students learn how to apply STEM concepts in their everyday lives.

PLTW Gateway is divided into

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## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### The Palmdale Promise

As your School Board, we are called on to provide policy and oversight for the operation of the Palmdale School District. It is an opportunity to work with groups of dedicated education professionals toward a singular goal: student success.

Student success comes in many forms. Good grades and subject mastery are part of it, but a successful student also learns social skills, is eager to help others, and is ready to live in our global society. With this in mind, we came together with our community to forge the Palmdale Promise strategic plan from our collective insight and experience.

One of the key tenants of the Palmdale Promise is our partnership with our community. This means going beyond our parent volunteers and Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) to form meaningful and productive partnerships with community members and organizations. A great example of this is our recent rollout of Footsteps2Brilliance. (For more information on Footsteps2Brilliance, please see Superintendent Maldonado's article in this issue.) Our purchase of lifetime access to Footsteps2Brilliance for our entire community is evidence of our district's dedication to our community as a whole.



**Nancy Smith**  
President

This program is available to every resident of Palmdale who lives in the 93550, 93551, or 93552 zip codes. However, we took this partnership a step further for this program.

To help bring our community together in the cause of childhood literacy, we joined together with the city of Palmdale, the Palmdale City Library, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department: Palmdale Station, the Palmdale Water District, the Palmdale Chamber of Commerce, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the African American Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Antelope Valley Chamber of Commerce. All of these local organizations are working together with us to get the word out about Footsteps2Brilliance, with the goal of increasing childhood literacy across our community.

This is only the beginning. As we work together, forming new partnerships and strengthening existing ones, we will undoubtedly find new and exciting ways to serve our students. These combined efforts will continue our progress as we enhance our community by providing the best elementary and intermediate school education possible.

Thank you so much for your support and generous contributions of time and material in our effort to keep the Palmdale Promise.



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**Raul Maldonado**

a schedule when I will visit and have a conversation about our new strategic plan, called the Palmdale Promise. We will also discuss the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP). So far, the meetings have been very positive. I am very pleased to meet with parents and have informal conversations. Therefore, I invite you to join me when I come to your school. The schedule for the breakfasts is available at your school's main office. I hope to see you there!

It seems like yesterday that I was calling you about starting the new school year. Time does fly when you are having fun, learning, sharing, and having a positive impact in the community. We can all play the role of advertising all the positive things happening in Palmdale. As the superintendent, I have the good fortune of visiting all of our schools. One of our greatest resources is our staff members, who have dedicated themselves to helping students achieve great success at school and at home.

While visiting the schools, it is easy to see evidence that our teachers, administrators, and support staff are focusing their daily work and resources on our five Strategic District Goals: dramatically improve student engagement and achievement through access to powerful learning opportunities; create and sustain globally competitive learning environments of high intellectual performance across the curriculum and in all areas needed for 21st-century



**Kay Coop**  
Founder/Publisher

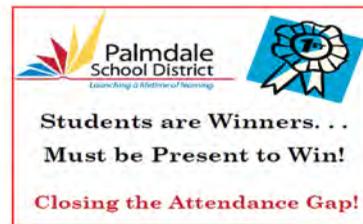


This issue the Superintendent and Board of Trustees messages are focused on the Palmdale Promise. The students are fortunate to have an involved community.

Our next issue is March 9, 2016. In the meantime, Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! We are always grateful for our men and women in the armed services.

**District Office (661) 947-7191 • Emergency (888) 474-8107**  
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success for students, including the opportunity for development of high levels of multilingual and Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) competencies; provide strategic direction and support to district administrators, principals, teachers, and sites focused on improving the quality of classroom instruction and interaction in every classroom in every school; create and support safe, affirming, equitable, and enriched globally competitive school environments for participatory, restorative, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive learning and interaction for students; engage diverse families and communities in powerful learning and collaboration.

As we begin our journey to implement the Palmdale Promise, parent engagement and participation is absolutely necessary to support student success at all of our schools. In addition to encouraging students' learning at home and school, parents are invited to volunteer in classrooms and throughout the schools. Family nights and parent education events are presented at school sites to strengthen our home-to-school relationships. I invite you to continue getting involved with your child's school and classroom. I am confident that together we can achieve great success with the implementation of the Palmdale Promise.

Lastly, I would like to wish everyone a happy and relaxing winter break. I hope you enjoy some quality time with your family and friends.

**School News**

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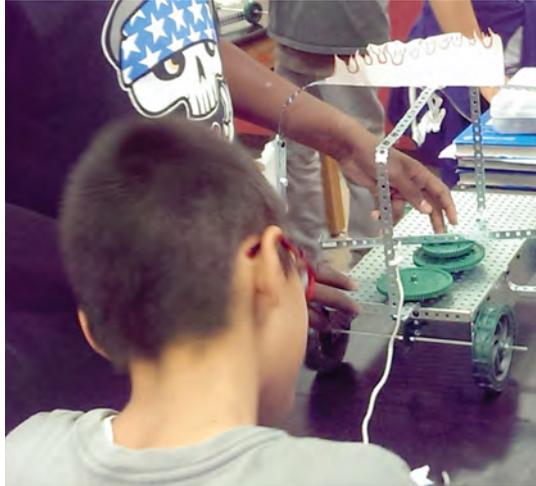


**PROJECT LEAD THE WAY • From Page 1**

independent, nine-week units, assuming a 45-minute class period. PLTW Gateway is designed to be taught in conjunction with a rigorous academic curriculum. Schools that offer the program implement both foundation units and may add any combination of the specialization units.

This year our middle schools implemented the two foundation units: Design and Modeling, where students apply the design process to solve problems and understand the influence of creativity and innovation in their lives, and Automation and Robotics, where students trace the history, development, and influence of automation and robotics as they learn about mechanical systems, energy transfer, machine automation, and computer control systems. Students use the VEX Robotics® platform to design, build, and program real-world objects, such as traffic lights, toll booths, and robotic arms. Each middle school runs the program a bit differently to better suit the student population's needs. Most of the schools adapted the original PLTW program to blend the offerings, with the intention of maintaining student interest.

Mr. Eric Smith, the PLTW teacher at Shadow Hills Intermediate School, explained that students have already worked on several projects this year, including the design and construction of an air skimmer, which they tested in the multipurpose room. The air skimmer gave the students a lot of practice with measuring and using a plan to create something. The students also built various gear assemblies using the robotics kits. The knowledge the students gained from the gear assembly formed



**Shadow Hills**

a foundation of skills, which they will use throughout the rest of the course. Mr. Smith has observed that the students are really having a great time with all of the hands-on activities. "We are all learning a lot as we go," Mr. Smith said. He agrees that getting students interested in science in another way is a big step in the right direction. "I think of this as a modern-day shop class, like the ones I took. I still remember 30 years later exactly what I built and created, and I think the students in this class will have similar memories. I never thought I would have my students asking me for more bevel gears or asking questions about gear ratios and universal joints, but that time has come." Yes, Palmdale School District is living up to its promise for the students. We hope to fully engage our students in school and bring back the love of learning.

According to PLTW teacher Mr. Mark Weiss, students at Cactus Intermediate School like working with partners, building things, the challenging projects, learning new things, engaging in hands-on learning instead of listening to a teacher talking all the time, using their imaginations, and how different it is from other electives. They shared that they have learned about measurement, how to draw and sketch better, how to build stuff, how to use tools, how to follow the design process, how to plan, how to communicate better, how to work as a team, how to think and solve problems in different ways, and how to be an engineer.



**Cactus**

The students at David G. Millen Intermediate School have enjoyed the hands-on aspect of PLTW, as reported by their teacher Monique Armstrong. The immediate feedback when something is completed and actually works is invaluable. Students have enjoyed learning about the design process and how it is used in such a wide variety of career paths.



**David G Millen**

Students at Desert Willow Intermediate School also have elective classes in robotics. As you can see, they are fully engaged and enjoy the access to a hands-on, project-based curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking and problem solving.



**Desert Willow**

Finally from the teachers' perspective, studying inventions and the evolution of innovations as STEM continues to develop and grow in our global market has taken students into real-world learning! Students are developing in-depth knowledge as they learn to build, analyze, and use their knowledge to create original designs. Students are also learning skills that are marketable and that better prepare them for success in STEM careers in the future.

As Mr. Weiss said, "This program is working better than my first impression. We have developed a close knit cadre of six teachers from four school sites who collaborate well. This is the first year, and we are experiencing growing pains, as all first-year programs do. But we do appreciate the support from the district and site administration." PSD will continue to support the implementation of PTLW.

PSD means business and is committed to providing our students with a world-class education to prepare and inspire them to hold onto their natural curiosity in the world around them. We want our students to be a part of a workforce that will fill the more than 1.2 million STEM jobs that will be available in the United States by 2018.

# Barrel Springs *Elementary K-6*

3636 Ponderosa Way, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/285-9270 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Kimberly Wright**  
*Principal*

## Great California ShakeOut

The Barrel Springs Elementary School students and staff participated in a drop, cover, and hold drill during the Great California ShakeOut earthquake drill on October 15. The students are taught to automatically, drop, cover and hold on to protect their bodies, so that, when it starts to rattle or shake around them, they are under a secured structure, such as a desk or table. Teachers reminded students to hold their positions until it is safe to evacuate. Students follow the directions of the teacher and are taught how to make safe choices so they can become

little superheroes, regardless of where they are in the community, at school, or at home.



For the Great California ShakeOut, scenarios were created for the search and rescue teams, and the drill went well. At the conclusion of the site drill, all schools participated in a post-drill radio check to test communications. Great job, Bulldogs!

# Buena Vista *Elementary K-6*

37005 Hillcrest Drive, Palmdale, CA 93552 • 661/285-4158 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Chris O'Neill**  
*Principal*

## The Palmdale Promise

Students at Buena Vista are following the Palmdale Promise. This year Richie Chadwick, Gia Peterson, Ireen Suarez, and Adriana Onofre put together a PowerPoint on Buena Vista students being bully free. These leaders presented their bully free PowerPoint at our school's assembly and invited every student in every grade to participate in a "Chain of Hope". The Chain of Hope has their names and a promise that they will continue to be bully free. The Chain of Hope is now displayed in the entrance of Buena Vista so that all who enter know we are a bully free campus.



# Cactus *Intermediate 7-8*

3243 East Avenue R-8, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/273-0847 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Ruth James**  
*Principal*

## New Ventures

Cactus is pleased to announce the launch of several new programs this school year. We have started our home economics class for parents on Wednesdays at 6 p.m, and are averaging about 15 parents at each session. Parents will be sharpening their skills in sewing, baking, knitting, and crocheting, as well as various arts and craft projects.

A special thank-you goes to Mrs. Vega, our retired home economics teacher, for volunteering her time to help spearhead this project.

Cactus has also added two new electives: CERT and Project Lead the Way. CERT stands for the California Emergency Response Team. Here our students



can learn first aid skills and how to respond in cases of emergency.

Students also played a key role in our Great Shake Out, and were even featured on Channel 3. Both the after-school robotics class and Project Lead the Way elective are new ventures that will expose our students to modern 21st-century skills.

# Chaparral *Elementary K-6*

37500 50th Street East, Palmdale, CA 93552 • 661/285-9777 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Tom Pitts**  
*Principal*

## Safety for All!

In October, the Great Shake-Out Drill started with rattling of coins in a can over a loudspeaker to simulate the sounds of an earthquake. After drop, duck and cover, students and teachers walked to the main field, where our Safety Committee members began their preparation for earthquake procedures to ensure safety for all. Our preschool team, as always, also was on board.

This drill serves as a wake-up call for earthquake preparedness and helps put everyone's minds in readiness mode. Our drill went smoothly. There were no major "damages" or "injuries," and everyone was accounted for. Our focus was on refining the request-and-release gates for this particular drill. After debriefing, we decided



to make some minor adjustments in this area.

We're very grateful for our Safety Committee! We want to send a big thank-you to Safety Committee lead Marcey Chambers and the rest of the Chaparral team.

## Cimarron *Elementary K-6*

36940 45th Street East, Palmdale, CA 93552 • 661/285-9780 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Kathy Wehant**  
Principal

### Truly Important Asset!

Cimarron offers a variety of parent classes. There's a computer class for Spanish-speaking parents every Wednesday from 3 to 4 p.m. in our computer lab. Parent Academy, a six-week program led by teacher Ms. Johns, teaches parents how to navigate our district's system and learn about the Palmdale Promise. This class is held Tuesdays from 3 to 4 p.m. We also offer an ESL class for parents every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. to teach English to our Spanish speaking parents.

Parenting Partners, a comprehensive, dynamic method for getting parents on board for children's academic success, begins Thursday, Oct. 22, from 2:30 to 4 p.m. The eight workshops combine parenting and leadership skills so that parents can become vital contributors to their children's success. The workshops are presented by our parent/community liaison, Jeanette Castellanos.

Free babysitting is available for all classes. Cimarron School believes parents are important and encourages parent involvement every day!



**A parent at work.**

## Desert Rose *Elementary K-6*

37730 27th Street East, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/272-0584 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Melanie Pagliaro**  
Principal

### Parent Programs Galore!

At Desert Rose, we offer many opportunities for the parents of our students to get involved. Currently, we are just one session away from completing our first round of Parent Academy. Later this week, we will be launching the first session of Parenting Partners in Spanish. Our second session will be in English in the spring. Soon, we will be offering ESL classes for parents taught by our very own teacher, Mr. Cull.

At our first Family Night this year, we offered parents training on helping their students with Engage New York homework. In addition, our fourth-grade teachers offered a separate math workshop. We have two more Family Nights scheduled for later this school year.

In the spring, our parent liaison will start our Latinos Literacy Project for families as well. We always encourage parents to come and volunteer at Desert Rose, too!



## Desert Willow *Intermediate 7-8*

36555 Sunny Lane, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/285-5866 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Melanie Culver**  
Principal

### Activities in Full Swing!

Desert Willow students are full of excitement with all of the new after-school clubs and activities! This year, we have started the DW Dance Team, Diamond Lights Choir, Drama Club, and Anime and Coding Club. Students are also participating in Associated Student Body (ASB), intramural sports, color guard and academic tutoring.

The student response to these clubs and activities has been amazing, and students are also encouraged to come up with club and activity ideas of their own if they haven't found the perfect fit. Our goal at Desert Willow is to provide extracurricular opportunities for all students to build excitement about coming to school and to help students feel like an important part of our school culture. We are very excited about our activities and look forward to adding more!

## Dos Caminos *Elementary K-8*

39175 Palm Tree Way, Palmdale, CA 93551 • 661/947-1849 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Marlene Batista**  
Principal

### Fall Festival

Dos Caminos Elementary School celebrated its fourth annual Fall Festival. We had one of the largest turnouts ever! Thanks to the extreme

hard work of our PTO Board in contacting local vendors and getting donations and support, the PTO was able to make several thousands of dollars, which will go right back to our students through fun events, assemblies, and field trips.



We had student volunteers from Highland High School, who helped to run games, as well as volunteers from a local bank branch, who generously pays its employees to donate their time to wonderful causes like ours!

Students were able to enjoy a variety of games and rides, a cake walk, face painting, balloons, and pictures with characters. Students also participated in a costume contest. The prize in the family competition was won by the Duenas family, but the Sammons LEGO family came in a close second.





**Ryan Beardsley**  
Principal

## Healthy Habits Start Early

On Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> approximately 250 students, parents, and community members joined Superintendent Maldonado and staff members

from Golden Poppy to celebrate National Walk to School Day. Participants walked approximately one mile from Domenic Massari Park to Golden Poppy where they were greeted by the PTA with refreshments to start off the school day. Deputy Diaz from the Palmdale Sheriff station was on hand to provide traffic safety for participants as they walked together to show their support for family, community, school, and physical wellbeing.



# Winter Words Word Search Contest

## Rules!

One word in the list is NOT in the word search. When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: [Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com) (Please put Palmdale in the subject line)

Entries must be received by January 15, 2016.

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

- |               |             |              |
|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| BLIZZARD      | ICE SKATES  | SNOWBOARDING |
| BOOTS         | ICICLE      | SNOWFLAKE    |
| CABIN         | MARSHMALLOW | SNOWMAN      |
| CHILLY        | MITTENS     | SOLSTICE     |
| FIREPLACE     | MOUNTAINS   | SOUP         |
| FREEZING      | OLYMPICS    | TOBOGGAN     |
| FROST         | POPCORN     | UMBRELLA     |
| GINGERBREAD   | RAINCOAT    | VACATION     |
| HOLIDAYS      | SCARF       |              |
| HOT CHOCOLATE | SLED        |              |

**Congratulations to**  
**Christina & Richard Jilavdaryan**  
**Winner of the October Contest!**



# Joshua Hills *Elementary K-6*

3030 Fairfield, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/265-9992 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Regina Tillman**  
*Principal*

## Tipsee Artist

This year at Joshua Hills the owner of Tipsee Art, Dr. Ericka De Jesus, is now holding free art classes for our students!

Dr. Ericka De Jesus is a full-time logistics manager at a local aerospace company. Outside of work, she comes in during her lunch breaks to hold two-hour painting sessions where she also provides the canvases, brushes, aprons, and hats for our students.

The classes are designed to allow a beginning or novice painter a chance to create their very own work of art. While the students wait for their paint to dry, Dr. Jesus likes to ask them academic questions related to what they're learning about in class.

One of her sixth-grade students, Kassandra Rivas, recently told us that she just discovered how she loves to paint. She said that, "I will tell my mom that I want to do more art." Another student, Jonathan Leyva, told us, "I loved using the brushes and messy paint!"



# Los Amigos *K-8*

6640 East Avenue R-8, Palmdale, CA 93552 • 661/285-1546 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Sonia Salcedo**  
*Principal*

## Welcome to the Family!

The Los Amigos School staff is excited to welcome Laura Cervantes to the family. Laura Cervantes, a resident of Palmdale since 2001, is the new assistant principal. In 1991, she began her career as an elementary teacher in Los Angeles. In 1999, Ms. Cervantes received the Los Angeles City Teacher of Mathematics Association Award. She continued to serve in public schools as an instructional coach, Access to Core coach, Title 1 coordinator, assistant principal, and district secondary math coordinator.

Ms. Cervantes has also supported the development of teacher candidates at University of California, Los Angeles, at National University, and within the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Ms. Cervantes earned her bachelor's degree and single-subject teaching credential in mathematics from California State University, Long Beach. She earned a master's degree in educational administration with an emphasis in school leadership from California State University, Los Angeles and the Center for Collaborative Education Principal Residency Network.

In her free time, Ms. Cervantes enjoys expanding her knowledge with digital literacy and spending time with her family. We are thrilled to benefit from her vast experience and knowledge as she joins our team.



**Ms. Cervantes**

Our next issue is March 9, 2016.  
To advertise your business please contact:  
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kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com  
Thank you for reading *School News*.

# Manzanita *Elementary K-6*

38620 33rd Street East, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/947-3128 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Roberto Lopez**  
*Principal*

## Coffee With the Principal

Manzanita's new principal, Mr. Roberto Lopez, recently introduced himself to our parents over coffee and pastries during the first few weeks of school. Together they discussed Manzanita's vision and mission for its students. They also shared concerns over safety, curriculum, and student achievement.

Many goals and ideas were discussed, and a solid foundation was formed between Mr. Lopez and our Manzanita parents. A mutual commitment was established for our staff, students, and families, with strong emphasis placed on parent involvement.

Our Manzanita parents are ready for this new partnership. Gualdalupe Boisjolie, one of our kindergarten mothers, said that, "I'm glad he took the time to get to know the parents, and to work together with us."

Mr. Lopez is ready as well, stating, "I am excited about being the principal at Manzanita. I look forward to working with the students, staff, and families to create the best school for all our stakeholders."



# Mesquite *Elementary K-6*

37622 43rd Street East, Palmdale, CA 93552 • 661/285-8376 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Ken Young**  
Principal

## Self-Affirmations

How do dog tags relate to the Palmdale Promise? At Mesquite Elementary School, our dog tag system provides a powerful affirmation and reward acknowledgement to our students!

Strategic Goal 4 of the Palmdale Promise challenges us to, “Create and support safe, affirming, equitable, and enriched globally competitive school environments for participatory, restorative, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive learning and interaction for students.”

Our students can earn dog tags in a variety of ways: by demonstrating positive character attributes, achieving academic success, participating in school activities, and meeting various learning, behavioral, and attendance goals.

Some of our many dog tag titles include Student of the Month, Reading Log, 50 Box Tops, Sportsmanship, Accelerated Reading Goal, Morning Announcer,



Perseverance, AVID, Paw Pride, Role Model, Perfect Attendance, and Class Helper. The tags are a fantastic visual for extrinsic motivation, but they are also a powerful intrinsic motivator that encourages our students to always do their best.

# Oak Tree *Community Day School K-8*

38136 35th Street East, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/285-1548 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Timothy Howell**  
Principal

## New Opportunities

Oak Tree Learning Center has implemented a reading program designed to close the achievement gap and support the district’s reading goal. Students are receiving support in targeted areas of need with a focus on classroom instruction and the Common Core State Standards in language arts.

The Oak Tree Honor Guard, an after-school program led Mr. Fred Jaramillo, teaches students the history and tradition of presenting the U.S. flag. Drums have been donated and are being used in the morning routine.

Oak Tree has implemented Individualized Growth Plans (IGP) for every student. Supervised by our school psychologist, Mr. Ferrell, these IGP’s support positive behavior, good attendance, and academic success.

Under the direction of Mr. Rossie Johnson, students have the opportunity to participate in a mentoring program. Students are learning different mental tools to put in their “tool boxes,” which will help them to focus their behavior.



# David G. Millen *Intermediate 7-8*

39221 22nd Street West, Palmdale, CA 93551 • 661/947-3075 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Brian Williams**  
Principal

## Engaged, Alert and Motivated

Our Trailblazers Engaged, Alert, and Motivated (TEAM) Youth Empowerment program is in full effect. Our program meets seven times throughout the year on various Saturdays to focus on the creed: “Today we will win. Today we will not falter in the face of obstacles. Today we will stay focused. Today we will respect ourselves and, in doing so, respect all people. Today we are responsible for our own future.”

Each session, led by Assistant Principal Mr. Gatlin, has a specific focus, including vision boards, personal finance, mock interviews, and a trip to the Black College Expo. The TEAM Youth Empowerment Program is for all students interested in planning their future, but it can also be used to put eighth-graders who are missing some promotion requirements back on the right path.

At Millen Intermediate School, it is never too late to start being responsible for your own future!



# Ocotillo *Elementary K-6*

38737 Ocotillo School Drive, Palmdale, CA 93551 • 661/947-9987 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Larry Lueck**  
Principal

## Good Things

Here at Ocotillo Elementary School, we start off each day announcing “good things”—positive things that have happened at our school. The good things include the accomplishments of individual students, grade levels, our entire study body, or members of our teaching and support staff. Good things can be submitted to the office for announcements by teachers, support staff, students, and parents. Also, within each classroom, teachers allow students to share good things prior to starting the lesson for the day. These recognitions build individual and school-wide pride.

As a staff, we recognize the good things our colleagues and members of the support staff do for the school. The name of each person who is recognized is entered into a drawing. The winners receive gift cards for the positive impact they have had on the Ocotillo school community. I am happy to say there are many good things happening here at Ocotillo.



# Palmdale Discovery Center

1330 W. Elizabeth Lake Rd., Palmdale, CA 93551 • 661/274-0849 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Colleen Sawyer**  
Principal

## A Positive and Nurturing Environment

The Palmdale Discovery Center and Yellen Learning Center are two of the Palmdale School District's very specialized programs. I am proud to be the principal of two programs in which our staff members are making sure that students are receiving a quality education in an environment that is equitable and safe. The Palmdale Promise is guaranteed at the Palmdale Discovery Center and Yellen Learning Center.

There is much to be excited about at the Discovery Center. I would like to thank our staff for their dedication and effort towards providing our students with high-quality services. Through their use of appropriate and rigorous instructional strategies, engagement with students, and our collaboration together as a staff, we are continually making sure that our students can meet their goals.

We have high expectations for our students. We also provide a very positive and nurturing environment for them as well. This year we have welcomed a new organization that will provide our onsite training events. We have also scheduled several didactic training sessions per month, as well as a trainer to be present in the classrooms to help provide immediate guidance and feedback during instructional times.

We are happy to welcome new teachers, speech and language pathologists, para-educators, and special education instructional assistants. It is very impressive to see how quickly our staff can bring new people onto our unified team.

This quarter our families should expect some family nights, and our annual winter performance.

# Palm Tree *Elementary K-6*

326 East Avenue R, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/265-9357 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Gerald Luke**  
Principal

## Running at Full Steam

We are very excited to announce the revitalization of our Parent Teachers Organization (PTO). Throughout the years this group has been the main funding source for our student field trips.

Our previous PTO had to discontinue their service, but we were able to enlist the support and commitment of more parents to help pick up the mantle and restart it. Beginning from the bottom, our PTO is currently working to build up our school's ability to fund field trips for all grade levels.

On Friday, October 16, we had a PTO-sponsored Spaghetti Dinner Night that garnered great participation and new memberships. Palm Tree also completed its CELDT testing, and is now running at full force in the clinic and intervention cycle.



The current focus is on our district's LCAP goal of having each student read at grade level by the third grade. We are now monitoring data and making adjustments as needed to properly serve our students.

# Palmdale Learning Plaza *K-8*

38043 Division Street, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/538-9034 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Danny Kanga**  
Principal

## Help in a Crisis

The Palmdale Learning Plaza, an International Baccalaureate World School, demonstrated the IB attributes when mudslides caused by rainstorms challenged Arvin School District buses on their journey home from a field trip. The packed buses were detoured when road conditions made the way home too dangerous, and the tired travelers had to bed down here in Palmdale. The Learning Plaza opened its doors to the students, parents and teachers, who slept in the gym. Supt. Raul Maldonado put a team into action: the Red Cross furnished cots and blankets, while district officials including Deputy Lovvik and Julie Ferebee ensured students' safety.



Our seventh- and eighth-graders kept their guests entertained the next morning with games, songs and other activities, and our cafeteria staff provided breakfast and a boxed lunch for their four-to-six-hour return trip, which ended up taking 12 hours! All in all, it was a time of coming together to help at a critical time!

# Quail Valley *Elementary K-6*

37236 58th Street East, Palmdale, CA 93552 • 661/533-7100 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Dr. Donna Lebitsamer**  
Principal

## "Working Diet"!

In October, Quail Valley Elementary School recognized our hardworking cafeteria staff during National School Lunch Week. Our team from left to right includes Ana Perez, our manager; Krystal Byram; Kristen Thompson; Lester Kelley; Kenia Sepulveda; and Shirley Cisneros.

Our hardworking cafeteria staff members are responsible for feeding all 730 students a healthy breakfast in the classroom every day at school. Students experience a "working breakfast" in which they begin their brain warm-ups for the day. When our students eat healthy meals for breakfast, their brains are able to focus better on their learning, and their academic achievement rises. At lunchtime, our students are treated to a delicious selection of food items aimed to provide them with a healthy diet.



Our cafeteria team members work tirelessly to support our students in their learning every day. Congratulations to our dedicated Quail Valley Cafeteria for a job well done!

# Shadow Hills *Intermediate 7-8*

37315 60th Street East, Palmdale, CA 93552 • 661/533-7400 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Dr. Donna Campbell**  
Principal

## Builders Club Officers

In October, Shadow Hills' Builders Club installed its officers for the 2015-16 school year. Tom Levesque and Vicki Galli, representatives from Kiwanis International, performed the honors of reading the oaths to the students and presenting them with membership pins and cards.

The current officers are Rich Luong, president; Nathalie Vasquez, vice president; Ruben Aceves, secretary; and Elvira Avila, treasurer. Also recognized were seventh-grade representative



Jazmin Garcia and eighth-grade representative Alyssa Hernandez.

Builders Club's philosophy is building character and developing leadership through service. Activities include a clothing drive, a food drive, participating in Wreaths Across America, and fund-raising to purchase supplies for the school's emergency shed.

We once again thank Mr. Levesque not only for performing the installation but also as a local restaurant owner for his donation of several large pizzas for this ceremony. We also thank Ms. Galli, director of personnel commission, for her words of encouragement to the students.



# Summerwind *Elementary K-8*

39360 Summerwind Drive, Palmdale, CA 93551 • 661/947-3863 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Dr. Linda Brandts**  
Principal

## Teaching a Thing or Two!

The staff at Summerwind agrees that learning should be fun, and so they took a "Dr. Seuss" moment to demonstrate a renewed spirit of teamwork and enthusiasm.

Joining Summerwind's administrative team this year is Principal Dr. Linda Brandts and Assistant Principal Candace Craven. Our Summerwind teachers are also jumping into programs like Engaged New York, Imagine Learning, and the Capture Kid's Hearts training. Our teachers are thrilled to see their efforts beginning to pay off.

Our entire staff, from campus supervisors to custodians, to the office team, have all committed to the CKH methods. Visitors will find themselves greeted by our students welcoming them to Summerwind and shaking their hands.

As Dr. Brandts is pleased to say, "Our students are beginning to demonstrate the essence of the CKH philosophy. A strong staff and a great support team make Summerwind a terrific school. Summerwind teachers have proven that they can definitely teach a thing or two."



# Tamarisk *Elementary K-6*

1843 E. Ave. Q-5, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/225-9647 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Martin Herrera**  
Principal

## Tamarisk Elementary Family Night

The Parent Teacher Association is diligently working to promote community involvement. The PTA sponsored a Family Night in mid-October. Many families and Tamarisk Staff showed up to enjoy an evening of fun and camaraderie. The excitement was palpable. Tamarisk Elementary families have shown a great appreciation for the re-opening of their neighborhood school. The PTA is proving to be a great resource for parent involvement. They are currently planning our first Fall Festival which will take place after school on October 30, 2015.



# Yellen *Learning Center K-8*

37015 Goldenview Way, Palmdale, CA 93552 • 661/456-1600 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Colleen Sawyer**  
Principal

## Promoting Student Success

The Palmdale Discovery Center and Yellen Learning Center are two of the Palmdale School District's very specialized programs. I am proud to be the principal of both programs, where staff members make sure that students receive a quality education in an environment that is equitable and safe. The Palmdale Promise is guaranteed at the Palmdale Discovery Center and Yellen Learning Center.

The Yellen Learning Center staff and students have a great deal to be proud of this year. Our teachers are working very hard to make sure that they are addressing the California State Standards in all academic areas. They are mindful of using different strategies to reach all students, as well as implementing new ideas as they work through the units. Teachers and support staff are actively promoting student success, announcing quality student achievement, and facilitating students' personal goals.

We are excited to continue through this school year to see more school-wide behavioral and academic growth. Our students have been participating in more writing opportunities too, such as adding segments to the "bookworm" in the library with the book reports they have written. In our classrooms, one may also see more hands-on learning opportunities as well.

Our students bring such variety to each classroom, which always creates a rich learning environment!



# Tumbleweed *Elementary K-6*

1100 East Avenue R-4, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/273-4166 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Dr. Victor Torres**  
Principal

## Developing the Whole Student

It is an honor and a pleasure to return to the Palmdale School District and lead our Tumbleweed Elementary School, a campus that has a rich history within the district.

This year we have implemented a district-wide approach that will help to create more data-driven instruction. At the beginning of the school year, every student was given a baseline assessment to help determine their specific areas of need. Using this data, Tumbleweed has begun to implement some targeted-based interventions that will specifically address these areas.

We are excited to provide this type of instruction to our children, and cannot wait to see how much they will soon be growing academically. In addition, we



continue to focus on the development of the whole student by looking at new ways to continue with our before- and after-school interventions and enrichment opportunities, such as robotics, Cyber Quest, and the Friday Fun Club.

# Yucca *Elementary K-6*

38440 2nd Street East, Palmdale, CA 93550 • 661/273-5052 • www.palmdalesd.org



**Pamela Egbert**  
Principal

## Robotics Workshop at Yucca House

On Saturday, August 22, 2015, from 9:00 am – 12:00 noon about 35 students, ranging from Kindergarten to Sixth Grade, attended a free

Robotics Workshop that was held at the Yucca House. This workshop was intended to get students interested in learning more about the exciting world of ROBOTICS. It was facilitated by teachers and robotic students from The Palmdale Aerospace Academy. Our students had a great time working together building robots. What a great experience for our future engineers!!



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