

FREE

# School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation



Covering the Vista Unified School District

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 18

MAY 2017

## SUPERINTENDENT



Dr. Devin Vodicka

Teachers, administrators and Classified staff who stood out among their peers were recently honored with Golden Apple Awards by the Vista Unified School District Board of Education.

“Every year, it is a privilege to recognize and honor our amazing employees who serve students, families and our community,” School Superintendent Devin Vodicka said.

“Our award recipients are an incredible group of dedicated and humble team members who represent the best of our profession,” Vodicka said. “I am hopeful that the Golden Apple Award serves as a small token of appreciation for the great work of all of our staff members who are impacting the future through their daily efforts to promote learning opportunities for all students.”

Seven district staff members were honored with the annual award for 2017.

**Mindy Ayers** of Monte Vista Elementary School – Resource Teacher

**Susan Moynihan** of Madison Middle School – Math Teacher

**Craig Gastauer** of Vista High School – Resource Teacher

**Rosy Simmonds** of Vista Academy of Visual and Performing Arts – School Secretary

**Judi Luna** of Child Nutrition Services (aka WaveCrest Cafe) – Supervisor

**Doris Shapiro** of Vista High School – Nurse

**Heather Golly** of Rancho Buena Vista High School – Assistant Principal

## A Strategic Partnership

By Brad Peterson, President Vista Education Foundation

From the community side we again are in the final days of our Heroes Of Vista event. Each year in April we co-host this event with the Chamber of Commerce. Our goal is to raise a sizable amount of money to offset our gifting throughout the year.

We recognize teachers and staff that have performed years of service that go above and beyond their core teaching profession. The Hero’s event also recognizes business and community leaders. We can always use your help in attending the event or providing an auction item.

From the Education side: We recently funded several projects around the district and continue to except requests for funding for the arts and technology. These projects include a requests for Steel Drum support, Ear Buds, Art supplies, instrument repair and head phones. I hope you enjoy the Photo’s.

We are continuing to fund scholarships and have increased the amount for the last two years. We give to every graduating campus in the district.



Students and art teacher working on one of the postcards that make up the mural at VAPA.

I cannot thank you teachers and staff enough for giving part of your salary deferral to United Way. I am not sure how it works but some of that lands in our bank account. It’s magic! I hope that you all will consider using the VEF as a great way to support our kids.

Let me end with why we are doing this. We do not live in an equal opportunity world. Some of us have more resources than others be that money, God given talent, charm, looks, intellect and the list goes on. Let’s face it, life is not fair! So in our own little way we are trying to level the playing field. We are trying to provide that single reason to come back to school because you know you have some Clay to work today or you got a new pair of ear buds for your class. So our board wants to help keep kids in their seats because without education the road to success becomes an unforgiving uphill battle.

Thank you so much for what you do.

## Creativity, Critical Thinking

By Matt Doyle, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Innovation

**Around the globe, there is concern about the education-to-employment gap. Employers are talking about the skills mismatch.**

The workplace learning model is changing. With more workers joining the ‘gig economy,’ the lifelong learner agency is becoming the responsibility of the individual relying on his or her own strengths, interests and values, just like the student agency here at Vista Unified. At Vista Unified, student engagement—students finding school relevant—is the beginning of a future career of successful learning that includes college, certificates, professional learning and high-priority-sector jobs. Put simply, an engaged student is an engaged worker and citizen, and employers know that to be true!

As part of its emphasis on innovative solutions, Vista Unified is also taking an innovative approach to the world of work, partnering with tech companies that have already resulted in makerspaces and that emphasize creativity and critical thinking in a STEM environment. Vista Unified is partnering with 22 countries around the world in the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) to redefine creativity and critical thinking for PISA exams. Creativity and critical thinking are just two of the important 21st century skills that students will need to be successful in the future. The San Diego Workforce Partnership has created a full list of what is called the Essential Skills for success in careers. These skills include teamwork, organization and communication, which are the skills that employers want in new hires.

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# VISTA'S Summer of Fun!

Experience All of the Fun  
the City of Vista Offers this Summer!

## DAY CAMPS

JUNE 12 – AUGUST 11

Register now at [vistarecreation.com](http://vistarecreation.com)

Our fully inclusive weekly day camps offers activities and field trips from 7 am – 6 pm. Camp is based at Brengle Terrace Park's Jim Porter Recreation Center. We also offer a camp program at the historic Rancho Buena Vista Adobe from July 11 – August 5.

## MOVIES IN THE PARK AND SUMMER FUN FEST!

All movies are free and begin at approximately 8 pm

**STAR WARS ROGUE ONE | JUNE 17**

Buena Vista Park Ball Fields

**MOANA | JULY 15**

Summer Fun Fest: 5:30 – 7:30 pm  
Brengle Terrace Park

**SING | AUGUST 12**

Brengle Terrace Park

## INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION!

July 4 at Brengle Terrace Park and the Moonlight Amphitheatre  
Featuring The Mar Dels at 7:30 p.m. followed by fireworks

## THE WAVE WATERPARK

Experience North County's coolest hotspot. Special events and promotions offered all summer long.  
Visit [thewavewaterpark.com](http://thewavewaterpark.com) for information.

## MOONLIGHT STAGE PRODUCTIONS

37<sup>th</sup> Season of Broadway's Best Under the Stars features discounted tickets for kids making a night out at the theatre affordable for everyone. Visit [moonlightstage.com](http://moonlightstage.com) for information.

**AIDA**

JUNE 14 - JULY 1 | 8 PM

**THE LITTLE MERMAID**

JULY 19 - AUGUST 5 | 8 PM

**SUNSET BLVD**

AUGUST 16 - DECEMBER 2 | 8 PM

**IN THE HEIGHTS**

SEPTEMBER 13 - 30 | 7:30 PM



## School News

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[www.schoolnewsrollcall.com](http://www.schoolnewsrollcall.com)

Covering the  
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Kay Coop  
Founder/Publisher



It is hard to believe we are already at the end of another school year. Thank you for including School News among your reading choices as we bring you the excellence from the classrooms. We hope you have a wonderful summer. The City of Vista offers so many fun things for all ages to enjoy. Remember to include the library among your activities.

Our next issue is September 20 just in time to welcome a new school year.

Congratulations Class of 2017!

## Board of Education



Rich Alderson  
President

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Vice-President

Jim Gibson  
Clerk

Rosemary Smithfield  
Member

Cipriano Vargas  
Member

## City of Vista Office of the Mayor

200 Civic Center Drive, Vista, CA 92084 • 760/726-1340 • [www.cityofvista.com](http://www.cityofvista.com)



Judy Ritter  
Mayor

## Lots to Do This Summer

With the free Movies in the Park series, Moonlight Amphitheatre, and Wave Waterpark, there's a lot for students and families to enjoy this summer! Vista Recreation offers many fun family and kid-friendly activities, events, and day camps to entertain everyone all summer long. Check online at [CityofVista.com](http://CityofVista.com) for the camp schedules, youth activities, and other outdoor fun. The Movies in the Park series is back. Pack up the family and a picnic and head to one or all of the movie series. The best part is that the movies are free. The movies begin at 8 pm. The annual City's Summer Fun Fest is planned before the July 15 movie - with jump houses, kids' games and activities and fire and sheriff's vehicle displays. Enjoy your summer and we hope to see you at some of the events.  
June 17: Star Wars Rogue One (PG-13): Buena Vista Ball Fields  
July 15: Moana (PG) & Summer Fun Fest (5:30-7:30 pm): Brengle Terrace Park  
Aug 12: Sing (PG): Brengle Terrace Park  
Have a safe and enjoyable summer and congratulations to all of the graduating seniors of Vista!

## VUSD Innovation

1234 Arcadia Ave., Vista, CA 92084 • [www.vistausd.org](http://www.vistausd.org)

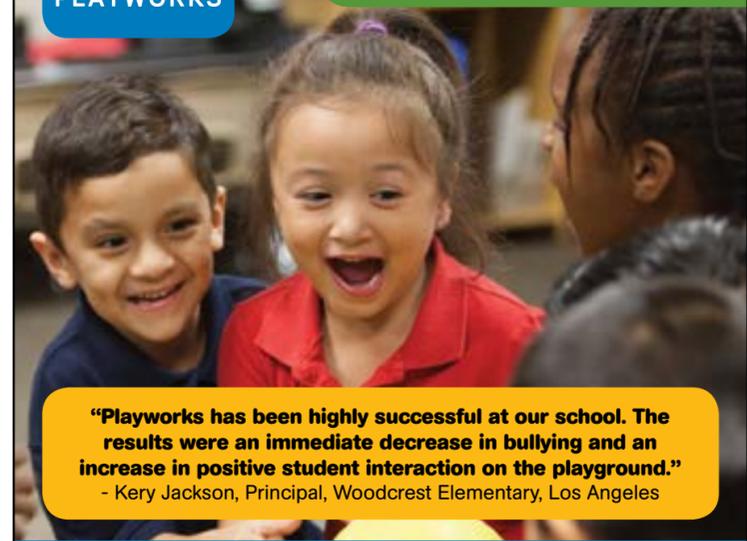
### Creativity, Critical Thinking (continued from page 1)

#### Talent Cities

For companies, the issue is talent readiness. Talent that is ready to work from day one, keeps up their skills with the lifelong learner agency, and navigates the rapidly changing workplace with 21st century skills makes all the difference for successful entrepreneurs as well as small and local businesses right here in Vista. To meet the need for ready talent, Vista Unified is partnering with the Vista Chamber of Commerce to pilot a new initiative with local employers, called Talent Cities. In December, 20 middle school students participated with one employer. This spring, 100 middle school students are participating with five employers. Engaged students explore their strengths, interests and values; assess their 21st century skills; and visit high-priority-sector companies. At Vista Unified, we are building the first strategic talent pipeline in the country, thus setting a model for excellence and innovation!



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- Kery Jackson, Principal, Woodcrest Elementary, Los Angeles

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## Alamosa Park *Elementary*

5130 Alamosa Park Dr., Oceanside, CA 92057 • 760/940-0700 • www.vistausd.org



**Cindy Anderson**  
*Principal*

### Here's to Parents!

Alamosa Park Elementary School parents are the best! They're resources, mentors, tutors, fund-raisers and, above all, advocates for every student!

We're fortunate to have two active parent groups: the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Alamosa Park Educational Foundation (APEF). These groups form the bedrock for multiple ways of parent involvement. Fund-raising is a big one. Through money raised, for example, we have a music teacher and necessary supplies for the music program. In fact, every dollar

raised by both organizations goes back to the students in the form of field trips, assemblies, classroom-supply funds—you name it, they provide it!

That's not all. Our parents provide hours of time in classrooms, on campus and on those field trips! They're the first to say, "Yes, we can do it!" Parents were right there to help direct traffic on campus when we implemented a new drop off/pick up procedure and are there every day wanting to know how they can help, where they can help, what can be done. I'm stopped daily by parents and asked, "What do you need, Mrs. A?"

Parents support our school through participation on district committees such as the VUSD Safety Committee, English Learner Advisory Committee and District Facilities Committee. They attend district board meetings whenever possible. Our parents understand the pulse of the community, create relationships, and act as public relation vehicles. And they love to celebrate, be it learning, teaching, achievement, talent or hard work. Our parents are our cheerleaders!

Our parent organizations are sponsoring several activities during these last months of school. These include a Spring Fling, where we'll open the Alamosa Park Time Capsule that was created 30 years ago; a site family camp-out; and our Music and Art Festival. In appreciation of you, your time, and your care for our students, we thank you, parents!

## Beaumont *Elementary*

550 Beaumont Dr., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/726-4040 • www.vistausd.org



**David Moore**  
*Principal*

### Design Day – 2017

On April 5th, the entire Beaumont Staff met with Dr. Eric Chagala, Principal of VIDA, for our first ever Design Day. The excitement was in the air as teachers and support staff worked together to explore both the "What" and the "Why" of what we do as a school. As we worked together to determine our brand, here is what some of our staff had to say:

Mrs. Gibson, "It created a rich environment for staff to delve deeper into our passion for educational excellence!" Mrs. Brooks, "So many great ideas...classified and certificated came together for a common goal!" Mrs. Park, "It gave our staff a chance to come together creatively for the same cause!" Mrs. Piro, "Collaborating with peers to shape the future of our school was a powerful experience!" Mrs. Amoranto, "Design Day was an opportunity for our staff to dream big, think creatively, and focus on the next step in our journey."



## Alta Vista *High School*

1575 Bonair Dr., Vista, CA 92083 • 760/724-3775 • www.vistausd.org



**Mike Sterner**  
*Principal*

### An Amazing Program

This month we would like to put the spotlight on our newest staff member and his program at our school. These are his own words:

My name is Corey (Mr. B). I am originally from Pennsylvania, and was recently working in Delaware as a corporate consultant. Corporate America was not for me though. I felt unfulfilled and started looking elsewhere.

I moved to California in August after securing a position with PASS AmeriCorps. They placed me with Alta Vista High School in September of 2016, and I am now responsible for overseeing PASS AmeriCorps on campus. PASS is a two-year gang prevention program that focuses on students who are struggling academically, behaviorally, and with attendance problems.

Sports have helped several of my students improve upon these three qualifications. Other platforms I use include independent tutoring, career counseling, and volunteer work. I am very thankful to be the first mentor to bring PASS to Alta.

After my AmeriCorps service has ended, I plan to go into the Peace Corps teaching English as a second language to students in Thailand. I have a strong desire to travel while I am young and gather as much experience as I can. Eventually I would like to get a master's degree in academic advisement working at the collegiate level.

I am very grateful to live in California and be a part of such an amazing program at an exceptional school. Alta Vista's staff has been very welcoming and helpful. I would like to thank the school and SDCOE for providing me with the opportunity to have a positive impact.

## Bobier *Elementary*

220 W. Bobier Dr., Vista, CA 92083 • 760/724-8501 • www.vistausd.org



**Dr. Jenifer Golden**  
*Principal*

### Inspiring Students and Parents!

Bobier students are becoming scientists and personalized learners who love learning how to problem-solve through science lessons. Our parents have been part of the Family Leadership Institute (FLI), a multifaceted educational curriculum focused on providing families with the knowledge, tools and inspiration to help their children succeed in school and in life.

Parents took a bus with their students to San Diego State University, and many now want to go back to college and are inspired to send their children to college. We are celebrating their FLI graduation where they wear their new school FLI Bobier shirts and hold their graduation diplomas with pride.

Students just finished the second schoolwide reading competition, the kindergarten through fifth grade Reading Olympics. Students earned prizes for improving in reading! Students competed for gold and silver medals. They are so proud of their reading progress!



Co-principal Mrs. Hendricks helped us earn a scholarship from Junior Achievement and the Chamber of Commerce for a new financial literacy program/curriculum, and community volunteers mentored students to teach students about financials from other sources. Students loved learning about financial planning and careers they could consider one day!

## Breeze Hill *Elementary*

1111 Melrose Way, Vista, CA 92081 • 760/945-2373 • www.vistausd.org



**Rachel D'Ambrosio**  
*Principal*

### Sharing Our Cultures

This school year our Latino Family Literacy Project offered six weekly workshops during two sessions in October and February. Each workshop included two bilingual teachers and our school site librarian.

The purpose of the program was to establish and support a family reading routine in order to develop and practice English language skills, and also strengthen family interactions. The attendees learned to ask guiding questions before, during, and after the reading in their primary language of Spanish, while also learning to read it in English. They learned vocabulary words and had many opportunities to practice their English language skills in a safe environment.

Many of the bilingual books we use describe and discuss the Latino culture, and so our parents were excited to see their culture captured in the content of the texts. Our parents also became eager to share the culture with their families and staff. We are looking forward to continuing the program in the 2017–2018 school year!



## Casita Center *Elementary*

260 Cedar Rd., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/724-8442 • www.vistausd.org



**Laura Smith**  
*Principal*

### A Fond Farewell

Our Casita Center family would like to thank Mr. David Brown for his past 25 years of teaching. After a 32-year career in the Vista Unified School District, Mr. Brown will be retiring in June to the beautiful mountains of Colorado to enjoy hiking and skiing.

Mr. Brown's warm nature and wisdom has left an indelible mark on our students in the first, fourth, and fifth grades, and they have impacted him as well. "Forming relationships with the students is my favorite part about teaching," he tells us. "Being with children keeps me grounded and young at heart."

An interesting path led David Brown to teaching. After graduating from high school in California, David studied architecture at Auburn University. He earned an A.A. degree from Southwestern Junior College, a B.A. in elementary education from Western State College of Colorado, and an M.A. in education from Cal State San Marcos. In addition, Mr. Brown also studied philosophy and sciences at Palomar College and San Diego State.

His legacy though is his passion for nature. David has been camping for his entire life, and he enjoys observing the stars, the major constellations, and the planets so much that he even became a self-taught astronomer!

When Mr. Brown first came to Casita he noticed a storage room filled with telescopes. He was able to convince the principal to let him take one home so that he could figure out how to use it with his students. Consequently, he started our Astronomy Club with an initial 10 students, and then launched the first-ever "Star Party" family campout as a culminating event. Ever since then our Casita community has been inspired by the beauty of the night sky. For years to come, our Casita families will now get to experience the annual "David Brown Star Party."

## California Avenue

215 W. California Ave., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/630-4870 • www.vistausd.org



**Rachel Schmidt**  
*Principal*

### Preparing for Kindergarten

For the preschoolers of California Avenue School, one of the indicators of success is readiness for kindergarten. In addition to academic skills, our preschool students have learned to sit and listen, share with friends, wait patiently, use kind words, and follow directions from a teacher.

In the last few months of school before the transition to kindergarten, the students have also focused on additional areas of readiness. The preschool classrooms now more closely emulate the kindergarten rooms that will soon be the students' new school communities come August.

The walking ropes which once assisted young students in walking together as a group have disappeared, as these students can now walk safely in a single-file line. Students now sit on carpet squares where preschool cube chairs were positioned only months ago. Children who once required adult assistance to locate and obtain their school supplies can now independently navigate around the classrooms and gather the items they need.

Summer is just around the corner. As the year winds down and we prepare for many of our students to transition to kindergarten, we also look forward to the many three-year-old students and their families who will soon join us in the new school year!

## Empresa *Elementary*

4850 Avenida Empresa, Oceanside, CA 92056 • 760/940-8454 • www.vistausd.org



**Dr. Cheree McKean**  
*Principal*

### Outdoor Learning Areas

It's springtime at Empresa! Birds are chirping, flowers are blossoming, and Empresa students are enjoying the great outdoors as they take their learning outside! Convertible benches, sun umbrellas, Adirondack chairs and covered ottomans have recently been added all over campus.

Students can now choose between working inside and outside, as they please. Empresa Student Council surveyed the student body and received input on the best places to learn. Many students now read under the shade trees during recess, while some arrange the chairs in campfire circles and engage in deep conversations.



**Second grade students enjoying a sunny day of learning at Empresa**

These outdoor learning spaces were made possible through the Personalized Learning Initiative that is sweeping across Vista Unified School District. It is our hope that Empresa students continue to develop a love for learning both inside and outside the classroom while fostering our tradition of academic excellence.

## Foothill Oak *Elementary*

1370 Oak Dr., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/631-3458 • www.vistausd.org



**Sandra Ceja**  
Principal

### Building Skills

Touring classes on DC days, we see this work in action! Playing Jeopardy in teams, students build and expand responses to questions about droughts. Second-grader Matthew showed us his computer-coding project, creating the pathway to draw the letters *H* and *I* and spelling the word *Hi*. He pointed out that he skipped one step, which left a gap in the H, but he assured us that he can go back to add a step to fix it.



Others learn about area, mapping out letters in their name on graph paper to calculate the number of squares needed for each letter. To develop citizenship and technology skills, students design model communities in Minecraft. In engineering, students design an animal-rescue station or build simple machines such as levers, gears and wheels.

The excitement runs high as students build lifelong communication skills and content knowledge through engaging activities!

## Hannalei *Elementary*

120 Hannalei Dr., Vista, CA 92083 • 760/631-6248 • www.vistausd.org



**Tracy Zachry**  
Principal

### A Community of Volunteers

Volunteering is when a person freely offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task. Volunteering is generally considered to be an altruistic activity, where an individual or group provides services for no financial gain and “to benefit another person, group, or organization.”

It is hard to believe that the 2016–2017 school year has come to an end. Each year we work together to support all of the children in our school community by teaching them how to be on time, complete and turn in homework, learn how to be a friend, and achieve a year’s growth both academically and behaviorally. However, we cannot do any of this work without the help of our families and volunteers.

This year has proven to be one of our best yet for volunteer service. We are so lucky and proud to have some amazing people in our community helping us at the school level. The volunteers at Hannalei Elementary School support us in the classrooms, at home, and in our Parent Center. Each hour that our volunteers spend supporting us is an extra hour of help for our students.

We cannot do this alone, and so we are forever grateful to the endless hours of time given to us here at Hannalei Elementary School.

## Grapevine *Elementary*

630 Grapevine Rd., Vista, CA 92083 • 760/724-8329 • www.vistausd.org



**Rafael Olavide**  
Principal

### Support Services

This school year, Grapevine has had a wealth of counseling services. First, we were fortunate to hire counselor Beth Foster, who has had the opportunity to support our school’s students in the social emotional area. In addition, she reads an inspiring message every morning after the daily flag salute. We have also added Palomar Counseling with their “Incredible Years” Program and its famous Dinosaur School for K-3 students. This is an intervention program in classes and small groups and we are fortunate to have a partnership for five years! Not only do our students benefit from these amazing counseling services, but we also have presentations for our parents called Cafecitos. Parents learn support strategies that help them with parenting skills. We have a great wealth of social-emotional support services at Grapevine.



## Lake *Elementary*

4950 Lake Blvd., Oceanside, CA 92056 • 760/945-5300 • www.vistausd.org



**Krista Berntsen**  
Principal

### Dolphin Fitness Week

At Lake School we have an outstanding and supportive community of families! This community is at the heart of all we do and who we are. All year long it comes together to put on fun and educational programs for our students.

In April, the PTA organized our third annual Dolphin Fitness Week. The week kicked off with an assembly that featured our Wave Crest Cafe (complete with costumes!) Throughout the week our students participated in events and challenges that taught them about healthy choices.



There was a fitness decathlon, where they participated in fun and active games during recess; the “eat a rainbow” challenge, where the children tasted healthy foods in every color of the rainbow; the “screen free” challenge, which asked students to put down their screens and find new activities to do at home; and much more. We are thrilled to offer this week of fun events every year!

## Madison *Middle School*

4930 Lake Blvd., Oceanside, CA 92056 • 760/940-0176 • www.vistausd.org



**Susan Ford**  
Principal

### The True Reward

I recently asked a group of our educators, “Why did you become a teacher?” The answers and the pathways to becoming a teacher varied. But as we shared our stories, we all arrived at the same fundamental reason: to make a difference in the lives of our students.

Those who do not work in education have little idea of the challenges or rewards of teaching. Effective teachers work long hours preparing, instructing, assessing, tutoring, and making connections with their students. A single teacher can change the course of a child’s life. Teachers live for the moments when a student has a breakthrough, or when a former student comes back to say what a difference that teacher has made in their life.



**VUSD middle school teacher of the year, Susan Moynihan.**

Our Madison teachers are awe-inspiring in their commitment, passion, and desire to see each student achieve. Working in education is a calling, and teachers deserve our gratitude and respect.

## Mission Meadows *Elementary*

5657 Spur Ave., Oceanside, CA 92057 • 760/630-7884 • www.vistausd.org



**Dr. Bill Porter**  
Principal

### Winding Down the Year

As the 2016–2017 school year comes to a close, I want to extend my sincere thanks to the students, staff, and parent volunteers who collectively make Mission Meadows an amazing school for learning. This helpful support has created many opportunities for our students to showcase their talents both inside and outside the classroom.

Mission Meadows, the school with an inclusive heart, challenges itself to constantly “do better” as a learning community. Our focus has always been on the “whole” child, no matter what challenges our students may face.

As a learning community, we are responsible to support all learners with their academic and/or behavioral challenges. Our students may at times struggle academically, emotionally, or socially, but we are committed to providing each of them with the support they need to move forward on their path towards success. We are also focused on challenging our students to extend their learning to higher levels if they have been showing proficiency in their current grade-level standards.

Looking back on this school year, we can be very proud of our accomplishments! Mission Meadows will continue to focus on continuous improvement in order to sustain higher levels of learning in an inclusive and accepting learning environment.

A big thank-you goes to everyone, especially our students, who have worked hard this year to improve upon their learning. A special thank-you and good luck wish also goes to our promoting fifth-graders. We wish you much success in middle school. Have a great summer break, everyone!

## Maryland *Elementary*

700 North Ave., Vista, CA 92083 • 760/631-6675 • www.vistausd.org



**Carol McKane**  
Principal

### Friendship and Support

Through mentoring activities, Maryland Elementary School receives extraordinary care from members of the North County Assistance League. Several members regularly come to Maryland to read, play games, or just hang out with some of our students. They are known as our CATCH mentors (Caring Adults that Teach Children How).

During this interaction, they develop friendships and provide academic support. Our students enjoy the meetings with their mentors, and look forward to their weekly visits. One of our shy students said, “I love that after every book we read, she draws a picture of what the story was about!”



**“We do it for the SMILES!”**

The CATCH Mentors all agreed that they do it for the “smiles on the children’s faces.” And, “We hope we are making a difference, and hope the kids are having fun with us.” Or, “We enjoy being with the children that we work with, and love to hear their stories!”

## Mission Vista *High School*

1306 Melrose Dr., Oceanside, CA 92056 • 760/758-6800 • www.vistausd.org



**Nicole Miller**  
Principal

### Celebrating our Accomplishments

Mission Vista High School has had a busy spring. We hosted our second annual TEDx Talks, with 11 of our students presenting powerful and personal speeches about overcoming challenges. We had two athletic teams compete in post-season play, and our girls basketball team competed in CIF finals. This was followed by an opportunity to experience the talent of our dual-magnet students and staff, first with our steel drum, dance, and choir groups, and then with our Associated Student Body Student-Staff Talent Show and our Speech and Debate Showcase.

We have had state competitors in theater and speech and debate, and many of our students have been offered admission to top colleges and universities.

In March, we were visited for our Gold Ribbon application. Representatives from the San Diego County Office of Education visited classrooms and interviewed parents, students, and teachers in order to validate our report. We anxiously await the reveal from the California Department of Education and hope to announce our position as a Gold Ribbon School for Visual and Performing Arts and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. What a great time to be a Timberwolf!

All of this leads us right into our testing window. With our 10<sup>th</sup>-graders completing the California Science Tests, we are now in the midst of our Smarter Balanced Assessments and will soon begin our Advanced Placement tests. Our students are busy showing what they have learned and their levels of mastery of the standards while experiencing unique and powerful learning opportunities on our campus.

## Monte Vista *Elementary*

1720 Monte Vista Dr., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/726-0410 • www.vistausd.org



**Charlene Smith**  
Principal

### Showcasing Student Leadership

On May 11, Monte Vista Elementary School hosted its first annual The Leader in Me Leadership Event. The Leader in Me is FranklinCovey's whole-school transformation process that teaches 21<sup>st</sup>-century leadership and life skills to students and creates a culture of student empowerment based on the idea that every child can be a leader.

We opened our doors to the community to celebrate the great things happening at Monte Vista. Visitors witnessed the amazing changes that are taking place for students and staff as a result of The Leader in Me implementation. Students showcased their leadership skills, staff shared their successes, and the leadership philosophy driving the culture of the school was tangibly "seen and felt."

Visitors to our leadership event had the opportunity to listen to students speak about how the 7 Habits of Happy Kids have impacted their lives. Visitors also toured classrooms to see how students and educators interact with The Leader in Me. Transitional Kindergarten through fifth-grade students shared their leadership binders, which are used to set and achieve academic and personal goals. Binders include items such as certificates of achievement, academic and behavior goals, goal-tracking sheets, and evidence of student learning.

Visitors also listened to college chants and enjoyed the school choir and the upper-grade band. Finally, students showcased the leadership clubs they participate in weekly. We look forward to next year's leadership event!

## Olive *Elementary*

836 Olive Ave., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/724-7129 • www.vistausd.org



**Stephanie Vasquez**  
Principal

### Raising a Reader

Olive Elementary School's "Raising a Reader" program was recently spotlighted at an annual public schools celebration by the Masons of California, who help support the activity. Representatives from the Vista Unified School District, various community members, and Interim Superintendent Dr. Edward Valasquez of the San Diego County Office of Education all joined in the celebration.

Raising a Reader helps our families develop, practice, and maintain good home literacy routines. A child's academic performance is known to improve when families get involved. So each week our Olive kindergartners take home a special "Red Book Bag" filled with award-winning books so that they can practice the habit of sharing and enjoying new works with others.

The books are exchanged each week, which makes reading exciting and fresh. The students are always eager to receive and share new books with their families so that they can all read together at home.



## Murray *High School*

215 N. Melrose, Vista, CA 92084 • 760/631-2502 • www.vistausd.org



**Chuck Hoover**  
Principal

### The PLUS Team

By Dulce Hernandez, Erica Rezendiz and Mario Crawford

Imagine coming to a school where all students and teachers get along! Thanks to the PLUS team here at Major General Raymond Murray High School, students are brought together to discuss various issues we face on campus and to come together as one. PLUS's main focus is to support student leaders who try to help others by engaging them and making them feel welcome.

We conduct four forums each school year. Knowing how uncomfortable it can be to sit next to people you've never met, we begin with a few icebreakers. As students participate with one another, they become more comfortable with one another. We then transition to topics requiring teamwork. The large group is split into four groups to dissect the problems we believe have a large impact on our student life. After the small-group discussions, we return to the larger group to discuss the conclusions of the smaller groups.



We believe PLUS provides an amazing experience that every student should be part of. We hope they take what they have learned and help others outside these forums.

## Rancho Buena Vista *High School*

1601 Longhorn Dr., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/727-7284 • www.vistausd.org



**Chuck Schindler**  
Principal

### Another Successful Year

At Rancho Buena Vista High School (RBV), we are having an exciting end of the year in both our academic and athletic programs as we highlight the great work of our staff and students. Our vision at RBV is to exemplify inspiration, discovery, and achievement. To reach toward this vision, the staff has been working on developing a "branding focus" for what students will be able to accomplish in their time at RBV.

As a "world school," we prepare students to be college and career ready as they enter the real world after graduation.

Students pursuing admission to competitive four-year universities receive excellent preparation and support. In addition, we are developing partnerships with local colleges that will give our students a chance to earn college credit while at RBV and a chance to be part of the Palomar Promise that could pay for their first year of college at Palomar College if they choose to attend school there.

Our spectacular arts programs have been very active as well, giving our students the opportunity to showcase their talents and extend their artistic expression. Our Drama Department's spring production of "Curtains" was phenomenal, with the students giving great performances. On April 10, our Visual Arts Department hosted the annual Chalk Festival. Many students and staff participated, decorating a main walkway at RBV with gorgeous chalk art.

Our athletic programs also continue to make us proud, as they allow our students to develop their skills and compete at high levels. Many of our girls and boys teams from the fall and winter participated in the CIF playoffs once again this year, and we have high aspirations that our spring sports teams will do just as well.

We look forward to recognizing the Class of 2017 and the completion of another successful year at RBV!

## Rancho Minerva *Middle School*

2245 Foothill Dr., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/631-4500 • www.vistausd.org



**Ben Gaines**  
Principal

### Latest Achievements

It has been quite a month for our Rancho Minerva students. Our school has won top honors nationwide in three separate projects that feature our innovative electives and vital approach to teaching and learning.

A team of our students and teachers won a trip to Chicago to take top honors in the National Digital Equity Video Challenge, an achievement that highlights the way in which we are bridging the digital divide. For the second year in a row a team of students and teachers will also be traveling to New York, as they placed in the top-three of the Panasonic KWN Video Competition.

Lastly, a team of students and teachers will travel to San Francisco for the National Maker Faire Video Challenge. A team of students highlighted the work of one of our student design engineers who created a 3-D printed piece to help the VUSD IT Department.

Rancho Minerva is a school that seeks innovative ways to educate our students. It is definitely leaving its footprint stamped across the nation!



**Rancho Minerva Wins 3 National Awards**

## Temple Heights *Elementary*

1550 Temple Heights Dr., Oceanside, CA 92056 • 760/631-6242 • www.vistausd.org



**Kim Morton**  
Principal

### Leadership Reigns!

Temple Heights had a packed house for its first Leadership Day, when students showcased their leadership accomplishments. The school has been implementing The Leader in Me, which teaches the 7 Habits for success.

Students shared their leadership experiences through musical performances, speeches, testimonials and multimedia presentations. In addition, student leaders served as greeters, masters of ceremonies, panel members and tour guides.

Temple Heights is focused on building a strengths-based culture in which students are encouraged to pursue passions to guide their personal learning. Every child can be a leader! When the focus is on what they are good at and what they enjoy doing, their confidence and motivation skyrocket. Parents, business partners and educators from all over the county were impressed with the energy in the room as students took ownership of the day. They rolled out the red carpet to honor all participants and gave them high-fives as they exited.



**Growing Great Leaders.**

## Roosevelt *Middle School*

850 Sagewood Dr., Oceanside, CA 92057 • 760/726-8003 • www.vistausd.org



**Elise Ochenduszko**  
Principal

### Springing to Activity!

Our campus has been abuzz this spring!

In March, we hosted a film crew from an organization whose mission is to accelerate innovation in education to improve opportunities to learn. The crew spent time in classrooms and interviewed students and teachers in our seventh- and eighth-grade COW (California, Ohio, Wisconsin) Project. Their documentary should be available soon.

Our eighth-graders hosted a showcase of student work, "Roosevelt in Motion," as well. All students in the eighth grade studied the concept of motion in each of their classrooms—think

Westward Movement in history, momentum in science and dance in PE—and then displayed their learning at the event. Students sang, danced, and described their work to parents, siblings, teachers and friends. It was truly a special event, and we are so proud of our eighth-graders who are ready to take on high school!

Finally, we loved meeting our new Wildcats at our Incoming Student Orientation in April!



## Vista Academy *of Visual & Performing Arts*

600 N. Santa Fe Ave., Vista, CA 92083 • 760/941-0880 • www.vistausd.org



**Catina Hancock**  
Principal

### A Talented Group

As we reflect on all that Vista Academy has accomplished this school year, we are excited to share some highlights.

After years of planning, refining, and implementing, we were recently honored to host a verification team from the International Baccalaureate Organization that came to see our amazing program in action. After-school conservatories have also been demonstrating their many talents. The students in the art conservatory designed, drew, and painted a mural incorporating arts integration and the IB Learner Profile.

The dance and drama conservatories are also rehearsing for *Seussical, Jr.* Please join us on June 1 and June 2 at 7 p.m., or June 3 at 2 p.m. or 7 p.m. This show is not to be missed! Please contact our school office for tickets.

As you can see, opportunities abound at Vista Academy for students to develop their creativity and innovation, from vocal groups and award-winning Lego robotics, to violinists and our Ballet Folklorico!



## Vista *Adult Transition Center*

325 E. Bobier Dr., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/758-3400 • www.vistausd.org



**Chris Altona**  
Principal

### Community-Based Instruction

In a world with cybercommuting and increasing degrees of personalized learning, there is a push for students to gain real-world experiences in a variety of settings to connect with environs outside the traditional classroom. Vista Adult Transition Center (VATC) has embraced this idea with gusto.

Our students each help to develop their own individual education plans, with the ultimate goal of growing into independent, successful adults. We all know how much work it can be shifting from childhood to adult living. Add learning or

physical challenges to the mix, and it becomes vital to have access to actual experiences in the world at large. This is precisely why our students are engaged extensively in community-based instruction (CBI).

CBI comes in many forms. The most well-known of these is the field trip. While field trips can be wonderful support for other lessons, they are not intended to be stand-alone learning experiences. At VATC, we do not generally have field trips in the traditional sense, but our students are in the community for many other reasons. Our students take community-college classes, learn how to get around in public transit, and access resources available to them. They learn employment attainment and explicit on-the-job skills that will enhance their resumes and soft-skill repertoires. They are becoming young adults, with the rights and responsibilities that reaching the age of majority entails.

While we will continue to provide numerous classroom learning experiences in VATC, we will also be expanding and developing a more robust CBI program. The goal is to consider future needs and skills for individual students and how those needs and skills mesh with the actual community jobs, opportunities and niches with which the young adults will interact.

## Vista *High School*

1 Panther Way, Vista, CA 92084 • 760/726-5611 • www.vistausd.org



**Anthony Barela**  
Principal

### Awards and Accolades

As the end of the school year rapidly approaches, we have had a wonderful spring at Vista High School (VHS). Here are some of the accomplishments we have been a part of this spring.

VHS was invited to send a group of delegate students to the United Nations in New York City. The VHS Regimental Band competed at Carnegie Hall and was awarded the gold medal. VHS has been working to upgrade our library, with a projected completion date in the fall. Dave Hanlon's group of student leaders was selected to be part of the national WE Day in Los Angeles.

Craig Gastauer was selected as the District High School Teacher of the Year. Doris Shapiro was selected as the District Classified Employee of the Year. VHS has been featured for its personalized learning approach in a number of national publications, including *TIME* and *USA Today*. And, finally, VHS was named one of the most challenging high schools in America by *The Washington Post*.

As you can see, our students are in good hands. We are continually striving to be the model of educational excellence! Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to a great end of the school year!

We Are VistaEvery Day!



# Congratulations Class of 2017!

## Vista Magnet *Middle School*

151 Escondido Dr., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/726-5766 • www.vistausd.org



**Anne Green**  
Principal

### Intro to Computer Science

Over 40 Vista Magnet students sent in applications to participate in our newest after-school class, Introduction to Computer Science, and are anxiously waiting to hear whether they

are among the lucky 14 to be chosen in a randomized lottery. Thanks to the efforts of Mission Vista teacher Jeffrey Yee and former Viper Andrew Yates, this after-school class will run for two months and allow students the opportunity to create 2-D games and animations using the Java programming language.

Since students will be employing advanced math and logic skills and focusing on problem-solving, a component of the application process was a recommendation from their math teachers. Vista Magnet is grateful to Mr. Yee and Mr. Yates for dedicating their after-school time to our Viper mathematicians, particularly given the importance of developing rich computer-science opportunities to middle school students.



## VIDA *Vista Innovation & Design Academy*

740 Olive Ave., Vista, CA 92083 • 760/724-7115 • www.vistausd.org



**Dr. Eric Chagala**  
Principal

### Shaping Their Education

Co-creation truly took on another level of meaning in March as seven of our eighth-graders attended Vista High School's Professional Development sessions to lend their voice to Vista's mission to re-imagine school.

During a break in the activities, the students were pulled aside by our intern to reflect upon their ideas and thoughts. To our heart's joy, the students spoke of choosing individual topics within their overall theme for each semester. Eventually they came to the conclusion that the semester should be divided into two segments, with each one focusing on different aspects of design thinking, and both targeted at developing and refining plausible and workable solutions.

For example, one student explained how within the first section of the semester the students would focus on gaining empathy through research, ideating, and prototyping. Another student, building off the idea of the first's, then explained how the next segment would be dedicated to testing their prototype and several reiterations.

Hearing our students use the "Design Thinking Process," which they have spent the last three years doing, brings us a strong sense of pride. Now we know that they can not only apply this technique in school, but they can apply it to their own lives going into the future. We are beyond excited to see how these students will continue to shape the educational transformation at Vista High School, and the world around them.

## Vista Visions *Academy*

305 E. Bobier Dr., Vista, CA 92084 • 760/724-4785 • http://va.vistausd.org/



**Dr. Erin English**  
Principal

### New Location

Vista Visions Academy, Vista Unified School District's 6th - 12th grade online and blended program will be changing locations for the 2017/2018 school year. Our new campus will be located on the Alta Vista campus at 1575 Bonair Rd, Vista 92084.

The school will still feature our model A - G Independent study program for our high school students and our blended middle school program. Our unique school meets the needs of families who are looking for a "charter-like" program that offers flexibility and personalized learning option for their children. Please contact Alta Vista for news and updates about next year 760/724 - 3775

## Career Technical Education

1234 Arcadia Ave., Vista, CA 92084 • www.ctevista.org



**Kelly McKinney**  
Coordinator CTE

### A Pathway to Success

In January, the school board approved new graduation requirements for VUSD students beginning with the class of 2021. This new change gives students an opportunity to take more electives that can lead them to college and career. With this change, the CTE team has been out at the middle schools hosting parent nights to not only understand the new requirements, but to select courses for next year and to see what CTE programs are available at each high school. One of the keys to successful CTE pathway completion is starting the program early in your

high school experience. We are hopeful that these information nights and partnership with the middle schools will help our students be more successful in preparing for a career. Please contact us if you are interested in learning more about the CTE pathways in VUSD.



## School News

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## Vista Adult School

510 Sunset Dr., Vista, CA 92081 • 760/758-7122 • www.vistaadultschool.org



**Liz O'Shea-West**  
Principal

### Supporting Student Transitions and Success

Vista Adult School (VAS) prepares students for the future through career-focused job training and educational advancement. VAS strives to help all of our students move on successfully to their chosen career fields or to continue their education in college. VAS offers many services to ensure our students are successful with their academic and career goals.

We are proud to welcome the newest member of our Student Support Team, our new transition advisor, Andrea Rodriguez. Ms. Rodriguez's job is to help students navigate the various

services we offer and transition them within our school programs or to career and higher education. She brings extensive experience in this field from her former job as a case manager and employment specialist in the Breaking Barriers program at the North County Coastal Career Center. She earned her associates degree at Mira Costa College and her bachelor's degree in psychology at University of California, Los Angeles.

Ms. Rodriguez advises our students to provide help with setting educational goals, career exploration, resume writing, securing employment, applying to community colleges, locating financial resources, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and researching the labor market. Additionally, she is doing outreach work in the community and collaborating with employment resource agencies to provide greater opportunities for our students.

"I am looking forward to helping students reach their goals by overcoming obstacles to achieve success," Ms. Rodriguez said. Along with our coordinators, counselor, and various teachers, Ms. Rodriguez can be found in the Student Transition Center (STC), where staff members are available to help students with class assignments, job resources, resume writing, interview practice, and goal setting.

In addition to our Student Support Team and STC, VAS provides many workshops and presentations throughout the year that are designed to help students improve their lives, gain valuable knowledge, and prepare them for the future.

## Vista Unified Council of PTAs

1234 Arcadia Ave., Vista, CA 92084 • www.vistausd.org

### What's New?

By Kim Hilder, President

What's new? Our name! We reviewed our Bylaws this year, and the Del Norte Council of PTAs voted to change our name to Vista Unified Council of PTAs. We will begin this transition over the summer break. The idea has been discussed at times during the last few years, and this year we made the leap to make it happen. It is no small task, and may take some getting used to, but we are so happy to continue our work throughout VUSD and representing at the County and State PTAs, without needing to explain who, what or where we are.



This year, our Council was recognized as a California State PTA Legacy PTA. Celebrating 60 years as a chartered Parent Teacher Association,

advocating and working on behalf of families, children, and VUSD's school communities. The PTA volunteers throughout our district work an average of 80,000 plus hours each year to fulfill our Mission Statement, which is simply, to positively impact the lives of all children and families. We look forward to continuing this vision by working with the dedicated parents, teachers, principals, staff, and district administration in the years to come. We appreciate everyone's continued efforts and support of all the great work being done by each member of the VUSD PTA family.



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