

FREE

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Monrovia Unified School District



Volume 7, Issue 34

March / April 2021

Committed to Ensuring A World-Class Education



We are committed to doing everything possible to ensure our students, no matter the setting they are in, continue to receive a world-class education.

(please see Superintendent Dr. Katherine w message on page 2.)

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Committed to Ensuring A World-Class Education



**Dr. Katherine
Thorossian**
Superintendent

On Jan. 4, Monrovia Unified began its spring semester continuing with distance learning amid an unprecedented surge in COVID-19 cases throughout Los Angeles County. Through it all, Monrovia Unified has remained committed to its mission of providing a world-class education for our world-class students, and our teachers and staff returned from the

winter break prepared to continue working with students to ensure their academic success.

Our administrators and COVID-19 task force groups, since the start of the fall 2020 semester and into the spring 2021 semester, have committed their time to developing a Hybrid Instructional Model that will allow for a safe return to in-person instruction.

In order to develop the hybrid model plan that will best suit our school community, Monrovia Unified will continue seeking input from our students, staff, and families. The option to remain in distance learning or enroll in independent study through Mountain Park School will also be provided to our families.

Though we have faced many challenges since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the District has also recorded many significant successes.

When the California Department of Education released the 2019-20 graduation data in December 2020, we were proud to see that Monrovia Unified students continued to outperform the county and the state. At the high school level, Monrovia Unified's strong college-going culture is emphasized through our specialized academies and our Early College Program. Our scholars continue to engage in meaningful education that is preparing them for college, career, and beyond.

In 2020, our ability to persevere was tested. It tested our relationships, our resolve, and our resources. The hum of the classroom has been replaced by breakout rooms and chats. Students are learning – as are we – through new platforms; platforms that will remain long after the threat of disease is removed; platforms that will enhance the traditional model of schooling. Our school community has shown strength in unity, coming together to support our students during distance learning and provide them with as many opportunities as possible to engage in traditional school activities.

We persevered, together, in 2020 and will continue to do so through whatever challenges face us in 2021. We are committed to doing everything possible to ensure our students, no matter the setting they are in, continue to receive a world-class education.

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www.schoolnewsrollcall.com

Covering the
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Netragrednik

As this issue is being finalized the reports of COVID-19 cases are less than reported in January and more people are being vaccinated.

This issue begins with the message from Dr. Thorossian on page 2. There is much to celebrate in the Monrovia Unified School District in spite of the pandemic challenges. As you continue to read the articles from

the principals it is obvious educators are innovators. You will read about slide shows demonstrating what it means to be kind, lunch with animals, virtual enrichment programs, a Zoom scavenger hunt, and so much more...

Thank you for continuing to include *School News* among your reading choices.

Our next issue is May 12.



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Bradoaks *Elementary Science Academy*

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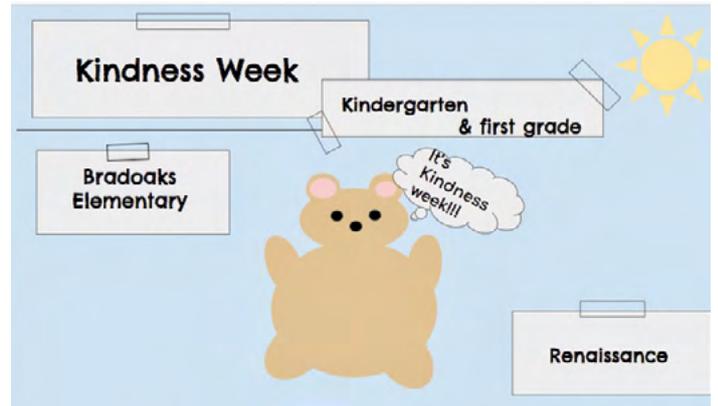


Dr. Jayne Nickles
Principal

Kindness Week & Renaissance

Under the guidance of our Renaissance Advisors and in honor of Kindness Week, our fifth-grade Renaissance Leaders decided to spread some cheer by creating slideshows that demonstrate what it means to be kind. These amazing students worked in groups to put their skills in motion and tailored each slideshow specifically for their audience. For example, the slideshow for the young Bobcats in kindergarten and first grade are filled with

pictures and key phrases that our primary students will understand and be able to read. The Renaissance Leaders also customized slideshows for Bobcats in 2-3rd grade, and for Bobcats in 4-5th grade. The Renaissance team is lifting spirits and showing that kindness can be practiced virtually at school, home, and everyday. We are proud of



our Renaissance Leaders and the impact they are making in our community. Way to go Bobcats!

Canyon Early Learning Center

1000 South Canyon Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2001 • celc.monroviaschools.net



Tom McFadden
Director

New Learning Tool

Canyon Early Learning Center continues to evolve the Preschool Distance Learning Program at Monrovia Unified. Canyon Early Learning Center's teachers and instructional aides continue to create, engage and evolve what they are doing with their preschool students in daily live teaching sessions through Zoom.

Through an array of learning activities that are in alignment with the Preschool Foundations and Framework, the Canyon Early Learning Center teaching teams engage their students and their families in the Distance-Learning Program to meet the developmental needs of our students. Teaching teams use a variety of learning activities that are theme based and access student learning through multiple modalities. Canyon Early Learning Center students are presented with songs, dances, social-emotional learning, letter recognition,

shapes, numeracy, patterns, and language-development and reasoning skills in very engaging ways in the synchronous and asynchronous learning that takes place at Canyon Early Learning center.

This spring, Canyon Early Learning Center will be implementing the Cognitive Toy Box tool into our Distance Learning Program. We are excited to add this tool as a means for Canyon Early Learning Center staff to add more meaningful formative assessments to our instruction. Cognitive Toy Box is a research-based formative assessment tool that is aligned to early-learning developmental domains and the California Preschool Foundations and Framework. This tool will allow our students and staff to engage in formative assessments in distance learning at home with families and when we return to in-person instruction. Canyon Early Learning Center is excited to add to bring this value-added tool to our program!

Contest!

This chicken is in this publication.
When you find it, email the **page number** to:
Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com
Please put Monrovia in the subject line.



Congratulations to Erendira Aguilar
Winner of our January Word Search Contest!

Your entry must be received by April 15, 2021.
From the correct entries, we will draw a winner to receive a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes and Noble.

Canyon Oaks H.S./Mountain Park/Monrovia Community Adult

930 Royal Oaks Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-3000 • www.MonroviaSchools.net



Flint Fertig
Principal

Remote Control

After nearly a year of distance learning, we have discovered many things. One of the most important things we have learned is that not all students thrive in a virtual classroom. Between Google Hangouts, Zoom meetings, and a plethora of online learning platforms, far too many students are suffering from screen fatigue.

Typical school days for students from kindergarten through the twelfth grade require structured daily courses. This predominately synchronous system is not equally feasible for all families. With the need for much parental support for the earlier grades, sometimes the parents' work schedules can impede them from being available to assist their children who are learning online.

With unpredictable Internet connections, and the bulk of the teaching responsibility falling on the parents' shoulders, some families are finding it more conducive to adopt a full-fledged, home school type of model. Fortunately, the Monrovia Unified School District offers a

K-12 independent study school to all students. Mountain Park School serves those students who need a flexible schedule and can learn independently.

Mountain Park students in kindergarten through the fifth grade receive weekly lesson kits from their teacher, and they return their completed work the following week when they pick up their next set of lessons. All of the work provided by the teacher includes the district-aligned coursework as well as the Common Core State Standards-aligned curriculum.

Parents play the lead role in teaching their children. For secondary students (grades 6-12), Mountain Park offers online Edgenuity classes from a robust catalog of Common Core/WASC-approved/NCAA-approved courses.

Mountain Park School provides a way for parents to choose how their children's instruction is delivered remotely. It provides a convenient alternative for any learner who does not thrive in the traditional virtual setting. With many years of experience in independent study, Mountain Park School is proud to be an alternative solution for parents.

Clifton Middle School

226 South Ivy Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2600 • clifton.monroviaschools.net



Dr. Jennifer Jackson
Principal

Lunch with Animals

Clifton has made a concerted effort to provide students a variety of extra-curricular opportunities in the form of clubs and lunch offerings to ensure students have a place to connect outside of class time. One of these opportunities is an animal lunch time event occurring weekly on Thursdays organized by teacher Alyssia Jacques. All students are invited to join this virtual space with

their pets to each lunch and connect with classmates. It is a wonderful show and tell opportunity where dogs, cats, birds, fish, lizards and chickens have all made their debut. Principal Jackson even showed up with new rescue dog to pay a visit. Clifton has been fortunate to have had a dog therapy program on campus prior to the school closures. Clifton believes that animal presence in classrooms creates positive outcomes and this is our alternative until we can safely return to campus to resume normal operations.

Where you can hang out with great company

THURSDAY LUNCH with ANIMALS

Animal lovers and critters of all kinds welcome

Mayflower *Elementary*

210 North Mayflower Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2200 • mayflower.monroviaschools.net



Michele Costarella
Principal

New Enrichment Program

Mayflower Elementary School's fourth- and fifth-grade GATE students will participate in an enrichment program in conjunction with Monrovia High School's Math and Science Academy, MASA Mentors. This long-standing program involves MASA students who create and deliver fun and exciting STEM-related lessons to our elementary students. We are pleased to be offering this program virtually to our students this year.

All enrichment workshops are directly related to math and science and are created and led by MASA students. This provides a wonderful opportunity for high-school-age students who are passionate about math and science to grow their expertise. As mentors, they are able to share

their passion, foster relationships with younger students, and serve as role models, inspiring creative thinking. This incredible six-week program includes weekly one-hour lessons that explore topics such as the solar system, slime and the eye. Students learn and collaborate during virtual workshops and engage in hands-on science-lab experiments in their own homes through the virtual program.

Andy Hernandez, fifth-grade teacher and Mayflower's GATE coordinator, worked diligently to organize this year's program, along with MASA coordinator and high school teacher Kristin Ford. The program began in February for Mayflower fifth-grade students and will serve fourth-grade students in the spring.

We are proud of our partnership among Monrovia schools, providing continued service to our students during this distance-learning time.

Monroe *Elementary*

402 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2300 • monroe.monroviaschools.net



Dr. Lily Jarvis
Principal

100 Days Smarter

The Mighty Monroe Community celebrated 100 days of learning with a whole school virtual pep rally. Our goal was to honor and celebrate our students' resilience and perseverance during distance learning. Teachers and students demonstrated school spirit by dressing in costumes, wearing headbands, and displaying festive backgrounds centered on the number 100.

The fun filled interactive agenda captivated our students and many of their parents watching from home. Students danced and cheered, enjoyed a live scavenger hunt, sang along with Mr. Weed, our talented music teacher. At the very end, Dr. Jarvis, surprised the community as she "pied" herself on Zoom. We are very proud of the progress that our students have made and how much they have learned during distance learning.



Monrovia *High School*

845 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2800 • mhs.monroviashools.net



Kirk McGinnis
Principal

CTE Pathways

Monrovia High School is committed to seeing that students become successful in preparing for successful and rewarding careers, and the career technical education

(CTE) pathways provide that rigorous opportunity for students. MHS has five different pathways for students to focus their studies, in the areas of automotive maintenance, photography, video production, computer programming/video game design and sports medicine. Each of the programs provides coursework aligned to the specific industry

sector as well as opportunities for real-world applications of their learning, like job internships and certifications necessary for future employment.



Seen here is MHS Junior Adam Joyner, the first of many for this school year, holding his CPR certification card acknowledging his ability to use an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED), provide CPR, and administer first aid.

This past month, students in the sports-medicine pathway classes have begun to earn certificates in CPR and first aid. These skills not only are essential in their role of providing support to student athletes in preventing and treating sports-related injuries but also provide a foundation for further studies in the medical field.

Look for many highly trained MHS students to be entering higher learning and the workforce from these thriving CTE pathways at Monrovia High School.

Plymouth *Elementary*

1300 Boley St., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2400 • plymouth.monroviashools.net



Dr. Greg Gero
Principal

Students Take a Virtual Trip Around the World!

On a Friday evening in January, Plymouth students and families made Australian rainsticks, danced with a professional Bollywood dance teacher, and even learned a bit of the French language! This was all part of our annual

Multicultural Family Night, and our PTA did an amazing job transforming this into a virtual format.

The event began with a trip to Paris, as one of our Plymouth families taught a light-hearted French language lesson and demonstrated the making of delicious crêpes. Next, students traveled south to Australia to make Aboriginal rainsticks and recreate the soothing sounds of rainfall. India was the final destination, where families learned a traditional Indian dance to celebrate the Festival of Colors.

Each year at this event students learn about three different countries and cultures and are provided with their very own international passport. What a fantastic opportunity for our students to travel across the globe!



Santa Fe *Computer Science Magnet School*

148 West Duarte Rd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2700 • santafe.monroviashools.net



Dr. Geoff Zamarripa
Principal

Giving Hope, Building Relationships

As the global pandemic continues, Santa Fe Staff are determined to teach our awesome Cougar Scholars resiliency, perseverance and what excellence, honor and Cougar Pride mean. We have created a system of support with the goal of keeping our students connected to their school.

Now more than ever, the human connection is vital. We are calling students, contacting families, and communicating in varied formats in order to ensure that families feel that they are truly part of the Santa Fe School Community. We teach our students that life is difficult and that they are up to the task of meeting these challenges with heart, with intelligence, with grit and with determination to give hope and meaning to each and every life. Many of the students we have worked with have done a tremendous job of turning around their academic trajectory. This plan is working, and our staff is making it happen!

Every student tells a story. These stories inspire us to continue to provide nurture and care to our students. We pride ourselves in being a school that cares about the children of the community we serve. Together, we will get through these difficult times by preparing our students for their futures! #santafestandup #awesomcougarteam #MUSD Proud



Wild Rose *School of Creative Arts*

232 Jasmine Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2500 • wildrose.monroviashools.net



Paige Ramos
Principal

Bear News

The culture at Wild Rose School of Creative Arts is very much like a family. As we continue to navigate through the virtual learning process we lean on one another for support. One of our family members was recently honored by the Association of California School Administrators with recognition as a Magnificent Monrovia and we couldn't agree more. Mr. Tom Bogdon our Office Manager is the heart of our school and offers support from kids to staff members and beyond. He was surprised on Tuesday, February 2nd by members of the ACSA team. Mrs. Ramos shared a few words about her appreciation for Mr. Bogdon as well as the significant leadership role he plays on campus. Many of our families also reached out once they heard the news to show their appreciation and congratulate him. We are truly grateful to have Mr. Bogdon at Wild Rose School of Creative Arts. Congratulations, Mr. Bogdon!

