

FREE

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Newport-Mesa Unified School District



Volume 18, Issue 96

February / March 2022



The Great Kindness Challenge at Sonora Elementary (please see page 21)



California Elementary students test a collaboratively-designed robot. (please see page 9)



Costa Mesa Middle School and High School Performing Arts (please see page 11)

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SUPERINTENDENT

Students Meet the Challenge to Thrive and Succeed



Dr. Wesley Smith
Superintendent

As we enter the second half of the school year, amid the pandemic that continues to impact our education system, we remain focused on improving student outcomes and supporting their social and emotional growth.

To help guide our focus in the coming years, our Board of Education adopted the following priorities (1) improve academic achievement, focusing on early literacy and the expansion of learning opportunities; (2) expand whole-child support (social and emotional needs); (3) more meaningfully communicate and engage with constituents; and (4) develop maintenance and facility master plans. As we prioritize these four goals, I reminisce on my first few months as superintendent of this district and the dedicated employees and exceptional students that make these goals possible.

Since joining the District in October 2021, I have been extraordinarily proud to represent an amazing group of educators and support staff that continue to do their best in support of each other and our more than 18,000 students. We have so much to celebrate as we continue to offer exceptional learning opportunities to our students.

Students are stepping up and continuing to succeed, despite the challenges they face. In just the first half of this school year, our Costa Mesa High School students placed first at the 2021 STEM on the Sidelines competition hosted by the Los Angeles Chargers, Ducommun and UCI's School of Engineering; Corona del Mar High School won second place in the California Educational Theatre Association Festival; Davis Elementary School was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School, and Davis Principal Christy Flores was awarded the Terrel H. Bell Award for Outstanding Leadership from the United States Department of Education.

Also this year, our Newport Harbor High School (NHHS) Boys Water Polo team won the CIF Southern Section Open Division Championship, CIF State Southern California Regional Open Division Championship, and various national championships. NHHS Girls Basketball won CIF Southern Section Division 4A Championship, and the NHHS Football Team won the CIF Southern Section Division 6 Championship.

There's so much to celebrate in education and I am excited to continue our journey to help develop the next generation of leaders.

A large blue-tinted advertisement for Vanguard University. The background is a photograph of two smiling graduates in caps and gowns, one wearing a lei. The Vanguard University logo is in the top right, and the text 'PAVING THE WAY FOR WORLD-CHANGERS' and 'Academic Excellence Since 1920' is in the middle right. At the bottom right, it says 'Orange County • Online' and 'vanguard.edu'.



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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Netragrednik

By now the new year is well underway. Here's to a healthier year for everyone.

Dr. Wesley Smith begins this issue with his positive message on page 3. Even during a pandemic there is much to celebrate.

In this issue you will read articles on topics such as: Creating Robots to Remove Waste, Performing Arts, Celebrating Reading, Kindness Counts, "Formal y'all", Battery Recycling, and so much more.

On page 7 the libraries bring you up-to-date on their offerings for all ages.

We have included our popular student book reviews on pages 26 & 27. If your child would like to be a columnist reviewing favorite books, please email me for specifics.

Also, on page 22 is our Word Search Contest — open to all ages to enter the drawing. As always I appreciate your kind words when you email your contest entries.

Our next issue is April 6.

School News

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Covering the
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UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Orange County Department of Education

200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa CA 92628 • 714/966-4000 • www.ocde.us



Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent

101.ocde.us

Want to better understand how curriculum decisions are made? Need a rundown of the immunizations required to attend school? Or perhaps you'd like to learn more about health education or ethnic studies in California.

These are some of the topics explained in a new website developed specifically by the Orange County Department of Education to help parents unpack complex education issues. It's called The 101, and it can be accessed at 101.ocde.us.

The 101 — the name is a reference to foundational college courses — launched this past fall as a companion site to the OCDE Newsroom, which has provided news and information about OCDE and Orange County schools since 2015.

With a mobile-friendly design and the ability to translate posts to multiple languages, The 101 goes beyond the headlines to break down complicated school-related topics and explain who has oversight in posts that can be read quickly and shared easily.

Current focus areas include school district governance, curriculum and instruction, health education, ethnic studies and COVID-19 protocols. New posts will be added over time, and there's even a form for readers to submit their topic suggestions.

Though the site was created with busy parents in mind, there are also links to primary sources for those who wish to take a deeper dive.

OCDE exists to serve our county's most vulnerable student populations and to support 28 local districts with services necessary for their operations. While much of our work happens behind the scenes, we have strived in recent years to elevate communication by generating and sharing stories and videos that meet the criteria of offering credibility, relevance and utility.

As stewards of this department, we want families and community members to know about the systems that define and shape instruction in California's public schools. We want parents to know how important decisions are made within their local schools and districts — and how they can become more involved. We want all stakeholders to know about the resources that are available to support the academic success and social-emotional wellbeing of students.

In the end, it's about lending our voice, and hopefully adding a little clarity, to the ongoing dialogue over public education, our schools and the students they serve.

We hope you, too, will continue to be a part of the conversation.

City of Costa Mesa



John Stephens
Mayor

February Fun

February is a month filled with many noteworthy and worthwhile celebrations.

On February 2, we kicked off Lunar New Year and Black History Month. Both events highlight the diversity in our community, something very important for students to learn and appreciate. We are fortunate in Costa Mesa to have such a rich blend of cultures and backgrounds among our residents.

Also, the Super Bowl will take place on Sunday February 13 with a local team, the Los Angeles Rams playing for the title. I suppose that's the next best thing to the Chargers being in the Super Bowl. Go Rams!!

The very next day is Valentine's Day, a special day celebrated by many at Costa Mesa restaurants.

February 20 is National Love Your Pet Day. I'll be doing something special that day for my little dog Louie.

Also, February 21 is Presidents' Day. Camp Costa Mesa operates during the Newport-Mesa Unified School District Presidents' Week break from February 22-25. Registration is available online at www.cmclassesonline.com. For more information, please contact staff at (714) 754-5161.

Enjoy your February!

77 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/754-5107 • www.costamesaca.gov

Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue



Dan Stefano
Fire Chief

Extended Winter Season

The Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue team relies on all of our community members, including students, teachers, and parents to partner with us regarding fire & life safety. With an extended winter season upon us, it is a great opportunity to revisit some important safety tips:

Carbon Monoxide – CO is odorless; proper installation and maintenance of fuel-burning appliances is imperative to reduce risks of CO poisoning.

The Only Way - to detect CO is with a working alarm.

Smoke Alarms - Install inside/outside of bedrooms/sleeping areas & on every level of your home; test once a month!

Portable Heaters - place on solid/flat surface and away from furniture; plug directly into outlet.

For additional information: <https://www.costamesaca.gov/city-hall/city-departments/fire-rescue>



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jccoc.org

Newport Beach Public Libraries



Christine Chapel
*Children's Librarian,
Newport Beach
Public Library*

Libraries for Lifelong Learning

You may be up to your ears in schoolwork, but why not take time to learn about something you're really interested in! Whether it's learning a new language, investigating ancient history, or creating a new craft, libraries are a community's center of lifelong learning. Come explore a new topic today!

Books and Media: Did you know that our children's collection contains over ten types of materials for discovering new

ideas and information? We have fiction (chapter books) in hardcover and paperback, graphic novels, books in Spanish, easy (beginning) readers, picture books, non-fiction books, biographies, DVDs, music CDs, books on CD, picture books with a CD (kits), and magazines. Don't forget that you can also download eBooks and eAudio as well as explore our many databases! Ask our library staff to help you find an item that's just right for you. We're always happy to give suggestions.

Technology: Adults, did you know that at any of the Newport Beach Library branches, you can also borrow cameras, tripods, GoPros, turntables, WiFi mobile hotspots, classic mini gaming systems, a drum machine, and other "tech toys"? At the Central Library, learn to edit your photos in our media lab, or convert old tapes to digital files. For an auditory experience, try our sound lab!

Programs: Learn about culture or enhance your STEAM skills with these fun programs:

Children's programming: Craft programs for developing fine-motor and problem-solving skills. Celebrate reading and books during National Library Week: April 3-9. Visit <http://www.newportbeachlibrary.org/calendar/children-s-calendar> for times and details.

Adult programming: Also check our calendar for a variety of programs aimed at adults, including musical performances, lectures on topics of current interest, author visits, writing workshops, and more.

<http://www.newportbeachlibrary.org/calendar>

All NBPL locations will be closed for President's Day on Monday, February 21th.

Central Library 1000 Avocado Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92660
949/717-3800 • www.newportbeachlibrary.org/kids
Mariners Branch 1300 Irvine Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92660
949/717-3838
Balboa Branch 100 East Balboa Blvd., Balboa, CA 92661
949/644-3076
Corona Del Mar Branch 410 Marigold Ave., Corona Del Mar, CA 92625
949/644-3075

Costa Mesa Public Libraries



Sarita Dangond
*Branch Manager,
Costa Mesa
Donald Dugan
Library*



Vivian Strabala
*Branch Manager,
Costa Mesa
Mesa Verde
Library*

Orange County Public Libraries are open for in-person services according to State and County guidelines. In addition to Costa Mesa branch hours listed below, please visit ocpl.org/libraries and click on any of our branches to see hours of operation.

Get a Library Card! Find details at www.ocpl.org

OC Public Libraries' In-Person Programming is on pause until further notice! Enjoy Virtual Programs and 24/7 Resources at www.ocpl.org/virtualprograms

Goodbye Late Fines! No more late fines at OC Public Libraries! For more information visit your local branch or www.ocpl.org/nolatefines

OC Public Libraries

www.ocpl.org

Costa Mesa Donald Dungan Library

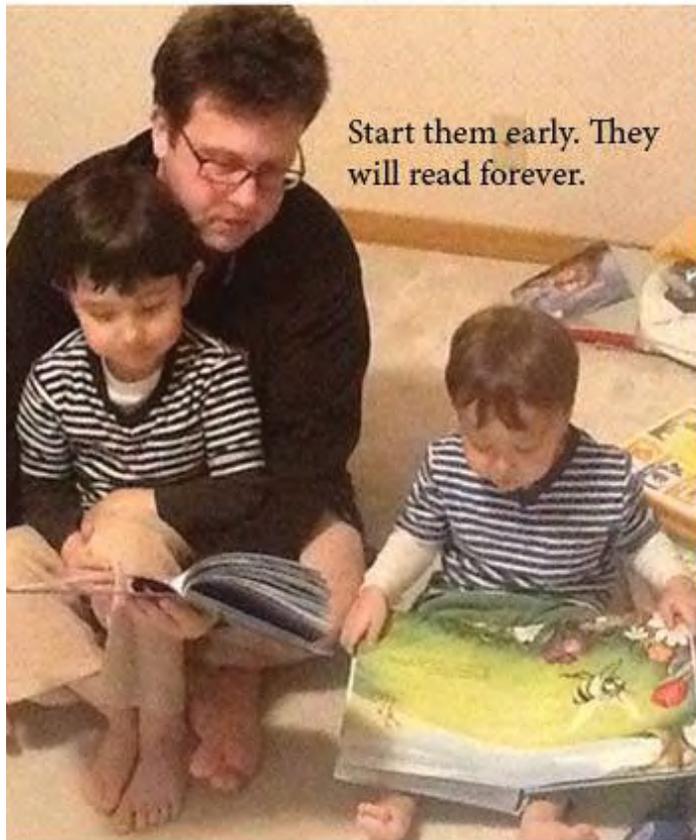
1855 Park Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/646-8845

Hours: Mon – Thurs 10am – 7pm, Fri - Sun 9am – 5pm

Costa Mesa-Mesa Verde Library

2969 Mesa Verde Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/546-5274

Hours: Mon – Thurs 10am – 7pm, Fri and Sun 9am – 5pm



Adams *Elementary (K-6)*

2850 Club House Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7935 • adams.nmusd.us



Stacy deBoom-Howard
Principal

Great Kindness Challenge

Kindness is alive and well at Adams! Students and staff participated in the Great Kindness Challenge in January. The week started off with students marking off items on their Kindness Checklist which had tasks ranging from inviting

a new friend to eat/play with them, helping the PE teacher, creating a bookmark for a friend, taking out the trash, complimenting a friend, helping the custodian and so many more ideas. At the end of the week, we created a school kindness chain which was hung to show all the kind deeds our students did throughout the week. Way to go All-Stars!



The Arts are Coming. We are looking forward to the spring as we start our Arts residencies with Arts teach through Segerstrom (Visual Arts) and Backhausdance (Dance). All students will participate in two six-week programs to grow their love of the arts.

Roy O. Andersen *Elementary (K-6)*

1900 Port Seabourne Way, Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-6935 • andersen.nmusd.us



Tiffany Lewis
Principal

We Love Our Health Assistant!

In addition to Andersen's excellent teachers, our classified staff is truly invaluable. So it came as no surprise to our Andersen Dolphins that Caren Weir, our school health assistant, is the NMUSD's Classified Employee of the Year!

Caren has handled this pandemic with confidence, grace, and an unbelievable "whatever-it-takes" attitude. The demands on our health offices have been intense lately, but Caren has remained calm and steady throughout. As school policies develop and change, Caren has kept the pace. She has also spent an extraordinary amount of time making sure that she is well-versed and knowledgeable.

Students know that a trip to the health office is met with a warm smile. Parents know that calls coming from the health office are delivered with compassion and information. Our parent community trusts Caren, and they rely upon her to provide guidance and assurance when their children aren't feeling well. Caren has become a go-to not only for our community, but also for our staff members. She is a reassuring voice in a tumultuous time!



Our staff knows that the students who are sent to her office will receive top-notch care, and will be returned to class or sent home appropriately. They are impressed with how she can assist with bumps and bruises, and by her capacity to support those students who just need a break from class or a sympathetic ear.

Caren is a breath of fresh air, and she is always willing to partake in fun, too! She dresses up for our theme days, brings in treats for the staff, and is always creating positive vibes here at Andersen.

This has been an incredible last 20 months, and having Caren here has proven to be such an asset. I can ask her questions and know that she will work collaboratively with me throughout each process. Caren is a big part of why I come to school every day confident that our parents, community, and staff members can feel safe.

Back Bay/Monte Vista *High School*

390 Monte Vista Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6900 • backbay.nmusd.us



Mike Wagner
Principal

Mural for New Homeless Shelter

December proved to be a fun and eventful month for Back Bay and Monte Vista High School.

A career fair led the way with 10 guest speakers on campus speaking with our students about cosmetology, apprenticeship programs, careers in drone navigation, culinary and other great careers our students could embrace for the future. OCC was here to talk about school opportunities beyond high school. The event was a huge success and both students and staff had much to be proud of!

Another exciting piece of news from the Back Bay and Monte Vista campus is that one of our very own 2020 graduates, Valerie Mata, was recognized by the City

of Costa Mesa in her design of a mural represented and painted for the city's new homeless shelter; The Bridge Shelter located on Airway Avenue in Costa Mesa. What a great honor, not to mention a small prize!



California *Elementary (K-6)*

3232 California St., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7940 • california.nmusd.us



Ryan Longacre
Principal

Creating Robots to Remove Waste

How might the use of remotely-controlled motorized robots help us solve some of our stickiest environmental problems? For seven weeks, 6th graders collaboratively tackled this question in a manner that required problem-solving, trial-and-error design, and persistence.

The proper management and disposal of hazardous waste is a real issue facing us today. Students were challenged to design a remote motorized vehicle that could safely move waste from one location to another. To meet this challenge, students worked in teams to understand how motors, sensors, and other robotic parts functioned. They began by building and testing various designs. Design teams were then given two minutes to safely move simulated hazardous waste to a designated safe zone. Sensors on the robots evaluated how well students were able to maneuver through a dangerous environment and safely deliver waste. The activity was challenging, highly-engaging, and, based on the energy of the students, extremely fun.



Sixth grade teacher Isha Joshi looks on as her students test a collaboratively-designed vehicle capable of removing "hazardous waste."

Cloud Campus (TK—12)

www.nmusd.us/cloudcampus



Dr. Racquel Stephens
Principal

The New Year at Cloud

As we start this new year at Cloud, our campus is increasing in enrollment!

We are proud of Cloud Campus as a viable virtual educational option for students in the NMUSD. Families who have considerations for virtual learning are now joining their fellow students “in the Cloud.” Our Cloud teachers are pioneers in virtual learning, and they have designed a robust and rigorous

curriculum to engage those district students who choose to be in the online environment.

Right from the beginning of this new year our elementary students have been engaging in such projects as an Arctic animal presentation, GATE testing, looking at items around their homes that represent fractions, completing portraits of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and designing geometry artwork based on the artist Kandinski. In January, our fifth-grade students began exploring their individual cultural identities through food by submitting recipes and action photos of their cooking activities. Our third grade is also diving into cross-curricular lessons inspired by inventions.



The secondary students will be experiencing their first-ever school-wide assembly via Zoom, where we will recognize academic achievement from the first semester, present the PBIS character awards, and acknowledge the English Language Learner students who were recently reclassified as English proficient. As a leadership team, we are always seeking new ways to engage our students in fun virtual activities that can unite them and bring a smile to their faces.

The Cloud ASB was definitely in the holiday spirit during December. The group spent some time with the elementary students building gingerbread houses, and they also challenged the secondary students to a fun game of “Name that Holiday Tune.” Mrs. Mathieson’s freshman seminar class also held a movie night. In addition, she brought students together to share their pets with their peers via a “Pets on Zoom” activity.

We are looking forward to growing and building our virtual community of scholars “in the Cloud”!

Corona del Mar High School (7-12)

2101 Eastbluff Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-6000 • cdm.nmusd.us



Dr. Rebecca Gogel
Principal
7-8 Grade



Josh Hill
Principal
9-12 Grade

All You Need Is Empathy

Dictionary.com defines empathy as, “The psychological identification with or vicarious experience of the feelings, thoughts, or attitudes of another.”

At CdM, we strive to empower our students to act with empathy. This means putting ourselves in a frame

of mind to understand what others might be thinking or feeling. I am convinced that if everyone adopted a more empathetic mindset we could more effectively tackle our societal and global problems. And if every Sea King did this, we could address many of the problems we encounter here at school.

Would an empathetic person insult another? Would they harass or take advantage of their peers? Would they be dishonest or speak negatively about others? Probably not. But how do we empower our students to act with empathy? What does that process look like at school?

One of the benefits of learning at a school like CdM is that we interact with many people from different backgrounds and experiences. This interaction requires the development of certain traits, such as empathy. Like most things, we become better at empathy when we constantly practice using it. In the beginning, practicing empathy might not come naturally or comfortably. But if you make an effort to listen to others, and consider how they might be feeling, or what they might be thinking about and why before you respond or react, you will find yourself well on the way to acting with empathy.

As you become a more empathetic person, you will also be helping others by becoming more understanding. And others, in turn, will see you as a kind and caring person, and they will want to help you out as well. With empathy, you will be expanding your perspective by witnessing and learning about all of the unique experiences that make each of us human.

Empathizing with others allows us to learn more about each other and build stronger connections. I encourage all of you to make an effort to act with empathy, and I look forward to building a harmonious and educational school environment that is based upon this principle.

College Park *Elementary (K-6)*

2380 Notre Dame Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7960 • collegepark.nmusd.us



Jake Topete
Principal

Thank you!

I wanted to take this issue's article to thank our incredible staff for their commitment and hard work during our first few weeks after the winter break. Like many people in our community, our school was greatly impacted by the pandemic after the winter break. Our staff continued to respond day in and day out by being flexible, positive, supportive of our students and really shining

during a challenging stretch of time. In particular, I really want to thank our incredible health staff for the wonderful support they gave to our community and families with their guidance, support, and care. During the past two years, College Park staff, students, and community continue to show great love and care for one another. It is something that is worth pausing for and highlighting. I am so honored and appreciative to work at such a wonderful school. Thank you College Park for continuing to shine for our families and community.

Costa Mesa *High School / Middle School (7-12)*

2650 Fairview Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-8700 • cmhs.nmusd.us



Dr. Eugene Kwong
Principal
7-8 Grade



Jake Haley
Principal
9-12 Grade

Holiday Traditions Return

Holiday traditions at Costa Mesa High and Middle School returned to the Performing Arts Center with concerts and performances. Our visual and performing arts teachers worked tirelessly to prepare our vocalists and musicians to adjust to performing indoors,

while also incorporating modifications such as singing through a mask or playing an instrument with unique covers. The annual "Songs of the Season" concert was well attended, and our families enjoyed hearing their students perform.

Our instrumental music classes, including band and orchestra, performed the Sounds of the Season concert

on our beautiful Performing Arts Center stage. For those who have not attended this concert before, this year was a slightly different one compared to previous productions.

Due to the limited seating in our theater, there were five small concerts combined into one large one. The goal was to keep this a casual event and make it an easy experience for our students and families, while also maximizing the number of people who could attend. The performers were definitely excited about having a concert in our Performing Arts Center!

Lastly, our middle school drama program performed *A Christmas Carol* on the main stage at the Performing Arts Center. There were two casts, and each one had its own performance on separate days. Most of the tech and crew for the shows were done by high school students, including direction by Zee Wippler and a poster by Ava Muniz. Congratulations to our middle school actors for an outstanding performance.



Davis Magnet (K-6)

1050 Arlington Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7930 • davismagnet.nmusd.us



Christy Flores
Principal

Meeting the Many Challenges

I couldn't let this issue go by without first taking the opportunity to highlight the work done this past month by our amazing staff at Davis Magnet School. Davis is an excellent school for many reasons, but the people are what make it really special.

This first month of 2022 presented our team with a variety of challenges, as we felt the impacts of the recent surge in COVID cases. Our nurse, Audrey Scott, and health assistant, Ginger Castillo, did a wonderful job of managing the many moving pieces of a very large school. Our front office, including administrative assistant Yvette Miranda and office assistant Mary Gray, continued to offer high-quality customer service to the staff and families across our community.

Our support staff is one of the best. The Davis support staff members are willing to do whatever is needed to help the team and make sure that the best possible care is provided for students both in and out of the classrooms. Our hourly support teachers, Suzie Smith, Jasmine Jeheber, and Rachele Chawke, were flexible, positive, and helpful while filling in as substitute teachers in a variety of positions over time.

Finally, our teachers experienced their students coming and going, which created some unique challenges for planning and teaching. Yet, they did the best they could to provide consistency while also making the days positive and productive.

I am grateful that the cases have subsided and that we are returning to many of our previous activities. I am also very grateful for the outstanding team here at Davis, who I am fortunate to be working with every day. They give me incredible #davisduckspride!

Early College High School (9-12)

2990 Mesa Verde Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7990 • earlycollege.nmusd.us



Dr. David Martinez
Principal

First Semester Accomplishments

During the week of January 18-21, we celebrated our students' first semester accomplishments. It turned out to be one of our best semesters in terms of students earning awards in Outstanding Citizenship, Principal's Honor Roll (3.5 or higher unweighted academic grade point average) and the California Scholarship Federation (based on the number of As and Bs in college preparatory high school courses and college courses taken). Among the entire student body, 31.8% earned the Outstanding Citizenship Award, 46.4% earned the Principal's Honor Roll Award (2nd highest rate in school history), and 50.7% earned the California Scholarship Federation Award (highest rate in school history). Considering the continuing challenges all are facing with the pandemic over these past two years, these are incredible achievements by our ECHS COLLEGE BOUND SCHOLARS!

ECHS will continue to hold Information Nights for prospective new students and their parents throughout the remainder of the school year. You can go to our website for more information.



Eastbluff Elementary (K-6)

2627 Vista del Oro, Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-5920 • eastbluff.nmusd.us



Cheryl Beck
Principal

Celebrating Reading!

The last full week of January celebrated our annual Read-a-thon. Our students did an amazing job all week reading, logging their minutes, and asking their family and friends to pledge for them.

Our classrooms were full of creative reading activities: Guest Readers on Zoom, Mystery Zoom Readers, Reading Buddies activities, Reading Café, Edible Book Reports and more. Some classrooms challenged their grade-level partners to reading-goal challenges

on Accelerated Reader. Our students collectively read hundreds of books that week and had so much fun! We finished the week with a PJ Dress Day to celebrate our love for reading.

A huge thank-you goes out to our PTA for coordinating this great event and to our teachers for their creative, fun classroom activities. Congratulations to Mrs. Allen's class, our top class in the Read-a-thon!

We know that reading is essential for our students' future, and our students really showed their passion for reading through this week's celebration. We are so proud of our Eastbluff Students! GO Otters!



Horace Ensign Intermediate (7-8)

2000 Cliff Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92663 • 949/515-6910 • ensign.nmusd.us



Samantha Payne
Principal

Athletics Off to a Great Start

Ensign athletics have had a great start to their year. The 7th grade girls' basketball team concluded their season with a 15-point victory over Harbor Day in the Coastal Athletic League Championship game. They ended the season 8-0, becoming one of the few teams in school history to have an undefeated season, winning both the league and tournament championships. This year's team added to a strong girls' basketball tradition at Ensign by winning a 6th championship within the past seven seasons. They look forward to defending their title next year as 8th graders!

Ensign boys' volleyball also dominated in the fall. Both the 7th and 8th grade teams won championships, with 8th grade going undefeated the entire season. One of the most amazing things about both teams was that very few of the boys had ever played volleyball before. However, they were any coach's dream, as they worked hard, learned fast, and were all very competitive.

Estancia High School

2323 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6500 • estancia.nmusd.us



Michael Halt
Principal

Updated Covid Protocols

While the Omicron surge did force Estancia High School to postpone our Winter Pep Assembly and Winter Formal Dance, we are grateful for the fact that we are still open serving our students with in-person learning. The arrival of new COVID test kits and updated COVID protocols has given us all the needed optimism to fully embrace the new year. Estancia's PTSA and ELAC parent organizations remain strong avenues of support for our community and we are pleased that we will be able to host meetings with both of these groups on campus in the evening hours. Estancia High School sends our best wishes to everyone for a happy and healthy 2022!

Our next issue is April 6.
Thank you for including *School News*
among your reading choices.

Harbor View *Elementary (K-6)*

900 Goldenrod Ave., Corona del Mar, CA 92625 • 949/515-6940 • harborview.nmusd.us



Gabriel Del Real
Principal

Note of Gratitude

I would like to take this opportunity to share my sincere gratitude for the incredible staff at Harbor View who have helped us keep our doors open over the challenging weeks since we returned from the holiday break. Harbor View has experienced the same spike in COVID-19 as the rest of the nation, and it has definitely impacted our staffing. Despite the challenges, the HV staff has been flexible, creative and resilient in ensuring that our classrooms remain open for our students.

While the daily puzzle of staffing our classrooms and support positions has been constant, it has been worth every ounce of the effort. Walking around our campus, I have repeatedly been reminded of the reasons why we are all here: our students. Despite the numerous student absences, as with all schools, hundreds of students are still here every day. Each and every one of those students makes it worthwhile to overcome the current challenges of the pandemic.

The amazing Harbor View staff has provided students with exactly the types of learning experiences that make their daily experiences at school feel as normal as possible in these most unusual times.

Thank you, Harbor View Elementary staff. You are an inspirational group. We are stronger together!

Heinz Kaiser *Elementary (3-6)*

2130 Santa Ana Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6950 • kaiser.nmusd.us



Dr. Deborah Granger
Principal

Spirit of Giving

Pablo Picasso is credited for having said, “The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.” Just a month ago, Kaiser families gave away all kinds of gifts to support those who needed holiday cheer during a challenging time. After a gift card drive, we had over \$3,000 to share with our families. Perhaps the most touching parts of this year’s experience were the generous contributions from current and past students who raised money by selling

beautiful luminaries in the community and the family that wanted to give back after once having been the recipient of holiday support.

Kaiser alumni now in high school have carried on a tradition that includes the annual addition of new students. They make and sell luminaries and then purchase gift cards to contribute to support those in need. A family that has “graduated” from Kaiser donated bags and bags of healthy, delicious food for families to take home along with their gift cards in appreciation of the help they received in a time of need. This is what Kaiser is all about—giving whenever we can!



Past and present Kaiser students “give it away!”

Killybrooke *Elementary (K-6)*

3155 Killybrooke Ln., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7945 • killybrooke.nmusd.us



Laura Sosa
Principal

Unusual Semester Start!

Killybrooke kicked off the 2022 calendar year with a unique month. Like many schools across the country, January brought to our site unique challenges as we adjusted to increased COVID-19 cases due to the spread of the omicron variant.

Our school nurse, Amanda Taylor, was arguably the most valuable team member this month as she spent countless hours taking phone calls from families, contact-tracing, and making notifications to pertinent staff members and families. She worked tirelessly around the clock tracking incoming cases and communicating with families who were understandably concerned about the positive cases or exposures. Mrs. Taylor was supported by our health-office technician, Maria Ramos-Rico, and our office team that included Cindy Ridens and Tami Gallarzo. I am so grateful

for the teamwork that allowed our office to weather the intensity of January.

In addition, our site teachers adapted to fluctuating class sizes amid incredible absences. Our classified team filled in for one another during periods of illness and made sure our students were safe and cared for during the instructional day. The team did all of these things while navigating their own health concerns at times.

The Killybrooke team knew that when they headed back to school on Jan. 3, there would be bumpy times ahead, but they showed up collectively to navigate each hurdle that came our way by working together and supporting one another. Thank you to team Killybrooke for your extraordinary teamwork and efforts! Another thank-you goes to the Killybrooke students for their resiliency and adaptability. Finally, thank you to the Killybrooke community for your patience and support as we navigated an exciting launch to 2022. We are looking forward to all the things we will accomplish as a team this year!

Abraham Lincoln *Elementary (K-6)*

3101 Pacific View Dr., Corona del Mar, CA 92625 • 949/515-6955 • lincoln.nmusd.us



Dr. Kristin DeMicco
Principal

6th Graders Walk through the Ancient World

On a recent January morning, our 6th grade students traded their typical school attire for clothing depicting historical figures from Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome. This is a common tradition for 6th graders on their Walk-Through day, but

it was especially exiting for this year's 6th grade students who because of COVID-19 missed the opportunity to have an in-person Walk Through experience in 5th grade. Our students spent a great deal of time preparing for this day, and as they learned about ancient civilizations in the weeks leading up to the presentation, there was some concern this year's event might once again need to be virtual. The students were so excited when they learned their Walk-Through could be live and in-person, and their enthusiasm was evident in their engagement and level of participation throughout the presentation. We are so thankful to have given our 6th graders this wonderful experience.



Mariners *Elementary (K-6)*

2100 Mariners Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-6960 • mariners.nmusd.us



Matthew Broesamle
Principal

Making a Difference

These current times have tested every ounce of our resilience, and they continue to challenge us in ways that we never could have imagined.

Fortunately, at the heart of Mariners lives an incredible group of people who are dedicated to showing up for our students to ensure that we take care of all of their essential needs. I am so grateful to be working with a staff that takes on each day with optimism, and is committed to living out our mission to inspire, motivate, and make a difference in the lives of our students.

I want to especially highlight the incredible work of our health office staff, comprised of Stephanie Hunt, our health assistant, and Cortney Hagerman, our nurse. Since our

return from winter break, this dynamic duo has performed the work of champions. They have worked to meet the demands placed upon them to see that our families are well taken care of and communicated with in a timely manner.

This is truly remarkable given the volume of work that has been placed upon our office. Not only do they show up for us each day, they show up with the most positive attitude for all of our students and families. They truly demonstrate the highest level of commitment to our school community.

These difficult times will be behind us some day, and hopefully soon. When that time comes, our Mariners will be stronger. We will be stronger because of the collective effort and dedication of our staff members in caring for our students and families. I cannot thank everyone enough for showing up for our students during this incredibly difficult time. Go, Marlins!

Newport *Elementary (K-6)*

1327 W. Balboa Blvd., Newport Beach, CA 92661 • 949/515-6965 • newportel.nmusd.us



Amanda Estrada
Principal

Kindness Counts

Newport El participated in the Great Kindness Challenge during the last full week of January. For the challenge, students are encouraged to complete as many acts of kindness as possible from the list on the challenge card. All week long, students participated in activities that focused on spreading kindness and empathy throughout the school

community. Our sixth-grade Student Leadership Crew kicked off the week by welcoming the student body with posters, pom-poms and fanfare.

Each day, students discussed a quote about kindness, read a book with the theme of kindness, and participated in a related activity. One of the students' favorite activities was painting a rock to add to our new Kindness Rocks rock garden. The challenge week may be over, but we know that the kindness and empathy shown will continue to have an impact on our school community.

I also want to take this opportunity to give a shout-out to our health-office staff. Throughout the pandemic, they have been amazing with showing care and compassion to our students and being incredibly organized in record keeping. This has been especially true during the surge in January.

Our nurse, Sarah Hacker, and our health assistant, Dana Hansen, are rock stars dedicated to keeping our students in school and healthy.





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Newport Coast *Elementary (K-6)*

6655 Ridge Park Rd., Newport Coast, CA 92657 • 949/515-6975 • nce.nmusd.us



Somer Harding
Principal

Speedy Success!

As the world comes together to celebrate the Winter Olympics, we recognize the talent and dedication of athletes in so many sports. At NCE, we are fortunate to have a very special student that is competing all over the country in track and field, and we are all enjoying learning about his training and his sport.

Indiana is a fourth-grade student who enjoys learning, his friends and our school, but he spends a lot of his time becoming a nationally recognized athlete with his cross-country running. He recently travelled

all the way to Kentucky to participate in a national competition, finishing in third place! This race included 250 of the most accomplished nine- and 10-year-old runners from all across the country, and Indiana took a top spot! There was even a tornado warning during the race, and the course included running through rain, wind and mud! We are very proud of Indiana and all of our students that give their very best effort at something that inspires them.

Our students will all be able to demonstrate their running abilities as our PTA will be organizing our annual Jog-a-Thon scheduled for March 23. This annual event is a favorite for students and families, and we hope to be able to welcome visitors to cheer on our students.

Newport Harbor *High School (9-12)*

600 Irvine Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92663 • 949/515-6300 • nhhs.nmusd.us



Sean Boulton
Principal

Winter Formal Week

Last week we concluded a most successful Winter Formal Week. The theme was “Formal y’all.” It was a complement to the Cowboy Western theme of the Knotts Berry Farm.

It was Newport Harbor High Schools first rally in over two-years inside our gym, and our first formal dance in two-years as well. Student dressed in their favorite country western attire, and we played country music around school all week. The week concluded with a dance at Knotts Berry Farm. Sailor Spirit is alive and well, as we approach a new normal that is bringing back a lot that was lost during the Pandemic.



Newport Heights *Elementary (K-6)*

300 E. 15th St., Newport Beach, CA 92663 • 949/515-6970 • newportheights.nmusd.us



Terri Clarke
Principal

Be Proud. Be Kind. Be You!

This year, our school is dedicated to our mantra: Be Proud. Be Kind. Be You! This encapsulates our focus on Shark PRIDE, kindness, and authenticity and uniqueness in our students. During the week of January 24th-28th, NHES participated in The Great Kindness of Challenge! Every day students participated in an activity at school to remind and encourage them about being kind, in big and small ways. Students were introduced

to a kindness checklist AND families had the opportunity to participate with the Family Edition at home. Check out some of the fun and meaningful activities students and staff participated in during the week: school-wide Kindness Pledges plus personal pledges on hearts, spreading kind messages throughout the campus with sidewalk chalk and posters, painting rocks for our Kindness Garden, Principal Read-Alouds, donning positive t-shirts each day, "Kindness Cards" for students and staff, and a fun kindness sticker contest in which one lucky winner's design will be printed as a sticker for the whole school!



Paularino *Elementary (K-6)*

1060 Paularino Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7950 • paularino.nmusd.us



Annalisa Schwartz
Principal

Character Counts at Paularino

Our Panthers are hard at work learning through the day, but not all learning is about academics. At Paularino, we also focus on building positive community members and citizens for the future. Character education has always been an integral part of our campus, and now it is more important than ever. Our students strive to make positive decisions and learn how to become better students, peers, and community members.

Students learn about the character pillars of Caring, Citizenship, Fairness, Respect, Responsibility, and Trustworthiness. Lessons can be in the classroom with their teacher, from our school counselor, or even during

library with our school librarian reading books about positive character attributes.

When a student is caught doing something outstanding in one of the character pillars, they are awarded a Panther Paw. Panther Paws are part of our Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS). Students can then place their Panther Paw in a drawing for an incentive, such as a treat, free book, restaurant certificate, or mystery prize.

The Panther Paws are then drawn on Fridays during our school-wide virtual or in-person Flag Deck assembly. The winning students are recognized for their positive character traits, and are then given their prize. Our students work hard to be recognized for their positive behaviors at school. Keep up the great work, Panthers!

Pomona Elementary (K-6)

2051 Pomona Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6980 • pomona.nmusd.us



Cindy Pedroso
Principal

Afterschool Enrichment

Pomona is roaring into the new year with a focus on student achievement and wellness. Our students have been through so much, yet they continue to show resilience and are thriving. We started afterschool enrichment and tutoring supports ranging from academics, robotics, engineering, and sports. Our younger students are enjoying building rockets and erupting volcanoes. While the upper grade students learn to program their robots and take them through obstacle courses. The art program also began last month where students and teachers enjoyed making beautiful master pieces. Additionally, students are learning social and emotional wellness using soccer. All these programs are intended to engage students in a variety of experiences that help support their overall development and well-being. Our goal is to make Pomona a place students can explore and engage in experiences that sparks their curiosity and develop a love for learning. We are looking forward to the great things our students are sure to achieve! #pantherpride



Everett A. Rea Elementary (K-6)

661 Hamilton St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6905 • rea.nmusd.us



Dr. Duane Cox
Principal

AVID Family Nights

The Rea AVID, or Advancement Via Individual Determination, program provides a structure for all school-site and district staff, parents, students and community to work together to prepare students for college readiness and success in a global society. Our recent Rea AVID Family Literacy Night was a huge success! Students were excited about reading and writing! Different-grade-level students used web-based tools to read and act out short stories. A local author and publisher, Kim Ann, shared her journey from writing her first book to having over 20 books published. Students learned about the planning process and how the author works with an illustrator to ensure that the draft is final before going to press.

Mrs. Ann provided a simple plan for publishing:

- Decide to be a published author
- Generate an idea



- Write a rough draft
- Make the draft better—continually edit
- Repeat, repeat, repeat!

Prior to the Literacy Night many Rea students created storyboards. The completed storyboards were showcased, and all students were given the opportunity to create a storyboard.

Let's continue to make reading a priority in our community and recognize that strong reading is a foundation for college readiness and success in a global society.

Sonora Elementary (K-6)

966 Sonora Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7955 • sonora.nmusd.us



Mia Doidge
Principal

Great Kindness Challenge

Sonora Elementary students are having a great time celebrating our Great Kindness Challenge this week! We kicked the week off with an important message about

kindness and all students received kindness checklists to complete at school. Students were busy taking on the challenge by doing kind acts that include complimenting 5 people, offering to help the custodian, making a “kindness matters” sign, and decorating five hearts and giving them to friends. Families also received a kindness checklist to incorporate at home. We also had kindness spirit week with days that included being wild about kindness and hats off to kindness – tipping your hat and showing gratitude to



others. We're so proud of our Sonora scholars for practicing kindness in their own ways and seeing the impact kindness has on their school, peers, and themselves

Charles W. TeWinkle Intermediate (7-8)

3224 California Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7965 • tewinkle.nmusd.us



Dr. Dipali Potnis
Principal

Drawing and Painting

This year, we were able to add a new elective to our site based on conversations with key stakeholders – most importantly, our students. We added three classes of Drawing and Painting. Our

new teacher, Mr. Lopez, is building a program that promotes creativity, challenges students, and builds confidence in their abilities. He has gained student interest and we have seen amazing projects and pieces of work from our Trojans. Students, staff members, and parents were thrilled to hear of the new addition, and we cannot thank our Estancia TeWinkle School Foundations for supporting with amazing supplies for our students.

Students in the Drawing and Painting class have participated in the PTA Reflections program, with some



students being recognized for their artistic talent. You can also see our students' artwork displayed in Costa Mesa's City Hall. We are proud of their dedication to their practice and are excited to continue to develop this program.

Victoria Elementary (K-6)

1025 Victoria St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6985 • victoria.nmusd.us



Dr. Aaron Peralta
Principal

Battery Recycling Contest

At Victoria Elementary one of our goals is to promote servant leadership in our scholars. We are proud that members of our Green Team took on the challenge to compete

in the City of Costa Mesa's Battery Recycling Contest. Our students learned that these harmful substances permeate into the soil, groundwater and surface water through landfills and also release toxins into the air when they are burnt in municipal waste combustors. Our Green Team's efforts took in over 200 pounds of batteries and earned the school \$300! Our little school finished in the top ten, competing with schools twice our size. Congratulations to our Green Team and thank you for your environmental stewardship!



Going Green! 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 (Please put NMUSD in subject line)

Entries must be received by March 15, 2022

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

Thank you **Barkate Orthodontics** for sponsoring our contests.
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- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
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| Compost | Planet |
| Conservation | Process |
| Difference | Protect |
| Eco Friendly | Recycle |
| Efficient | Reduce |
| Emissions | Renewable |
| Energy | Resources |
| Environment | Respect |
| Future | Responsibility |
| Garden | Reuse |
| Healthier | Solar |
| Impact | |

Congratulations to **Jax Ortega**
Winner of the December Contest



Whittier Elementary (K-6)

1800 Whittier Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6990 • whittier.nmusd.us



Randy Lempert
Principal

Dual Language Immersion

Whittier Elementary is proud to be building a school community that is culturally and linguistically diverse. One unique experience at Whittier is the opportunity for students to participate in our dual immersion program.

Our school's dual immersion program in Spanish aims to create bicultural and biliterate students, honor and celebrate their unique heritage, validate their identity, provide a sense of belonging, and bridge communication and unity among different generations and cultures. Starting in kindergarten, our students experience an English and Spanish curriculum that aims to prepare them to help influence the world around them as biliterate.

Dual Language programs are rigorous, and require a higher level of commitment from all parties, as the standard grade-level curriculum is taught in both languages. We believe that giving our students the opportunity of becoming biliterate and bicultural will provide them with better job opportunities and create a harmonious, multicultural society.

The 2021-2022 year marks the first where our students have fully completed their elementary experience in a dual classroom environment. Today's sixth-grade students began their journey in kindergarten, and continually worked on Spanish and English in their classrooms.

Our Whittier students are excited to be moving forward to continue their learning experience with the transition to Ensign Intermediate School. The Whittier community is incredibly proud of their accomplishments, and confident that they will all see remarkable success.

Wilson Elementary (K-6)

801 Wilson St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6995 • wilson.nmusd.us



Dr. Jennifer Heckert
Principal

Wildcats Explore the Arts

Wilson Wildcats are exploring the arts this year by integrating arts enrichment into our curriculum. Our students are all unique and we believe that providing access to these experiences provides an opportunity for our students to discover their passions and learn new ways

of expression. Research also supports the integration of the arts to support the social emotional well being of our students. We are fortunate to implement Art Masters lessons during the 21-22 school year. Students TK-6 have the opportunity to learn about the histories, styles, and impact of several iconic artists. Following this information we are engaging in art lessons where each student creates their own unique masterpiece. Wilson is also collaborating with our community partners to provide dance enrichment experiences for students. We are so very grateful to our PTA and community partners for sponsoring these enrichment experiences and our amazing staff and students for participating!



Woodland Elementary (K-2)

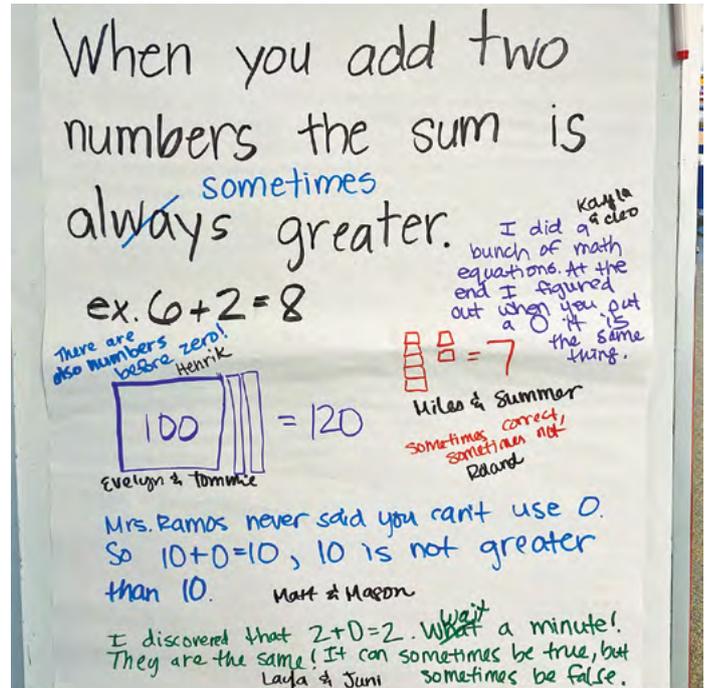
2025 Garden Ln., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6945 • woodland.nmusd.us



Dr. Amy Nagy
Principal

Math Instruction: Engaging Students in Critical Thinking Skills

The way we teach math is changing. Through Cognitively Guided Instruction, (CGI) teachers have opportunities to go beyond the basic skills to focus on our students' learning and critical thinking skills. CGI is a student-centered approach to teaching math. We start with what our students already know and build on their natural number sense and intuitive approaches to problem solving. We listen to students, ask guiding questions, and engage with their thinking. The goal is to uncover and expand every student's mathematical understanding. Through well-designed problems, we engage student thinking. We choose problems that students can relate to such as, "How can we share five candy bars equally among four people?" This approach helps our students progress toward a deeper understanding of the operation or idea. Students enjoy the work, and it is exciting to see them engaged in their own learning. Woodland is a GREAT place to learn.



This chart, created by Mrs. Ramos and her first graders, captures some of her students' thinking around the question, "Is it true or false that when you add two numbers together the sum is always greater?"

Nutrition Services

2985 Bear St., Building B Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-5000 • nmusd-ca.schoolloop.com/nutrition



Todd Hatfield
Director

Changing What We Eat

By Pam Williams, MPH, RD
Nutritionist

Change is the new normal. We find changes in our food supply that impacts all of us. Even though food availability is changing, we can still find healthy foods.

Nutrition Services works hard to keep healthy foods in our cafeterias. But what about in our homes? Finding healthy choices for our families can be a bit tricky. One way to keep up with healthy foods is to look for seasonal foods. Right now, citrus foods are available.

These foods have vitamin C, plant chemicals and fiber to help keep us healthy. Vitamin C helps support cell functions so that the body can better fight off infections and reduce risk of other conditions that may compromise health. Plant chemicals help fight chronic diseases and more. And fiber helps get rid of waste materials. These benefits help keep our immune system strong.



So grab an orange for breakfast or a tangerine for a snack.

Stay healthy!

Health Services

2985 Bear St., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-5000



Merry Grasska
MPH, FNP-C, RN
Director

Wellness: Why It Matters

These days, we hear the term *wellness* used a lot. It got me wondering what that really means. What does the body of knowledge on wellness say, according to the experts?

The World Health Organization (WHO) has defined health and wellness as separate but not exclusive concepts. The definition of health goes beyond the absence of disease to include physical, mental and social well-being with specific determinants of health, such as environmental factors and systems of care. Wellness, according to WHO, is the active pursuit of a quality life in which individuals consciously strive for optimal positive outcomes for self and family. This is a holistic approach that encompasses an individual's physical, mental, social, spiritual and economic health. It also includes one's

relationship with the environment, family, community, place of worship and workplace. Health is described as more passive, a state of being, whereas wellness is a state of actively living a lifestyle that helps to attain health.

Why is any of this important? It helps us understand that we can proactively take care of ourselves, and it provides a platform for discussion with our children. Understanding these concepts and how they interrelate allows us to appreciate that to truly be healthy and achieve wellness, we must take action and the responsibility for the lifestyle choices we make for ourselves and our families. Wellness matters because it influences the quality of life for every one of us. Understanding the concepts of health and wellness helps us recognize how important it is to practice good health habits and achieve optimal health. We may not be able to control every aspect of our lives, but we can work toward our best physical, emotional, spiritual, occupational, and intellectual selves.

Early Childhood Education

2985 Bear St., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-5000



Michelle O'Neill
Coordinator

Our Neighborhood

For the month of January, our preschool students learned about "Our Neighborhood". The students were excited to discover: what is in a neighborhood, who works in our neighborhood, how do we keep our neighborhood clean, and what sounds do we hear around us. During the student's art lesson, they each were given different color paper and shapes to create their own unique neighborhood. This art activity represents a typical lesson for preschool students at College Park Elementary. The College Park preschool is a blended classroom with a general education teacher, special education teacher and two instructional assistants. Ms. Vanessa, Ms. Desha, Ms. Kimberly, and Ms. Lissett pictured.



David's Review



David H.

The Aliens

Title: *We're Not From Here*

Author: Geoff Rodkey

We're Not From

Here is about a kid named Lan and his family who travel from their human colony on Mars to a faraway planet Choom to start a new human population. Unfortunately, once they get there, the aliens on Choom tell them to leave immediately. Now they have a big problem that they have to figure out because they don't have enough fuel in their spaceship to go back to Mars. What do they do? Read and find out! I really liked this book and I recommend that you should read this book too if you like action, suspense, and humor.



David is in fourth grade and he loves to read and play piano. He likes math and outdoor activities such as rock climbing, tennis, and basketball.

Daniel's Review



Daniel H.

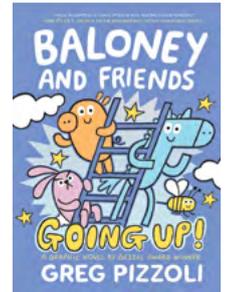
Funny Friends!

Title: *Baloney and Friends: Going Up!*

Author: Greg Pizzoli

Baloney the pig and his friends Peanut the horse, Bizz the bee, and Krabbit the crabby rabbit do funny things and have fun in the many

short stories of this second book of the Baloney and Friends series! You'll laugh about the things they do, like finding a lost sneeze, using a ladder, and appreciating trees. My favorite story is when Baloney and his friends make up a silly theme song for their group and everyone helps out in their own way. Baloney is my favorite character because he is a good friend. I felt happy when I read this book and I think you should read it too!



Daniel is in second grade and he likes to spend time with his family playing board games, reading, and playing sports like tennis, soccer, and basketball.

Katie's Review



Katie C.

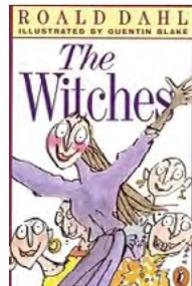
Witch is Which?

Book Title: *The Witches*

Author: Roald Dahl

Think of a group of women, gathering to speak at a convention in a hotel. Nothing out of the ordinary--except they wear wigs

and gloves, don't have toes, and turn children into rats. That is the premise of "*The Witches*," by Roald Dahl. In this fantastical story about witches who hate children, there is no end to your imagination. From the drawn out, shrill voices of the vicious women to the very magical potions they concoct, there is no doubt that you will find the missing piece to all the supernatural myths of the world. A grandson is warned from a very young age about these mystical, mysterious women--but can he face the dangers that creep upon him? If you like a suspenseful story, "*The Witches*" is a perfect book for you.



Katie is a senior in high school. She likes reading and writing. She loves to read to younger kids. She provides book reviews to kids who want to find more good books.

Kailani's Review



Kailani T.

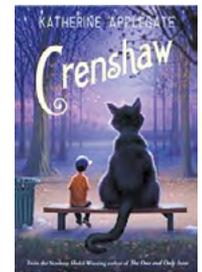
Do You have an Imaginary Friend?

Crenshaw

by Katherine Applegate is about a family with very little money for rent and even less money for food and toys. When Jackson's dad lost his job, his sister, mother,

and the family dog have to move from place to place. When there was no more money for rent, the family has to live in their minivan. Jackson has an imaginary friend named Crenshaw. Crenshaw is a huge fluffy cat. Crenshaw always comes into Jackson's life whenever Jackson needs help.

The story is full of excitement and sadness. I learn more about homelessness and friendship from this story. Reading this book makes me understand why my parents always tell me to appreciate everything we have, to share when we can, and not to take anything for granted. This book also shows how important it is to have a good friend, even if they're imaginary. I give this book 5 out of 5 stars.



Kailani is a 4th grader who loves to read. When not playing with her brother, Kailani likes to listen to music, ride horses, and play board games. Hope everyone stays well and healthy.

Jenna's Review



Jenna C.

Carry Us Away

Book Title: *Stargirl*
Author: Jerry Spinelli
Change is a big word and is something a lot of people do so that others will like them. Stargirl is a character that differs from everybody else. Leo



the narrator always tells himself that Stargirl is weird, but do you think that? Your opinion may change throughout the book because of Stargirl's choices. Stargirl is new to the school and catches attention quickly for being unique such as singing with her ukulele in the cafeteria. She becomes the good luck charm at the football game because she starts singing which motivates the players to try harder. She becomes the Queen of the school, but does she maintain her popularity with her quirkiness? Read to find out!

Jenna is a 6th grader. She enjoys playing soccer and drawing. She likes to read fiction novels. Someday she wants to publish a book.

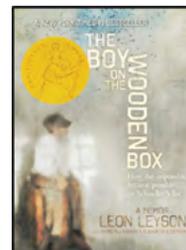
Tegan's Book Review



Tegan

Moments of Hope

In this tragic but wonderful story, *The Boy on the Wooden Box*, author Leon Leyson shares his emotions of fear, confusion, and anger. With his early childhood shattering into pieces as



he is taken away and transported to a fatal concentration camp, separated from his friends and relatives. However, even as depression and pain surrounds his life, Leyson experiences unforgettable moments of hope that are unexpectedly injected, reminding me that through this pandemic that I am fortunate to have friends, family, and freedom. A bonus was reading that Leyson had lived his last few years in Fullerton, making me feel connected to his story more.

Tegan Y. is a fourth grader who enjoys art, mountain biking, tap, writing and reading.

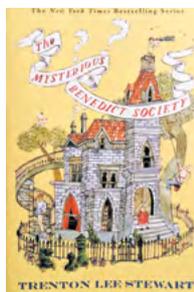
Taegyong's Book Review



Taegyong K.

A Secret Society

Title: *The Mysterious Benedict Society*
Author: Trenton Lee Stewart
Reynie Muldoon is a very intelligent boy. He is an eleven-year-old boy and lives at an orphanage. One day, he finds an advertisement in



the newspaper. It says that if you pass the test, it will let you into a school. Reynie finds the test asking strange questions. He passes the test and meets three other children, Sticky (George) Washington, Kate Wetherall, and Constance Contraire who pass the test like him. Then, they meet Mr. Benedict. He tells them that "The Emergency" is coming from a secret institute that makes the world in danger. Now, they are on the mission to stop it. Will the four be able find the secret of "The Emergency" with Mr. Benedict? This book is written in third person perspective. I feel intrigued in the story more as it progresses. I recommend this book to those who have a thirst for adventure.

Taegyong K. is a 6th grader. She loves reading books and writing her own stories. Also, she likes to draw and play video games.

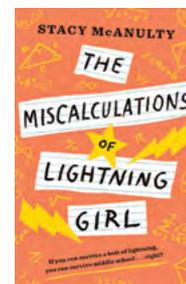
Yoona's Review



Yoona C.

The Math Girl

Title: *The Miscalculations of Lightning Girl*
Author: Stacy McAnulty
The main character's name is Lucy. Lucy was struck by lightning. She loves math, and is actually



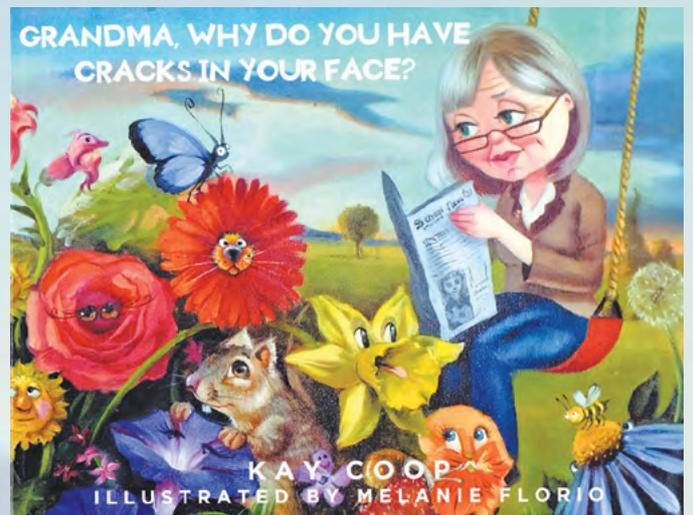
a genius with math! Lucy most of all loves pi. If she doesn't sit, stand 3 times pi appears and keeps going in her head. Lucy is homeschooled and lives with her Grandmother. She is ready to go to college, but her grandmother insists and forces her to go to middle school for at least 1 year. Her grandmother says to make 1 friend, join one activity, and read one book. Later on, the school has a project where you have to help places, or people in need. Lucy and her friends plan to help a dog shelter. She later finds a dog named Cutie Pi and instantly falls in love. Lucy's Grandmother soon finds a school that is good for her intelligence, but she's not sure if she wants to go... Does Lucy decide to leave the school and friends? I like this book because there are a lot of changes in this book, which makes it more interesting.

Yoona is a 4th grader. She likes to read books and create stories. She also enjoys playing soccer.



Grandma, Why Do You Have Cracks In Your Face?

By Kay Coop
Illustrated by Melanie Florio



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Grandma, Why Do You Have Cracks In Your Face? Is a question many grandmothers have heard from their grandchildren. When a grandchild finds her beautiful lost doll, she understands beauty is more than skin deep.