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School News

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Covering the Monrovia Unified School District



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Creating an Environment in which Every Student Finds Success



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Creating an Environment in which Every Student Finds Success



Dr. Katherine Thorossian
Superintendent

“My dream for the year is to wake up early. I will achieve it by setting my alarm.”
“My dream for this year is getting better at math. I will achieve it by practicing math.”
“When I grow up, I want to be a teacher.”

Walking through our elementary school classrooms is always a treat. Quotes like these reflect our belief that the self-efficacy of students grows when they set goals, develop a plan to achieve the goal, monitor their progress, adjust their plan as necessary, and recognize their success. We assist them in this process from a very early age. Our purpose is to cultivate the skills and mindset that promote the initiative and persistence necessary for them to achieve.



In Monrovia Unified School District, parents and students have a wide array of choices when it comes to education. There are offerings at elementary schools of computer science, Mandarin and Spanish Dual-Language Immersion, arts, and a school of the sciences.

At the middle school level, Spanish dual immersion and computer science are offered as specialty programs with many elective opportunities for students.

The high schools offer specialty academies in the humanities and math and science, and also have state of the art career pathway programs in technology, construction, media arts, information technology and more.


Monrovia High School has a model program whereby students are able to earn college credit and high school credit for courses taken in the high school program. This results in two full years of college credit at the time of high school graduation.

Every school and every project provides our students with an array of unique educational experiences. The educators in our district take responsibility for creating an environment in which every student finds success. At Monrovia Unified, student success is at the forefront of all we do and we are fortunate to have a team of determined, like-minded professionals who are committed to our students.




Indeed, in walking through classrooms in our schools, I have the opportunity to observe excellence in teaching and learning. Lessons are designed purposefully with objectives, scaffolds of imaginative elements to bring relevance of learning to life. The more engaging the lesson, the more attentive and meaningful the learning. This excellent process contributes to the journey of learning and instills curiosity in our learners.

This intentional approach to teaching is the foundation of our success and the reason families choose to enroll their children in our schools. With the enrollment window now open, schools are busy conducting tours and hosting open houses for prospective families.



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**Covering the
MONROVIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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advertisers in this publication.

Dr. Katherine Thorossian begins this issue with her important message of creating an environment where everyone can achieve success. It is an exciting time to be a student with all of the choices. As you read the articles in this issue you will get a glimpse into the choices. Some of the articles are about a kindergarten class

taking on an engineering challenge, students reaching out to help others, Spanish Dual Immersion, Career Technical Education (CTE), Spring Musical, and much more...

We've included student book reviews and our popular Word Search Contest.

Our next issue is May 6.



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Jayne Nickles
Principal

Engineering Experts

*By Mrs. Lee,
Teacher – Kindergarten*

Each month, our kindergarten class takes on an engineering challenge. Our students approach these projects with their “engineering hats” on—they know that engineers solve problems. Last months’ challenge, in conjunction with our informative writing unit and our study of polar bears, was to design a polar bear den out of marshmallows and toothpicks.

After three previous challenges, the students knew what to do and got right to work. They made a plan, manipulated the materials, and started building. What I learned as a teacher is that marshmallows and toothpicks are harder to build with than you think! What I hope my students learned is that they have the ability to be tomorrow’s problem-solvers in a world that can always use more engineering and creativity.



Canyon Early Learning Center

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



Tom McFadden
Director

December Fun

Canyon Early Learning Center (CELC) celebrated the month of December in a variety of exciting ways.

First, we had our Winter Wonderland Book Fair. Students and parents were encouraged to drop by the book fair for storytelling, thematic pictures, and special guest readers, including our friends from the Monrovia Public Library. Each class visited the book fair and enjoyed hearing the stories shared by our guest readers. The fundraiser and book campaign were a huge success for students, families and staff!

CELC students also had an opportunity to perform at the Monrovia Unified District Administration Office. Students performed an enthusiastic round of “Jingle Bells” and “Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer” in their blue Santa hats. Santa also made a surprise visit to the classrooms to pass out pencils and spend time with all of the CELC students!



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

Full Circle

*By Calvin McKendrick,
Assistant Principal*

Mr. TeDese Ross started off his path to becoming an educator on the wrong foot. In high school during the late 90s, that foot happened to be pushing the gas pedal of a janitor's cart that he had hot wired and eventually crashed! For his poor decision-making, Mr. Ross recalls being suspended by his then grade-level counselor, Ms. Katherine Fundukian.

But today, Dr. Katherine Fundukian-Thorossian plays a different role in



Mr. Ross' life. She is his boss! Her efforts have paved the way for him to be the type of educator who movies are made about. After yet another amazing speech about the work he does with our MUSD students, Mr. Ross has also earned yet another Educator of the Year award, this time from the state of California.

We want to congratulate Mr. Ross, and also thank our superintendent, for all of their continued hard work and dedication to our MUSD students.

Clifton Middle School

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



Jennifer Jackson
Principal

Spanish Dual Immersion

The past four years have been a time of growth and learning for the Spanish Dual Language program at Clifton. Our students, who arrive every year from Monroe Elementary, come to Clifton with a firm grasp of both English and Spanish. It is our goal that during their middle school years these students will continue to develop high levels of language proficiency, literacy, academic achievement, and an appreciation and understanding of the cultures where Spanish is spoken.

The inaugural Dual Immersion class has come and gone, but their mark on our school is permanent. The names of every student in this first class are emblazoned on tiles on our Legacy Wall, but more importantly, these students also

blazed a trail for all of the bilingual students who are still on their way.

In the 2018-2019 school year, our freshmen students proved that they possessed the fluency required for enrollment in the AP Spanish Language and Culture course at Monrovia High School. The AP class is equivalent to an intermediate-level college course in Spanish. Therefore, to have freshmen in the class is a testament to the effort put forth by these students, and by the teachers who had a hand in educating them.

Due to the many cognitive and academic benefits which accompany second-language learning, Clifton also offers Spanish IA and 1B as elective options for its seventh- and eighth-grade students. These courses are open to those who would like to learn Spanish as a second language, or reclaim and improve the Spanish they bring from home.



Mayflower *Elementary*

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



Michele Costarella
Principal

Visitors from China

In January, Mayflower Elementary School took part in an exchange program. We warmly welcomed 24 students and five teachers and administrators from Shanghai, China. The fifth-grade students spent five engaging days participating in a variety of learning activities together.

The week began with a community welcome ceremony. Our fourth- and fifth-grade student council members served as ambassadors, leading an assembly and school tour. During the welcome assembly, students from both schools had an opportunity to participate in a panel discussion, sharing interesting facts and answering questions about their school life and cultures. Alongside Mariners from a variety

of grade levels, the exchange students participated in daily school activities and learned about math, language arts, and science in Mayflower classrooms. They participated in coding, art, and music lessons and even took an exciting field trip to Monrovia Canyon Park.

In addition to the student activities, the adults spent time with Mrs. Costarella learning about the American education system. Together they observed classroom instruction, discussed the roles and responsibilities of teachers and administrators, and learned about educational programs here in Monrovia.

This visit proved to be a valuable learning experience for all involved. Friendships were made, and much was learned about the similarities and differences among the students and learning systems. The Mayflower community collectively benefited from this experience, and we look forward to future visits.

Monroe *Elementary*

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



Dr. Lily Jarvis
Principal

Making a Difference in the World

Our Monroe third-graders returned from winter break worried about the recent bushfires that have been devastating Australia. They were particularly upset about the animals dying, and the many orphaned animals in that country.

Because of these concerns, the students connected with a wildlife caregiver in Australia who takes injured animals into her home and then nurses them back to health. Our Monroe students wrote her letters, and they later received back detailed stories and photos about the animals.

The students then decided that they wanted to help this caregiver who is spending her own money on food and burn cream for the animals. During their recess and lunch breaks they made posters and fliers. With this the #SaveAustralianAnimals campaign was born!



So far our students have raised \$250. You can donate to them as well via PayPal at <https://ntwc.org.au/about-ntwc>. Or you can stop by the Monroe office and drop your donation in the box. We'll even give you a button with a design!

Monrovia High School

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



Kirk McGinnis
Principal

Skills USA!

Monrovia High School's robust Career Technical Education (CTE) Program shines at the most recent Skills USA competition. Skills USA is an interactive educational program that focuses on developing workplace and technical skills in an academic setting helping to create career-ready graduates who are prepared to face the 21st century demands of employers.

There are 15 different industry sectors that students compete in on teams with other high school students and industry experts. This year, three MHS students—Vincent Morelli, Avoryrose Villanueva and Jake Hidey—who are part of the school's automotive program shined in the Automotive Diagnostic and Repair Industry category. All are planning careers in the automotive industry, including master mechanic, auto design and diagnostic technician. They said that working with a team and with industry experts really made the learning realistic and meaningful.



"I have really found my niche," Vince Morelli said. "I now know exactly what I will be doing for my career."

MHS has CTE pathways in automotive engineering, sports medicine, computer programming and game design, photography and video production. Come by to see the students in action!

Plymouth Elementary

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



Dr. Greg Gero
Principal

Lunar New Year!

In January, Plymouth students and their families celebrated the Lunar New Year with a spectacular family event featuring amazing student performances, shadow puppets, fun-filled crafts and delicious food! Our school was transformed into a magical world with red and gold lanterns, bright-orange pagodas, and Chinese-zodiac animal decorations. Students dressed in traditional Chinese clothing and captivated families and friends with songs, dances and skits. Children created shadow puppets, an ancient Chinese form of storytelling, to present traditional legends, using animals from the Chinese zodiac.

Students in the dual-immersion program showcased their Mandarin-language proficiency by reciting poems,



singing songs, and presenting traditional Chinese stories. One of the truly special aspects of this event was the underlying community spirit.

Celebrating diverse cultures and traditions through the arts is something our whole school community embraces, and this was highly evident at the Lunar New Year family night!

Santa Fe *Computer Magnet School*

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



Dr. Geoff Zamarripa
Principal

New Lab Opened, Students Honored

Santa Fe continues its evolution as a Computer Science Magnet School. On February 4th, Santa Fe opened a new Paxton Patterson College and Career Ready Lab. This new lab will offer students world class opportunities to learn about careers such as Video Programming, Structural Engineering,

Robotics, Sports Medicine, and more. Further, this learning lab connects students to the opportunities that await them at Monrovia High School. Students whose interest and inquiry is sparked by a pathway can choose from a host of courses at the high school to advance their learning, knowledge, and college and career readiness. Working together, Santa Fe and Monrovia High School are giving our students more access to more pathways for professional success and personal fulfillment.



Wild Rose *School of Creative Arts*

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



Penny Fraumeni
Interim Principal

Spring Musical

Wild Rose School of Creative Arts is in production of the Spring Musical Disney's "Cinderella." We are in the second year of our Disney Musicals in Schools Grant and our partnership with an influential nonprofit theatre group. The students auditioned the week before our Winter Break and the cast was selected then with a full cast of

60 students. Practices and rehearsals are every Monday and Thursday afterschool until two weeks before opening night and then we rehearse every day after school. Our student directed stage crew is working diligently on developing and constructing scenery and props. We hope the parents and children in our community will come and support our students and enjoy an evening of pure enchantment!



Tyson's Book Review

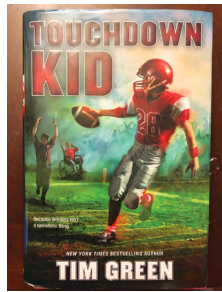


Tyson

Never Give Up

Touchdown Kid by Tim Green

Cory is an awesome football player from the Westside. He is 11 years old and is just moving into middle school, along with his friend, Liam. A



well-known coach from HBS, an elite junior high school, is giving a scholarship to a player he thinks is good enough to play football there. If Cory gets it, he will get to live in a nice neighborhood with a host family in a cozy home, and play football, his passion. His best friend's brother isn't the nicest guy and pulls him into trouble. If he is late, he won't play. What will he do? This is his dream. Find out more about this crazy adventure and read *Touchdown Kid*. This book is great and pulls me in. I can relate a lot to this book and if you're an athlete, you'll love it. I'm not much of a bookworm and I rate it 5 out of 5 stars!

Tyson is an athletic 6th grader who loves basketball, soccer, and volleyball. His favorite subjects are P.E. and math. He is a gentle pet owner and loves taking care of his 3 guinea pigs with his brother. He looks forward to going to Lakers games with his dad.

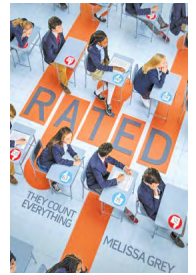
B is for Book



Bailey

Life is Numbers

Rated by Melissa Grey is an intriguing, mystery like book.



In this society, it truly matters what people think because every person has a "rating." Their rating reflects just about

everything, from if they have a good job, to if they said "thank you" to the waiter. The future of every individual lies on their rating. When someone vandalizes Maplethorpe Academy with red paint reading "THE RATINGS ARE NOT REAL," it will bring these six students together, Bex, Tamsin, Hana, Chase, Noah, and Javier. Although they have absolutely nothing in common, they thrive together! But will they be enough to solve the mystery and conclude the corruption of their society?

This dystopia depicts a possible reality that will keep the reader thinking days after finishing the book. I have read the book several times and it still fascinates me. I rate it 5 out of 5 stars.

Bailey is an eighth grader who loves to read whenever she's not dancing or with her friends.

Word Search Contest

Words Associated with School

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 **Monrovia** in the subject line)

Entries must be received by April 15, 2020

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

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Excellence	Parents	Workers

Congratulations to **Landon Cooper winner of our December contest!**



The Yo-Yo

Some believe the yo-yo originated in China. However, the first mention of the yo-yo is in Greece around 500 B.C. It is also found in pictographs in Egyptian-temple wall art. Philippine hunters used a rock with a 20-foot string to hit their prey in trees in the 16th century. Wherever the yo-yo originated, it has become a global fascination.

The yo-yo is said to be the second-oldest toy in the world, next to the doll. It is a toy that has a calming effect on the user. The French court played with the yo-yo (*joujou de Normandie*). Marquis de Lafayette toyed with the yo-yo. Napoleon and his troops played with it before the battle of Waterloo as well, as it was a favorite of the Duke of Wellington. There is a National Yo-Yo Museum in Chico, and wooden parts can be found online.

This country saw its first patent in 1866 by an Ohio company, but the toy remained obscure until 1916 in an article in *Scientific American* titled "Filipino Toys." When Pedro Flores, an immigrant from the Philippines working at a hotel in Santa Monica as a bellhop, played with his yo-yo during his lunch break, a crowd would gather around and watch. He started making yo-yos and had two factories by 1929.

A businessman named Donald F. Duncan on a trip from Ohio to California saw the yo-yo and bought Pedro's

company in 1929. Then in 1932, Duncan was given the trade name yo-yo, forcing competitors to use other names for the toy. It was Duncan who introduced the slip-string that allowed the yo-yo to "sleep." He set out on an advertising campaign with the Hearst newspaper company that increased paper circulation and sales of yo-yos.

Then in the 1960, with television and mass advertising, the yo-yo had a resurgence in sales and interest. However, the Duncan family lost a trademark case in 1965 and sold the company. Yet between 1960 and the 1990s, the yo-yo saw many innovations with the new technology that saw another resurgence in the 1990s. On April 12, 1985, the yo-yo went to space on the Discovery Shuttle. The toy needs gravity to work—you can guess the result!

Today, the yo-yo is providing more than entertainment for young enthusiasts. It is also a way for our troops to relax and take their mind off the stress of the job they have been sent to do. In 2008, Senator John McCain asked for people to send yo-yos and stress balls to the troops. There are several organizations that send yo-yos to the troops. As we get older and can no longer do what we used to do, there is still something that we can do that will make a difference.

D.H.Coop is a retired fire/paramedic and retired teacher having taught IB and AP World History 30 years. He continues to substitute, tutor and consult. www.HistoryDepot.com



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