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School News

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Covering the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District



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Fun is Learning!



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Opportunity to Be Grateful and Reassess



Donald B. Austin, Ed.D.
Superintendent

The start of a new year provides a perfect opportunity to reassess our direction and areas of focus. Our high-performance schools are firing on all cylinders, and we continue to accumulate awards, recognitions, and top rankings. That doesn't mean there isn't work to be done.

I am hopeful that 2017 will be a year of powerful and meaningful investments in people. The area of 'wellness' is worthy of additional attention to better support the complex needs of our students. While the term has multiple

meanings to people, the root of the term is a commitment to a healthy life. In this case, we mean physical and mental health, strengthened by forming positive habits.

This is an opportunity for all of us to take the time to know and support others at a different level. It may mean asking more questions or respectfully embracing differing opinions. We will teach our students many things throughout their time with us. Modeling acceptable behavior may be at the top of our list. As always, I would like to thank our community partners for all you do! Here is to a 2017 dedicated to the people who make Palos Verdes Peninsula USD special.

Board of Education



Anthony Collatos
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Malcolm S. Sharp
Member

Serving Our Students Every Day

By Anthony Collatos, President Board of Education

Every academic year—some might argue everyday—something brilliant and magical happens on our school campuses. At times, we are acutely aware that something historic is occurring. At other times, it takes years of reflection to recognize how a lesson or a school experience may have influenced the adult actions of a former student. As educators, we cannot predict when or how our efforts will influence the next generation of leaders. Therefore, we commit to serving our students to the best of our ability every day.

As educators, we believe evidence matters. I hope that we continue to teach students the process of investigation, analysis, and forming conclusions. A student's ability to establish a position based on evidence is essential in a world where how we access information, what information we value, and whose knowledge matters continues to evolve.

How we engage in discourse is also critical. Our cultivation of academic spaces where students learn how to disagree is not accidental. I hope we continue to model how competing ideologies, philosophies, and approaches can converge to solve problems, not exacerbate them. These efforts help students develop the competencies and dispositions needed to solve personal and community problems. Most importantly, how we lead with compassion as we figure it all out together.

We could not be more excited by the possibilities ahead. Without question, 2017 will be a historic year, one that shapes how our students engage locally, domestically and internationally for decades to come. We must continue to provide our students with opportunities for critical thinking, leadership, and compassion.

On behalf of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School Board, I would like to thank you for the privilege to serve our school community.

Peninsula Education Foundation

P.O. Box 2632, Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA 90274 • www.pvpef.org



Christine Byrne
Executive Director

Congratulations to Grant Recipients!

The grants are named in honor of the former Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District principal, past president of the Peninsula Education Foundation, and local business leader.

Congratulations to all of our dedicated teachers who received 2016 Chuck Miller Teacher Grants:

Elementary Schools: Jasmine Arjasbi

- Silver Spur, Top Secret Adventures; Shannon Bogart – Soleado, Science Exploration Day; Elisa Buda-Morreale – Point Vicente, Social/Emotional Development Through Literacy; Mariana Donahoe – Soleado, New Generation Science Standards; Kimberly Fenimore – Point Vicente, STEM Exploration: Building Blocks; Melinda Furlong – Silver Spur, Build a Computer and Learn What's Inside; Kristen Gagnon – Silver Spur, STEM Lego® Simple & Powered Machines; Bryan Godbold – Mira Catalina, School Newspaper with Guidance; Heidi Hiatt – Mira Catalina, Coding Primary Grades; Lisa Mack – Vista Grande, First Grade Production of American Symbols; Laura Monge – Rancho Vista, Putting the “A” in STEAM; Stephanie O’Brien – Dapplegray, Let’s Get Lost in a Book; Denise Ravatt – Soleado, NGSS Science Module; Cathy Rodriguez - Rancho Vista, Educational Motorized Robot Kits; Mindy Sedlik - Silver Spur, STEM Robot Kits for First Grade; Stacy Upton – Cornerstone, Elementary Spielbergs; Diane Urias - Lunada Bay, TK Emotional/Social Skills

Intermediate Schools: Sue Demerjian – Palos Verdes Intermediate, Broadcast Journalism – It’s the Little Things that Add Up; Scott Garman – Palos Verdes Intermediate, Why is Water Wet?; Janine McKenna – Miraleste Intermediate, We’re Rolling! Camcorders for Miraleste News!; Campbell Nimick – Miraleste Intermediate, Digital Electronics and the World Around Us; Sharon Palmer – Palos Verdes Intermediate, Clear Communications Headsets for Stage Productions; Katherine Santarosa – Miraleste Intermediate, Understanding Climate Change; Paul Woodward – Ridgecrest, Project Drone

High Schools: Judy Adams-Smith – Peninsula High, Science + Math x Inquiry = Success; Paula Borstel – Peninsula High, Let’s Experiment!, Investigating Phenomena in Science; Barbara Ferraro – Palos Verdes High, Tools for Instant Assessment; Julie Munoz – Palos Verdes High, Anatomy and Physiology: Disarticulated Skeletons, Anatomy and Physiology: BioKit and Video Packages; Kristen Nelson – Palos Verdes High, Stress Less; Cecilia Remeta – Palos Verdes High, Music to Their Ears; Robert Snodgrass – Peninsula High, Incorporating STEM with Microscopy; Michael Spalding – Peninsula High, Circular Motion Lab Equipment for Physics Program.

The funds for the grants come from an annual donation made by Chuck Miller, coupled with additional funding from PEF.

This year we were able to provide \$40,000 in grants up to \$1,500 for 34 classroom projects and materials.



School News

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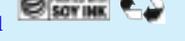
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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Neta Madison
Netragrednik

Happy New Year!

The students are already focused on their year end goals and perhaps Spring Break right around the corner.

Dr. Austin's message on page 3 was thankful and optimistic. I particularly like his message of modeling acceptable behavior. Recently I was attending a girls basketball game and had the pleasure of watching the PVPUSD players in action. They were very respectful on the basketball court as well as in the bleachers waiting to play. The District and their parents should be very proud of their behavior. I might add that the coach also lead by example.

Thank you for your nice comments when you email your contest entries. Be sure to enter the Word Search on page 15.

Our next issue is April 12.

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PVP Council of PTAs

Proud History of PTA Advocacy

By Beth Meyerhoff, President,
and Lori Siembieda, Publicity Chair

The role of the PTA is often thought to be centered around cultural assemblies, Fall Festivals, or the many other enrichment and community events funded by the PTA. However, one of PTA's most important roles is to create and support laws that "advocate for the education, health, safety and well-being of all children." capta.org. The PVP Council of PTAs is proud to carry on this tradition of advocacy for our children.



and sponsoring legislation in the 1990s to require all school districts to adopt a parent-involvement policy. In the November 2016 election, voters passed the California State PTA supported state initiative Proposition 51, the "Kindergarten Through Community College Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2016."

The PVP Council of PTAs theme, "Partners in Advocacy," highlights the significance of advocacy to our membership. One noteworthy example of our advocacy is the PTA funded Capital Convoy program. In April 2016, 66 parents, educators, and students traveled to Sacramento to meet with legislators



The history of California State PTA advocacy is a rich one. As early as 1897, the first advocacy group, the California Home and School Child Study Association, organized in San Francisco. From there, PTA has consistently advocated on behalf of children. Some examples include starting a student welfare program; supporting legislation for teachers' salary schedule;

and their representatives, and to lobby for issues including a proposal that high school juniors' SAT or ACT test scores be used to assess student performance rather than the CAASPP assessment test. Moreover, our school Legislative Representatives update our members regularly on issues affecting our schools and greater community. Through the dedication and passion of our PTA leaders and members we hope to make a difference in children's lives.



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Cornerstone @ Pedregal *Elementary School*

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Michele Marcus
Interim Principal

The Extended Family

Nothing describes Cornerstone School better than the proverb: It takes a village to raise a child. Staff and parents work together to offer an outstanding academic, cultural and hands-on learning environment for all students.

From the moment a new family joins our school community, they become part of a larger family—the Cornerstone family. Families choose to enroll their children at Cornerstone because they want to be involved in their children's learning. Teachers take time throughout the year to meet with the parents in their classrooms and train them on how they can assist them in their instruction. Parents willingly commit many hours a month to work in teachers' classrooms and support the various enrichment programs we offer. Teachers are able to differentiate their instruction and provide small-group, hands-on learning experiences because of the



support of the teaching parents in the classroom.

With so much support from the parent community helping prepare materials for lessons or gathering resources for specific activities, the teachers are freed up to focus on instruction. This includes exploring innovative ways to teach our students and determining the best type of instruction to be used for each lesson. What's most special about this school is that students develop strong bonds with the parents and teachers that are on our campus. All students know that they can go up to any adult on campus if they need help problem-solving a situation or if they just need a hug. When

walking around our campus, it is impossible not to feel the collective commitment everyone has to providing the best elementary experience possible for all of our students.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future." At Cornerstone, teachers, staff and parents work hard to build our youth for wherever their journeys may take them.

Dapplegray *Elementary School*

3011 Palos Verdes Dr. North, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274-7303 • 310/541-3706



Nancy Parsons
Principal

Looking Ahead

At Dapplegray, we are looking ahead to close out our 2016–17 school year as the best year ever! Powerful teaching and parent participation provide opportunities for all students. Our academic program consistently integrates art, science and social science with the core disciplines of English language arts and mathematics. In the final five months of school, this will be more prevalent than ever.

Students in all grades will read fiction and nonfiction selections, constantly improving reading comprehension and fluency. Reading for all students is differentiated to provide constant instruction, support and practice at optimal levels to meet individual needs. Razz Kids for students in grades K–2 and Accelerated Reader in grades 3–5 integrate technology to engage students and provide teachers with specific data to inform instruction and continually improve student achievement. Through utilizing Step Up to Writing, Dapplegray is implementing and refining a schoolwide system for writing instruction. Professional development for teachers in the area of writing instruction will continue for the remainder of this year.

Math in Focus, an internationally renowned methodology for math instruction, is in its second year

of implementation. Students' ability to break down and solve complex problems will continue to be a focus. Think Central software supports Math in Focus and provides individual data for teachers, parents and students. Use of Cognitively Guided Instruction ensures that students are provided ample opportunity for discourse and differentiation. ReflexMath and IXL are software programs that enable students to increase math-fact fluency and computation skills both for remediation and enrichment.

On the calendar for the spring of 2017, fourth- and fifth-graders will participate in Walk Through California and Walk Through the Revolution, respectively. Currently, all fourth-grade students are participating in an artist-in-residence program, Scientific Observation, Drawing, and Recording, through a grant from the Palos Verdes Arts Center. This will be integrated into and enhance the STEM program in grades 4 and 5. Fourth grade also is looking forward to their simulation of an archaeological dig where they will "discover" artifacts left behind by significant groups in California's history.

Through the generosity and volunteerism of the Dapplegray PTA and Booster Club, we still look forward to Multicultural Day in March and Arts Alive in May. The annual parent fund-raiser is being held at Norris Pavilion on Friday, February 2. We are so thankful for their constant support in providing our fabulous Dapplegray programs!

Lunada Bay *Elementary School*

520 Paseo Lunado, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274-4377 • 310/377-3005



Julie Tarango
Principal

To Continue with Resolution!

Supporting the social and emotional well-being of our school community is critical to helping students reach their full potential, an idea shared by many in education. This year, Lunada Bay began a new tradition called Mindful Monday to support this need. Mondays begin with a time of silent reflection to help students focus and prepare for the upcoming week. This reflective activity has

been beneficial as we all take a moment to collectively pause as a school community.



Students pause in mindful reflection at the start of each week.

The first school day of 2017 began with a mindful activity lead by fifth-grade teacher Mrs. Rush. Students quietly reflected upon a favorite memory from winter break that will carry them through the new year. Students came away with renewed energy and a positive attitude to start the school day. We all can benefit from reflecting in such a way!

Positive attitudes led to exuberant conversations about goals for 2017. I love asking students about their new year's resolutions. They have such uninhibited outlooks—no dream is too big! Here are some student responses I received when I asked, "What is your goal for 2017?"

"To show my personal best every day this year!"

"I want to be more kind to my family."

"I will memorize my math facts. Even the 7's and 8's!"

"I want to meet a new friend this year."

"I will help save the earth and the polar bears."

"I want to write a chapter book."

My goal is to continue improving our learning environment at Lunada Bay by actively redefining and bettering our educational practices. I want to help our students feel confident, safe and happy in their classrooms, at lunch, during recess and with each other. Our students' words have purpose and meaning. Follow their lead by aiming big for whatever you want to accomplish in 2017!

Mira Catalina *Elementary School*

30511 Lucania Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-6272 • 310/377-6731



Brett Egan
Principal

Tiered Reading Instruction

Mira Catalina Elementary School is a fantastic school that is continually looking for ways to enhance the academic and social experience for students. For the 2016–2017 school year, we have implemented a tiered instruction model for language arts in second through fifth grades. Students in second, third, fourth, and fifth grades participate in leveled reading groups four days weekly for 50 minutes.

There are three levels at each grade level. All groups work on the same grade-level content and skills. However, at the intensive third level, students receive small-group instruction as well as additional practice in fluency and comprehension via a research-based, leveled reading system and/or core curriculum. In the extension/enrichment first level group, students

move more rapidly through the grade-level content and have opportunities to extend and deepen their learning. The second level group, which falls in the middle of this spectrum, enables students to receive instruction in a small-group setting in order to meet and accelerate learning as measured by ongoing assessment. In kindergarten and first grade, students who need extra support with reading are given a "second dose" of reading instruction in a small-group setting four days weekly for 40 minutes.

We have seen tremendous growth in reading fluency and comprehension scores this year. Through the design of

our tiered instruction model, all students' needs are met at their instructional levels, and they receive appropriate and effective instruction. A program like this doesn't happen by accident. The teachers at Mira Catalina have put forth tremendous effort, collaborating on best practices and delivery of curriculum to benefit our students. I commend them for their great work.

Go, Mira Cat!



Miraleste *Intermediate School*

29323 Palos Verdes Dr. East, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-6470 • 310/732-0900



Brent Kuykendall
Principal

Even Downhill Can Be Uphill!

I recently took my children up to the mountains to learn to ski for the first time. We got off to a bit of a rocky start! Anyone that has tried to teach their own children to ski can understand the challenge. We eventually got through a couple of hours of frustration after some help from a pro and a number of treacherous chair-lift experiences.

The highlight of the trip, however, wasn't seeing them skiing successfully but an impressive initial run down the mountain. We had only made it about a third of the way down, and my daughter had fallen at least a dozen times. I was doing my best to give simple directions—nothing worked, and I found myself beginning to lose my patience. After helping her up again, I looked down at her and said, "Just keep doing your best and don't give up." And she answered, "Don't worry, Dad, I *never* give up, I will get this."

As tired and frustrated as I was, those few words reminded me of what I want for my children. We all face challenges, but how we respond to them define us as individuals. As we look toward the second half of the school year, take this lesson and perspective to heart. As overwhelming as any situation may seem, I hope that



we can learn from those around us and persevere to accomplish what we thought was impossible. This includes not giving up, doing what may be difficult or uncomfortable, and realizing that challenges make us better.

I'll look back on this trip fondly for many years to come, and I'll never forget the simple lesson my daughter reminded me of. If you want to learn, grow, and be the best person possible, face your challenges, as well as overcoming them.

Palos Verdes *Intermediate School*

2161 Via Olivera, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274-1983 • 310/544-4816



Frank Califano
Principal

Give it a Try!

In last month's issue I spoke about creating a culture of success at PVIS, and discussed trying to find a place for each child. I would like to continue that discussion, and tell you about a group of children who felt the need to take this concept one step further to form "The ARK Club." ARK stands for "Acts of Random Kindness."



Led by language arts teacher Allison Lehault, in its short time "ARK" has made an immediate impact on our campus and the community. This is just a short list of some of their activities:

In September, the Club delivered goodie bags to over 30 students new to PVIS, welcoming them to our school. In October, it passed out over 150 "boo" bags full of school supplies to students with the tag of "You're Boo-ti-ful."

In November, the Club delivered notes from students to their teachers thanking the staff for all that they do for the students. I had numerous staff members comment on how much they appreciated the thought and effort behind this gesture.

In December, the Club visited Lunada Bay Elementary School as mystery readers. Using Dr. Seuss as the mascot, they read their favorite Dr. Seuss stories to the Lunada Bay kindergarten students. They also brought ARK pencils and snacks to share with them.

In December they also enacted the "12 Days of Kindness" campaign, spreading holiday spirit to the students of PVIS. The Club members also put together a community donation drive to help the Marine Mammal Center in San Pedro collect materials in need.

Kindness is infectious. Give it a try and watch it spread!

Montemalaga *Elementary School*

1121 Via Nogales, Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274-1671 • 310/378-5228



Growth Mindset

The month of January is an important month during every school year. Students have completed a grading period and have settled nicely into a daily classroom routine over the first



School were given a book to read about growth mindset. The next few faculty meetings will be structured to include discussions about how all grade levels can use common language and strategies to help students be excited about and responsible for their own learning process. Teachers will be provided opportunities to observe and discuss growth mindset strategies and

practices in other classrooms. few months of the school year. Teachers have experienced staff development and have a clear understanding of both school and district goals for student learning and success. Parents are involved with supporting programs and enrichment activities for the development of the whole child and for a welcoming school climate. School administrators often view January as a time to plan the rest of the school year and to meet with grade-level teacher teams to implement any needed changes or additions to the school day, such as increased intervention, observations, professional learning communities, and activities to ensure every student's success at school.

In early December, teachers at Montemalaga Elementary

practices in other classrooms.

Every student can learn. Often the learning outcome is much more significant when a student's first attempt at solving a problem leads to more in-depth questioning and discovery. Teachers at Montemalaga will continue working to improve their questioning practices to ensure that their students can explain their thinking and even discuss what would happen if there were a change in the information provided.

Our goal is to make sure that every student enjoys learning and is involved in the process. Student active participation is a key component to successful learning outcomes. Montemalaga is an innovative and happy place to learn!

Point Vicente *Elementary School*

30540 Rue de la Pierre, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-5364 • 310/377-6972



Looking to the Future

Maybe you began 2017 with plans you want to accomplish. Educators have multiple opportunities to set resolutions and revisit goals. The beginning of the school year is a first "new year" for us, and, as the year turns, January provides another opportunity to take stock, reflect, and recommit ourselves to our goals. This cycle of reflection, reevaluation, and planning occurs regularly throughout

instruction. But in the spirit of the holiday, I want to share with you some of the areas of focus for us at Point Vicente Elementary School this year!

Hands On Science is a long-standing program led by our parents, who serve as docents for science lessons. We are working on aligning with the Next Generation Science Standards and planning to extend the program to all grades. Our PTA and our teachers are excited to provide science instruction that matches the curiosity of our students.

We have worked with our PTA to provide opportunities for parents to get together informally to strengthen friendships and welcome new families. Room parents are the vital link in keeping parents up to speed, and I am hosting new family meetings to support parents as they

adjust to their new school. We want our families to build strong connections with each other and with the school.

We are using innovative grouping strategies to meet the needs of our students in math and reading instruction. Small-group instruction combined with whole-class activities create maximum learning opportunities! We are committed to establishing strong foundational skills in these important elementary years.

Keeping parents informed and providing helpful information and updates are some of our most important efforts! We use a variety of tools to serve the needs of our parent community and build communication success: Our Web page, pointvicente.pvpusd.net, is organized to include everything we think would be helpful for parents. On the site, parents can sign up for e-mail notices when information is updated. We use Loop to send e-mails and texts. Our PTA newsletter is e-mailed home weekly and posted on our Web page. You can also follow us on Twitter at BethHadley@PointVLight to see snapshots of special events at school.

As a faculty, we are working together to set goals that align with district goals for the coming years. Our process of reflection and refocusing our efforts continues, always with the goal of meeting the emotional and educational needs of our precious students.

Palos Verdes *High School*

600 Cloyden Rd., Palos Verdes, Estates, CA 90274-1869 • 310/378-8471



Charles Park, Ed.D.
Principal

2017: A Time for Resiliency

I was recently in our school's drama class. It was a class of 25, and students were each taking turns going up to the stage and reciting a Shakespearean monologue. After each monologue, the student would sit down on stage and the audience of students would start to provide constructive feedback. It was methodic, yet each instance of feedback was positive and direct.

I was impressed with our students' ability to be honest, and I was more impressed with each student who was able to sit in front of the class and take such raw feedback. It reminded me of a Simon Sinek YouTube video titled "The Millennial Question," in which he stated that millennials need structured practice in receiving critical feedback because this generation is engaged in social media 24/7 and lacks social-emotional resilience. However, what I saw in the drama class was *all* resilience and a place where seeking critical feedback was the norm and a safe place to do so. It was also our teacher, Nicole Thompson, who set that tone in her program in which

we are developing not only acting and drama skills but also resilience at the character-building level.

Then, I visited Jen Warren's painting class, where she was sharing with her students that she had spent a summer sabbatical painting in her own dedicated studio in an art class where she received constructive feedback on her art from peers. She showed me her work, and I was amazed by the progression of her work from beginning to end. Mrs. Warren said it was the raw feedback that helped her progress as an artist. You can see her work here yourself: <http://jennifercaseywarren.crevado.com/>.

I learned quite a bit that day visiting our art classes, and I realized that artists really have no fear of critical feedback. So as we start 2017, I think we can all benefit from learning from feedback. I forgot to tell you—as I was leaving the drama class, I was pressured onto the stage by students to read and act out a Shakespearean monologue, and I have to say that it was a nerve-racking experience. And our students make it look easy!

Let's applaud art and artists, and aim to learn more this year about ourselves through feedback.

Palos Verdes Peninsula *High School*

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Mitzi Cress
Principal

The Bradbury/Smith Gallery

In fulfillment of a long-held vision, we are excited to announce the opening of the Bradbury/Smith Gallery, a permanent gallery on our campus for the showcasing of student and community art.

Our school has a long history of excellence and innovation in the visual arts, and the establishment of the Bradbury/Smith Gallery honors that tradition and reflects our ongoing commitment to the visual arts in our learning community. The gallery will allow our Visual Arts Department to host a variety of juried, topical, media-based, and experimental shows throughout the year.

Perhaps more importantly, it will allow our students to interact with art on a daily basis. As our gallery evolves, opportunities for our students will expand to include not only the exhibition of their work, but also real-world experience in roles as curators, preparators, and critics.

We look forward to welcoming students, alumni, parents, and community members who are interested in the creative process and would like to visit our gallery and support its mission. We plan to maintain regular open hours for both students and community members.



Members of the Peninsula High Art Department who worked to create the studio. James Meade, Brendan Karg, & Jamie Nyman

For more information, please contact Seth Cohen, Visual and Performing Arts Chair.

Rancho del Mar *High School*

38 Crest Road West, Rolling Hills, CA 90274-5058 • 310/377-6691



**Rosemary
Humphrey**
Principal

Hour of Code

Computers are changing every industry on the planet, and coding has become crucial to the 21st-century skills of collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and communication. Computer technology is relevant to a wide range of occupations, including those outside the fields of technology and engineering.

Over the last three years, as part of Computer Science Education Week, more than 100 million students in more than 180 countries have participated in the Hour of Code, which encourages interest in the field of computer science and shows students that anyone can learn the basics of coding. This year, the Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District (PVPUSD) launched an effort to implement an annual district-wide Hour of Code, giving every student the opportunity to participate in an introduction to coding.

With the support of the PVPUSD technology staff, all Rancho del Mar High School teachers and students participated in the Hour of Code over several days. To kick off the activity, students watched two inspirational videos. Then, using individual netbooks, students participated in

coding tutorials. After completing the challenge activity, students could go further and work on six additional coding activities. Students who were already knowledgeable about coding assisted their peers.

It was wonderful to see the students get so excited when they mastered these coding activities. At the conclusion of the Hour of Code, all students, including those who were reluctant at first, shared that it was a great activity and that they were glad to have had the opportunity to participate. Following the Hour of Code, links to coding activities were sent home to all Rancho del Mar families to encourage continued involvement.



Rancho Vista *Elementary School*

4323 Palos Verdes Drive North, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274-1576 • 310/378-8388



**Salvatrice
Kuykendall**
Principal

Grit's It

We began the new year by reflecting on it while focusing on our goals for the remainder of the school year. This year, our amazing teachers have led with courage and confidence while turning every challenge into an opportunity for our students.

Our school focus has been guiding our students to develop a growth mindset. Studies indicate that the best predictor of success is grit—the power of perseverance and motivational perspective. So, in taking our growth mindset one step further, we're guiding students to develop greater grit for the remainder of the school year. Talent alone doesn't create success, and our ability to learn is not fixed. When students develop grit, they're more likely to persevere when faced with a challenge. Our goal is to develop students who, when faced with failure, take the lessons that they have learned and start over.

The kind of praise that we give our children is a factor in developing grit. Offering personal praise with words like "You're awesome!" or "Good work" won't encourage children to go beyond status quo. Saying things like "These problems didn't give you much of a challenge—let's try

to stretch your brain and try something else" or "Great strategy—you used some creative problem solving!" motivates children and makes them more willing to learn from their failures.

Over the break, my family and I had the opportunity to deliver gift-card trees donated by the Rancho Vista community. These families have children in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). My family, along with the Samuel's Trees organization and Rancho Vista students, were able to view firsthand the true grit that takes place each day in the nurses who care for the fragile babies.

Challenges are all around us, but it's grit that creates motivation and perseverance.



Soleado *Elementary School*

27800 Longhill Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-3909 • 310/377-6854



Gina Stutzel
Principal

Preserving Family Time

Happy New Year! What a great time to not only reflect upon the year, but also look forward to the remaining months of school.

An important addition to the school schedule are our “No Homework Days.” We have partnered with the intermediate and other elementary schools to create a purposeful day where the focus is on spending time as a family. We believe that

the more time you spend together as a family, the better chance you have of sharing quality experiences. Eating meals together, talking about the events of the day, sharing joys and defeats, doing household chores together, and spending some evenings popping corn and watching movies are ways that we get to know each other better and build real strength in our relationships.

Our Booster Club has also adopted this belief. They have established their own Family Social Nights, where families have an opportunity to come together and enjoy an activity. Whether at a local restaurant or a fun activity center, quality family time is the focus!

We will continue to pledge to our families that homework should not be the only activity that takes center

stage during the weekdays. Don't get me wrong, homework has a purpose. Reinforcing skills, preparing for upcoming topics, developing self-discipline, and encouraging follow-through are the important learning habits we gain in doing homework. Nevertheless, we also believe that homework should not be the only thing that a child has time for in the evenings. Promoting quality family time is important at Soleado, and we will continue to make this a priority throughout the year.



Vista Grande *Elementary School*

7032 Purpleridge Dr., Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-3059 • 310/377-6066



Jeri Delatorre
Principal

Renewal

Happy New Year! Even though we are midway through a school year, there is still something special about New Years. I think we all like the idea of a fresh start and an opportunity for a new beginning.

This time of renewal often comes with resolutions, pledges, and vows to change old habits. I have been interested in the work of David Rock, author of *Your Brain at Work*. His assertion is that changing old habits is much more difficult than creating new ones. Old habits are hard-wired into our brains via neural pathways and are deeply ingrained. Changing them is a formidable obstacle.

However, learning a new habit is relatively easy, since it requires the building of new neural pathways. True, these must be practiced and reinforced, but this is easier than redirecting old ones. As you look toward this new year, what new habits, goals, and challenges will you set for yourself? Who will be “on your team” to encourage you and reinforce your new brain connections?

This is why elementary education is such a thrilling field. Every day we work with young minds that are constantly learning something new. They are building new neural pathways without having so many “old” ones

to interfere with their learning. This is the reason why young children learn new languages, new instruments, new words, and embrace new ideas so readily. Unlike adults with neural pathways as entrenched as the Grand Canyon, children are always in the process of building new pathways.

The best way to support their journey is to encourage thinking. Strong neural pathways are created when a person solves problems independently, instead of being presented with answers. So I challenge each of you this year to engage your child on a daily basis not about what they have learned, but how. Ask them questions like “How do you know that?” or “How did you figure that out?” Do not provide answers when you help them with homework, but ask questions so that they can realize their own ability to solve problems.

This focus on thinking pervades instruction at Vista Grande. Teachers in classrooms, instructional aides in the Learning Center, and even our playground supervisors resist the temptation to merely direct students and provide answers. We talk with the children and ask them questions so that they can develop their own answers and solutions. We acknowledge their efforts and good choices with praise, thus reinforcing these new neural pathways.

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Michael's Book Review

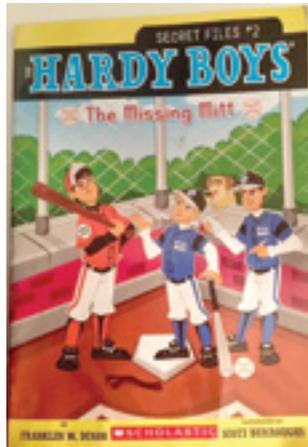


Michael H.

The Missing Mitt

This Hardy Boy case is about Joe and his brother Frank. They try to figure out who took Jason Prime's baseball mitt. Their team, the Bayport Bandits, were ready to win the final little league game of the season using their good luck charm. Jason's mitt was special because his dad, Winner Prime, had used it to win the world series. Right before each game the whole team would touch it for luck.

Jason thought it was Conner Hound from the opposing team, because he had seen him snooping around their bags while they were practicing. Jason was upset and did not want to play until the mitt was found. After some detective work they figured out what had happened to the missing baseball mitt. They remembered that earlier that day Mr. Mack's dog Lucy had jumped on Jason. Lucy loved to play fetch especially with things that people threw on the ground. You had to be very careful around her because anything thrown might end up buried somewhere. They decided to throw another mitt. Lucy immediately picked it up and began to run. Jason, Joe and Frank chased her. When Lucy stopped she dug a hole and there in the hole was Jason's mitt. The Hardy boys were very happy. Secret File Case #2 was solved.



I give this book 4 stars I really enjoyed the mystery. The only thing that would have made this book more exciting was if Lucy the dog wasn't the one who had taken Jason's mitt.

Michael H. is a 4th grade student. Besides his love for reading, he also enjoys Karate, playing guitar and sharing new adventures with his mom. He will rate the books 1 to 5 stars with 5 being the highest.

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www.rollinghillsmontessori.com

FRAM Soccer Club
Tryout Dates

2006	2005
February 1st	February 13th
Boys 4:30-6 pm	Boys 4:30-6 pm
Girls 4:30-6 pm	Girls 4:30-6 pm
February 8th	February 15th
Boys 4:30-6 pm	Boys 4:30-6 pm
Girls 4:30-6 pm	Girls 4:30-6 pm
2004	2003
February 13th	February 13th
Boys 6-7:30 pm	Boys 7:30-9 pm
Girls 6-7:30 pm	Girls 7:30-9 pm
February 15th	February 15th
Boys 6-7:30 pm	Boys 7:30-9 pm
Girls 6-7:30 pm	Girls 7:30-9 pm

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Laura Henry
Young Readers
Manager

Information Power!

“Write a 10-page research paper. Cite two scholarly articles. Do NOT use Wikipedia or Google to find sources.”

Yikes! For many high school grads, this standard first-year college assignment can produce an unexpected surge of anxiety.

Raised on an information diet of free web sites, social media, and blogs, students may have little familiarity with the scholarly research methods expected of them at college. Fortunately, the PVPUSD high schools and PVLVD offer online scholarly tools like those used in academic libraries. Article databases, such as JSTOR, are not freely available on the Internet but are accessible to any student who wants to access them from the school or public library.

To help prepare college-bound students, PVLVD has teamed with PVPUSD’s librarians, teachers and parents to create “Information Power! Core Skills for College



Success.” This two-hour, extracurricular experience will give high school students the skills they need to find and use scholarly material while getting more out of popular information resources like Google. Engaging in fun, competitive, game-based tasks, students will learn to:

- Go “beyond Google”
- Master skills for finding, evaluating, and using reliable information
- Describe what an academic article database is and how to use one effectively

Students wanting to be confident and prepared for college research can sign up for an “Information Power!” session. Sessions are free and include a pizza lunch. Select one session on any of these dates: Feb. 4, Feb. 18, Mar. 4, Mar. 18, and Mar. 25. All take place from 10 a.m.–12 noon. Space is limited, so sign up early!

To sign up, visit WWW.plvd.org/Calendar and select your preferred date.

“Information Power!” is supported in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.)

Courtney’s Book Review



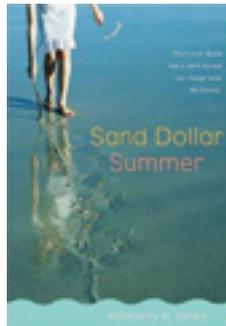
Courtney M.

Sand Dollar Summer

The book *Sand Dollar Summer* by Kimberly K. Jones is about a mom and her two kids Lise and Free. After Annalise dropped the kids off at school she went to go get groceries, but

on the way home someone slammed into Annalise and she had many broken bones. But once she gets a little better they go to Fiddle Beach, Maine. As they passed all the great beach houses they continued on for at least another mile. They found a tiny shack and it was old, stinky, and basically going to fall down if you touched it. Meanwhile Annalise wanted to get in the water, but Lise had never been in the ocean and she was terrified.

If you want to find out what happens next, check out the book. I would rate this book with a 4 a good read.



Courtney likes to play Softball, Football, and ride her bike. She also draws, sews and sings on the worship team at her church. She will rate the books 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest.

Isabella’s Book Review



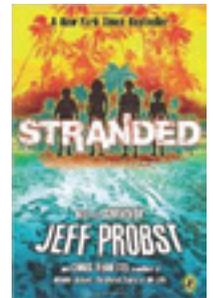
Isabella A.

Get Lost in the Pages of Stranded

Stranded is the first book and the best in the series. When Carter and Jane’s mother marries Vanessa and Buzz’s father, uncle Dexter a boat captain takes the new four siblings on a bonding trip. However, it doesn’t exactly turn out that way. A storm sinks the boat. They try to get in the life boat, but Dexter gets in first. The storm takes the life boat away from the young kids. Fortunately, they make it to a close by island that is rocky and full of jungle. They were starting get along and now they are in the middle of the South Pacific! This could be good or horrible. Will these kids survive each other?

I give this book three and half stars because it can be fun, exciting and adventurous, but also a bit long in some parts.

Isabella is in fifth grade and continues to enjoy writing fictional stories based on true events, which she looks forward to learning how to publish when she is older. She will rate the books 1 to 5 with 5 being the best.



Naomi's Book Review



A Magical Box

The Secret Kingdom by Rosie Banks, is a book full of mystery, suspense, adventure, thrills and excitement.



Naomi

This book is about three girls called Jasmine, Ellie and Summer who found a magical box that gave them a riddle. That the girls couldn't solve. Therefore the box sent the three girls to another world where they saw fairies, kings, queens, and trolls. Where they also went through different stages in weather. After going through all that adventure the three girls solved the riddle. Then the box sent the three girls back home. Where they made sure to put the box in a safe place where no one could ever find it again.

I give this book 5 stars because it is interesting and has many different scenes that just make me want to keep reading it over and over again. This is why I recommend this book to everyone.

Naomi is a fourth grader that enjoys reading and writing. But aside from her joy of reading she loves to play the piano, drawing, coloring and be involved in any school event. She rates her book from 1-5 stars with 5 being the highest.

Alana's Book Review



Spirit Animals—Against the Tide

By Tui T. Sutherland
Travel across Edras alongside Meilin, Rollan, Conor, and Abeke as they make their way to the Hundred Isles in an attempt to retrieve yet another talisman



Alana F.

- the Coral Octopus. However, after a demoralizing encounter with the enemy in Arctica, it is apparent that a traitor is in their midst. Will the team be able to put aside their emotions, or will their mistrust for one another be their downfall?

As a story centered around Abeke, I was prepared to be bored while reading this but upon closer inspection, I realized that Abeke is a completely different character than I had initially thought. I would give this book four stars because there wasn't much action or combat however, this book managed to completely change my perspective on a character, (it's harder than it sounds) so I'll give it credit for that.

Alana is a student columnist. When she doesn't have a book in her hands, she enjoys playing video games and writing fiction. She rates books on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest.

Weather Words 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 PVPUSD in the subject line)

Entries must be received by **March 15, 2017**

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

BAROMETER	FROST	STEBER
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CELSIUS	HUMIDITY	SWARTHOUT
CIRRUS	HURRICANE	TEBALDI
CLOUD	HYDROMETER	THERMOMETER
CUMULUS	ICE STORM	THUNDERSTORM
CYCLONE	MIST	TORNADO
DEW	RAIN	TRAUBEL
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Congratulations Contest Winners

Heather Elkin, Amy and Logan Goodman!

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Hearts	Chocolate
Candy	Roses
Love	February
Pasta	Date
Card	Friendship

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A A D B F T C G I O V J A G A  
L O V E G E Z G T J O Z L X B  
D D R W F I B S T R A E H O Z  
I C R G T U F R B V I C P R C  
P P Q A B D H T U F E I R H H  
U G A U C E P P L A H I O N F  
C Y E G U K T X A S R C O S V  
Y G E T A D D T D S O Y C E A  
X N I D P X N N O L T C M S L  
K D F S T E E Y A L I A X O E  
H O X Y N I R T N R I P J R N  
J P U I R D E L G Z C N D J T  
Z I M F R G H S U R N S O U I  
J E M Y K O C A N D Y U U S N  
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