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School News

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Covering the Fullerton School District

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APRIL 2014

Personalized Learning



Dr. Robert Pletka
Superintendent

With the beginning of the rollout for our new Visible Innovation Program (VIP), which will ultimately provide an electronic tablet for every fifth- through eighth-grader in Fullerton School District, we will be able to further personalize learning for students. “Personalized Learning is the tailoring of curriculum and learning environments...for learners in order to meet their different learning needs and aspirations” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personalized_learning).

Our ultimate goal is to empower students to be masters of their own learning. By harnessing the power of the electronic tablet as a learning tool, teachers can help students to discover solutions to unanswered questions, to hone their skills, and to remove barriers to their learning.

As a father of six children, I found that my own kids learned at different rates. Sometimes they understood the material quickly, and they were ready to move forward, while the teacher needed to move at a slower pace. Other times, the teacher taught at a faster rate than what worked well for my kids.

Teaching to the exact learning rate of 35 different students can be challenging, however, the electronic tablet allows a teacher to customize learning to the different needs of each student. One example of this type of personalized learning can be seen in Mrs. Bass’ classroom at Fisler School. She offers students an online pre-assessment to check for their level of understanding of a math skill prior to instruction. If a student scores highly on the pretest, he or she is moved to a FAST Track and does not have to sit through the traditional math instruction for something he or she already knows. The FAST Track students have a Challenge-Based Learning Project, in which they are applying their learning in real-world contexts or creating math content, such as screencasts.



Excitement abounds for Richman School sixth graders with implementation of the Visible Innovation Program.

Another teacher, Holly Steele from Beechwood School, shared how in the past differentiating for middle school was a “huge challenge,” but now technology helps give her and her colleagues the “power to multiply ourselves” during a class period. Now she can provide different content to both remediate and enrich students all at the same time. While she is guiding one student or a small group of students, other students can access notes, videos, and screencasts of her lecture in Haiku (a learning Web site) during independent practices so that no one is “held up in his or her learning.” In essence, the electronic tablets give her the power to multiply her assistance to students. Not only can students access content at different levels, but they have more flexibility in the pacing of their learning. The teacher and the student leverage the technology to empower children to create their own tomorrows.

Board of Trustees



Lynn Thornley, Clerk; Dr. Robert Pletka, Superintendent; Chris Thompson, Vice President; Janny Meyer, Board President; (front) Beverly Berryman, Member; Hilda Sugarman, Member.

Loss-Control Leader

By Susan Cross Hume, CPA, CIA, CGMA, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

Fullerton School District is the proud recipient of the Alliance for Schools Cooperative Insurance Program (ASCIP) 2014 Excellence in Loss Control Award. ASCIP is a coalition of 120 member school districts which work together to provide outstanding insurance, risk-management, and loss-prevention services specifically targeted for students and schools. One district is recognized each year that exemplifies the characteristics of a loss-control leader by demonstrating a commitment to controlling risk exposures, minimizing losses, and improving the safety of students, staff, and the general public. The award includes a \$10,000 prize to the District.

ASCIP recognized Fullerton School District for its proactive approach to risk management, especially in the field of up-front risk assessment. The District was also recognized for its training, implementation of best practices and recommended protocols, sharing of lessons learned with other districts, and thinking creatively to come up with out-of-the box solutions.

Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Susan Hume, Risk Manager Laurie Bruneau, and Risk Management Specialist Letty Cortez accepted the award for the District at ASCIP’s annual meeting.

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Kay Coop
 Founder/Publisher



Dr. Pletka's message on the front page is another example of how technology in the classroom continues to evolve and increases the learning opportunities for the students. We will continue to learn more about the four C's of a 21st-century education: Creativity, Collaboration, Communicatoin and Critical Thinking.

This is our last issue for this school year. It has been a pleasure publishing the excellence from the Fullerton School District and we look forward to our next issue on Oct 15.

Have a wonderful summer and congratulations to the Class of 2014!

School News

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**Covering the
 FULLERTON SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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 Post-doctoral Certificate in Orthodontics, UCLA
 DMD, Harvard School of Dental Medicine
 BS in Mathematics, UCI

(FUN FACTS)
 Dr. Moon is a "foodie" who loves rock climbing and the newest technology



MATTHEW MACGINNIS DDS, MS

(CREDENTIALS)
 Post-doctoral Certificate in Orthodontics, UCLA
 MS in Oral Biology, UCLA
 DDS, University of Southern California
 School of Dentistry
 BS in Biology, Point Loma Nazarene

(FUN FACTS)
 Dr. MacGinnis is a die-hard sports fan who loves golfing & playing with his two small kids

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Jobs Abound



Mark Douglas
Assistant
Superintendent

The 2014–2015 school year is shaping up to be an exciting year for Fullerton School District. The economy is on the rise, new housing developments have popped up, enrollment projections are increasing, and jobs abound! The District anticipates filling approximately 30 teaching positions in the multiple-subject and single-subject areas, in addition to several management positions. This will be the District's healthiest recruitment in almost 10 years!

Superintendent Dr. Robert Pletka and the Board of Trustees remain committed to "providing an engaging, rigorous educational program that gives opportunities for all students to achieve." The District has been committed to engaging

in 21st-century technology since 2004. However, with the inception and implementation of the 1:1 Visible Innovation Program (VIP) in March, we have strengthened our efforts to provide students with a strong platform from which to dive into the technology forefront. The VIP provides every sixth- and seventh-grader with an electronic tablet to enhance instruction with access to technology at school and at home. Our goal is to expand the distribution to all fifth- and eighth-grade students as well.

With such forward movements in technology, the District is seeking to employ educators and leaders who can help guide instruction in a collaborative, exciting, and engaging fashion. All recruitments will be posted on edjoin.org. If you wish to join in our exciting endeavors, we encourage you to apply.



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Acacia *Elementary*

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Dr. Karen Whisnant
Principal

Joining Together

Acacia's vision is to provide 21st-century learning opportunities for the Whole Child. Beyond a rigorous curriculum, our staff also offers daily enrichment through technology, arts, and physical education.

This spring, seven teachers and the principal launched "Girls Can Run," an after-school running club that promotes physical activity and personal success. Seventy third- through sixth-grade girls are now setting goals, running twice a week, composing a journal on Padlet, and learning how to train for the 5K Color Run in May.

It has been exciting to watch the girls' camaraderie, confidence, and care for their physical wellbeing grow. Support for the team has been overwhelming. Stylists from a local beauty salon have sponsored each girl for the 5K. Acacia parents have also donated T-shirts and helped sponsor our staff for this run.

We are honored to join with the Acacia community in providing our students with meaningful endeavors that can affect their whole being.



Commonwealth *Elementary*

2200 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/447-7705 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Anita Lomeli
Principal

The Numbers Show It

By engaging our students in skillful interaction with the very tools that make it all possible, technology has transformed the way that Commonwealth Elementary School constructs the learning opportunities for its classrooms.

This year we have been able to integrate enough technology to make an impact on student learning and attendance. With 200 iPads in the classrooms, and a complete Mac computer lab, our students are "App"solutely engaged in learning!

Integrating 21st-century skills with the new curriculum, and with the right technological tools, is reaping a boost in our learning and attendance. We are seeing a considerable increase in our benchmark scores, and an improved attendance rate, with the students attending 741 more school days this year than last. At the time of printing we were the District's leader in most-improved attendance!

Commonwealth Elementary is leading the way to a relevant and rigorous education.



Beechwood

780 Beechwood Ave., Fullerton, CA 92835 • 714/447-2850 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Julie Graham
Principal

IB World School

In 2014, Beechwood School was re-authorized by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) to be an IB World School because of Beechwood's exemplary implementation of an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme. The Middle Years Programme (MYP) encompasses all students in grades 6-8. It provides a framework of learning, which encourages students to become creative, critical, and reflective thinkers. "The MYP emphasizes intellectual challenge, encouraging students to make connections between their studies in traditional subjects and the real world. It fosters the development of skills for communication, intercultural understanding and global engagement, qualities



that are essential for life in the 21st Century." (IBO website) In addition, all of our middle school students benefit from visual arts, performing arts, and second language instruction in Spanish. Beechwood students receive a well-balanced education that comprehensively prepares them for their futures!

Fern Drive *Elementary*

1400 W. Fern Drive, Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7710 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Yaelan Choo
Principal

Hands-On Science

Students at Fern Drive School are thinking like scientists. At our annual Family Science Night, the children had a great opportunity to participate in hands-on experiments with their parents and siblings.

In collaboration with family members, the students applied their knowledge of the Scientific Method to investigate concepts like buoyancy, surface area, density and states of matter. They created toothpick structures that would support the weight of metal washers; constructed aluminum foil boats that could hold the greatest mass of beans; and explored the characteristics of Ooblek to determine whether it was a solid or a liquid.



These inquiry-based science projects were on display at the school's science fair in March. The heat conductivity of metals, and solar-panel heat transfer, were among the many topics covered. Our sixth-grade students also spent a week in the San Bernardino Mountains at the Outdoor Science School learning about rock formation, plate tectonics, wildlife and the variety of ecosystems.

Robert C. Fisler

1350 Starbuck Dr., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-2890 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Trang Lai
Principal

Creativity and Making Connections

At Robert C. Fisler School, we believe in creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking. These ideals begin in kindergarten and carry on through each school year.

Creativity is critical for the future success of our students. It is creativity and the opportunity to be creative that raises

the bar, and is the dividing line between being merely good and great. This is even more important as we transition to the California Common Core Standards, where students are expected to be creative thinkers.

For example, second-grade teacher Kelly Talbot nurtures creativity by designing innovative projects. After reading a story, students wrote a script for an interview with Officer Buckle, the main character. "I gave general requirements, and each group made it their own," said Kelly.

"One group asked to add a commercial expanding on one of Officer Buckle's safety tips. Given the freedom to create, the students made amazing connections to the story!"



Golden Hill *Elementary*

732 Barris Dr., Fullerton, CA 92832 • 714/447-7715 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Robert Johnson
Principal

Working Together for Student Success

Golden Hill Elementary School is privileged to have a very involved parent community that provides a high level of support for our students. This help is provided both financially and through countless volunteer hours at our school.

Historically, these efforts have been coordinated through the school's PTA. We are also fortunate to have the Golden Hill Education Foundation (GHEF), which was formed to "enhance and enrich the educational experience of students at Golden Hill Elementary School."

The PTA and GHEF have discovered that combining their efforts will result in a higher level of success for all, and so they have formed a partnership called "Team Golden Hill." For the past several months, these two organizations have been working together to establish guidelines and procedures on how to most effectively utilize their unique skills and talents to provide an outstanding educational experience for our students.





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Hermosa Drive *Elementary*

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Robin Gilligan
Principal

Sweet As Pi!

Hermosa Drive School offers a variety of math programs for students to expand their skills in critical thinking, mathematical ingenuity, and flexibility in problem solving.

Do you remember the Rubik's Cube? Well, students in grades three to six recently competed in the Rubik's Cube Challenge, with top honors for the quickest times. Students in grades three to six met twice a week after school for the Math Olympiad and Continental Math events.

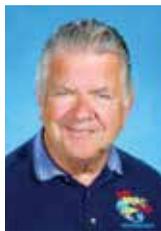
We also offered an international competition called "Kangaroo Math" for the other grades. Students participated in math assessments that are scored and ranked internationally, nationally, and within the State.

One last competition this year is a grade-level team event called "Math Field Day." Students in the fourth through sixth grades compete on four-person teams against other Orange County schools.

We are proud of our students, and want to congratulate them on their achievements in the Hermosa Math Club!

Laguna Road

300 Laguna Road, Fullerton, CA 92835 • 714/447-7725 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Harold Sullivan
Principal

Fun and Fitness

At Laguna Road School, we are passionate about our students being "Fit for Life." Out on our blacktops and fields, our students participate in a whirlwind of activities that keep their bodies moving and their faces smiling.

Student squad groups participate in specific fitness/sport units planned for their grade levels. This year's units are folk dancing, field hockey, fitness, softball/ball handling, soccer, and volleyball. Our kindergarteners have had units on personal space, directions, dance, parachutes, scoops, and balls. With the help of our sixth-grade students, they have also jumped feet first into jump roping. Our students also jog to musical tunes that coincide with the grade-level plays. The highlight has been the addition of a hike to Laguna Lake, with the third-through sixth-grade classes taking turns on our nearby trail.

We are reaching the goal of "Trying Hard, Being Active, and Being a Good Friend."



Ladera Vista *Junior High School*

1700 E. Wilshire Ave., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/447-7765 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Randa Schmalfeld
Principal

Our Students Shined!

The weather was wet and windy, but the bright smiles of the Ladera Vista Science Olympiad team made the day anything but gloomy!

Coming off two great performances at local competitions earlier this year, our team took second place at the Regional Competitions at Santa Ana College on February 28, coming in just three points behind the first-place team, Jeffrey Trail Middle School from Irvine.

The Ladera Vista team competed in 18 different categories, showing their scientific skills in areas such as physics, earth science, biology, chemistry, robotics and astronomy. Led by teachers Marlon Barcelona and Gina Ortiz, the team also competed in the State competition on April 4.

Several of the Science Olympiad students left the competition and immediately hurried back to school, where they performed in *Once on This Island*, a fun and colorful musical production. Ladera Vista students are talented in both science and the arts!



Maple *Elementary*

244 E. Valencia Dr., Fullerton, CA 92832 • 714/447-7590 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Susan Mercado
Principal

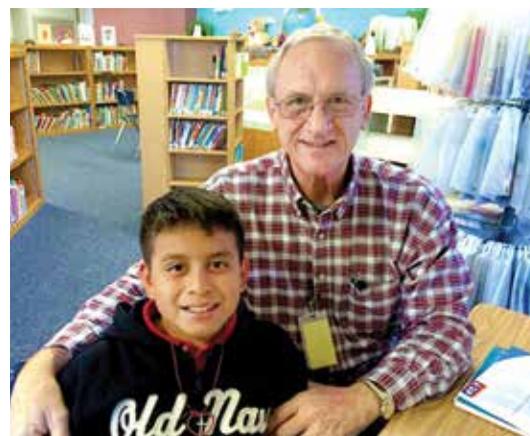
Community Tutoring

For more than a decade, volunteers from a local church have tutored our students in math, reading, writing, and science and have provided homework support. At the end of the school year, a potluck will be held to thank the volunteers and bring the students, their families and the tutors together to celebrate their success.

Research suggests that an adult role model investing time in the life of a child is valuable for both the student and the adult. Developing a commitment to learning, building positive values

and social competencies, and adopting a positive view of the future are just a few of the benefits this program brings to our students.

Our volunteers include high school and college students, working adults, and retired folks, all of whom are making a difference in the lives of students! For more information, contact Jessica Humes at (714) 447-7590 or jessica_humes@fullertonsd.org.



Nicolas *Junior High School*

1100 W. Olive Ave., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7775 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Dr. Mathew Barnett
Principal

Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, & Critical Thinking

Nicolas Junior High School's @NicTech electronic tablet programs help students demonstrate the four Cs of a 21st-century education. With the help of modern technology, students work together to deepen their understanding of academic subject areas, find solutions to real-world problems, and demonstrate their knowledge of academic subjects. Students learn to read effectively, negotiate meaning through conversation, and demonstrate their learning through writing.

Every student, from our most gifted to those that need extra help, all use electronic tablets. For the 2013–2014 school year, every seventh-grade student has access to an electronic tablet during the school day to use apps like Google Drive, Haiku Deck, Note Anytime, and Pic Collage. For the

2014–2015 school year, every student at Nicolas will have full access to an electronic tablet to apply knowledge and demonstrate understanding.

Nicolas students show that Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) take the Knights beyond the pathway to success!



Orangethorpe *Elementary*

1400 S. Brookhurst Rd., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7730 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Dr. Amanda Segovia Hale
Principal

Special Guest Stars

Our students love learning and interacting with technology. One five-year-old recently exclaimed, "I love coming to school because I get to work on my iPad. My teacher teaches me cool stuff, and I teach her because I know all about insects!"

These children are "digital natives." Many kindergarten students even have their own iPads, and work on projects at school.

Recently their teachers planned an exciting science lesson starring live insects! The students learned about ants, ladybugs, caterpillars and praying mantises. Some used their iPads to video and capture the insects moving, while others narrated what they learned about them.

Leilani said, "Look, I took a picture of the head and antennae!" They were all able to identify the head, antennae, mouthparts, thorax, wings, legs and abdomen. Jaden added, "I typed two sentences about the praying mantis all by myself." The students also kept an insect journal with vocabulary words and pictures.



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Pacific Drive

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Yolanda Castillo
Principal

Artist to the Rescue!

Pacific Drive School recently experienced an act of kindness from a very talented artist, Mrs. Yvonne Bevacqua, the mother of our first-grade teacher, Ms. Quitral. When news reached Mrs. Bevacqua that several of our school murals had been vandalized, she immediately wanted to help.

Restoring the murals was a priority, however, due to the cost, the repair had been postponed. Luckily Mrs. Bevacqua, a muralist and graphic artist, made it her mission to restore and revitalize our school campus. She was able to get all of the paint and materials donated after sharing our plight with the manager of a local home improvement store.



Within a week, our Pacific Drive murals were restored, thanks to Mrs. Bevacqua and Mrs. Quitral, who helped every afternoon. Our sincere gratitude goes out to these fine ladies for their gifts of time, talent, and thoughtfulness.

Raymond *Elementary*

517 N. Raymond Ave., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/447-7740 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Yolanda McComb
Principal

A Celebration to Remember!

It wasn't birthday candles casting the bright glow over Raymond School; instead the radiant brilliance was generated by dozens of sixth-grade faces after receiving their brand-new electronic tablets. The unveiling of the District's 1:1 Visible Innovation Program (VIP), designed to ensure students are able to "author and shape their future through a personalized and blended learning program that integrates the curriculum and technology," was indeed a cause to celebrate.

The integration of technology has been unmistakably well received. A teacher posed the following question to her students: How has technology affected your learning? And the students responded using their blogs or made voice recordings that they turned into quick-response codes.

Students summarized their experiences by sharing that the devices "make me thirsty for more knowledge" and "improve my chances of getting a good occupation later down the road of life." One student summed it up well: "Honestly, technology has made learning in school better for me."



Parks *Junior High School*

1710 Rosecrans Ave., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7785 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Sherry Dustin
Principal

Celebrating Poetry

At Parks Junior High School, our eighth graders spring into the sunny, hot season with creative and vibrant poetry t-shirts. Every eighth grade student at PJHS celebrates poetry with a culminating t-shirt project. The t-shirts display pre-selected poems written by poets such as Whitman, Homer, Cisneros, Neruda, and even Parks' up-and-coming student poets. Although some of the students leave their homes wishing that sickness had overcome them the night prior (unsure about their t-shirt's caliber), by the time they march up the two steps in front of PJHS and swing open the doors, they're as eager, excited, and enthusiastic as ever—happy, energetic, and spirited about another great school day at Parks!



Richman *Elementary*

700 S. Richman Ave., Fullerton, CA 92832 • 714/447-7745 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Estella Grimm
Principal

Excited About Learning

March was a very exciting month at Richman School. We launched our after-school STEAM Club, and also rolled out the FSD VIP program!

The students in the STEAM Club are using Lego Mindstorms NXT to learn basic computer programming and robotics. They are also designing and building solar cars while learning about the need to be environmentally conscious, as well as writing scripts and creating short movies to express the ethics behind robotics and automation.

During that same week our school distributed 104 iPads to students who could not contain their excitement! It was like Christmas Day when the iPads were distributed, and everyone eagerly waited for their names to be called. They didn't even want to go to recess!



In the first week of delivery the students were already creating keynote presentations, and using the Educreations app to explain their learning. Wow, what a week!

Rolling Hills *Elementary*

1460 E. Rolling Hills Dr., Fullerton, CA 92835 • 714/447-7795 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Paska Juncaj-Yehya
Principal

Technology-Assisted Curriculum

At Rolling Hills School, we are committed to incorporating technology-assisted curriculum, which in turn empowers students to own their learning. We strive to create learners who consume information, collaborate with their peers, and creatively demonstrate their new-found knowledge. Our teachers work diligently to create meaningful, standards-based and focused instruction, while increasing levels of student engagement through purposeful implementation of technology. With the District's successful launch of the 1:1 electronic tablet program in March, our sixth-grade teachers have embraced this brave, new, digital world.



Students are involved daily in innovative learning that taps into their creativity. While working in collaborative groups, students apply the skills they have learned, using technology as a tool to broaden both their skills and their global knowledge. This will eventually evolve into students creating authentic audiences for their final products. As teachers and students embrace this medium we will find that the sky is truly the limit!

Sunset Lane *Elementary*

2030 Sunset Lane, Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7750 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Paula Pitluk
Principal

Art Is a Way of Life

Visitors to Sunset Lane often comment on the public art throughout the campus. The walls are covered with murals depicting grade-level curriculum. Self-portraits of first-graders adorn the first-grade building. Charlotte and Wilbur, Leo the Lion, Harry Potter and other fictional characters adorn the walls of the portable classrooms.

Other notable pieces include stained-glass mosaic quilts in the fifth-grade garden, mosaic insects climbing the Media Center wall, a ceramic tower of second-grade faces in front of the office, and our glorious Sunset Lane sign.



This year a mosaic studio has also been added to our campus. In one after-school program the students create major pieces of mosaic art for installation throughout the City of Fullerton. The first work can now be viewed at St. Jude's Medical Center.

Art is a way of life for our students and community.

Valencia Park *Elementary*

3341 W. Valencia Dr., Fullerton, CA 92833 • 714/447-7755 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Helene Morris
Principal

Every Student Succeeding Breakfast

Valencia Park School proudly recognizes second-grader Yarely Pineda as Fullerton School District's Every Student Succeeding winner. On March 14, Yarely was honored at a breakfast at Bowers Museum. Each Orange County school district recognized one student who had overcome obstacles and achieved success.

In 2012, Yarely was diagnosed with seizures and missed more than a month

of school. This year in math, she has progressed from basic to proficient. Yarely has benefited from using an electronic tablet in the classroom every day to motivate her and individualize her learning experience. Yarely has a big heart and recently donated her long hair to a children's charity.

"Her smiley face, hugs, and positive attitude continue to light her way," said Yarely's teacher, Mrs. Cat-Aurelio.

At the breakfast, Yarely received a medal and prizes, including two tickets to an amusement park. For Yarely, however, the ultimate reward is her love of learning.



Woodcrest *Elementary*

455 W. Baker Ave., Fullerton, CA 92832 • 714/447-7760 • www.fsd.k12.ca.us



Dr. Hilda Flores
Principal

What Will You Create?

Woodcrest Elementary School defines a portfolio of work that drives creativity and engages students with inquiry, design, and problem-solving skills. The 1:1 Visible Innovation Program placed an electronic tablet in the hands of each sixth- and seventh-grade student in the District.

Teacher Rochelle Wolf was confident because "At Woodcrest, we

were ready to begin using our tablets to create on the first day." The sixth-grade team has worked diligently over the last two years to adapt teaching practices, plan instruction, and build capacity with students to use technology as a tool to innovate and express ideas.

Students are currently engaged in a project that leverages the power of mobile devices to gather, interpret, and communicate survey data collected and based on research questions posed by students. Rochelle Wolf and her students are presenting their projects at the Tea and Technology Showcase this month.





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Where

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 Rock Christian Academy - 4150 E Beauty Dr., Anaheim, 92807
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Note-ables



Kate Karp

Buy One Get One Flea, Dog on Fleas

For some time, creators and performers of young people's music have been dispensing with the cheap, synthetic sound of electronic tracks and replacing them with real live instruments. I'm surely not the only one who's delighted beyond words. Dog on Fleas is one of the groups that plays in its own band, called the Backyard Orchestra; the combo includes but is not limited to a sousaphone, duck calls, a bass drum, a bassoon, a clarinet and several kazoos. The wacky instrumentation and the wordplayful monikers of group and band indicate one slaphappily good CD.

The content is composed of songs original, familiar and obscure. Imagine, if you will, "Over the Waves" and the "Grand March" from the opera *Aida* played solely by kazoos, albeit skillfully. The original songs, written by Grammy Award-winning producer and band member Dean Jones, are based on themes that both child and parent will appreciate. "Hundredaires" is about the joys and disadvantages of a simpler life and a lighter wallet. "It's a Ruse" warns about things that seem too good to be true and likely are. "Pardon My Pajamas"—well, who hasn't longed to spend an entire day in jammies?

And "Hinterlands" is plain wonderful—brilliantly arranged and tuneful, with an energy that you can jump on and ride. You're certain to get an itch for Fleadom.

Kate Karp is an editor for *School News Roll Call* and a freelance writer and editor.



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Parent To Parent

Selfies



Jodie Lynn

Question: My 12-year-old daughter and her friends are constantly taking “selfies” on their cell phones. The other moms and I think this is a bad thing. All we hear is negative comments about their faces, noses, teeth, eyes, hair, etc. What’s the best way to try to help these girls understand that these self-pictures should not be used as a testament of their true appearances, inside and out, and to try to teach them to make light of the selfies if they insist on continuing to take them?

From Jodie: Self-critiquing alone can be rough on one’s self-esteem and emotional state of mind. But if the picture is shown to friends or posted on social media the comments, which can be quite mean, can devastate the individual and really do damage. As kids get older they begin to be generally hard on themselves as well as others when it comes to just about everything they do and say and especially how they look. Recognizing this, Dove® came up with ways to help build and rethink self-esteem in growing girls. In 2004, they created The Dove Self-Esteem Project which focuses on helping girls, ages 8 to 17, become more confident and well-adjusted, even enjoying themselves for who they really are. Be sure to visit their site where you both can engage in great lessons on self-esteem and loads of other resources. Check out <http://www.dove.us/Our-Mission/Girls-Self-Esteem/default.aspx> for more details. You might also want to watch a video that they put together (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3agBWqGfRo&feature=youtu.be). It aims to reaffirm a happy, healthy insight into the next generation of women growing up. Since our own personal opinion about ourselves is important, we have a tendency to verbally express negative comments, which in turn is heard by family members.

Jodie Lynn is an award winning, internationally syndicated family/health and education columnist and best selling author. She has authored several books including *Mom CEO (Chief Everything Officer)*, *Having Doing*, and *Surviving it All!* and *Syndication Secret—What No One Will Tell You!* Check www.ParentToParent.com for details on new radio talk show, Inside Parenting Success.



**Sign up for May Swim Lessons
and get 50% off June Lessons!**

*Restrictions may apply



SPLASH OF FUN

Youth Programs at the Fullerton Family YMCA



SWIM LESSONS:

PRESCHOOL, YOUTH, TEEN & ADULT

The Fullerton Family YMCA Swim Lesson program teaches safety, comfort, and swim skills in the water for swimmers 6 months old to 99 years old. All levels of swimmers welcome! Lessons starts in April - REGISTER NOW! ymcaoc.org/swim



GYMNASTICS

Gymnastics is a sport involving the performance of exercises requiring physical strength, flexibility, power, agility, coordination, and balance. Internation.

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April 2nd– 30th, May 3rd – 31st
June 2nd – 30th, July 2nd – 30th



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YOUTH BASKETBALL LEAGUE

The YMCA offers Youth Basketball Leagues for boys and girls ages 6–14. Participants will have fun learning the fundamentals of the sport as well as developing new skills, including ball handling, passing, shooting techniques, and defensive skills. **May 17 – Aug 16**

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Driving Is a Responsibility



Karley Cable

HAPPY SPRING! I am so glad that the days are finally longer and we are getting closer to summer vacation. As a new driver, the freeways can be pretty daunting, especially during rush hour and driving is always a lot harder for me in the dark.



It was just over year ago that I got my driver's learning permit. As excited as I was to get behind the wheel, my first few driving lessons with mom and dad were a disaster. It was much harder than I anticipated and I wondered if I would ever be able to navigate my way around by myself without nearly running into something. Add to that the fact I live in a crowded, busy, beach community. Skateboarders and cyclists are constantly flying out from alleyways and tearing down narrow streets in the wrong direction. Young kids are can always be found playing in the streets. Animals are frequently running out into the road, and nothing is worse than trying to parallel park. You need to be very cautious. I'm glad I didn't give up on learning to drive because it is just like learning any new skill, it takes practice for it to become second-nature.

I have a lot of friends who are getting their driving permits this year and other friends that don't seem the slightest bit interested in learning to drive. I can understand where both are coming from. Driving is amazing! It is so empowering and it gives me such a sense of freedom. I finally feel like I am no longer a child. However, learning to drive does require a big time commitment and expense. Training courses can take a few months and they can be very boring, not to mention pricey. And, in addition to the training, you must put in a lot more time practicing behind the wheel with an adult.

Summer is an ideal time to learn to drive. The days are longer, and for most teenagers, school is not in session so there is more time to dedicate to learning.

If you are the parent of a teen nearing driving age, I imagine you might be thrilled if your teen has no interest in learning to drive, but I would recommend you encourage them to do it. Here's why: In order to get behind the wheel and drive, you must first pass a driver's permit written exam and complete a training course which usually takes a few months. Then, if you pass your exam and get your driver's learning permit, you must get professional "behind-the wheel" training as well as put in 100 additional hours of practice with an adult. This is a great opportunity for you to help get your teen off to a good start by practicing a lot with them. For most teens and their parents, this can be a very stressful time. Just remember, the more they practice, the better drivers they will be. By the time they receive their license, you will hopefully be very confident in their driving abilities. Plus, you will become a better driver as you realize how important it is to set a good driving example yourself.

Even after your teen has mastered the driving courses, and has met all the requirements to finally get their driver's license, they still need to go to the DMV and take a behind-the-wheel driving test. Some DMV's are very tricky. After driving countless hours in crowded cities with heavy traffic, I quickly learned that a green light means nothing if pedestrians are still crossing the street or cars are in the intersection. I can give you the names of twenty people, myself included, who failed their first driving test for slowing on a green turn arrow.

Learning to drive is a rite of passage and the experience of teaching your teen to drive will no doubt provide many memories. The best part for parents is that once your teen starts driving, there is no better motivation for getting good grades, a job, and being responsible, like the privilege of driving a car. They can also run out to the store and grab a few things you need or fill the car with gas for you too! And while the thought of an auto accident is extremely scary, we can drastically reduce the likelihood of injury by wearing seat belts, obeying traffic laws and certainly NEVER TEXTING WHILE DRIVING.

I urge you to require your new driver to log onto my website:<http://themadmovement.weebly.com> and TAKE THE PLEDGE to never text and drive. Karley Cable is a junior honors student at Woodrow Wilson Classical High School in Long Beach. She recently received her second President's Volunteer Award from President Barack Obama and was a state honoree for the prestigious Prudential Spirit of Community Awards for her "Don't Text and Drive/It Can Wait" campaign efforts. For more information on Karley and her campaign, visit her website: <http://themadmovement.weebly.com>

Summer Fun 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 Fullerton in subject line)

Entries must be received by June 15, 2014

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

- | | | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Awesome | Lessons | Sunscreen |
| Barbeque | Lifeguard | Surfing |
| Beach | Picnics | Swimming |
| Fireworks | Pool | Vacation |
| Fun | Popsicles | Volleyball |
| Hot | Sand | Water |
| Ice Cream | Summer | Wave |
| Lemonade | Sunny | |

**Congratulations to Josefina Chavez
Winner of the February Word Search Contest!**



Oranges and Life's Lessons



Nancy

I just spent a wonderful weekend with two little grandsons (ages 6 and 4) watching them enjoy and delight in what has become work for me after all these years at the ranch. The two boys loved climbing orchard ladders to harvest navel oranges. They picked themselves 5 twenty five pound bags to take home to sell. Aside from all the enjoyment they had they are learning some of life's lessons, i.e., where their orange juice comes from, the work involved in harvesting the fruit, the work and art of sales, and earning some of their own money. Not too bad for one morning in the outdoors, enjoying nature and spending time with their great grandmother, grandmother and parents.



...Planning vegetable garden beds for this year. It is getting more difficult to wait patiently for the frosty nights to pass before putting vegetables in the garden. The kale plants that were still in the garden went home with the boys for their garden beds (and hamsters, guinea pigs and rabbits). Young onion plants are up and growing and my experiment of growing potatoes in empty wild birdseed bags is proving to work, at least the plants have sprouted and are looking very healthy. I added more compost around the plants to encourage potatoes to set along longer stems. The plan is to continue "hilling" the potatoes by adding more compost as they grow taller, thereby increasing the eventual harvest of potatoes. By growing them in bags, I am hopeful I can get all of the potatoes out of the ground and not have sprouting veggies here and there.

...Dealing with poor drainage in the back yard by putting in drains, moving a few blueberry plants and snapdragons.

...Enjoying vases of daffodils as well as groups here and there throughout the property. I plant them here and the gophers move them there, so you just never know where you will find a narcissus, jonquil or daffodil. In the summer there are mysterious plantings of gladiolas joining the "gopher planted gardens." The ranch critters provide me with new garden items annually. Right now I have two beautiful dogwood trees courtesy of the blue jays, the aforementioned bulb plantings, lavender plants, and a few olive trees.

...Marking time preparing for Spring! Garden catalogues! Planting plans!

Publisher's note: Nancy is a mother, grandmother, great grandmother, retired school board member, and community volunteer. Nancy is a rancher in Northern CA. I don't think I have ever known anyone quite as appreciative of nature as Nancy. She can stand in the middle of a field of weeds and find beauty in the gentle swaying of the tassels. At the end of her busy day, rather than settle down for a much needed rest, Nancy is preparing sugar water to not disappoint the hummingbirds the following morning. After much arm twisting, I convinced Nancy to share with our readers a few tidbits of her days on the farm. Enjoy!



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Gearing Up for Summer



**Sandy Spurgeon
McDaniel**

For some parents, the arrival of summer means less stress because the school schedule is not a part of the daily routine. For other parents, having the children home all day every day is stressful. Whichever arena you are in, the reality of life is that summer vacation is almost here for the traditional schools.

Children may get more wound up, more disagreeable, more difficult to manage as the start of summer gets closer. Change is stressful, even if it is for the better. The break in routine is stressful for children and adults. It is advisable to keep your discipline strong so that you glide into summer with boundaries in place. Consistent boundaries will also help your child to contain his or her behavior and to feel safe.

My discipline system is mentioned on parentingsos.com and in my book, *Don't Feed the Dragon*, is a discipline manual divided into three sections:

(1) what parents need to understand about children in order to successfully guide them; (2) my discipline system, and (3) answers to 130 of the top concerns of parents, listed in alphabetical order. The book is age-appropriate from tots through the teens and is available on parentingsos.com.

Having your discipline system in place, it is wise to sit down as a family and make a list of things that can be done during free time. The list may be posted in a place where children can use it as a reference. To quell the endless, "I'm bored" message that children who are not used to having non-structured time often begin chanting when school ends, offer two choices: "You may refer to the chart that we created or I will choose a chore off the chores chart that will help you dispel boredom." This plan might allow you to have your whole house cleaned in the first week of summer!

Summer is a wonderful time to train your darling children to do chores. Finally, they have time—the constant excuse during school months! Children will leave home some day—I promise!—and when they do, they need to know how to take care of a house and themselves. Chores teach a child that a house does not clean itself and how to do fundamental tasks, such as clean a toilet. If you have a housekeeper, create a space each week that the children are responsible for in terms of upkeep and give the tidiness angel one less area to clean.

It is important that children are not in so many activities that their lives become stressful. Children need time to be children! If you want your child to be successful in school, have at least a half hour a day that is devoted to school skills. If each child took a 30-minute "chill break" and read for that amount of time, their future teachers would be ecstatic! Every child needs quiet time each day that does not involve any media or mechanical gadgets, including during the summer.

Most important of all, enjoy your children! There will never be another summer like the one ahead of you. Your children will not be this age ever again. Create some sort of structure and have some time that is not structured. Don't send your children to other people to play all the time—what each child wants more than anything else is time with you. It is easy to forget that when you are trying to keep the energy-packed chicks busy.

Thanks to all the teachers who gave so much of themselves this school year to help our children be all that they can be!

Sandy Spurgeon McDaniel has written four adult books, and a new children's book: *Believe You Are Beautiful*. She has taught school, raised two children, worked as a consultant to schools and has worked with children and families for 52 years. Sandy now lives in Meridian, Idaho. ParentingSOS.com, Amazon and Kindle



Dream Universities are Attainable



**Susan D.
Marshall**

My question to parents is this; if your son or daughter could attend their dream school for the same out of pocket expense or less than another school, would this be something you would like to know ahead of time? Yes, of course. As soon as possible.

There are ways to know these things. There are things you can do even when students are in middle school that can be game changers in the world of financial aid, getting scholarships, and helping families save on college.

Navigating the financial aid process is a challenge and it needs to start sooner than parents realize. One of the biggest challenges you will face is college costs have become alarmingly high. Most families have not saved enough to even pay for 1 full year of tuition.

The other challenge is figuring out how to navigate the college financial aid process and learning how the colleges disperse financial aid. The reality is that colleges and universities don't want you to know the process or guidelines they use to distribute financial aid. Their goal is to attract as many high quality students to attend their school with as few dollars as possible.

Every college is different in how they award aid. Do they offer more need based aid or merit aid? Merit aid is awarded for the student's merit. Need based aid is based on financial need.

Regarding need based aid: The question is how much of your need the college will meet. Then the question is if they will meet your need in the form of loans or in gift aid. Gift aid is free money, money you don't have to pay back. Loans, even though considered financial aid, someone will eventually have to pay back.

By being able to answer these questions and understand how colleges' award financial aid (and the types of aid) may make a difference in your student attending their dream school or settling for a school they think is more affordable.

Susan both educator and advisor specializes in college planning. She helps families save for and pay for college. If you have questions you would like answered in a future article contact her at Susan@College4Less.com or on her Web site at www.college4less.com

Ask Dr. Shari

Good for the Mind & Great for the Heart



**Dr. Shari
Sweetnam**

The way we choose to spend our time and the activities in which we engage help form our value system. With a wide array of possibilities and opportunities, volunteering is a positive and vastly beneficial way of helping young people develop a strong sense of self.

Volunteering offers benefits spanning from the intellectual and spiritual to the educational and professional. As young people give of themselves and their time, they can learn about being selfless. In a busy world of "pursuit of personal happiness," too often the intrinsic values of empathy and giving are the lessons that are overlooked. Helping others via a structured volunteer program is a positive and safe way to develop oneself in this regard.

Additional Benefits of Volunteerism:

- **Learning:** Acquiring a new trade or skill can help teens see the world in a bigger picture and be inspired to continue to expand intellectually.
- **Networking:** Volunteering brings people of like minds, interests and values together. This will inevitably lead to positive interaction and healthy relationships.
- **Building the Résumé:** Engaging in service to others and taking the initiative to learn new trades or skills is a brilliant way to expand your portfolio. This is especially beneficial for students and young professionals.
- **Personal Growth:** As Mahatma Gandhi said, "The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others." Teens who experience growth at an early age are likely to continue cultivating positive behavior and friendships.

Motivational Speaker, Founder of *The Brainpower Programs for Schools*, Author, Consultant, Radio Host contact: info@doctorshari.com, www.doctorshari.com, twitter: DrShariS, Youtube: Dr. ShariS, LinkedIN: Dr. Shari Sweetnam

Warning Signs of Sexual Predators



Dr. Craig Bertsch
Director

Cherie Benjoseph is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Sally Berenzweig, MEd, MA are Child Safety Experts, Mental Health Professionals, Educators, Public Speakers and Coauthor's of two children's books. They are the founders of 501c3 nonprofit KidSafe Foundation dedicated to keeping Kids Safe through Prevention Education Programs they created to decrease abuse, bullying, internet safety issues & abduction. Cherie and Sally, both mothers, are on a mission to help keep children safe. Their philosophy is to teach children personal safety life skills from a place of fun not fear.

The guidance they provide in an article that they coauthored entitled *Preventing Child Abuse: Warning Signs of Sexual Predators* is extremely valuable for parents. The following excerpts are from their article and are being shared with their permission:

Here are some tips for parents to help keep their children safe at school and in the community:

Be aware of adults who...

- Single out your child or a few children to be alone with them
- Give your child gifts or money
- Are preoccupied with children
- Are more comfortable with children than adults
- Are overly physical with children — hugging, tickling, and handling children.
- Talk to children about inappropriate topics, their bodies, sexual topics
- Offer to babysit, tutor or play with your child — especially if they don't have kids
- Contact your children (via text, phone, Facebook etc.)
- Share their personal information with children. It is inappropriate. It is crossing boundaries. It is gross misconduct.

Parents need to have open communication with your children.

The following topics should be open and ongoing conversations:

- Your child's body with regards to safe and unsafe touches. You cannot be scared to talk with children about this. You should be much more scared NOT to talk with your children. (Predators look for children whose parents don't talk about these important issues.)
- Discuss proper names for body parts. Make sure children know that privates are all the parts of the body covered by bathing suits and are called "private" because they are meant just for you — no one else.
- Discuss the fact that their bodies are special and belong to them. Children should know that no one (not even an adult they know) should ever make them feel confused, uncomfortable, nervous or scared. If they ever do feel this way then they have permission to report to a trusted adult.
- Discuss the importance of reporting and how to report to a trusted adult if they receive an unsafe touch or are asked to keep a secret that makes them feel confused or uncomfortable.
- Discuss the "red flags of behavior" and "red flags of secrets." Good secrets have a happy ending, a time limit, and the person asking you to keep the secret ultimately wants you to tell — a good example is a surprise party. Bad secrets make you feel uncomfortable, confused, nervous, scared, and have no time limit. If someone says "Don't tell a parent" that is a sure sign that you should report to a trusted adult.

The reality is that at the end of the day, every child is vulnerable to child abuse. However, a child who has open communication with their parents, a child who is taught to not keep secrets, a child who is taught safe and unsafe touch and boundaries becomes a much harder target for a predator. And as savvy as the predators can be ...they are looking for an easy target.

Let's cure the epidemic of child abuse by empowering our children and educating ourselves as parents and all adults about signs and symptoms to be aware of to prevent abuse. Let's make our children hard targets for predators. For more information visit www.kidsafefoundation.org to learn how to talk to your children about these sensitive topics, and please read our 2011 Award Winning Safety Book *My Body is Special and Belongs To ME!*

OCDE Strategic Plan



Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent

Orange County Department of Education Vision:

Orange County students will lead the nation in college and career readiness and success.

As educators, we are preparing our students to succeed in an increasingly globalized and competitive workplace. It is imperative that students develop competencies in the areas of critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, communication, collaboration, and character to assure their success in college, careers, and life.

Recognizing the essential need to keep pace in education, and to assure our accountability, the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) undertook a strategic planning process. This activity will enable us to stay ahead of the vast changes in technology, culture, and the global economy - while working hard to close the achievement gap. In developing our plan for the next five years, we looked at our history, core strengths, areas of improvement, challenges, and opportunities. Through the process, we affirmed our Mission, developed our Vision, and outlined the blueprint to achieve our goals.

We come away from the strategic planning process with a living document and the compass for our ambitious journey. A journey that sets high expectations and allows us all to unite on the path to ensure Orange County students lead the nation in college and career readiness and success. The plan includes a set of strategic priorities, goals, key performance indicators, and a learning vision to guide our work. It revolves around our primary focus of student achievement, which is at the center of everything we do on a daily basis. The plan will enable us to build upon the successes of the past as we continue to enhance our services to students, parents, and the community.

To lead the nation in college and career readiness and success is a high ambition, but within the reach of Orange County students. We recognize that OCDE plays a supportive role in reaching this vision and its fulfillment is ultimately dependent on the engagement and the contributions of educators at all levels of student development from early childhood through higher education. Success will require that our students cultivate not only academic mastery but also emotional and social development in safe and supportive schools and communities. Individual student interests, choices, and capacities define college and career success, but we know students need support to acquire competencies that will allow them to succeed in learning experiences beyond their PreK-12 education.

I want to express my gratitude to the many of you who contributed to the development of the plan by responding to surveys and participating in discussions with our leadership team members. I truly appreciate your constructive, thoughtful, and valuable input. I am confident that if we work together, our students will graduate from high school prepared with the competencies they need to thrive in the 21st century.

Thank you for your interest in the students of Orange County and for your contributions to their success.

For additional information about OCDE services, visit www.ocde.us.

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