

# School News

*Education + Communication = A Better Nation*

**Covering the Paramount Unified School District**



Volume 7, Issue 17

November 2022

## Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month



### PUSD Third Graders Practicing Los Machetes Dance

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## Greetings Paramount USD community

On behalf of our Board of Education, it is a pleasure to welcome you to a great year for our school district, staff, and students.

Our dedicated staff continues to do everything possible to ensure our students' school environment is focused on student engagement, inclusion, rigor, and addressing the social-emotional needs of our students. It is imperative that we maintain positive learning environments and support systems to address students' needs and help them achieve their full potential.

Our District has focused its attention and efforts on enhancing equity and recognizing diversity in our District. We are training a representative group of staff members in cultural proficiency, with plans to train our entire District in practices that will better serve our students and our families. We want to provide the best instruction to serve all students. Our high school programs have implemented updated schedules to provide more in-depth instruction and enhanced learning.

We recognize that there are consequences relating to student achievement after the many academic changes that occurred during the pandemic. Still, our staff is working diligently to restore our academic performance and improve upon past student successes. We will continue to work hard to focus our attention on instructional practices that provide our students with the knowledge needed for their successful college and career choices.

Our District is also working on the expansion of daily student learning time through the implementation of the extended learning opportunities program, which allows students to remain engaged in academic and extracurricular programs after school. This and other District initiatives provide academic and social-emotional support in our schools to achieve our goal of successful students at all grade levels.

Finally, our District has been proactive in providing beneficial services such as free student nutrition services, improved technology access, and upgraded facilities. It is our unwavering commitment to excellence that motivates our staff and makes me so proud to serve with them. I am confident that in this environment our students feel welcome and ready to learn.

Thank you for supporting our students and staff.



**Ruben Frutos**  
*Superintendent*

## Saludos comunidad Paramount USD

En nombre de la Mesa Directiva de Educación, es un placer darle la bienvenida a un gran año para nuestro distrito escolar, personal y estudiantes.

Nuestro personal dedicado continúa haciendo todo lo posible para garantizar que el entorno escolar de nuestros estudiantes se centre en la participación de los estudiantes, la inclusión, el rigor y el tratamiento de las necesidades socioemocionales de nuestros estudiantes. Es imperativo que mantengamos entornos de aprendizaje positivos y sistemas de apoyo para abordar las necesidades de los estudiantes y ayudarlos a alcanzar su máximo potencial.

Nuestro Distrito ha centrado su atención y esfuerzos en mejorar la equidad y reconocer la diversidad en nuestro Distrito. Estamos capacitando a un grupo representativo de miembros del personal en competencia cultural, con planes para capacitar a todo nuestro Distrito en prácticas que servirán mejor a nuestros estudiantes y nuestras familias. Queremos proporcionar la mejor instrucción para servir a todos los estudiantes. Nuestros programas de escuela preparatoria han implementado horarios actualizados para proporcionar instrucción más profunda y un aprendizaje mejorado.

Reconocemos que hay consecuencias relacionadas con el rendimiento estudiantil después de los muchos cambios académicos que ocurrieron durante la pandemia. Aun así, nuestro personal está trabajando diligentemente para restaurar nuestro rendimiento académico y mejorar los éxitos anteriores de los estudiantes. Continuaremos trabajando arduamente para enfocar nuestra atención en las prácticas de instrucción que brindan a nuestros estudiantes el conocimiento necesario para sus elecciones exitosas de universidad y carrera.

Nuestro Distrito también está trabajando en la expansión del tiempo de aprendizaje diario de los estudiantes a través de la implementación del programa de oportunidades de aprendizaje extendido, que permite a los estudiantes seguir participando en programas académicos y extracurriculares después de la escuela. Esta y otras iniciativas del Distrito brindan apoyo académico y socioemocional en nuestras escuelas para lograr nuestro objetivo de tener estudiantes exitosos en todos los niveles de grado.

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**Kay Coop**  
Founder/Publisher



*Neta Madison*  
Netragrednik

# School News

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Covering the  
**PARAMOUNT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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Welcome back to a new school year. By now students are settled into their routines and focused on academics. In this issue you will read articles on such topics as Character Traits, Cultural Celebrations, STEAM, An Academic Summit, and more...

We have included our popular student book reviews on pages 18 - 19. If your child would like to be a

student columnist reviewing favorite books, please email me for specifics. And on page 20 are children's music reviews.

This is our 7th year collaborating with the Paramount Unified School District. Thank you for continuing to include *School News* among your reading choices.

Our next issue is May 10.



In 2019, the City of Paramount started a **Youth Sports Hall of Fame** recognition program for Paramount student-athletes. The student-athletes considered for this year's awards played high school sports between January and December of 2022.

To be nominated, the student-athlete must live in Paramount, or attend a Paramount Unified School District High School, and be 18 years old or younger.

To learn more, please call (562) 220-2121 or visit [www.paramountcity.com/pyhof](http://www.paramountcity.com/pyhof).



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# Early Childhood Education Program

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**Rita Cruz-Wahl**  
Director

## Parents as Partners

Families are the center of a child's world. As children enter into preschool, the classroom becomes an extension of their world. The preschool program promotes and builds strong relationships with parents and caregivers in order to support the growth and development of the child. There are multiple ways the program involves families. Parent conferences are held twice a year.

Families can join in on virtual story times based on a theme. The Parent Survey and Parent Advisory Committee provide an opportunity for feedback that will help inform program quality and future events.



**Starting the Day**

One of the valued activities for staff is Parent Education Workshops where teachers present on topics such as the importance of routines and procedures, the social emotional development of young children, interacting with your child during reading and play, and preparing your child for Kindergarten. Teachers and families work together to shape the lives of children!



**Parents as Learners**

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**Ruben Frutos**  
Superintendent

## SUPERINTENDENT • From Page 3

Finalmente, nuestro Distrito ha sido proactivo en la prestación de servicios beneficiosos, como servicios gratuitos de nutrición para estudiantes, acceso mejorado a la tecnología e instalaciones mejoradas. Es nuestro compromiso inquebrantable con la excelencia lo que motiva a nuestro personal y me hace sentir muy orgulloso de servir con ellos. Estoy seguro de que en este ambiente nuestros estudiantes se sienten bienvenidos y listos para aprender. Gracias por apoyar a nuestros estudiantes y personal.

## Grandma, Why Do You Have Cracks In Your Face?

Now Available on **AMAZON & BARNES AND NOBLE**

By Kay Coop | Illustrated by Melanie Florio

## Vaping in School Age Children



**Inderpal S. Randhawa, M.D.**  
medical director,  
Children's  
Pulmonary  
Institute,  
MemorialCare  
Miller Children's &  
Women's Hospital  
Long Beach

There has been a growing trend of vaping, or smoking e-cigarettes, among teenagers the past few years and more recently there has been a spike in school-age children starting to vape.

Vaping is only marginally regulated in the U.S., causing teenagers and children to regularly use vape products and oils incorrectly. The bright packaging and sweet flavors can tempt kids and teens, many of whom end up staying hooked due to the addictive nicotine inside the vape liquid. This combination can result in serious, life-threatening respiratory events.

Nicotine is not the only harmful chemical that vape liquid may contain. Other harmful chemicals include:

- Ultrafine particles that can enter the lungs
- Flavorants such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease
- Volatile organic compounds
- Heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead

While vaping is still relatively new, the long-term side-effects of these chemicals are still being researched and discussed throughout the healthcare community. These harmful chemicals can cause side effects like coughing, dry mouth or throat, nausea, and headaches, as well as affect the development of the brain and cause nicotine addiction.

It is important to talk to your child about the dangers it may cause in both short- and long-term use. By educating yourself first, it becomes easier to educate your children. Maintaining a dialogue about vaping, where both you and your child can ask questions, will help you be effective in preventing your kids from vaping now and in the future.

For more information call (714) 377-6993 or visit [millerchildrens.org/pulmonary](http://millerchildrens.org/pulmonary).



Dr. Roy Nattiv,  
pediatric gastroenterologist,  
and patient Charlie

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## Alondra Middle School

16200 S. Downey Ave., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8004 • [alondra.pusdschools.net](http://alondra.pusdschools.net)



**Dr. Andrea Aguilar-Nuno**  
Principal

### Dolphins Compete with Pride

We are thrilled to have our after-school sports program return this year! Our fall season is off to a successful start and we hope to keep the momentum going throughout the year. Did you know that participating in youth sports has a positive and long-lasting effect on your overall health? Becoming an athlete early on not only assists with creating a growth mindset

but also helps develop lifelong habits. Student athletes are shown to have a stronger sense of self, a vital sense of camaraderie, vigorous fitness habits, healthy peer relationships, and an overall solid foundation of life skills. These habits are important because they help mold our youth into strong leaders who can deal with adversity and overcome any obstacles thrown their way. This in turn creates a positive cycle, as our young leaders will then be well-prepared to tackle the next hurdle in life. Go Dolphins!



**AMS Volleyball**



**Fear the Fin**

## Buena Vista High School

3717 Michelson St., Lakewood, CA 90712 • 562/602-8090 • [bv.pusdschools.net](http://bv.pusdschools.net)



**Morrie Kosareff**  
Principal

### Uplifting Cultural Wealth

At Buena Vista, we want our students' voices and stories to be uplifted and centered. Every school year, we work on building stronger connections and practicing restorative justice with our students. Last year, we started giving more voice to the experiences and cultural wealth of our students through cultural celebrations that center our students. We set aside

four cultural celebration days to celebrate our students' cultures. This year we will continue to hold celebrations for Latin & Hispanic Heritage Month, Native American Heritage Month, Black History Month, and Asian American, Native Hawaiian, & Pacific Islander Heritage Month. These celebrations create an opportunity for students to teach us about their cultures and for everyone to learn more about different cultures. The outcome is the appreciation for the diversity of our students and student empowerment.

Each celebration is a day-long event consisting of four Google Meet Presentations that teachers project in their advisory classes for their students to see and take notes. This year all the presentations will be done by our students. Our topics are chosen by the students presenting. The topics range from speaking about history, experiences, community values, music, food, traditions, to social injustices. After the presentations, students play an on-line app game based on the presentations. After lunch, students watch videos about the cultures and go over discussion questions. During the last 90 minutes of the day, students participate in our field fair. We have different cultural activities, such as games, crafts, music, sports, etc. Our students also taste authentic food from the cultures and watch performances by students from that culture. Since we started these celebrations, we've seen an increase in student empowerment and cultural awareness and appreciation. We hope to continue doing work that uplifts, centers, and empowers our students.



## Collins Elementary School

6125 Coke Ave., Long Beach, CA 90805 • 562/602-8008 • [collins.pusdschools.net](http://collins.pusdschools.net)



**Margie Domino**  
Principal

### Celebrating Success

During the month of September, Collins Colts learned about and practiced using empathy, the ability to be aware of, understand, and be sensitive to another person's feelings. Every Monday, students were reminded during morning announcements to practice showing empathy and were also given a quote which highlighted the character trait. Newsletters were sent home to families that included tools and suggestions on how to incorporate empathy within the home setting. Teachers focused on the trait of the month and monitored students' abilities to demonstrate it. At the end of the month, two students who exemplified empathy were selected to be honored in our Student of the Month Awards Ceremony. Parents were invited and enjoyed a slide show with a picture and write-up of each student recognized during the ceremony. It was a wonderful celebration, and we are looking forward to next month's character awards!



**5th Grade Awards**



**2nd Grade Awards**

## Gaines Elementary School

7340 E. Jackson St., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8012 • [gaines.pusdschools.net](http://gaines.pusdschools.net)



**Karen Sullivan**  
Principal

### The Grizzly Bucks Stop Here

Gaines students follow guidelines for success to keep our campus a safe and civil place to be. Our grizzly cubs are collaborative, understanding, brilliant, and scholarly. They demonstrate those qualities in the classrooms, at recess, and during lunch.

As a schoolwide incentive, staff members reward students "caught" following the school rules with Grizzly Bucks. On the first Friday of each month, students get to shop in the Grizzly store. They choose from a wide variety of items as they cash in their well-deserved bucks. Some students like to buy small toys monthly while others save up for larger items.

Every student walks away with something special on Grizzly Store days. Regardless of the bucks earned during the month, students choose a book to take home with them. We are proud of our CUBS as they show respect and kindness for others.



**Counselor Nieto Helps Students Shop.**

## Hollydale School K-8

5511 Century Blvd., South Gate, CA 90280 • 562/602-8016 • [hollydale.pusdschools.net](http://hollydale.pusdschools.net)



**Hilda Mapp**  
Principal

### Parent Engagement Kicks Off

Hollydale held its first parent engagement meeting of the year hosted by our school social worker. We started with a spider web icebreaker where parents got to know each other and share their hopes and dreams for their children. Next, we continued with the focus group portion of the meeting

where parents were asked to guide the parent engagement meetings for the 2022-2023 year.

- What traditions, activities or parent workshops do you want to see continue?
- What parent workshops or trainings would you like to see offered this school year?
- What do you suggest we can do to increase our family engagement?

Very valuable data was gathered through this process that will help guide our Parent Programs this year. We finished with some mindfulness tips and strategies that parents can use at home. We look forward to a successful year of parent programs!



**Hollydale Parent Engagement**

## Jefferson Elementary School

8600 Jefferson St., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8024 • [jefferson.pusdschools.net](http://jefferson.pusdschools.net)



**Kelly Williams**  
Principal

### Full STEAM Ahead

The Jefferson Jaguars are enjoying the latest upgrade on campus: The STEAM Lab! Classes have already begun directing lessons and conducting hands on activities in the newly designed space. One of these activities included planting seeds to put into our school garden! We also have two

tanks full of fish and snails to greet the students. Our intent is that the fish tanks will also give each student a chance to learn more about aquatic life, as well as ecosystems, and how every living thing has a role to play. We envision many more experiments and hands on activities taking place in the STEAM lab throughout the year and we know the Jaguars are looking forward to each one of them!



**Students Planting Seeds.**



**Students at Work.**

## Jackson Middle School

7220 E. Jackson St., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8020 • [jackson.pusdschools.net](http://jackson.pusdschools.net)



**Kelly Anderson**  
Principal

### Fight On, Knights!

Our Knights have their sights set on college athletics! This fall, our sports teams had the opportunity to visit PHS and local universities to experience the athletic opportunities



**PHS Pirates Inspire!**

available to them after middle school. The Jackson Football Team attended the PHS Homecoming game, engaging in various pre-game rituals and leading the Pirates out on the field. Staff members also stepped up and sponsored our players,

giving them the opportunity to attend a USC football game and take pictures on the field. Similarly, our girls' team attended the USC and CSULB Womens' Volleyball games, where they got to meet the elite athletes, take pictures with them on the court, and hear about their college athletic experiences. Our Knights left these events inspired to pursue their dreams of playing college sports. Jackson staff looks forward to extending opportunities such as these to our other sports teams in the future.



**Knights at USC!**

## Keppel Elementary School

6630 Mark Keppel St., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8028 • [keppel.pusdschools.net](http://keppel.pusdschools.net)



**Michael Naruko**  
Principal

### Makerspace Coming Soon!

Mark Keppel Elementary School will soon be home to a Makerspace Studio, where students are given hands-on learning experiences to explore science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM). A makerspace studio is a high-tech or low-tech workspace that encourages students to work collaboratively as they design, build, and share ideas to solve real-world problems.

At the Keppel Makerspace Studio, students will turn everyday household items into creative projects.

Additionally, the Keppel Makerspace Studio transforms into a classroom science lab. Teachers can now plan lessons

and set up experiments in a laboratory environment. Kayla Robert, fifth grade teacher, has utilized the lab to teach chemical reactions and properties of matter. Ms. Roberts states, "The lab has allowed students to observe, test, and apply scientific concepts to real-world experiments. There is a growing excitement surrounding science!" Fifth grader, Cindy Diaz, says, "In science, we mixed and dissolved substances and then watched chemical reactions take place." Student, Adan Figueroa, added, "It's cool when you combine water, citric acid, and baking soda because it turns into a gas."

In the upcoming weeks, all of us at Keppel are looking forward to watching our students develop their interests and skills as junior scientists and engineers.

## Lincoln Elementary School

15324 S. California Ave., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8036 • [lincoln.pusdschools.net](http://lincoln.pusdschools.net)



**Anastasia Ferrarer-Bias**  
Principal

### Lincoln Lion Superheroes!

October is National Bullying Prevention Awareness Month and Lincoln students showed their support by wearing superhero shirts on school spirit day October 3, 2022. We kicked off the month at the first Monday Morning Assembly in October. Leo the Lion came by to remind students heroes help, and we must each do our part to help stop bullying. Students were also able to make



**Be the "I" in Kindness**



**Leo and Friends**

their mark on the life size "Be the I in Kindness" sign made by Ms. Orozco, the TK teacher. Students were able to take pictures in front of it to be the "I" in Kindness sign all week long and talk about how they will help put a stop to bullying! Lincoln students will participate in social-emotional lessons prepared by our school counselor, Mrs. Villa, every morning this month to learn about respect and how to be kind to show their Lincoln PRIDE.

## Los Cerritos Elementary School

14626 Gundry Ave., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8040 • [loscerritos.pusdschools.net](http://loscerritos.pusdschools.net)



**Linh Tran-Roberts**  
Principal

### Our Futures are Bright!

Los Cerritos PTA is working together to support our students by promoting school spirit. The PTA provided every student a free PTA t-shirt that says My Future is Bright. Students are encouraged to show their school spirit every Friday.

As a member of the PTA, Ms. Lopez, our School Social Worker, assisted with delivering shirts to all classes. Ms. Lopez explained to the students the meaning behind the shirt's quote: "College or Career Bound - My Future is Bright". As students begin their academic path, we want our Bulldogs to envision themselves going to college and/or having a bright career in the future, which is made possible

when students are exposed to strong organizational skills, dedication and a growth mindset. Our students were excited and thankful for their shirts. Thank you, PTA!!



**Ms. Lopez delivering shirts to Mrs. Breneman's class.**

# Mokler *Elementary School*

8571 E. Flower St., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8044 • [mokler.pusdschools.net](http://mokler.pusdschools.net)



**Holly Hennessy**  
*Principal*

## Learning Together

The old saying, “Together is Better” is so true! Here at Mokler Elementary we know that instruction and instructional practices inside the classroom are only part of the picture. It’s the outside influences and the people at home that are helping our students succeed. Working together we can truly make



## In-Class Lessons

a difference. So far this year, parents have had a chance to learn about our school at Coffee with the Principal, Title I Meetings, an ELAC meeting, and Back to School Night. In addition, our Kindergarten parents have participated in a special orientation and an in-class lesson with their child. This is only the beginning; and we look forward to a very productive and successful year, as we work to achieve our 2022-2023 theme: “Today a Reader, Tomorrow a Leader” as a team.



## Parent Meeting

# Odyssey *STEM Academy*

3701 Michelson Street, Lakewood, CA 90712 • 562/602-8032 • [odyssey.pusdschools.net](http://odyssey.pusdschools.net)



**Rebecca Perez**  
*Principal*

## Student-Led Conferences

Odyssey welcomed families to an in person Back to School Night for the first time since 2019. At the heart of the evening were Student-led Conferences, where scholars showcased their learning to families.

In preparation for the evening, scholars reflected on their learning experiences and selected key artifacts of learning they were proud of and prepared presentations for families. Scholars demonstrated their project work, walked families through their experimental designs, and described their personal goals and next steps.

Seniors took a deep dive into their college application progress, sharing their choices for their ten four-year college applications, reflected on their transcripts, and presented their interests in college majors.

Odyssey families turned out in large numbers to celebrate scholar learning and connect with the school community. At the end of the evening, families left positive messages for their scholars to celebrate and encourage their learning this school year.



## Paramount *Adult School / Community Day School*

14507 Paramount Blvd., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8080 • [pas.pusdschools.net](http://pas.pusdschools.net)



**Dr. Yvonne Rodriguez**  
*Principal*

### Inspiring ESL Story

Daphlie arrived from her native Haiti in November of 2020, during the pandemic. With the encouragement of family members, Daphlie enrolled in Paramount Adult School's Distance Learning Beginning Level ESL class. She was determined to learn how

to speak English and pursue a career in the medical field. Daphlie experienced success in her class and moved up two ESL levels. Additionally, she enrolled in the Listening and Speaking class which gave her confidence to interact with her peers. At that point, Daphlie spoke to her teachers and the school counselor and decided to enroll in the Phlebotomy course. Daphlie was hesitant as the program was demanding; however, once she began, she dedicated her time to studying and practicing drawing blood techniques passing the course in 12 weeks. Furthermore, Daphlie passed the National Phlebotomy Exam on her first try. Daphlie spoke at the PAS Graduation and shared her inspirational story.



**Daphlie Reyes Addresses the Class of 2022**

## Paramount Park *Middle School*

14608 Paramount Blvd., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8052 • [paramountpark.pusdschools.net](http://paramountpark.pusdschools.net)



**Kevin Longworth**  
*Principal*

### Fall Club Rush

Paramount Park Middle School is excited to launch our second annual Club Rush earlier this month!

Excitement is in the air during lunch time as students and teachers rush to the booths with all the different clubs offered. Our Student Council leaders promoted each club with enthusiasm and pride.

We have the return of our Gardening Club, connecting students with earth, learning about gardening, growing food, sustainable living, beautifying our campus, and even maintaining our school garden. Panther Student Union, a space for understanding, unity and excellence as we celebrate the history and diversity of black culture.

Coming new to our school this year is the Panther Pride Club, a safe and welcoming space for any student who wants to discuss issues related to sexual orientation

or gender identity and expression. Everyone is welcome to come and join this club, regardless of identity! In our Literary Club, students will engage in conversations on different literary work taught in class. Along with a support in writing and critical reading strategies. Need Math support or just a space to do homework? Our homework club is the place to be. For all of our future journalists and media folks, our AV Club will teach students the basics of journalism, script-writing, filming, and video editing skills. How about money? With our Stock Market Game Club, students will learn how to build their own portfolio, follow the current stock market and engage in online investment simulations.

Coming back by popular demand, our future engineers can continue to immerse in either Femineers or MESA to create, compete and showcase our masterpieces utilizing all aspects of STEM.

More clubs to come next season!

## Paramount High School - Senior Campus

14429 S. Downey Ave., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-6067 • [pchs.pusdschools.net](http://pchs.pusdschools.net)



**Elizabeth Salcido**  
Principal

### PUSD Board Member

Paramount Unified School District has taken leadership to the next level by having the first Student Board Member in the 2022–23 school year. Christopher Kaing, a Paramount High School Senior, represents the

13,125 students within the school district. He is involved in numerous school and extracurricular activities, such as ASB, Lions, Interact, and Computer Clubs. He serves as a volunteer at city events and can be found lending a hand to his peers.

Christopher attended his first PUSD Board Meeting on September 16 where he actively engaged in the discussions and voted on pertinent issues. He has also shared that his



**Christopher Kaing, Senior**



**Pirate in Action**

vision is to express the feelings and thoughts of his fellow students with the District as well as represent them to the best of his ability.

## Paramount High School - West Campus

14708 Paramount Blvd., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8073 • [phwest.pusdschools.net](http://phwest.pusdschools.net)



**Dr. Damon Dragos**  
Principal

### Schoolwide Academic Summit

The PHS West counselors, academic coaches, and the school social worker planned a schoolwide Academic Summit on September 29, 2022. Each period had a different topic that students followed along by utilizing the provided materials.

The topics included: time management, stress management, healthy habits, conflict resolution, empathy, and healthy relationships.

The aim of the Academic Summit was to equip our students with essential soft skills to be successful in and out of the classroom. These soft skills can sometimes be described as character traits, attitudes, and behaviors which can impact our students' academic performance.

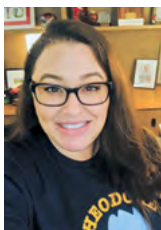
The team wanted to emphasize that life consists of choices. Our students are in control of the development of their soft skills because they result from conscious decisions to behave or not behave in certain ways. The wise behavioral choices now will help them succeed in the future.



**Hayley Navarro and Christina Arnaud**

## Roosevelt *Elementary School*

13451 Merkel Ave., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8056 • [roosevelt.pusdschools.net](http://roosevelt.pusdschools.net)



**Michelle Soto**  
*Principal*

### Yosemite Cafe Opens!

Roosevelt Elementary celebrated the Grand Opening of Yosemite Cafe. Our cafeteria received a well-deserved makeover thanks to the vision of our school principal, Mrs. Soto-Garcia, who wanted our students to know the history behind our school's namesake and his work in establishing national parks across the United States. As students enjoy nutritious meals, they are transported to Yosemite National Park,

surrounded by lush forests of giant sequoias, a majestic valley view, cascading waterfalls, and common wildlife. The immersive experience will hopefully inspire our students to explore nature and work to protect other special places.

The makeover of our school cafeteria also included a renovation of our stage, new flooring, and new tables for dining and assemblies. None of this would have been possible without the tireless efforts of the following individuals: Scott Law- Executive Director of Facilities, Maintenance & Operations, Julian Solis, Charles Jacobs, and Lucy Albera- Director of Nutrition Services.



**Renovated Stage**



**Yosemite Cafe Mural**

## Tanner *Elementary School*

7210 Rosecrans Ave., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8060 • [tanner.pusdschools.net](http://tanner.pusdschools.net)



**Belki McConnell**  
*Principal*

### Attendance Champs

Who's ready for a game of kickball? Tanner Tigers Attendance Champs, that's who! On Fridays, the class with the best attendance rate plays kickball with Principal McConnell. Everyday shout-outs to classes with perfect attendance are announced and students anticipate who will have the overall best attendance rate by Friday Morning Assembly.



**TK - Youngest Attendance Champs**



**3rd Graders - First Attendance Champs**

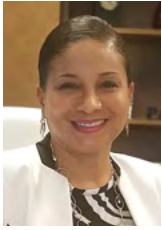
"We want to win so we can play kickball on Friday!" explained K'Den, a 5th Grader in Ms. Worcester's class.

This attendance incentive has caught students' attention and the team spirit has taken over as students encourage each other to come to school and get that daily shout-out. Our schoolwide goal is to improve student attendance and we will accomplish it one kickball game at a time.



## Wirtz Elementary School

8535 Contreras St., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8068 • [wirtz.pusdschools.net](http://wirtz.pusdschools.net)



**Lisa Nunley-Macon**  
Principal

### 5th Grade Art Masters

Wirtz Wizards in 5th grade are ready to engage in a year-long annual art project headed by 5th grade teacher, Mr. Caruso. Students will participate in a monthly art project

that is based on featured artists from all over the world. The students learn about each artist and their artwork before trying to replicate the art style themselves. At the end of the year, students will showcase their artwork for other students and staff to see. The artists are invited to attend the art show, showcase their work, and discuss their pieces with students. The art show is always a huge hit, and the staff is waiting with anticipation to see what the students create this year! Go Wizards!



**The Yellow Submarine**

## Zamboni Middle School

15733 Orange Ave., Paramount, CA 90723 • 562/602-8048 • [zamboni.pusdschools.net](http://zamboni.pusdschools.net)



**Lisa Kirk**  
Principal

### Frida Comes Alive

In conjunction with Hispanic Heritage month, 8th grade WILDCATS explored the life and artwork of Frida Kahlo in their ELA classes. The impact of TurnAround Arts training was evident as students utilized visual

thinking strategies (VTS) requiring them to discuss the artwork of both Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. Students spent time analyzing a variety of Frida's paintings and used their understanding of her work, especially her self-portraits, as inspiration to create their own self-portraits. Beyond the art, students participated in the AVID strategy of the Socratic Seminar, as they analyzed the feud between Rivera and the Rockefeller family related to the controversial "Man at the Crossroad" mural commissioned by the Rockefellers and painted by Rivera. As a culminating assignment,



**Frida Kahlo-style student self-portraits**

students will be writing an essay based on how Frida's life influenced her art. Studying and creating art to connect to content makes the content come alive.



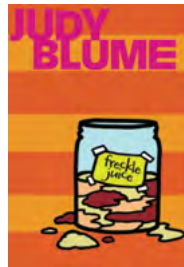
## Daniel's Review



Daniel H.

### Who Wants Freckles?

*Freckle Juice* is about a boy named Andrew who really wants freckles on his face. A girl in his class named Sharon says that she'll sell him a secret recipe for freckle juice that will give him freckles.



Will he buy the recipe and use it? Read to find out!

This book is very silly and easy to read. I liked this book and I think you will too.

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

## David's Review



David H.

### Thrills and Surprises

*The Detective's Assistant* is a mystery book about Nell Warne, who is adopted by her Aunt Kitty, a detective that works for a detective agency, and the mysteries that they solve. One of the mysteries they solve is a murder. This



book shows how detectives solve crimes and the thinking behind it. It also contains a lot of historical facts so you are learning while you are entertained. If you want to read a good mystery novel, you are sure to love this book!

David is in fifth grade and he loves to read and play piano. He likes math and activities such as tennis, basketball, and bowling.

## Kailani's Review



Kailani T.

### Speak Up for Yourself

*Left Behind* by Laurie Halse Anderson is book 17 (of 17) in the Vet Volunteers series. The story is mainly about Sylvester and Sunita. One day while Sunita follows Dr. Gabe and another Vet



Volunteer to a horse farm

on a house call, she finds Sylvester in 1 of the stalls in the barn. Sylvester is a sheep who was just left behind. Sheep usually thrive when they live in a group or a flock. Why is Sylvester left alone? Does Sylvester need a new home? Can Sunita and her Vet Volunteer friends help this lonely little lamb?

I like all the books in the Vet Volunteers series, especially this one since I can relate to the main character. Just like Sunita, I am very reserved and shy. I often let my friends decide the games we play and the TV programs we watch to avoid conflicts. I highly recommend this book to anyone who loves animals and anyone who may have a hard time speaking up for themselves.

Kailani is a 5th grader who loves to read. When not reading, Kailani likes to play with her brother, jump on the trampoline, listen to music, and ride horses.

## Aubtin's Review



Aubtin M.

### Teamwork

Title: *Thomas & Friends - Day of the Diesels*

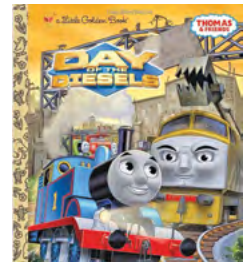
Author: Christopher Awdry

On the Island of Sodor, Thomas the tank engine and Percy the small engine are best friends. When Belle;

the fire engine comes, she becomes Thomas's new friend. Percy feels very left out. Percy goes to the Diesel Works to see if the Diesels want to make friends with him. Percy leads the Diesels to the Steam Works, when he discovers that Thomas is held prisoner in the Diesel Works. What will happen to Thomas? Will Percy save him? I recommend you read this book to see what happens.

I learned about friendship, teamwork and cooperation from this book. I hope you will too. You will find great pictures in this book.

Aubtin is a 1st Grader. When not playing, Aubtin does writing, reading and drawing. He also likes sports, swimming, and music. He cares a lot about his family and friends.



## Penny's Review



Penny

### A Wish Gone Awry

Book Title: Best Wishes  
Author: Sarah Mlynowski

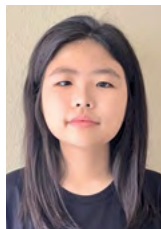
Becca is having a terrible day. Her best friend Harper decided that she didn't want to be friends with her. But after her terrible day, a mysterious package arrives for Becca in the mail. It turns out to be a bracelet with magic powers. Becca wishes that she could have a lot of friends, and the bracelet makes her wish come true. But then everybody wants to be her friend. The kids in her class, the teacher, even her mom! Everyone who reads this book will laugh at all the funny adventures and twists that this book has.

I give it a ten out of ten hearts.

Penny is a 5th grader who loves to read. She enjoys eating ice cream and petting her dog. She wants to be a librarian when she grows up.



## Taeyoung's Book Review



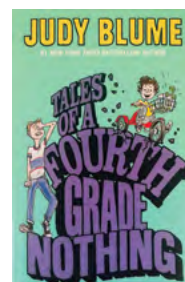
Taeyoung K.

### Absolutely Nothing

Title: *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*  
Author: Judy Blume

Fourth grade. The days of kickball at recess. The grade of joy. But Peter Hatcher doesn't think so. But that isn't even the problem. His problem lies with Farley Drexel. Or Fudge as everyone calls him. Fudge is all the world's irritating toddler brothers merged into one. A three-year old terror straight out of the cinema's next horror movie who gets away with all he does. Even if it's smearing some mashed potatoes on the wall of the restaurant or putting stamps all over a bag, he's never punished. Of course, by this point Peter has had enough of his chaotic brother and no-nonsense parents. But his parents are busy with Fudge rather than paying any attention to Peter. After they leave Fudge alone with Dribble, Peter's pet turtle that he cares so much about, things get ugly. Will Peter solve his problems, or is he truly nothing

Taeyoung K. is a 7th grader. She loves reading books and writing her own stories. Also, she likes to draw and play video games.



## Sourish's Review



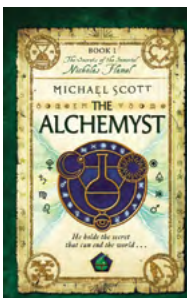
Sourish M.

### The Future of the World of Magic...

Michael Scott, states, "He holds the secret that can end the world..." on the back of *The Alchemyst: The Secrets of the Immortal Nicholas Flamel*. The author has written this book phenomenally.

He describes every important detail, which blows away the reader and allows them to experience more of the world of magic. He slowly reveals the backstory of Nicholas Flamel which results in suspicion. The main characters are Josh and Sophie Newman, who work with Nicholas Flamel and Scathac, a mighty warrior. The Siblings have the rare gold and silver auras which powers them to protect everyone. Nicholas and Scathac help the two on their journey, the end is unpredictable, but one thing is certain, Dr. John Dee and Niccolo Machiavelli cannot have Josh and Sophie. The book is super exciting with amazing moments and I look forward to finding out the future of the Magical World!

Sourish M. is a seventh grader who is enthusiastic to learn more and experience new things. He likes Science and Reading, plays soccer, basketball, guitar, and has fun with friends and family. Sourish loves to spend long hours coding and expanding his experiences by traveling with his family.



## Tegan's Book Review



Tegan

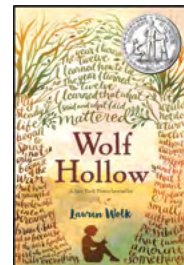
### Redemptive Friendships

*Wolf Hollow*, a beautifully written novel by Lauren Wolk, revolves around the complicated life of Annabelle, a twelve-year-old girl living in a barn, surrounded

by forests. As Annabelle attempts to deal with an evil bully named Betty, she wants to defend a strange World War I veteran named Toby against lies and accusations of a violent crime he did not commit.

While Annabelle struggles to stand up for herself, she courageously learns to speak up for others. Defying her parents' wishes, she faces sadness, fear, and hope as she fights for Toby. *Wolf Hollow* is a wonderful story of unexpected friendship, prolonged injustice and bittersweet redemption. Readers are taught how one person's evil actions as we as another's determination can impact a whole community. All in all, I award this work a deserving ranking of 4.8 stars.

Tegan Y. is a fifth grader who enjoys art, biking, writing, and reading.



## Note-ables



**Kate Karp**

### Life Beyond Sight

What does it mean “to see”?

When you say, “Do you see?” you’re not referring to eyesight but to understanding, and that’s what the songs on *Life Beyond Sight* are about. The CD is the product of a self-advocacy workshop that produced songs written and sung by students from the Maryland School of the Blind. The opener,

“Not with My Eyes,” is a blunt challenge to people who make themselves feel good through the pretext of helping someone whom they see as “disabled”: “You’d like to help a blind girl, pretend that you’re my friend. I see your truth, but not with my eyes.”

That may sound harsh, but it’s what self-advocacy sounds like for someone who won’t accept labels or insincerity.

The collection gives expression to discomfort, fears, absolute joy and sharing gifts. The students sing of those gifts in “Dance to Freedom;” they see with other senses and through their thoughts. “Lifeboat to Sanity” describes the insecurity of two individuals on either side of the sighted shore and how music carries them across the bridge they can build. The instrumental track of “Not with My Eyes” stands alone as melancholy-infused jazz, and “Bach Invention in C Major” is a virtuoso performance performed by 14-year-old student Alex Kern.

“You are limited by the things you see—you don’t have the gift that was given to me.” No matter how you see, this collection brings light and understanding.



### ‘Strawberry Band,’ The Story Pirates

When you were little, did you write songs and stories with dreams of publication?

Too bad the Story Pirates weren’t around then. These artists and educators take silly stories that children make up and turn them into even sillier songs and videos. Piracy? Nah—they make a child’s dream real!



*The Strawberry Band* is the most recent of the Pirates’ compilations. The title song, based on a story written by a 5-year-old, introduces the band and teaches young listeners what a concept album is: a group of songs connected by a theme, “some more so than others;” but you’d be correct in saying that the whole idea is spending your childhood in the best possible way.

“Weird Sisters” celebrates being different yet fabulous enough for others to emulate and to brush off bullies. “Glowy and the Friend Adventure” tells of a whale, lonely in his sea mansion, who finds a friend who’s just right. “Fun Crazy Weird Hair Store” has a cautionary subtext: check the prices before pulling out your credit card and paying five thousand million dollars.

The music is wonderful and no mere afterthought. “Glowy,” enhanced by Marile Bildsten’s trombone, will be an earworm forever; the haunting melody of “Blue Night” would be perfect for a jazz concert.

Read the [original stories here](#). If you know any young authors who’d like to submit their own works, [here’s the place](#).

Ah, the innocent silliness of youth! If we only could have boarded that pirate ship back then . . .

### Young Maestros

Tracy Bonham’s Grammy-nominated compositions might be familiar to some—Google “Mother Mother” if you’ve never heard it—but her gifts extend on beyond “Billboard.” Her classical training and devotion to developing a passion for music in very young children created the [Melodeon Music House Curriculum](#), which teaches music fundamentals to preschool youngsters.

You don’t need a spoonful of sugar to get children interested in music, but Bonham knows a most delightful way anyhow. “Young Maestros,” a collection of songs and games from Melodeon, opens with “Me Symphony,” in which Bonham laments how she misplaced her instruments everywhere—her tuba in Aruba, her shaker in Jamaica. But hey, she has her fingers, mouth, nose, feet and a beat as substitutes! Take heed, teachers and parents—there’s a great maps lesson in there.

Bonham puts the “fun” in “fundamentals” with “Beats to a Measure,” a pleasant, rapid-fire lesson in rhythm. “All the Blackbirds” gives flight to the black keys, and “Feelin’ Pretty Major” explains major and minor keys and how the upbeat feel of the former and the mournfulness of the latter comprise the music of life.

“Background Singers” is my personal favorite. Like the documentary “Twenty Feet from Stardom,” it pays homage to the unsung singers who provide the bones and body of a song. “Background Singers” tells what happens when a lead singer is unkind and unappreciative to them. Let’s say that she learns about harmony the hard way!

The final track on the collection is “A Song Without an Ending,” only 32 seconds long with an abrupt stop, but no satisfactory end. Bonham seems to be telling the Young Maestros, “You pick up from here!”

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