

School News



Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Placentia - Yorba Linda Unified School District

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 11

FEBRUARY–APRIL 2012

Academies Prepare Students for a Future Beyond High School



El Dorado High School's Digital Media Arts Academy students learn to use the same equipment used by the television industry.



Medical Sciences is one of the many academies offered through the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District.

By Rosemary Gladden, Director of Community Relations/Public Information Officer

Esperanza senior Heather Prah is headed to Azusa Pacific University to become a nurse practitioner with a specialty in pediatrics, and she has a distinct advantage on her high school resume: a Certificate of Competency from the Medical Sciences Academy at Esperanza High School.

This certification, which is recognized by the medical profession, signifies that an individual has completed the necessary training to work in an entry-level position once they reach their 18th birthday.

And that is exactly what Heather plans to do—work in the medical profession while simultaneously attending college to complete her nursing degree.

SEE ACADEMIES PREPARE • PAGE 11

Dennis Smith To Retire As Superintendent of the Placentia-Yorba Linda USD

By Rosemary Gladden, Director of Community Relations/Public Information Office

Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District Superintendent Dennis Smith announced in December that he will retire at the end of this school year.

An educator for 38 years, Smith concludes 12 years as Superintendent of the award-winning, 26,000-student Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District.

As PYLUSD Superintendent, Dr. Smith has been instrumental in leading the school district's many significant accomplishments. These achievements include dramatically raising the level of technology in PYLUSD schools; leading the effort to build new schools and renovate existing ones; and, most importantly, raising the level of academic achievement of an already high-performing school district.

Dr. Smith is very visible and highly respected throughout schools, the community and in the education field. He is a frequent visitor to schools and makes it a priority to know staff members by name. His leadership style is to build a culture in the PYLUSD where individuals genuinely care about each other which results in a dramatic difference for students. Even in the toughest of times as is the case with the State's budget crisis that has affected all school districts in Southern California, Dennis Smith inspires. "We need to stay calm, work as a team, plan ahead, and position ourselves in the best possible scenario" is his consistent message to the district's 2,500 employees and 16,000 families—a message that has galvanized everyone to work together.



Dr. Dennis Smith

In a message to staff regarding his retirement, he humbly shared that, "it has been my honor to have served with such an incredible and outstanding group of professionals. Our Board of Education, managers, teaching staff and classified are second to none! Each and every person has always had the welfare of students as their first priority."

Superintendent Smith has been an educator for 38 years, formerly serving as superintendent in five uniquely different school districts: Laguna Beach Unified, Cajon Valley Union, Irvine Unified, and Orange Public Schools in Florida, the 14th largest school district in the United States. He has been a teacher, assistant principal, principal and assistant superintendent.

Dr. Smith received a B.A. and M.A. from Arizona State and a doctorate in Educational Administration from the University of Arizona. He was recognized as one of the "Top 100 Executive Educators in North America" by the National School Boards Association and as one of the "89 Rising Stars in Southern California" by the Los Angeles Times. In 2004, he was named Orange County Superintendent of the Year and in 2008 was selected by KABC Radio in Los Angeles as the "Best Boss in Southern California." He currently serves as President of the highly respected Southern California Superintendents' Association.

The Board of Education will work with a search firm in the important process of conducting a search for a new superintendent who will continue to foster the excellent reputation and achievements of this award-winning school district.

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~Henry Brooks Adams



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Kay Coop
Founder / Publisher



Congratulations to Superintendent Smith with his much deserved retirement plans. His leadership is evident with the excellence in the PYLUSD and his dedication to education.

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**Covering the
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UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**



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Bernardo Yorba *Middle School*

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Cameron Malotte
Principal

Learn By Doing

Have you ever wanted to cook a hot dog with solar power? Or would you like to learn to fly an airplane, but never leave your seat in the classroom? How about building a bridge out of balsa wood, only to crush it to measure the quality of your design and construction?

The students at Bernardo Yorba Middle School do all of these things, and many more, in the Tech Lab. Sometimes referred to as the Discovery Lab, this is really an applied sciences classroom where our students can learn about a wide variety of scientific concepts.

Taught in modules that are 7-10 days long, our students learn about topics like energy, power and mechanics; flight technology; oceanography; rocketry and space; engineering and much, much more. Teacher Dan Barger is an excellent facilitator of learning, because most of the actual teaching is done by computer as his students work in pairs with a hands-on approach to projects and experiments.

Special thanks go to Dr. Smith, our superintendent, for bringing this program to our district's middle schools.



Bryant Ranch *Elementary*

24695 Paseo de Toronto, Yorba Linda, CA 92887 • 714/986-7120 • www.bryantranchschool.com



Debra Silverman
Principal

Students Get Respect!

This year the students at Bryant Ranch School are learning about positive behavior choices and how to earn respect and give respect to others. This extension of our positive behavior plan, character education program, and anti-bullying campaign is making students aware of what it means to have integrity. In an assembly, children learn real-world examples of respect at home, at school, and in the community.

Along with the notion of respect, students learned about the "Golden Rule," which is the easiest way to show respect. A presentation using an ActivInspire flip chart was shown to that defines bullying and how to address it. Some examples of bullying, rough play, and rudeness were demonstrated, and problem-solving skills were used to arrive at a solution.

Mrs. Silverman discussed corrective action to reduce bullying and harassment behaviors in her ABCD plan. Students love this activity. They come up with great ways to treat each other with respect and demonstrate their integrity. If you ask the students at Bryant Ranch, they will tell you the most important rule is "Treat others as you would like to be treated."

Brookhaven *Elementary*

1851 N. Brookhaven Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7110 • www.brookhavenelementary.com



Chuck Hunter
Principal

Curriculum Brought to Life

It is a great time of the year to be at Brookhaven School! The new year began with our sixth-graders and their teachers, Ms. Tripp, Mr. Nakanishi, and Ms. Martin, attending Outdoor Science School in the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains. The week spent in the mountains provided a unique opportunity to study the natural environment. The students investigated the geological features of our Southern California mountains, hiked picturesque mountain trails, observed area wildlife, and studied the brilliant night sky through telescopes. The curriculum provided at the camp is aligned with our California science content standards, as well as the California Science Framework.

Back at Brookhaven, our fifth-grade students, dressed as colonists and famous Revolutionary figures, participated in Walk Through the Revolution. This program is sponsored by our PTA and supports our social studies curriculum. Parent responses to the program were very positive. One parent remarked, "If they had something like this when I was a kid, I would have remembered more about the American Revolution." Teachers Kim Castillo and Melody Sweet reported that other parents stated that they had learned as much as the students.

The fourth-grade teachers, Karen Aleksic and Daneen Kniess, and their students are looking forward to participating in Walk Through California, another meaningful social science program provided by our PTA and enjoyed by our students in previous years.

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Esperanza *High School*

1830 N. Kellogg Dr., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/986-7540 • www.esperanzahs.com



Ken Fox
Principal

Three National Honors

Happy New Year! We are back in full swing, finishing the first semester and heading in to spring. There are great things happening for both students and staff at Esperanza. The Esperanza Entertainment Unit has student Ryan DeWeese, who has been chosen to play lead trumpet in the Grammy student jazz ensemble. Eighteen students throughout the United States were accepted. This is a huge success for Esperanza as well as for Brad Davis and Mark Gunderson, the instructors of the Entertainment Unit.

We have two teachers who have been honored in the past couple of weeks for commitments to students at Esperanza High School. German teacher Liz Kaulard was chosen to receive the 2011 German Embassy Teacher of Excellence Award. The award, given in association with the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG), recognizes those instructors who have excelled in all facets of language teaching and who leave a lasting impression upon their students. Mrs. Kaulard was chosen as one of three in the United States for her outstanding contributions to the teaching of German and for the promotion of language learning and German culture. Also, Mike Curran was inducted into the National High School Baseball Coaches' Association Hall of Fame. This is a fantastic accomplishment, and Mike is the second coach from California to be nominated for this honor. As you can see, we have some great things going on around Esperanza, and we are excited to see what the spring brings.

Fairmont *Elementary*

5241 Fairmont Blvd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7130 • www.fairmontelementary.com



Shawn Knutson
Principal

Another Great Recognition

We are excited to announce that Fairmont has again been selected as a Gold Medalist in the *Orange County Register's* 2012 Best Public Schools ranking.

Fairmont was ranked 18th among the top 25 gold medal schools. The criteria for selection was based upon academics and school environment. The Register used a weighted system that gives 75 percent of the value to academic performance and 25 percent to environment and diversity.

This recognition is a credit to our excellent teaching staff, and also a tribute to our parents who are so dedicated to their children's education.

During the month of December we held our annual Toy Drive, sponsored by the Fairmont Student Council. Our community generously donated over 50 large green bags of toys to those students within our district who are less fortunate.

We are so proud of the Fairmont staff and students. Congratulations! And keep up the great work.



Way to go student council, staff, students and community on another successful Toy Drive!

El Dorado *High School*

1651 N. Valencia Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7580 • www.edhs.org



Cary Johnson
Principal

A Magic Moment

On November 1, El Dorado High School (EDHS) social science teacher Sunshine Cavalluzzi was named an Orange County Teacher of the Year Finalist. One of five finalists, Mrs. Cavalluzzi was the only high school teacher to receive this top honor. Educators from all over Orange County gathered at the Disneyland Hotel to celebrate the county's top teachers for their innovative approaches, commitment to excellence, and passion for serving students.

A 1993 graduate of El Dorado High School, Mrs. Cavalluzzi has worked at the school for 12 years. She works tirelessly to maintain El Dorado's tradition of excellence. She started her career as a swim coach and spent 12 years as the mock trial coach, leading the team to three Orange County championships. In the classroom, Mrs. Cavalluzzi infuses technology to keep students actively involved and challenges students to connect their learning to current events. Teaching both Advanced Placement (AP) US government and politics and contemporary world affairs, she works with students of all ability levels. Students appreciate her energy, firm knowledge of the content, and high standards with support. She is an extremely bright, talented educator who is a leader on campus and whose passion for education is contagious.

This is the third consecutive year EDHS has had a teacher selected as an Orange County Teacher of the Year. The staff and students at El Dorado are honored to have so many stellar educators serving our school community. The Golden Hawks continue to soar.

Glenknoll *Elementary*

6361 Glenknoll Dr., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7140 • www.glenknoll.org



Doug Slonkosky
Principal

Thawing Out!

Glenknoll students and staff have had an active winter and look forward to spring! Our courageous sixth-grade teachers and students completed a four-day Outdoor Science School in early January. The program is administered by the Orange County Department of Education and was held at their site near Forest Falls. Students bunked with students from other schools and explored mountain trails, observed wildlife, and studied the geological features of the San Bernardino Mountains. Meals in the mess hall completed the camp experience.

Many Glenknoll parents remember their own sixth-grade outdoor education experience as one of the high points of their elementary school education. This year's sixth-grade class will add this to their list of favorite learning experiences. Thanks to the Glenknoll PTA and sixth-grade parents for helping to make this event possible.

Spring activities at Glenknoll will include grade-level field trips like the First Flight Program with the Anaheim Ducks.



Students on an Outdoor Science School Hike

The Glenknoll Garden will become active again this spring. Students will have an opportunity to study life, physical and earth sciences in this hands-on environment. Spring Planting Day is March 3. Parents and community members are actively encouraged to help with the preparation and planting—contact school principal Douglas Slonkosky at dslonkosky@pylusd.org for more information.

George Key School

710 E. Golden Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7170 • www.pylusd.org/schools/georgekey

A Surprise Visit



Deby Six
Principal

Such a busy season of learning activities for our George Key students!

It was with great anticipation that we began the season with a visit from Superintendent Dennis Smith. While stopping to visit each of our classrooms, Dr. Smith also took the opportunity to view a variety of lessons and curriculum implementations. He saw the new Promethean Boards and engaged with our students and staff. It was such fun to have him see George Key in action!

Then once again, for the 20th successive year, the Yorba Linda Rotary Club sponsored our Holiday Luncheon. Through its kindness and generosity all of our students were given individual Christmas gifts by a big man in a red suit and white beard!

The students had been anticipating this jolly man's visit for weeks, and they were thrilled to be individually greeted by him! As if this were not enough, the Rotary also presented George Key with a donation to help support the technology and sensory lab!

Finally, Patti Linza and Barbara Howe's classes hosted their annual BUNCO and PIZZA learning party fund-raiser for needy families. It was an opportunity for our students to practice their math skills by matching numbers, rolling dice, counting and taking turns.

The adults bought their admission to the party with a gift card from a local grocery store. These were given to our support center at Topaz Elementary School, and then distributed to families in need with the help of John Matson.

A very busy season, indeed!

Golden Elementary

740 E. Golden Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7160 • www.golden.pylusd.org

Where Every Student Shines!



Kathy Chakan
Principal

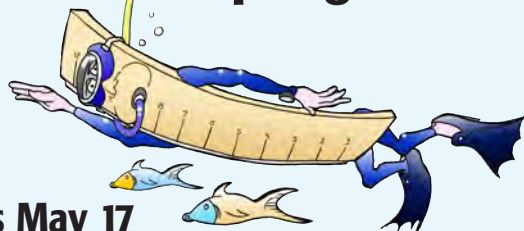
It is hard to believe that the first half of the school year is already coming to a close. As the students, staff and PTA begin the second half of the school year, a special focus is being placed on the new state law regarding bullying and cyber bullying. In keeping with the Board Policy 5131, our goal is to help all children "learn appropriate social behaviors, as well as considering the needs, behaviors, and feelings of others."

Several events have been scheduled to educate and reinforce these concepts at Golden Elementary School. Our sixth-graders had the opportunity to attend an anti-bullying assembly conducted by a team from the district office. Our Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL) student leaders sponsored a "no-dissing" campaign. Students were challenged to follow the Golden Rule and treat others as they would like to be treated.

The culminating activities will take place during the month of March. PTA is sponsoring school-wide magic assemblies with an anti-bullying theme. A magical family event is also planned. These activities help to highlight our efforts to ensure that all students continue to develop positive social skills and remember to be considerate of the feelings of others.

Looking ahead, our sixth-grade spelling bee winners are preparing for the county competition. Golden Pentathlon teams, also comprised of sixth-grade students, are preparing for contests later this spring. The second half of the year promises to hold many more special events and great learning opportunities.

Have a wonderful Spring Break!



Our next issue is May 17

Glenview Elementary

1775 Glenview Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/986-7150 • www.glenviewbulldogs.org



Moises Plascencia
Principal

Everyone Counts

We are proud of everyone's efforts and involvement at Glenview. Thanks to the parents, teachers and students, we are improving our school attendance. Glenview students are doing their part to increase our overall school and district attendance. By simply increasing attendance by 1%, our school district can gain an additional \$1 million from the State of California. This would help make a huge difference in saving student programs and services during the State's fiscal crisis.

Thank you for making Glenview a fun place to learn. Everyday can be a rewarding experience at Glenview. Recently, our students enjoyed a music filled lunch recess where they showed off their shuffling dance skills.

Please visit our website at www.glenviewbulldogs.org for upcoming events.



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Kraemer *Middle School*

645 N. Angelina Dr., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-1551 • www.kraemerms.org



Keith Carmona
Principal

New Facilities for Students

The new Kraemer Middle School Student Lounge is an exciting facility with an assortment of games, video games, music, foosball, and other recreational activities. Students can gain entrance to this room during their break and lunch periods by spending one GRRR Card. Students are able to earn GRRR Cards by demonstrating any one of our key character traits: goal-setting, respect, responsibility, and readiness. The student lounge has already become a popular incentive for students who make positive choices at Kraemer.

Additionally, the Kraemer staff is proud to have opened a multi-use facility designed for physical education classes and the Kraemer Dance and Colorguard Teams. The physical education/dance room offers our physical education program an indoor setting to continue with curriculum during inclement weather. Before and after school, the award-winning dance and colorguard teams now have a top-notch location to practice for upcoming competitions.



Lakeview *Elementary*

17510 Lakeview Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7190 • www.pyusd.org/schools/lakeview/index.asp



Katherine Dailey
Principal

Peer Mentors

To ensure all of our students feel part of the Lakeview School community and are able to gain friendships, confidence, and positive experiences, we have started our new peer mentor program. The goal of this program is to develop a student's social skills and friendships.

For the mentors, this opportunity will enhance their skills as leaders and build their confidence and self esteem. Our mentors completed applications, went through an interview process, and demonstrated their caring attitudes and ability to follow through with their commitments responsibly. Teachers and the principal supervise and support the mentors.



Our Peer Mentors give us Lion Pride!

Mentoring time occurs during morning recess twice a week. If you should happen to be here on a Tuesday or Thursday, you will be able to see our fourth- and fifth-grade mentors proudly wearing their badges and meeting with their mentees. This program is off to a great start.

La Entrada *High School*

4175 Fairmont Blvd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7026 www.laentrada.pyusd.org



Libby Moore
Principal

A Personalized Approach

Because of our accelerated program where students can take extra classes at their resident high schools or through the community college system, our students can graduate up to one year early. This year's highly motivated seniors who have completed the requirements for graduation have received acceptance letters from Kent State University, Western Kentucky University, Northern Arizona University, and Concordia University. One of our seniors has already received a \$20,000 scholarship towards her college tuition at Chapman University. Other early graduates are pursuing their careers in New York, opening a formalwear rental business in Yorba Linda, and enrolling in our local community colleges. One student recently moved to Pakistan, where he was accepted into a pre-medical program.

Our online classes are a very successful instructional strategy for our students. Students taking the online algebra course have mastered the standards at a higher level of proficiency than through our textbook program. Science students are posting videos for students to review for their Standardized Testing And Reporting (STAR) testing in May and using WebQuests to deepen their understanding of the content standards. The yearbook class is into the designing stages of the yearbook, while the National Honor Society is tuning up the application procedures so everything is ready when first semester grades are posted. Our language arts and social science teachers are being trained in Document Based Questions (DBQ) and using this instructional strategy in preparation for the common core standards. Our students are thriving by being active participants in designing their personalized education!

Linda Vista *Elementary*

5600 S. Ohio, Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7200 • www.lindavista.pyusd.org



Paula Kintsch
Principal

Helping Out

The Linda Vista Lions are all heart, and they are always lending a helping hand. Every day our volunteers are on campus helping the staff make our school its very best!

In fact, over the past four months these wonderful volunteers have recorded over 3,000 hours of donated time! The PTA also organized a canned food drive that benefited the Women's Transitional Living Center with over 20 boxes of canned-food items.

Linda Vista's generosity doesn't just stop there. Our Student Council has also participated in several community service projects as well. In fact, they led a record-setting toy drive in December that was the biggest effort Fire Engine 10 had seen in the entire nine years they have been collecting toys for the Spark of Love Toy Drive. Way to go, Lions!

The Council is currently hard at work preparing for their next service project, Jump Rope for Heart. Soon our Linda Vista students will be enjoying the benefits of exercise by jumping rope and donating to the American Heart Association at the same time!

Your support and dedication throughout the year is much appreciated.



Mabel Paine *Elementary*

4444 Plumosa Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • **714/986-7210** • www.pylusd.org/schools/mabelpaine/index.asp



Tamie Beeuwsaert
Principal

Fifty Years of Excellence

This year Mabel Paine Elementary School is celebrating its 50th year of excellence in education! The school was named after Mabel Mead Paine, for her many years of service in the Yorba Linda School District.

Mabel Paine was born on November 16, 1885 in North Canton, Ohio. She came to California in 1912 and taught in Hawthorne and Olinda before becoming a teacher at the school on Lemon Drive in Yorba Linda, where the fire station now stands. She became the principal of the local school around 1914 and retained that position, as well as that of eighth-grade teacher, until her retirement in 1947.

Mabel was greatly admired by her parents and students for giving them a good start, both academically and socially, on their way to high school. In 1961, 13 years after her retirement, the new elementary school was named in her honor. Mabel was in attendance at the dedication ceremony, and the school's doors opened to students for the 1961–1962 school year.

Mabel was a longtime Yorba Linda resident and had a home near the school on Lakeview Avenue. She died in 1969 at 84 years of age after a lengthy illness, but her spirit lives on at Mabel Paine. We continue to offer our students the excellent start that Mabel gave all of her students for so many years. Happy 50th anniversary, Mabel Paine!

Parkview School *Independent Study* *K-12*

2189 North Kraemer Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • **714/986-7050** www.parkviewpylusd.org



Libby Moore
Principal

Student Leadership

Student Leadership has experienced a very busy season. Recently, they held elections and the following students were elected to the Student Council: President–Racheal Sinis, Vice President–Sarah Caballero, Secretary–Ariana Sims, School Community Service Leaders–Anthony Murillo and Josh McCafferty, Treasures–Kylie Gruss and Josh Fleming, Social Leaders–Austin Tebay and Hallie Fleming.

Parkview's Student Council has three areas of focus 1) developing as leaders 2) service to the school, and 3) service to the community.

In December they completed a food drive for McKinney-Vento families and are planning a “Pennies for Leukemia” drive in spring. Students have learned seven step goal setting, conflict resolution strategies, how the elections process works, and how to work in committees. Next quarter they will tackle “Rational Decision Making” as they continue to develop their leadership skills.

Annual Talent Nite

Parkview headed into the winter season with their annual Talent Nite on December 1st. Students in grades k-12 participated in Tone Chimes, Pee Wee Glee, and a variety of dance, instrumental, and miscellaneous acts. The Parkview Boosters arranged a refreshment reception after the show that was enjoyed by all.



Talent Nite

Melrose *Elementary*

974 Melrose St., Placentia, CA 92870 • **714/986-7220** • www.melrose.pylusd.org



Vivian Cuesta
Principal

We Love JiJi!

Students at Melrose Elementary School love JiJi, the penguin mascot for the MIND Institute Program. JiJi appears in ST Math, a computer program which uses spatial and temporal reasoning to present and teach mathematical concepts. Students are highly engaged as they play innovative games which train them in multi-step problem-solving.

Since much of the software uses a visual approach to teach math concepts, the language barrier to learning math is reduced. Our goal last year was to complete 80 percent of the program before starting our state testing, since the coursework aligns to our state standards. We met and exceeded our goal! As a result of this effort, we also met and exceeded the state's math goal. Students can proudly tell you how much of the program they have completed to date, and we hope to meet and exceed the goal again this year!



Jiji, the Penguin

Morse *Elementary*

431 E. Morse Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • **714/524-6300** • www.morse.pylusd.org



Kathie DiRocco
Principal

Outdoor Learning

By Adriana Garcia-Ruiz, Teacher

Sixth-grade students at Morse Avenue Elementary School are busy getting ready for Outdoor Science Camp this February. The students and their teachers will be spending one week in the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains studying our natural environment.

The sixth-graders have been participating in this unique learning opportunity for over 20 years. During their time at camp, the students go on two hikes and participate in activities revolving around ecology and geology. In addition to this, students also have nightly astronomy activities.

However, the students learning experiences go beyond just science-related activities. While at camp, the students also engage in learning new folk dances and performing nature-themed skits. Furthermore, the students learn social skills by practicing table manners during meals. The teachers say the students participating in the Outdoor Science Camp return from camp as more mature and responsible students. This experience also helps in building strong bonds between the students and between the students and their teachers.

Students begin preparing for this trip months in advance through fund-raisers to help defray some of the costs for this educational opportunity. The regular cost of Outdoor Science school is \$430 per students. This year the cost was reduced by \$30 per student through a recycling grant. The students also fund-raised through community cards, cookie and pizza dough sales, and candy bar sales.

This unique and enriching learning experience is just another example of how students at Morse are developing an appreciation for the world around them.

Rio Vista *Elementary*

310 N. Rio Vista St., Anaheim, CA 92806 • 714/630-7680 • <http://www.riovistaschool.org>



Jackie Howland
Principal

Abundant Volunteers

In a joint venture between the Rio Vista Elementary School PTA and the English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC), a cadre of over 30 parents and grandparents has been trained to assist teachers in the classroom. Volunteer assistance can vary from copying materials to working with small groups of students in reading, math, or other subject areas.

Teachers are grateful for the help, because students can receive extra practice with math facts or assistance with Ticket to Read, the district's reading fluency program. Volunteers also take responsibility for copying worksheets, cutting out materials for art projects, and anything the teacher asks for help with. One teacher recently said, "I truly don't know what I would do without my volunteers!" By having this valuable volunteer help, teachers can focus on teaching, planning, and guiding students to achieve their best.

If you are interested in volunteering at Rio Vista, please contact Principal Howland.



Rio Vista Volunteers Enjoy Their Work!

Sierra Vista *Elementary*

1811 N. Placentia Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7270 • www.pylusd.org/schools/sierravista/index.asp



Cynthia Rex
Principal

Meaningful Moments

Come along for an impromptu tour of Sierra Vista Elementary School, and enjoy a glimpse of some of our everyday activities!

First stop: the kindergarten building. A young student leads his class in an addition exercise by using a touch wand on his SmartBoard to add the total number of colorful animals displayed on the screen.

In the first- and second-grade building, students are sitting independently at computers in the central pod. They are completely absorbed in online reading activities, while their classmates in the adjacent rooms gather in small instructional groups to converse with teachers and parent volunteers.

The third-graders have all left the building, and are tracing each other's shadows on the blacktop and discussing the rotation of the earth. Further out on the field our fourth-graders run relays, and the fifth-graders are studying the muscular system with charts posted on the handball courts.

The sound of music guides us to our next stop, where several sixth-graders masterfully perform *Ode to Joy* as an orchestra. A few steps on and other students are smiling, and even laughing, as they work with new algebra concepts to solve real-life problems. An entire wall of an adjoining room shows students how to expand a paragraph into an essay, and they are silent in thinking, writing and creating.

An hour later this entire view of Sierra Vista will change over to other engaging and meaningful activities, because from moment to moment learning captures the day. So join us any time!

Rose Drive *Elementary*

4700 Rose Dr., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7250 • www.rosedrive.pylusd.org



Liana Neuland
Principal

Wild About Learning

Rose Drive School has much to be excited about as we move into the new year! Congratulations to teachers Mike Fredstrom, Marianne Hill, Jenny McLane Raya, and Kelly Willey for being the recipients of grants from the Yorba Linda Sunrise Rotary Club. Thank you to the Rotary Club for these generous donations.

In October, Rose Drive was notified by the state that we had been selected to apply for the California Distinguished School Award. This program honors schools that have demonstrated educational excellence for all students and progress in narrowing the achievement gap. As part of our application, we highlighted two signature practices at Rose Drive which have directly contributed to increased student success: our Response to Intervention (Walk to Read) program and our use of technology-based teaching. A team of teachers worked diligently on the application, and it was sent to the state at the end of November.

Teachers Jenny Mc Lane-Raya, Kelly Willey, Mike Fredstrom and Paula Powers spearhead Team Roadrunners, a group of fourth- and fifth-graders in leadership roles who promote a positive school climate. One of the group's first activities for this year was to mentor students in our Special Day Class kindergarten program. The students met with their "buddies" for the first time in December to read a story and build friendships.

Please visit our school Web site at www.rosedrive.pylusd.org to learn more about the great things happening at Rose Drive. As we move into this new year, the entire Rose Drive community continues to be "Wild About Learning!"

Ruby Drive *Elementary*

601 Ruby Dr., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-1921 • www.rubydrive.pylusd.org



Monica Barrera
Principal

Medalists!

Ruby Drive Elementary is a bronze medal recipient for Orange County's top public elementary schools. In order for us to earn a bronze medal, we had to meet all No Child Left Behind testing targets.

Staff at Ruby Drive Elementary is excited as we enter the second half of the school year. We are ready to face all the challenges ahead of us in the new year. We will continue to focus on student achievement and are looking forward to a year of great academic growth for our students. We have set our course for student success, and we are grateful for the parent and community involvement and support that are imperative to reach our academic goals. Ruby Drive currently has over 40 loyal volunteer parent greeters that welcome students and parents as they walk onto our campus. It is a wonderful way to begin the day on a positive note!



Topaz *Elementary*

3232 Topaz Ln., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/993-9977 • www.topaz.pylusd.org



Rafael Plascencia
Principal

Are We Busy!

Options and opportunities abound at Topaz for a wide range of interests. Two days a week after school will find Mrs. Lumby, the school librarian, meeting with four teams who are reading and studying for the Battle of the Books competition in February. Or students might join Mrs. Lumby and Mrs. Chang on Fridays during lunch for Chapel on Wheels. Tuesday and Thursday will find students creating works of art with Mrs. Womack.

Interest is high in the lunch sports team tournaments. Sign-ups for soccer teams are going on now. After school, the GOALS program offers an experience in hockey for upper-graders. With Tiger of the Week, Student of the Month, Trimester Award Assemblies and Caught Being Good certificates, students are recognized for achievement in academics and citizenship.

Whew! Topaz is a busy, fun place to be.



Tuffree *Middle School*

2151 N. Kraemer Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7480 • www.tuffree.org



Rosie Baldwin-Shirey
Principal

Touching Lives

Two recent events embraced both the focused learning and enthusiastic caring of the students at Tuffree Middle School.

Tuffree earned a 2012 Gold Medal from the *Orange County Register*, which ranked Tuffree as one of the top 10 of 87 public Orange Middle Schools. Using a ranking system of more than a dozen measures, top schools are named that provide the richest academic experience and strongest environments for learning. Tuffree's infusion of technology into learning was emphasized. The voter-approved 2008 Measure A bond funded technology-based learning environments, resulting in engaged learning that has increased our culturally diverse student population's achievement.

Our Touching Tiny Lives campaign represents the embodiment of our goal to have Tuffree students realize the power they have to make a difference in the lives of others. After a conversation with Mr. Young about his Peace Corps experiences, students initiated administration approval to launch a campaign to raise money to support children, many of them orphans, who are struggling to cope with the ravages of AIDS in rural Lesotho, a small country landlocked by South Africa. Earning money themselves and doing without special treats, students collected \$2,000.

The Touching Tiny Lives director wrote, "You have opened doors of hope and trust where there were none."

Travis Ranch School

5200 Via de la Escuela, Yorba Linda, CA 92887 • 714/986-7460 • www.travisranchschool.org



Larry Mauzey
Principal

Hands-On Learning

We recognize that learning also takes place beyond the walls of the classroom.

Thanks to the generosity of our PTA, Travis Ranch School students in kindergarten through 8th grade participate in educational field trips and assemblies. Excursions to the California Science Center, the Long Beach Aquarium, Mission San Juan Capistrano, and the Los Angeles Zoo are just a few of the places our elementary students will visit this year to help connect in-class lessons to real life. Hands-on learning also takes place in numerous assemblies. Kindergarten through second-grade students learn about language arts through a Who, What, Where assembly. Second-graders discover the mighty rainforest, third-graders play in an interactive planetarium, and fourth- and fifth-graders portray historical figures from California state history and the American Revolution.

Some of the activities scheduled for our middle school students are a visit to the Irvine Ranch Outdoor Education Center, a pig heart dissection through an on-campus field trip, and a dramatization of Harriet Tubman.

To promote a positive school culture, our middle school Associated Student Body (ASB) sponsors two important interactive assemblies each year: Connecting the Dots and Rachel's Challenge. These two nationally-known programs promote understanding others in an effort to curb school violence and bullying.

Additionally, we are piloting a new, after-school academy to enrich the educational experiences of our elementary Gifted And Talented Education (GATE) and high-achieving students. Once a week, these students are invited to experience the middle school art and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) classes. These experiences all support our mission "to achieve educational excellence for every child."

Tynes *Elementary*

735 Stanford Dr., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-5550 • www.tynes.pylusd.org



Cristina McCall
Principal

Exciting Events

Tynes Elementary School students were very busy ushering out 2011 and welcoming 2012! Classes participated in numerous events while learning their grade-level standards.

First-grade students enjoyed a wonderful assembly from the Long Beach Aquarium in December. Mrs. McMahon's accelerated first-grade class participated in the Spirit of Giving Service-Learning Project, where students received books emphasizing the spirit of giving. They "paid it forward" by performing acts of kindness at home and school. Their contributions helped to brighten the holidays for many needy families!

Third-grade students attended the very memorable and record-breaking Angel Stadium Gift of History Event! Fifth-grade students enjoyed the popular Walk Through the Revolution assemblies in January.

Congratulations go to fifth-grade student Adeline Woltcamp, whose PTA Reflections essay, "Diversity in Woodward Forest," was selected to compete in the PTA Fourth District competition. Sixth-grade students ended the year with the sixth annual Spelling Bee. Thirty students participated in the oral competition. We congratulate first- and second-place recipients Sharleen Loh and Al Gacias! Both students will participate in the annual Orange County competition.

We're excited to launch our 2012 Tile Wall Fund-raising Project. The project will commemorate the school's 35 years of excellence. We invite all Tynes families, past and present, to participate.

I invite you to visit our Web site at www.pylusd.org for further information or stop by and see firsthand why Tynes is a great place for students!

Please contact our office for Tile Wall Project and tour information.

Valadez *Middle School Academy*

161 E. La Jolla St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7440 • www.pylusd.org/schools/valadez/index.asp



Minerva Gandara-Boggs
Principal

Soaring to Success—Literally!

Ready, set, launch! In November, a team of students from Valadez MS Academy launched their way into third place at the annual Pumpkin Launch event held at Cal State Fullerton. A team of seven students under the direction of Jeff Schumerth and Erick Rouanzoin worked many hours after school building a handmade trebuchet, which they used to launch pumpkins at targets up to 200 feet away. The first round was almost the last, as the launching arm cracked, but the Valadez team quickly problem-solved, repaired the trebuchet and went on to outscore 15 high school and college teams as the only middle school competing in the event.

We are very proud of our Valadez Eagles “Soaring to Success”! Valadez students are looking forward to the District Vocal Festival March 6 and our annual Career Day March 14.



Valadez “Angry Eagles” Pumpkin Launching Team.

Yorba Linda *Middle School*

4777 Casa Loma Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7080 • www.ylms.org



James Hardin
Principal

Professional Learning Communities

What is Collaboration? A systematic process in which we work together, interdependently to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve our individual and collective results.

Educational research supports the fact that developing a staff's capacities for talking together may be the most significant investment staffs can make for student learning (Garmston/Wellman). Yorba Linda Middle School uses Wednesday time together to do just that: develop professional learning communities! A systematic process is implemented where every member of our staff engages in the ongoing exploration of four crucial questions that drive the work of those within our school. The questions we continually address throughout the year are:

- What do we want each student to learn (essential knowledge and skills)?
- How will we know when each student has learned it (ongoing assessments)?
- How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning (student interventions)?
- How will we deepen the learning for students who have already mastered essential knowledge and skills (differentiated learning)?

The Yorba Linda Middle School Staff continues to analyze and discuss state and national standards, district curriculum guides, and student achievement data.

Our community continues to support our commitment to improving learning in our school.

The Big Question: How does Yorba Linda Middle School continue to maintain a high level of excellence with our staff in progressing forward with professional learning communities? Providing professional development; Encouraging staff buy-in; Recognizing the difference between “teaming” and true collaboration; Continuing positive school culture; and Building trust

Valencia *High School*

500 N. Bradford, Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-4970 • www.vhstigers.org



Jim Bell
Principal

Tigers Continue to Excel

Tiger scholars and athletes continued to excel during the fall semester of the 2011–2012 school year. Numerous senior scholars received good news prior to winter break regarding early admissions to some of the most prestigious universities in the nation. Elizabeth Knarr and Biola Macaulay were admitted to Stanford University, Cara Ta to Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, and Daniel Kim to Johns Hopkins University. Valencia High School is also celebrating its nine National Merit Semifinalists and 12 National Merit Commended Scholars.

On the athletic front, Valencia has captured at least seven Empire League Championships each year for the past five years. The Tigers are on pace to do the same this year, after capturing a share of three league championships during the fall season in boys water polo, boys cross country, and girls tennis. Valencia has five CIF championships and seven CIF runners-up in the past five years alone.

January 7 was a big night for present and former Valencia young ladies. Valencia junior, Rachel Pham, was named Miss Teen Yorba Linda at the Miss Placentia Pageant. Valencia graduates Ryan Osborn and Jamie Gerhardt were named Miss Placentia and first runner-up.

Van Buren *Elementary*

1245 N. Van Buren St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7100 • www.vanburenelementary.org



Ken Valburg
Principal

Math Fame!

The first Friday each month, all of the students at Van Buren Elementary school take a math basic-facts test. Most students quickly move from problem to problem, and a few labor over the facts they unfortunately haven't memorized yet. Each grade has a different set of fact tests and completion times for the students to demonstrate mastery.

Two PTA volunteers take those results and a gigantic role of star stickers to the MPR, where they begin a labor of love.

Displayed on the large MPR wall is the Math Wall of Fame. You can imagine that by this time of year, many students have so many stickers that it's difficult to find their name!

Students proudly show off to their parents how many stickers adorn their nameplate. Each star sticker also represents a Math Buck, and twice a year, students may redeem their Math Bucks at the Math Bucks Store. The more tests you pass, the more you may purchase. You can bet that Van Buren students are bullish on math!



Wagner *Elementary*

717 E. Yorba Linda Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7180 • www.pylusd.org/schools/wagner/index.asp



Patrick Brown
Principal

Outdoor Science Adventures

Our sixth-graders recent Outdoor Science School trip to Cedar Crest left staff and students with a number of memories. Many students entered the San Bernardino Mountains apprehensive about leaving home, while others were excited to make new friends and experience a new adventure.

Students explored the forest environment while experiencing unseasonably warm weather. Each day, students hiked a different trail to learn about plate tectonics, rock hammering, wilderness survival, animal habitats, and the costs and benefits of tree cutting.

Students performed skits, sang songs and bonded over eating delicious meals.

Outdoor Science School has provided students with a unique learning opportunity and memories for a lifetime!

ACADEMIES PREPARE • FROM PAGE 1

lege to learn what I have learned in high school,” she said. Over the course of the four-year Medical Sciences Academy program, Heather learned such skills as venipuncture (drawing blood), injections, urine analysis, glucose testing, blood pressure monitoring, CPR and auscultation (a method of diagnosis for respiratory diseases).

“The program was a way to get my feet wet and confirm that the medical sciences were the profession for me,” she added.

This is just one of several Career Technical Education (CTE) academy programs offered in the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District. Other academies now available include: the Digital Media Arts Academy at El Dorado High School; the Medical Sciences Academy at Esperanza High School; and the Val Tech Academy at Valencia High School. We also look forward to a future Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management Academy coming in the 2013-14 school year at Yorba Linda High School. Each of these academies provide internship opportunities, and in some cases, college credit or industry certification so that students may enter the workforce if they so desire.

Classes offered are structured in a multi-year sequence of study that equips students with core knowledge along with lab work relative to that specific industry. For example, at Valencia High School a student in the Val Tech Academy may choose a pathway in Arts and Communication where students study media production, photography and more; Business and Computer Science where students study computerized accounting or webpage design; or Science and Technology (Engineering) where students learn CAD and other skills for architecture or engineering. The Val Tech Academy has also partnered with well-known companies to assist students in completing the program’s required internships.

At El Dorado, the Digital Media Arts program boasts a television recording and editing studio and computers loaded with a suite of the latest animation software for students to produce animation, digital photography or film.

CTE academies are housed in newly-renovated facilities thanks to the community’s approval of the Measure A school modernization and construction bond. These facilities include equipment comparable to that used in the workplace.

The lineup of CTE academies will be expanding soon to include: Yorba Linda High School’s Culinary Arts & Hospitality Management Academy; El Dorado’s Commercial Cabinet-Making Academy; and Esperanza High’s Engineering and Manufacturing Academy.

If you would like to learn more about the academies, visit the district website at www.pylusd.org to view a video or to download brochures.



Woodsboro *Elementary*

7575 Woodsboro Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/986-7040 • www.woodsboro.pylusd.org



Shirley Fargo
Principal

Helping in Hard Times

The future is bright in spite of budget cuts and layoffs! At Woodsboro Elementary School, there is a tone of charity, generosity and caring that permeates not only Woodsboro but also our community.

Because the holidays bring to our attention the needs of others, the Woodsboro staff collected \$600 to donate to McKinney Vento families, families that are homeless, so that children would have a good Christmas. Two of our teachers, Mrs. Strohmenger and Mrs. Blasius, headed up the collection of donations. Staff and community members donated cash, clothing, diapers, over-the-counter medications, food and bicycles. Mrs. Strohmenger and Mrs. Blasius filled their SUVs with gifts

for children and Christmas dinner for 10 people donated by the owners of a local restaurant.

The holidays have been a wonderful example of good people taking care of one another. The Woodsboro staff wishes everyone a wonderful new year in 2012. The future is bright as we work together to meet the academic and basic needs of our community.



Mrs. Blasius & Mrs. Strohmenger

Yorba Linda *High School*

19900 Bastanchury, Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7500 • www.ylhs.org



Dave Flynn
Principal

Student Successes

I hope each of you had a relaxing holiday break and enjoyed the time with your family and friends. As the first semester of 2011-2012 comes to an end, we want to highlight the many successes our programs and students have had this fall. The Mustang athletic teams earned five Empire League Championships in football, girls tennis, golf, volleyball and cross-country. The Yorba Linda High School (YLHS) Mustang Band and Color Guard earned nine first-place and sweepstakes awards at a variety of parades and field shows and excelled in their performance in the Hollywood

Christmas Parade. The YLHS Show Choir was invited to perform at the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District staff luncheon before the holiday break.

Our winter season of sports is in full swing, and we wish all of our teams and coaches great success in boys and girls basketball and soccer, girls water polo, and wrestling.

Second semester classes started January 30, and our counseling staff is working with our senior students to make sure they are on target for graduation and college applications. Individual meetings with all students will be scheduled as we plan for the rest of this year and next year. We are also looking forward to our first graduating class. The graduation ceremony will be held at Shapell Stadium on June 11.

As always, the YLHS staff and students appreciate all the support we receive from our community. Continue to check the ylhs.org Web site for upcoming activities and events.

Go, Mustangs!

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