

FREE

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation



Covering the Placentia-Yorba Linda School District

Volume 12, Issue 35

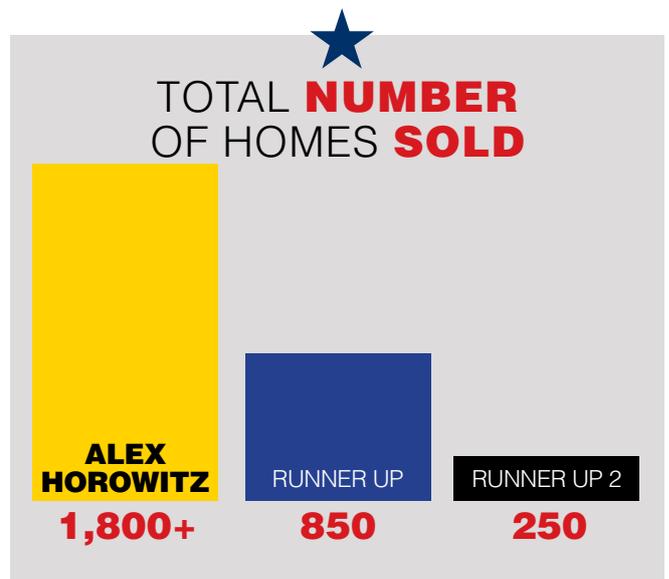
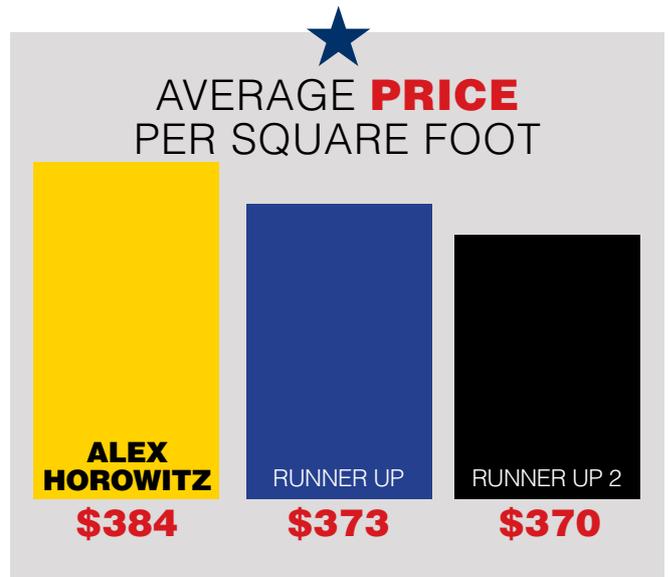
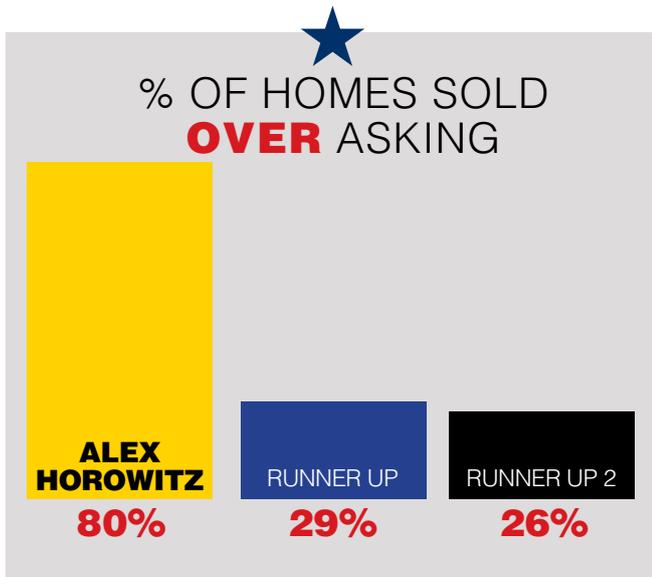
February–April 2020



Brookhaven Elementary School full-day kindergarten students enjoy reading and writing activities during their morning group time.



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SUPERINTENDENT

PYLUSD Remains Committed to Offering High-Quality Music Education



Dr. Gregory S. Plutko

The Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District (PYLUSD) has a long-standing tradition of excellence in the performing arts. Specifically, the District's music program boasts a wide variety of class options for students in the areas of band, strings, and vocal music. For decades, these programs have enjoyed ample support from not only the Board of Education, but also the surrounding community and partnerships such as the REACH Foundation.

Students in PYLUSD have the opportunity to participate in performing arts classes beginning in fourth grade with orchestra and choral music. Then, starting in fifth grade, elementary students may choose to join band. More than 30 music teachers educate PYLUSD music students, including over 3,000 students at the secondary level alone.

The beloved PYLUSD Band Pageant, which has happened annually for over 44 years, brings together the District's middle and high school marching bands and color guards for an evening of enjoyable music and spectacular pageantry. Similarly, the District's annual Vocal Festival combines the choral programs from PYLUSD high schools, middle schools, and even elementary schools for a stunning group performance.

Engaging and innovative, PYLUSD instrumental and vocal music programs provide students with the skills necessary to progress as artists while deepening their passion for the arts. PYLUSD recognizes that a growing body of studies provide compelling evidence connecting students learning in the arts to a wide range of academic and social benefits. As a result, the District will remain steadfast in its commitment to providing students with opportunities in the performing arts that contribute to the development of thinking, social, and motivational skills essential to success in school, the workplace, and life.

Full-Day Kindergarten Coming to PYLUSD This Fall

From the District

The Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District is pleased to announce its decision to launch full-day kindergarten at all 21 elementary schools beginning with the 2020-2021 school year. This decision comes as a result of the District's successful full-day kindergarten pilot program at five elementary schools – Brookhaven, Glenknoll, Morse, Topaz, and Woodsboro – throughout the 2019-2020 school year.

"We are happy to report that our pilot program has been a very positive and beneficial experience," shared Deputy Superintendent, Candy Plahy. "It focused on enriching our current half-day kindergarten program with extended time for learning in an academically appropriate environment."

The District's full-day kindergarten program is grounded in developmental research to ensure all students receive strong academic foundational instruction, as well as time to participate in enriched visual and performing

arts activities. Through the gift of additional time, students have the opportunity to interact with other students during purposeful play, physical education, computer lab, library, music and movement, art, hands-on science, and many other extended lessons.

"It is our strong belief that full-day kindergarten supports long-term educational gains for our students," Plahy noted. "By providing a solid, developmentally appropriate foundation of learning to all students, our full-day kindergarten program ensures students' academic, social, and emotional success."

For the first time in history, all PYLUSD kindergarten students will have the same daily schedule as the rest of their school. Online registration for full-day kindergarten in the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District begins in February. To learn more, please visit www.pylusd.org/kindergarten or contact the District's Educational Services Department at 714-985-8650

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We are celebrating 20 years publishing *School News* and that includes 12 years publishing the PYLUSD *School News*.

During the 20 years curriculum has changed in ways never imagined with the biggest change being technology. Gone are the blackboards, white chalk and erasers. Mentioning the 3 R's would bring a puzzled look and might be mistaken for Reduce, Recycle, Reuse. Discussing STEAM with anyone older than 60 would conjure up images of a train or an iron, but the younger generation would instantly visualize test tubes and robotics. We have changed the format of most of our

publications to glossy cover booklet, but our mission never changes: Education+Communication=A Better Nation. The one constant has been the focus on academics. It is a privilege to publish the excellence from the classrooms. Thank you for continuing to enjoy *School News*.

Our next issue is May 13, 2020.



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Bernardo Yorba *Middle School (7-8)*

5350 Fairmont Blvd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7400 • www.byms.org



Beth Fisher
Principal

BE Yorba

One of the hot topics of our time is developing non-cognitive skills, such as perseverance, teamwork, empathy, and growth mindset. Coupled with this is the notion that our teens are facing unprecedented pressure. As students come to grips with what it means to expand their non-cognitive skills and develop into

happy and healthy young people, they are not left on their own to make meaning of this.

Encouragement of teenage development involves approaching students with empathy and compassion. This year we began implementation of Restorative Circles. Our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system encourages positive student behavior. We are proud to have a full-time counselor and a part-time clinical associate serving our students. No matter what difficulties our students face, they are surrounded by a network of adults who embrace the BE Yorba philosophy: BYMS will holistically support you in your discovery that who you are is good enough and it is you, our students, who inspire excellence!



Brookhaven *Elementary (K-6)*

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



Julie Lucas
Principal

Roaring Success!

This year, our kindergarten students are participating in the full-day K FDK pilot, and it's a roaring success! Kindergarten teachers Mrs. Grijalva and Ms. Vitelli said, "What we love best about FDK is the slower pace, the ability to take our time, fit everything in and still have the time for children to play!

Play-to-learn is what kindergarten needed! What we've noticed about kindergarten children over the last 10 years is that they don't know how to play! They need someone to organize everything. Play-to-learn took some time to get started, but with guidance and support, it is our children's favorite part of the day. It looks like organized chaos, but if you stand back and watch, every child is actively engaged, socializing, and having fun. They organize plays and

puppet shows for us to watch. They work in teams to build with blocks, make ramps to launch cars and marbles, create using art materials, and play board games. They dress up, build STEM-like activities, and use play dough.

I worked closely with my dream-team kindergarten teachers, Mrs. Grijalva and Ms. Vitelli, to plan for the implementation of the FDK program. The teachers did a great deal of preplanning last spring and in August in order to roll out the pilot program. All that thoughtful planning led to a highly successful pilot, and both teachers have said that this is their favorite year of teaching so far.

Brookhaven parents have played a large role in the FDK pilot success as well by trusting the staff, following the routines and protocols created for safety and efficiency, and communicating with the teachers and me so that the school team can continue to revise, if necessary, and successfully implement FDK.

It's a great day to be a Bear!

Bryant Ranch *Elementary (K-5)*

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



Shannon Robles
Principal

A New Learning Space

We are proud to announce that Bryant Ranch Elementary School's TinkerLab is up and running! This makerspace provides hands-on, creative ways to encourage children to design, experiment, build, and invent as they engage in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) learning. Our students are using this space to design, build, and test creative

projects with upcycled materials and child-friendly tools. Giving our students the opportunity to touch, build, test, tinker, and engage with hands-on education helps them to grow in the 4 Cs—collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking—which will be critical to their success in the future workplace.

A first-grade class visited the TinkerLab to apply principles of geometry with pumpkins, tacks, and rubber bands and worked on building a bear cave. The students told us they liked the way the lab looks, the freedom of choosing their own

supplies, and working in groups to accomplish their goals. Their teacher likes how inviting and creative the space is and the way it encourages independent learning and creativity.

A fourth-grade class delved into research and development with cardboard automata, building their own working machines. Coming next is kindergarten marble mazes and third-grade paper roller coasters.

We look forward to seeing all of the amazing things our students are able to learn, design, and build in this new space!



El Camino Real *High School (9-12)*

1351 E. Orangethorpe Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7060 • www.ecrhs.pylusd.org



Carey J. Aiello
Principal

Inspiring Awe and Wonder

El Camino His School continues to provide students with authentic learning environments to foster practical application of knowledge and skills. When students are empowered to explore, learning is more memorable and meaningful.

In late December, students visited Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles. They explored the observatory, used telescopes, applied principles of physics and math, and enjoyed expansive views of the Los Angeles skyline.

Math teacher Mrs. Rotkosky and science teacher Mrs. Gersbacher developed lessons that place students in different environments where they can apply the math and science they've learned in new ways. Second-year attendees are selected to serve as docents, guiding their peers through exhibits and

answering questions. Both teachers enjoy having fun with students, showing them possibilities beyond their own neighborhoods and inspiring awe and wonder about our fascinating universe.

Each student received a printed guide for the field experience, which challenges students to apply concepts and formulas and make interdisciplinary connections.



El Dorado High School (9-12)

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



Joey Davis
Principal

Champions Yet Again!

The El Dorado High School Mock Trial team swept through the county competition with eight wins and no losses, to be named the 2019–20 Orange County Mock Trial Champions. The team will advance to the California State Championships at the end of March. This is the seventh championship for EDHS, who is now tied for the most championships in the history of the competition!

Mock Trial is a demanding and rigorous competitive academic elective that requires students to prepare a hypothetical criminal case for trial, develop fluency with legal knowledge, perform under pressure, think on their feet, defend their assertions, respond to challenges, and do it all with poise, control and confidence in front of the community judges and attorneys scoring their performances. Most of the students representing El Dorado are also members of the ED LAW Academy.

Congratulations to all the Golden Hawks involved, and best wishes at the state competition!



Esperanza High School (9-12)

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



Gina Aguilar
Principal

From Concept to Product

Esperanza High School's Aztec Engineering and Manufacturing Academy strives to provide students with real-world experiences and connections. Upholding the motto, "From Concept to Product," students

in both the engineering and manufacturing pathways work with one another to design, refine and develop products, then collaborate to manufacture the products in our expansive state-of-the-art facility. Engineering students are using industry-level software and manufacturing students have access to high-end machinery. AEM students have been responsible for many important projects including designing and producing new

flywheels for district school buses, creating storage units on campus for outdoor AED machines, and building a frame for a new kiln for the ceramics classroom. The Aztecs are preparing our students for the future!



Fairmont Elementary (K-6)

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



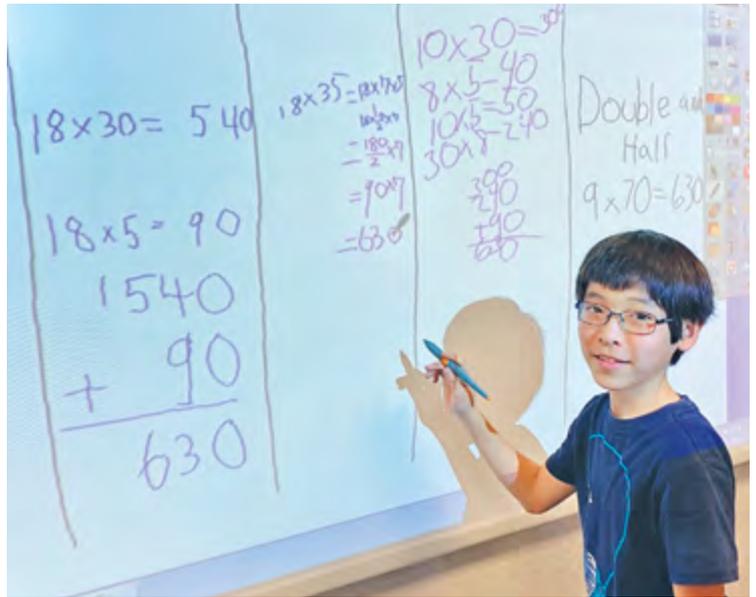
Cynthia Rex
Principal

Growing Mathematical Minds

How do you solve 18×35 in your head? Our Fairmont teachers are growing mathematical minds through classroom conversations focused on number sense and numerical reasoning.

Teachers know that mental computation helps strengthen their students' understanding of place value, and enables them to use number relationships to solve problems. In the lesson pictured above with Masaki Matsuoka, Mrs. Jacobson's fifth-graders explored several strategies to mentally arrive at an accurate answer. Their flexible thinking and number sense contributed to a discussion as to which strategy was the most efficient to use, and they could also explain why.

One question was, "If you halve 18 to 9 and then double 35 to 70, it is easy to multiply 9×70 and get 630." This strategy was the winner for efficiency. Another strategy used addition: " 10×30 is 300, 10×5 is 50 and $8 \times 30 = 240$, $8 \times 5 = 40$." So, just break up 18 and 35 and do the friendly multiplication facts, and then add the answers " $300 + 50 + 240 + 40$ to get 630."



This shows depth of understanding, not to mention fun! Short "number talks" like this with students at all grade levels are sparking creative interest and deeper appreciation as children share and critique their mathematical reasoning!

George Key School (K-12)

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



Kelli McFedries
Principal

Community Partners

In December, a local service organization sponsored their annual holiday party for the students at George Key School. Every year since the mid-1980s, the organization has hosted this much-anticipated event. Students at George Key are each sponsored by an individual service-club member who ensures that their student receives a special gift from Santa.



In addition, each year, George Key receives financial support from the club for a specific purpose. Last year, the club generously donated \$4,000, which enabled our school to finish the sensory room. Our sensory room is a space dedicated to sensory experiences and is designed specifically to help students feel calm, supported and focused. This year, the club donated funds for student technology.

Glenknoll *Elementary (K-6)*

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



David Cammarato
Principal

Outdoor Science Camp

Sixth-grade Outdoor Science Camp is a long-standing tradition at Glenknoll Elementary School. For our sixth-grade students, this is a memory that is often talked about for many years.

Outdoor Science Camp gives our students the opportunity to spend four days in the mountains learning about science and experiencing all that the outdoors has to teach us.

I am always amazed at the fund-raising that occurs to help support this event. Glenknoll's parents welcome this program, and our sixth-grade committee provides many opportunities to raise money for this trip. Over the course of the year, they have put together a Harvest Festival, a candy fund-raiser, and a poinsettia sale to help raise over \$6,000 to reduce costs for all of our sixth-graders attending camp. Collectively, they have made an impact on our students, which showcases the amazing commitment of our community and staff to putting students first.



Glenview *Elementary (K-6)*

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



Alondra Ramos
Principal

Have a Seat!

By Jacqueline Brown, Interim Principal

Students in Mrs. Pearson's third-grade class had a great time learning and experimenting with STEM engineering practices as they worked in groups to "build a chair" for their class's stuffed eagle.

The groups had to build a plan, design, and create a chair made with paper and masking tape and make it strong enough to have the small eagle sit without falling over. The groups collaborated, shared ideas, and realized this was a trial-and-error process!

At certain intervals, students got to look at other groups' structures to get ideas and make any changes to their chair, based on what they observed.

At the end of the class time, the groups had to step away from their structure for the "test." The eagle was placed on each of the structures to see if it could sit without falling. As each chair structure was tried, students could be heard cheering, clapping,

and sharing their viewpoints on why the eagle was able to sit or why it fell over. Students shared that they learned that, as engineers, they had to share and try ideas, work in teams, and be willing to think out of the box to make a structure that worked.



Golden *Elementary (K-6)*

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



Dr. Alison DeMark
Principal

Top Honor Awarded!

Golden Elementary School was recently named a 2020 California Distinguished School, the state's top award for schools. The California Department of Education awards schools for outstanding programs and practices. Golden was one of 35 schools awarded in Orange County with this honor.

The teacher-led writing

team cited Golden Elementary's SHINE (Safe, Here and ready, Inclusive, Nurturing and Exceptional) program as the foundation for our academic success. At Golden, we expect that all students will demonstrate academic achievement and overall social-emotional wellness. Our model has

evolved organically over the years as we have adopted best practices and innovative ideas that benefit all students at Golden. This multifaceted plan has a direct impact on the culture of our school.

Golden was previously awarded the California Distinguished Award in 2018, 2016 and 2006. Additionally, Golden was awarded the 2018 National Blue Ribbon School Award in 2018, the nation's top honor for schools.



Kraemer *Middle School (7-8)*

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



Michael Young
Principal

Overboard with Generosity!

December marked a season of creativity and generosity for KMS staff and students. A holiday chalk-art contest was organized by staff during our PRIDE intervention and enrichment period, giving students the opportunity to



showcase their artistic skills for all to enjoy. As students worked collaboratively on pieces of artwork in front of our library, holiday music played. The enthusiasm for this innovative event was palpable.

Staff and students also demonstrated the impact of our shared belief in togetherness, kindness and responsibility by collecting over 2,100 cans of food to donate to a local shelter, His House. Classrooms competed against one another to collect the most cans, with the winning class receiving a root-beer-float party. So many cans were collected that the shelter received food in two separate shipments!

At Kraemer, we firmly believe that providing these engaging and meaningful experiences enrich the lives of our students.

La Entrada High School (9-12)

4999 Casa Loma Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7026 • www.laentradahighschool.org



Carrie Bisgard
Principal

Yearlong Giving Mood!

La Entrada students, staff and community members are in a giving mood! They participated in a clothing drive this fall—students and staff collected 138 large bags of gently used clothing. Students earned community-service credit by assisting with the organization of the

drive or by contributing items from family, friends and neighbors as well as their own homes.

The new and good-condition used clothing and linens were donated to HOPE Services, a local organization that helps improve the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. The clothing, towels and bedding collected filled the donation truck!

In addition, throughout the year, LEHS students donate nonperishable canned and dry goods to Canning Hunger, another local organization dedicated to providing food to those in need in Brea, Yorba Linda and Placentia. LEHS families bring in donations throughout the year for this program.



Lakeview Elementary (K-5)

17510 Lakeview Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7190 • www.lakeview.pylusd.org



Dr. Suena Chang
Principal

Art Integration

Art integration into the student's learning experience has been linked to increased student achievement along with an improvement on student engagement and motivation.

The community at Lakeview ES works hard to make every learning opportunity the most beneficial for our children. Beyond the music and art class time, our teachers make math come alive and enrich social sciences by embedding art. Also, this year there are a total of four arts assemblies each followed by classroom lessons showcasing an artist. Our second assembly highlighted Paul Klee whose inspiration came from nature, music, and colorful creativity. Our students also created some of these masterpieces by building on his themes of abstract composition using paint crayons thanks to the support of our PTA.



Linda Vista *Elementary (K-5)*

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



Kristen Petrovacki
Principal

Science is in the Air

The Linda Vista community recently came together for a Family Science Night. This has become an annual event for our school. It is a tradition that serves as a wonderful opportunity for our children and adults to gain new knowledge about the world around them.

Many of our families enjoyed the hands-on activities, which included foil boats, mystery architecture, straw bridges, and penny drops. Leading up to the event, the students were first invited to participate in a science fair where they could share an experiment, demonstration, or invention. Their curiosity, creativity, and passion for learning was evident in all the work they produced.

Our Family Science Night also incorporated technology and engineering. Our GATE students showed off their coding skills by programming their robots to complete various tasks. They also shared their special units of study on ecosystems and conservation.



We are so thankful for our various community partners, which included Esperanza's Medical Science Academy, the AFJROTC, and a video production crew that highlighted these unique programs. Additionally, we also had experts from the aerospace industry who enthusiastically shared with us about their careers. All in all, the evening was filled with inquiring minds, innovation, and inspiration!

Mabel Paine *Elementary (K-5)*

4444 Plumosa Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7210 • www.mabelpaine.org



Melanie Carmona
Principal

New Netbooks

Mabel Paine Elementary School received a new netbook cart for our upper grades this year. The new technology has been an exciting addition to our collection. Upper-graders utilize netbooks every day to participate in engaging lessons through Google educational apps.

Third-graders are using the netbooks to research topics for their upcoming informative essays. They learn how to use a search engine to find information and format typed essays. Fourth-graders now have more access to iReady, a reading program, and use the netbooks for narrative essay writing.

Our fifth-graders commented that the additional netbooks have been a great help in their classrooms when it comes to working independently on their Document-Based Questions (DBQs) and their standards-based social studies assignments, which require the students to read provided sources, formulate research-based essays, and cite their findings.

With money provided by our PTA, we plan to continue to replace old equipment and accomplish our goal of becoming a 1:1 netbook school very soon!



Melrose Elementary (K-5)

974 S. Melrose St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7220 • <https://melrose.pylusd.org>



Nicole Hernandez
Principal

Celebrating

Celebration was in the air at Melrose Elementary School this December. Each grade level performed holiday songs for their families.

In addition to the holiday performance, students received awards for great

attendance, great academic achievement and great behavior as well. Students stood with smiles from ear to ear and parents delighted in seeing their students on stage. It was a fun way to celebrate both the holiday and awesome student achievement.

We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season and we wish you a bright New Year!



Morse Elementary (K-6)

431 E. Morse Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/524-6300 • www.morseschool.net



Tonya Gordillo
Principal

Kindness Week

In the month of December, Morse Elementary School students celebrated Kindness Week. For one week, the student leadership team became the Kindness Squad, and they sprinkled kindness and joy throughout the school.

Each morning, the Kindness Squad greeted students at valet with kind



words, well wishes, and motivational quotes. Kind notes written in chalk welcomed students as they entered school. The Kindness Squad also created a daily theme to encourage students to participate by dressing up and completing a daily Kindness Challenge. Examples of Kindness Challenges included giving five



people compliments and playing with someone new. Once students completed a Kindness Challenge, they were given a strip of paper to add to the kindness chain. The schoolwide challenge was to see how long the chain would be at the end of the week.

Kindness Week proved to be a great way to make Morse students feel special.

Parkview Home Schooling (K-12)

2189 N. Kraemer Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7050 • www.parkviewpylud.org



James Hardin
Principal

Parkview School

Parkview School was incredibly proud of their 2020 performance of “Fiddler on the Roof.” This show, performed by our amazing Performing Arts Program, made a tremendous impact on everyone who attended.

The show ran approximately one and a half hours, with a 15-minute intermission. Everyone loved it! It was about doing what’s right, friendship, and community.

Our Parkview community was committed to over five months of rehearsal, 20 different songs, elaborate set construction, more than 70 volunteers, and more than 600 costume pieces. Our students and parents have worked incredibly hard, day in and day out, and it has been a tremendous joy to watch them practice, sing, and work together as a team to present wonderful masterpiece that was enjoyed by everyone!



Rio Vista Elementary (K-5)

310 N. Rio Vista St., Anaheim, CA 92806 • 714/986-7240 • www.riovistaschool.org



Jose Cabrera
Principal

Number Talks

Rio Vista Elementary School welcomed the new year with yet another exciting opportunity to engage in the power of language. Our students have embarked on Number Talks to strengthen their accuracy, efficiency, and flexibility with mental math and computation strategies.

As our students engage with Number Talks, it is such a joy to witness how classrooms take risks and share mathematical thinking via classroom discussions. These five to 15-minute classroom conversations revolve around purposefully crafted computation problems so students can communicate to represent, explain, justify, agree, and disagree with their thinking. These classroom dialogues are engaging students, allowing for deeper learning and providing for the exploration of ideas, strategies, procedures, facts, and language development.



A 3rd grade example of a Math Talk Chart that demonstrates multiple ways to get to the result of 48.

Rose Drive *Elementary (K-5)*

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



Kathleen Escaleras-Nappi
Principal

Young Scholars Thrive

Have you ever heard of Scholarly Behavior? Dr. Sandra Kaplan developed a set of characteristics or behaviors common in “scholars” while conducting research with gifted and talented students. Some of these characteristics include the following: scholars ask thoughtful questions and are curious, scholars come prepared to learn, scholars view ideas and problems

in different ways, scholars exercise their minds, and scholars set short- and long-term goals.

Teaching students to become aware of and practice scholarly behaviors will help them in school and in life, as it promotes a positive-growth mindset and goals all students can achieve. In order to promote scholarly behavior at Rose Drive, we welcome students in the morning by saying, “Welcome, Scholars,” and we teach scholarly behaviors and model them for students.

Another way we achieve this growth mindset is through our Young Scholars Program. Our Young Scholars program is designed for both primary- and upper-grade students and is taught by our certificated staff. Our Young Scholars program is an after-school intervention that focuses on foundational skills for reading in primary classes, and our focus in upper grades is on reading comprehension and specific math skills such as multiplication and division.



Our Young Scholars program has helped students make academic gains as well gain confidence as scholars. Our students know that if they work hard, they will be the best scholars they can be!

Ruby Drive *Elementary (K-6)*

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



Diana McKibben
Principal

Behind the Scenes

Why was the Ruby Drive community event “Winter Wonderland” and the kindergarten play *Gingerbread Man* so successfully attended and filled with joy? And why is student self-esteem on the rise?

The answer is, the volunteer! We are so

grateful for our many volunteers who help with events, small groups, and tutoring time with students. We are also thankful for our student volunteer leadership team, who recently took on the challenge of placing decorated rocks throughout our campus with words of affirmation for each child to ponder. Thank you, Ruby volunteers!

Thank you also for building theater sets, costumes, and providing lunch-time holiday crafts. Thank you to our new PTA, too, for organizing our community party. These events would not have happened without you!

No matter what the task, our parent and student volunteers matter. They are a vital part of our recipe for success here at Ruby Drive!



Sierra Vista *Elementary (K-6)*

1811 N. Placentia Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7270 • www.sierravistapta.com



Jacquie Bluemel
Principal

We're on TV!

Each morning of the school year our Sierra Vista students start their day with brief morning announcements from our principal, Mrs. Bluemel. The students enjoy these announcements, but it is the once-a-month viewing of Sierra Vista TV (or SVTV) that brings a smile to everyone's face.

That's because students at all grade levels can trade in their earned SOAR tickets for a guest presenter spot on SVTV! SVTV provides our students with the opportunity to work on their public speaking skills, while also having fun informing the school about important upcoming information and birthday celebrations.

Adviser Mrs. Calle Hendry works hard to have her students help with many of the aspects involved in the production of each installment, from filming the action to staging the presenters. Pictures of students not presenting, paired with fun music, are often used as background images, or during transitions. Our Sierra Vista students and staff love seeing themselves on SVTV!



SVTV advisor, Mrs. Calle Hendry, with three of our student presenters.

Topaz *Elementary (K-6)*

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



Christa Borgese
Principal

A Whole Community!

Student success at Topaz is a direct result of the daily phenomenal teaching and learning and of the extraordinary level of community support offered to our students and families. Each month, members of a local service organization volunteer at the Second Harvest Food bank to pass out fresh fruits and vegetables to our families. Additionally, Topaz is fortunate to partner with GRIP to support at-risk students by offering

mentoring, goal-setting programs and incentives.

Each year Topaz families have a joyous holiday season through the generous toy donations from Fairmont Elementary School and PYLUSD managers. One of our favorite events, Operation School Bell hosted by another charitable group, sponsors a shopping spree for about 60 students at a department store. Lastly, this year, we were fortunate to be a part of Shoes that Fit, a nonprofit program that provided new shoes for 50 students!

It takes a whole community to rise together to help our children succeed!



Travis Ranch School (K-8)

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



Susan Metcalf
Principal

Big Buddies, Little Buddies

Our unique PK to eighth-grade school allows students to practice their interpersonal skills across many age groups. Several of our classes have even “buddied up” to meet together throughout the year to learn, grow, and have fun.

While our big buddies and little buddies look forward to their time together, there is also a whole lot of learning going on! Our students work to both improve their communication skills and take on more responsibility in their school and community. We even have a middle school P.E. class that meets with a second-grade class to teach them some engaging and healthy games.

Our buddies can be seen throughout the campus working on writing activities, art projects, and conducting science experiments. One of the best parts is when our big and little buddies happen to see each other by chance on campus. Their faces light up and joyful greetings are exchanged. This is just another bonus to the PK-8 experience!



Tuffree Middle School (7-8)

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



Cindy Freeman
Principal

Students are SOARING!

Tuffree has developed a SOAR program as part of Tuffree’s Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). SOAR is an acronym for “Success through Organization, Attitude and Responsibility.”

Tuffree’s SOAR program is 24 minutes of weekly carved-out time for the purpose of building connections, creating a sense of belonging, and providing support for all students. We do this by team-building exercises and addressing many relevant teen issues such as vaping,

organization, goal setting, bullying, growth mindset, expressing kindness, social media, self-care, conflict management and peer pressure. SOAR classes are safe places for students to express themselves and discuss these important teen topics.

Our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team, which includes teachers, administrators and parents, has developed a year’s worth of interactive lessons with activities, videos and teacher-led discussions that structure this time for students. Tuffree students are feeling more connected to school, attitudes have improved, and relationships have become deeper because of Tuffree’s SOAR program, according to student surveys



Tynes Elementary (K-6)

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



Dr. Debra E. Silverman
Principal

Paper Roller Coasters!

The excitement explodes out of the MPR as our GATE magnet students present and test their paper roller coasters. While building these roller coasters, students focus on engineering, physics and Newton's laws of motion.

Groups are given a stack of paper with templates and instructions. The students are tasked with designing and building the coaster with limited supplies. They test their coasters using marbles. They may include loops, time wasters and a variety of other add-ons. The loop is tricky; it takes extra energy for the marble to stay on the track. Students continually make modifications through trial and error to make it successful.

In the GATE magnet program, teachers can compact or accelerate curriculum, which allows time for students to experience a deeper understanding of the material. The learning outcomes with projects like this are endless. We are so proud of our GATE students!



Valadez Middle School Academy (6-8)

161 E. La Jolla St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7440 • www.valadezacademy.org



Refugio Gracian
Principal

A Great Leader

At the heart of Valadez Middle School Academy's successful counseling and mental health program is Mrs. Denise Plascencia. Mrs. Plascencia has served the Valadez

Middle School Academy community as lead counselor since its inception in 2008. She also served in the same capacity for Kraemer Middle School prior to opening Valadez MSA.



Our Valadez Middle School Academy alumni, parents, and community members seek Mrs. Plascencia's guidance and advice during situations that impact the Valadez Middle School Academy community. Our Valadez stakeholders firmly believe that they can place their trust in Mrs. Plascencia, as her deep local roots allow her to have a firm grasp on the pulse of the community.

As a result, our Valadez Middle School Academy students, staff, and community members prosper by having a leader like Mrs. Denise Plascencia as a part of our community.

Valencia High School (9-12)

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



Olivia Young
Principal

University Acceptance Begins

As principal of Valencia High School, I am proud to share the exciting news many of our seniors have received in recent days as universities are announcing Early Decision Admission results.

Harvard - Chrystal Aluya; Johns Hopkins - Andrea Chen; Vanderbilt - Ben Yoo; Boston College - Kathleen Yun; Pepperdine University - Adithya Mody; Chapman

University - Ryan Wong, Adithya Mody, Lauren Moyle; Occidental - Brandon Yeh; BYU - Lauren Salcedo; BYU Idaho - Makenna Sanders; University of Arizona - Chloe Schwartz; Grand Canyon University - Nathan Terry; Newman University - Lauren Kwak; Colorado College - Sannuth Rao;

Humboldt State - Samantha Cedillo, Samantha Vera; Vanguard University - Kellie McGlenn, Melanie Flores-Cruz; Cal Baptist - Melanie Flores-Cruz; Cal State East Bay - Chloe Marucut; Concordia University, Portland - Emily Ayala; University of La Verne - Emily Ayala, Eli Amezcua; CSU San Bernardino - Arlette Martinez, Cesar Herrera, Alejandro Herrera; University of Redlands - Lauren Moyle; Hope International University - Kellie McGlenn, Melanie Flores-Cruz; Cal State San Marcos - Chloe Marucut.

Many of these students have also been recognized by the National Merit Recognition Program or National Hispanic Recognition Program and are enrolled in our prestigious Valencia Academy or AVID National Demonstration Program.

Van Buren Elementary (K-6)

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



Connie Roe
Principal

International Visitors

Van Buren Elementary School had the privilege of hosting international professors at our campus! Thanks to California State University, Fullerton

professors Erica Howell, Dr. Melinda Pierson, and Dr. Janice Myck-Wayne, nine professors representing Germany, Spain, Bulgaria, Japan, Australia and China came to see American education in action.

Teachers Veronica Gomez, Lyn Chadez, and Kim Voge welcomed the professors into their classrooms to observe the progressive programs found in American schools. The international observers were very impressed with the students' use of technology in the classroom, positive behavior supports throughout the school, engaged learning, and student choice-making opportunities.

The visit ended with a presentation of the school plan for improvement, including school demographics and how



student performance data is used to drive school goals. The visitors were inspired by this clear, cohesive plan for the school.

What a privilege it was to share the outstanding work of the Van Buren team with this international audience!

Venture Academy *Adult Transition (18-22)*

701 East Golden Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7178 • <https://ventureacademy.pylusd.org>



Kelli McFedries
*Coordinator,
Special Education*

Career Speaker Series

This year, Venture Academy started a career speaker series for our students. District leaders from the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District (PYLUSD) Maintenance, Facilities, and Nutrition Services Departments came to Venture Academy to speak to our students about different career pathways in the district.

This event has given our students the opportunity to explore areas of interest while getting an up-close look at a wide variety of jobs. The process has allowed our students to gain a better understanding of themselves and what possible career pathways they would like to pursue after graduation. It has also allowed the students to build relationships with supervisors in district, which has been a great networking opportunity for them.

Overall, this has been a great opportunity for our students that will ultimately result in informed decision-making about their future careers. We are thankful for our PYLUSD district leaders!



Wagner *Elementary (K-6)*

717 E. Yorba Linda Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7180 • www.wagnerwildcats.org



Janice Weber
Principal

Second Step

Wagner Elementary School strives to support all aspects of student learning and wellness by living out our theme of “Growing our Hearts and our Minds.” Along with learning through Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, Wagner students have the opportunity to grow

socio-emotionally through weekly Second Step lessons taught by their classroom teachers.

Second Step lessons promote social skills that help students learn to show empathy, see different perspectives, listen and focus with attention, problem solve, handle disagreements, be assertive, and practice calming strategies. The short lessons, implemented once a week, are very engaging, often including songs, puppets, and videos.

Staff members wear Second Step lanyards that remind students to use their social skills strategies.

By implementing Second Step lessons across our school, staff and students are able to use a common language of strategies that will help students succeed in school, the workplace, and life.



Woodsboro Elementary (K-6)

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



Dr. George Lopez
Principal

Hitting the Level

Our Woodsboro scholars and families exceeded all expectations when they held their own Move-a-thon at the end of last year. “Our goal was to make this our largest fundraiser in hopes of eliminating the pressure on our wonderful families,” explained organizer Cali Kimble.

And that they did! Woodsboro raised \$39,000 this year, blowing last year out of the water by \$6,500! “By reaching this goal, we are now able to get the last amount of Chromebooks that we need to have one for each student in grades one through six,” said Kimball.



Each student who raised \$250 got to throw a pie in Dr. Lopez’ face, which was a big hit all around! But we challenged the students to hit that \$39,000 level by promising them that if they did, Dr. Lopez would then shave his head, dye it yellow and black, and wear it in that “bee” way for one week, which happened in January. Good job, Woodsboro scholars!



ELITE AQUATICS SPORTS TEAM



All EAST swim classes begin with a FREE assessment! Assessments take place by appointment @ Esperanza High School and Yorba Linda High School. Our year-round program offers swim lessons for ages 2+, youth water polo for ages 8+, & competitive swimming. For more information visit our website, email, or call Ashley Haney with any questions regarding our program:

www.eastaquatics.com

coachashley@eastaquatics.com 714-402-7166



Yorba Linda *High School (9-12)*

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



Dave Flynn
Principal

Connecting with the Community

During the fall semester, our Yorba Linda High School PTSA and Mustang Business Academy coordinated two very important career and community presentations.

On December 4th, our PTSA invited 48 community business leaders and professionals to speak to Yorba Linda High School students about future career opportunities. Mustangs selected three

20-minute presentations to attend from a variety of professionals, including doctors, dentists, judges, law enforcement, first-responders, and entertainment industry and local business and community leaders. The morning activities provided our students with a snapshot view of future professions and, hopefully, also sparked an interest in “getting connected” with our community.

On December 17th, our Mustang Business Academy and Economics students competed in the Shark Tank and Business Expo. This annual competition is a collaborative effort between the Mustang Business Academy and the Social Science Department. Here students must determine a problem in their community and then provide an innovative solution to present in a “fast pitch” event.

The students first identified the problem, brainstormed an innovation, conducted market research, created a prototype, and crafted a 60-second pitch that was delivered to “sharks” or judges from both our Yorba Linda and Placentia communities. Over 200 students in teams presented their innovations to 50 community judges. The top five ideas were recognized by our staff members, community, and students.

We want to thank our community volunteers for “getting connected” to YLHS and our students. Go, Mustangs!

R.E.A.C.H. Foundation

21520 Yorba Linda Blvd., Suite G503, Yorba Linda, CA 92887
714/323-9706 • www.reach4pylud.org



Melina Michaels
President

Healthy Lifestyles - Let's Walk, Jog and Run!

This year the REACH Foundation supported 20 schools Jog A Thons with a sponsorship and bottled water for the kids. We are happy

to see this tradition of encouraging student health and fitness continues across Placentia-Yorba Linda School District.

Our foundation's annual ShamRock 'n Run 5K & 2K Fun Run on March 15 at Yorba Regional Park, keeps pace with the Healthy Lifestyles theme. Up to 1,200 walkers, joggers and runners participate in the 5K or 2K Fun Run Walk along with crafts, music, games and food. We love to share the morning with PYLUSD students, their families and the community.

Just a week after the ShamRock 'n Run, the foundation hosts the District wide Middle School Track Meet. Over 500 middle school student athletes from the PYLUSD compete in a number of track and field events. The track meet introduces many students to the team sport of track and field. Dozens of students that have been in the Middle School Track Meet are now members of their high school Track and Field team.



Yorba Linda *Middle School (6-8)*

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



Greg Kemp
Principal

GEAR UP

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a class that focuses on maximizing student potential by providing strategies to deal with various academic, social, and emotional issues. Learning how to deal with these issues in a healthy manner allows students to present the best version of themselves. Many of these students also become advocates for student mental health and awareness.

In the first quarter, the boys' GEAR UP class made tremendous strides, both personally and academically. By coming together as a group, they have upheld high standards for one another and promoted increased academic success. They help each other study for tests, work on homework together, help each other catch up on missing work when absent, and support each other through tough times. The class cumulatively increased their overall grade-point average by two-thirds of a point! Four of these students were recognized on the Honor Roll, including two who made the higher Honor Roll list.

Eighty-five percent of students in this year's GEAR UP classes have raised their grade-point average from the prior year. Many have increased their behavioral marks, and attendance has improved significantly. The students are working diligently to increase their total grade-point average again. They are committed to growing and becoming better students and people.

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200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa CA 92628 • 714/966-4000 • www.ocde.us



Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent

The Federal Census Bureau

In just a few months, you'll be asked to participate in one of democracy's most considerable responsibilities — and it shouldn't take more than a few minutes of your time.

As mandated by the U.S. Constitution, the federal Census Bureau conducts a nationwide population count once every 10 years. This is one of the few national activities the American public does together. It's also easy, confidential and critically important to our students and their communities.

Along with establishing the number of congressional seats and electoral votes for each state, census data serves as the basis for deciding how approximately \$900 billion in federal funds are spent annually, impacting education, housing, public safety and other vital services.

These anonymous statistics also enable local governments to make highly consequential decisions about public safety, including staffing police and fire stations, and they help school districts plan for enrollment shifts.

Meanwhile, businesses rely on census data to open stores, offices and factories that generate new jobs. Real estate developers use these figures to construct new houses and revitalize aging neighborhoods. Residents use the census to support community initiatives.

Despite all that's at stake, our state is expected to lose about \$1,950 per person in annual federal funding as a result of undercounting. But a number of organizations are working to offset those losses by generating awareness in advance of the 2020 count. OCDE is among them, offering workshops for educators along with a social media campaign to help drive home some important points.

For example, we want to spread the word that the 2020 census will be easier than ever. Orange County families will be asked to respond starting in March, and the process should take about 10 minutes. In-person visits will only be made to households that don't respond online, by phone or by mail.

Another point worth noting is that any information collected by census-takers is confidential and can only be used for anonymous statistical purposes. In fact, every census employee takes an oath to protect your personal information for life.

Completing the census is easy, it's confidential and it's mandatory. But it's more than that. It's a way for all of us to participate in our democracy, ensuring that Congressional representation and taxpayer-funded resources are distributed equitably over the next decade.

Orange County students and families count. Now let's make sure they're counted.



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