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School News

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Covering the Tustin Unified School District



Volume 16, Issue 79

November 2020 – January 2021

We're All in This Together!



Sycamore Magnet Academy Principal Rafael Plascencia and student Elliot Ku exchange elbow greetings during the first week of hybrid learning. Tustin Unified schools have established a safe learning environment on campus for their students and staff due to the coronavirus pandemic. (See more details inside this issue.)

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TUSD Staff Comes Through in Challenging Times



Gregory A. Franklin, Ed.D.
Superintendent

In Touch with TUSD

I wish to acknowledge and congratulate the Tustin Unified School District staff on a successful return to in-person classes. This was an incredibly complex process that took the work and cooperation of the entire District. I recognize that many people had to address child care, health concerns and other personal matters to return to campuses. I also know that many of our students are better off for your efforts, and it has been terrific to see students on campuses.

I want to recognize several of the groups that made this possible:

Teachers, paraeducators, principals and assistant principals, the Educational Services Department and Information Technology have done incredible work to make the hybrid instructional model work. Teaching has never been more sophisticated, and the team worked together to make it possible. Besides the back-end work by Information Technology and Educational Services, teachers are working completely differently than they ever have before. Kudos to the teachers and everyone who supports their work!

TUSD school nurses have played a key role in helping create the District's reopening plan, establishing safety protocols, training staff and students, and liaising with the Orange County Health Care Agency, California Department of Health and others. Additionally, they have done a terrific job monitoring student health, and conferring on IEPs and 504 plans. The District appreciates their important contributions.

The Special Education Department has remained committed to providing services to students under these difficult circumstances. An assessment clinic team conducted in-person assessments over the summer, and our students with the most intensive needs were brought to campus a few days ahead of other students to help them with a smooth transition back to in-person instruction. Teachers, paraeducators, behavior interventionists, psychologists, therapists and their leaders are doing great work.

The Business Services and Maintenance & Operations Department addressed numerous issues to equip and prepare our campuses for a safe return from purchasing hard-to-obtain supplies to installing water bottle filling stations. They have established new cleaning protocols, built plexi-shields for high-traffic areas and supported school sites in many ways.

Nutrition Services continues to take care of our students' most basic needs – food. Since the District closed to in-person classes on March 13, the Nutrition Services staff have prepared and distributed thousands of meals every week – including the summer. Now under the hybrid model, they are providing meals to in-person students as well as those learning from home. They have done an outstanding job!

Finally, **Personnel Services** worked with employees on personal issues, recruited and filled candidates for open positions, and continues to add to our shallow pool of substitute teachers.

Thank you to everyone for your efforts to bring students back to campuses. The hybrid model is not perfect, but every well-planned step toward a “normal” school day is an important progress. Our students are counting on us.

Go TUSD!

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TUSD News and Announcements

By Mark Eliot

Director of Communications and Public Information
Tustin Unified School District

Tustin Unified Launches COVID-19 Dashboard



The Tustin Unified School District continues to reinforce safety measures for its students, such as temperature checks, handwashing, physical distancing and plexiglass shields on student desks as seen in teacher Tiana Kallenberger's sixth-grade class at Legacy Magnet Academy.

The Tustin Unified School District is committed to providing accurate and transparent information regarding COVID-19 cases on its school campuses, while also maintaining privacy and confidentiality for its students and staff.

On October 7, the District launched the TUSD COVID-19 Dashboard, an online database reporting the number of confirmed coronavirus cases among District students and staff on its campuses and work locations. The dashboard is regularly updated and lists each school and work location's total populations and number of reported cases, but does not have names of students or staff members or classroom information.

The TUSD COVID-19 Dashboard is available on the Tustin Unified's website at www.tustin.k12.ca.us/covid-19-dashboard and reports confirmed, positive cases at each school within the last 14 days.

As a reminder to parents, if a member of your household tests positive for COVID-19 or is awaiting test results, please keep your child at home and notify your school. If your child has any symptoms associated with the coronavirus, make sure they stay home and get tested if necessary.

In the event there is a positive case, affected individuals will be contacted directly by their school or District staff, and they will receive a letter that may include self-isolation,

quarantine and other important information. Families of students who are not affected will not receive a notification letter and no action will be required. Please note that the District will only communicate and provide data for confirmed COVID-19 cases.

It takes a concerted effort to keep the students, staff and families safe. In addition to health and safety measures taken on campuses, TUSD encourages families to be proactive and to reinforce the importance of handwashing, physical distancing and face coverings, or have their child stay home if he or she is ill to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

For additional questions about the coronavirus, visit the Orange County Health Care Agency website, which also includes a COVID-19 health line at <https://occovid19.ochealthinfo.com/>.

Parents should continue checking their email and other sources of communications from their schools, which have been providing school and class specific information. For detailed information and updates regarding safety procedures, visit the TUSD's School Opening and Safety Plan.

Tustin Unified's top priority is to provide the education to its students while maintaining the health and safety of students and staff.

School News

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**Covering the
TUSTIN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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SCHOOL NEWS ROLL CALL, LLC
P.O. Box 728, Seal Beach, CA 90740
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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



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Netragrednik

Superintendent Dr. Franklin's message on page 3 begins this issue with an update on students returning to campus. Each principal shares their classroom experiences with hybrid and virtual learning. You will often read about the community effort.

In addition to the dedicated teachers, administrators, and loyal readers, I'd like to acknowledge the businesses who have continued

to advertise in *School News* year after year. Many businesses have not survived the COVID-19 forced closures and we hope they will be able to reopen in 2021.

Be sure to enter our Word Search Contest on page 27. Congratulations Brody and Jen Weathers winners of our September contest.

We'll be back with our next issue February 10, 2021. Happy New Year!

Please see the TUSD ad on the back page.



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Arroyo *Elementary School*

11112 Coronel Rd., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7381



Katy Sheyka
Principal

We Can Do Hard Things Together

To Be Mustang Strong means to display Strength of Mind, Strength of Character, and Strength of Body. It is no surprise then, that this first trimester of hybrid and virtual learning has brought out the best in our students, staff, and parent community. On September 24, we opened the school campus back up with tremendous school spirit and pride; PTA cheering on our Mustangs and

showering the school's perimeter with positive messaging and signage. The sight of smiling teachers eager to greet their Mustangs in-person for the first time since March and the sounds of joyful children were indescribable. In addition to launching a new teaching and learning model, we ran a successful Fall Fundraiser, enjoyed our first virtual Book Fair, and celebrated over 120 Summer Challenge Readers. Embracing all of the challenges that COVID-19 have imposed upon us has not been easy, but nothing can stop the Arroyo Mustangs. We can do hard things together!



Arroyo Principal Katy Sheyka stops to thank the wonderful Arroyo PTA Board members: from left, Rachel Korengold, Alexis Beaudreau, Principal Sheyka and PTA president Kirsten Antoinus.

Arnold O. Beckman *High School*

3588 Bryan Ave., Irvine, CA 92602 • 714/734-2900



Dr. Donnie Rafter
Principal

A Successful Hybrid Opening

After more than a month of distance learning, Beckman High School joined other secondary schools in Tustin Unified School District and began the “hybrid” instructional model. Students who elected to attend in person were split into group O1 or O2, while students who were not ready to attend in person were given the opportunity to remain in distance learning. Group O2 was first to attend in-person on September 29, while group O1 attended in person for the first time on October 1. Students who came to campus saw first-hand the safety measures that have been put in place. They were quick to note the mandatory face coverings, desk partitions, hand

sanitizers, wall mounted thermometers, and a one-way flow of students around campus. In nearly all cases, students appeared to be happy to be back on campus despite the changes. They reported feeling more productive and more connected than when they were home on distance learning. They also noted the fabulous job our teachers have done to prepare lessons and generate engaging activities with groups of students who are both in person and online. We are extremely fortunate to have had such a smooth opening and contribute the success to our teachers, counselors and other staff members who have worked extremely hard to ensure a safe opening for our students. With the continued support of our families, Beckman looks to build on this success and continue to improve our hybrid learning model.

Barbara Benson *Elementary School*

12712 Elizabeth Way, Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7531



Jackie Christy
Principal

Benson Successfully Reopens for Hybrid/Virtual Instruction

The beginning of a new school year always brings with it a combination of excitement, and enthusiasm with a little bit of apprehension. This year was no different. Especially with our second First day of School on Thursday, September 24, when students choosing to return to in-person instruction were able to come back to campus for learning in the classroom. While our classrooms look different because of our extensive safety protocol, 'how' learning will happen also looks different. Teachers are navigating a new way of teaching called live streaming, or concurrent teaching. While students in the classroom are engaged in the learning process with the teacher in the same room, students online are continuing to participate in learning using the Google Meet app to participate in much the same way they have since August. Teachers', staff, and students' efforts all helped the reopening plan go off without a hitch!



Teacher Allison Goodlander's fifth-grade students log into their Google Meet together so that they can maintain their classroom community.

Benjamin Beswick *Elementary School*

1362 Mitchell Ave., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7385



Ashly McNamara
Principal

Beswick Students are Ready to Learn

Beswick was so excited to welcome students back in person on September 24. It was wonderful to see their smiling eyes behind their masks! Students are doing great following all protocols to keep students and staff safe while at school. We are all required to wear masks, maintain social distance, and wash hands frequently. Teachers are able to teach students who have decided to come in person while also connecting to the virtual students at home, bringing them into the classroom environment. All classrooms are equipped with the technology necessary to make live streaming possible thanks to our amazing Tustin Unified IT Department. They have been working hard to make sure everything is working properly so students are able to connect to learning. While it is a lot of juggling and we are learning each day how to improve, teachers and students alike are showing perseverance and grit through all our challenges. I am very proud of the hard work and effort that is being shown each day!



Beswick second grader Jesus Diaz is ready to learn on the first day of in-person classes.

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Columbus Tustin *Middle School*

17952 Beneta Way, Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7352



Maggie Burdette
Principal

Cultivating Columbus Tustin Girl Power

Columbus Tustin Middle School had a very successful shift to Hybrid learning. Based on feedback from families who have children participating in our hybrid format and from those that remained on distance learning, we discovered that students are still struggling to make important social connections. Columbus Tustin has created a special after school Girls Circle

that meets weekly and is run by our counselor, Yesenia Barajas, and our Restorative Practices Specialist, Maggie Lauder. This eighth-grade girls' group is a small group of up to 10 girls from different social groups who have been recommended by teachers, counselors, and administrators. The structure of the meetings are based on a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) program that focuses on

increasing positive connection, personal and collective strengths, and competence in girls. We look for girls who are struggling defining themselves, need connection with adults or others, and/or could use support in developing their social emotional capacities. The purpose of our girls group is to build resilience and self-esteem by practicing social-emotional skills in a group dialogue format. Using restorative circles as the dialogue model, the girls engage in self-reflection, storytelling, listening, and relationship building. The current theme for the eighth-grade group is "Healthy Relationships." The weekly meetings will focus on various topics girls or women experience in their lives, such as "Exploring Labels," "Expressing Myself," and "Cultivating Respect." Girls leave the girls group more aware of themselves, with new relationships with each other and with strengthened ties to the school community.

Helen Estock *Elementary School*

14741 North B St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7390



Dr. Amanda Heineman
Principal

Creating a Classroom Community

Welcome Back, Estock Eagles! On September 24, Estock staff were excited to welcome students back to campus as we shifted into our hybrid instructional model. Our opening was an incredible success and having students back on campus filled staff and student hearts with joy.

The social-emotional well-being of our students has been a top priority as teachers have worked to build a classroom community and connect both in-person and live-streaming students. Our teachers are working incredibly hard to make learning relevant and engaging for students. The amount of hours that has been devoted to prepare for this transition has been amazing, and we greatly appreciate everyone's patience with our new systems and procedures.

Our Estock team remains dedicated to serving our community and meeting the instructional needs of our students. Thank you to our families for their continued partnership and support.
#EstockEaglesSoar



Estock fourth-grade teacher Wendy McCracken creates a classroom community by connecting in-person and live-streaming students.

Foothill High School

19251 Dodge Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/ 730-7464



Michelle England
Principal

A Year of Firsts

Foothill High School has experienced many firsts this year along with other comprehensive high schools throughout the country moving into Hybrid instruction. We excitedly re-opened our doors to students with extra safety precautions and modified schedules. Our freshmen participated in the first Virtual Orientation, our whole student body recently learned about the over 60 opportunities to join a school club through our first Virtual Club Rush, and our counselors hosted their first Virtual Counselor Coffees. Students have adjusted well to the new practices on campus and teachers have made impressive adjustments in their classrooms. Within the first days of students being on campus, we even had our first class presentation given by a team consisting of both in-person and at-home students, certainly the first of its kind on our campus.



Fully microphoned English teacher, Trevor Hershberger, recites a writing example for in-person and online students (through his iPad).



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Guin Foss *Elementary School*

18492 Vanderlip Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7552



Ray Hernandez
Principal

Peek a Book!

Which book hooked you growing up? If you can still remember the feeling, then our school's Storytime Fun with Susan Alexander is exactly what you are recalling. Mrs. Alexander, library media technician at Guin Foss School,

runs weekly virtual story times with all students, at all grade levels. Her ability to inspire imaginations and capture her audience's attention is truly a gift. It stems from the depth of Mrs. Alexander's knowledge of children's literature, which is equally fueled by her passion for students engaging in that literature. If students are in need of a good read, Mrs. Alexander knows exactly which book to refer them to. If teachers are in need of a good

book to support and reinforce instructional pedagogy, she knows exactly which book to refer them to. If parents are in need of good books to support their efforts at home, well, I think you know exactly what Mrs. Alexander knows to do.



Guin Foss library media technician Susan Alexander knows exactly which books peek students' interest.

Robert Heideman *Elementary School*

15571 Williams St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7521



Deanna Parks
Principal

Learning is a Community Effort

Coming back to campus is a joyful event that included balloons and music. Students and teachers were so excited to connect in person after seeing each other online for a month. Our teachers are working hard teaching students in their classroom the

way they know so well, while also engaging the learners staying home. It is a production to make it happen. Teachers learned how to livestream and they modify it regularly as they learn new ideas to make the experience even better. It takes a village to make this work. Parents are involved, District IT provided every student a device and internet if they need it. Sergio Perez, our head custodian, works so hard to make all the needed accommodations happen, our office staff makes our school run and our support staff jumped right in to do whatever is needed. Keeping our students safe and learning is a community effort!



Heideman fifth-grade teachers Jewel Peeler, Sherry Davis and Lyn Carter are ready to welcome students on campus.

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Heritage *Elementary STEAM Magnet School*

15400 Lansdowne Rd, Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7339



**Beth
Rabel Blackman**
Principal

#HeritageStrong in 2020

Heritage Elementary School is focusing on their strengths as a community of learners during the fall of 2020. The school community is proud to be wearing #HeritageStrong school shirts the first Friday of each month to honor their own strengths as individuals and as a school. Tee shirts were generously donated and printed by the Heritage Parent Teacher Association and provided the first day of school to all students. #HeritageStrong is also being used as the school's theme to honor each person's resilience and spread a message of positivity, unity, and belief that each individual has unique gifts that grow through hard work and grit. As a launch for the school year, the school Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports team (PBIS) is providing instruction in Heritages motto of SOAR: Show respect, be On task, Act responsibility, and Reach for our personal best to emphasize the #HeirtageStrong way.



Ricky Miller, a Heritage Elementary fourth-grader, wears his #HeritageStrong shirt on a recent Friday spirit day.

Hewes *Middle School*

13232 Hewes Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7348



Eric Kilian
Principal

A Hybrid Universe

For the first time in the history of Hewes, students started out the school year without even setting foot on campus. Due to state health guidelines, all students started out the year virtually via online curriculum and interactive meeting settings. On September 29, Tustin Unified

was able to open secondary campuses to “Hybrid Learning” in which students that wished to return to campus were split into two groups, each attending on two separate days. As these students returned to classrooms, masked up and spaced six feet apart, teachers not only instruct live to students in person, but also ‘livestream’ video lessons to students still learning virtually at home in real time.

With students on campus, the positive energy on campus definitely sky rocketed, and students’ smiling eyes can be seen even with masks on. The adaptability and innovative spirit shown by students, teachers, and parents have truly been remarkable. We are building the UFO as we fly it, but getting better every day.



Hewes students return to in-person classes with a positive energy.

Hicks Canyon *Elementary School*

3817 Viewpark Ave., Irvine, CA 92602 • 714/734-1878



Deena Vela
Principal

Inspire, Inquire & Innovate Every Day!

Hicks Canyon Elementary School proudly opened its doors welcoming many students with smiling faces for Hybrid on September 24. For the 2020-21 school year, the staff continues with their mission to “Inspire, Inquire and Innovate by providing meaningful and engaging

learning experiences as a top priority, while ensuring a safe and nurturing environment where students are encouraged to communicate, collaborate, create and think critically each and every day.” As a 21st century school of excellence, we were recognized as a 2020 California Distinguished School. This recognition is given to schools that demonstrate high levels of student academic achievement, improvement in achievement over time, and reduction in achievement gaps. At Hicks Canyon, we are proud of this recognition as it is

evidence that our mission continues to prepare our Huskies for success. Thank you to the parents and community for your daily support and trusting us to inspire your children both online and hybrid!



Hicks Canyon teacher Jennifer Hubbard’s third-grade students are ready for a good day at school. The students are, from left, Maile Metzger, Jenny Yoon, Elly Kim and Sunday Merrifield; and back row, Mischa Peterson, Mrs. Hubbard, Lucas Hyldmar and Gavin David.

Hillview High School

1701 San Juan St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7544



Tim O'Donoghue
Principal

New Math Teacher Makes Every Day Count

Hillview is proud to welcome Sarah Chop as our new Algebra teacher. Over the years Hillview has been lucky to have some of the top math teachers, Barry Turner and Lynda Chung. Mrs. Chop is doing a great job and carrying on the tradition of great teaching mixed with compassion.

Mrs. Chop is a 2001 Foothill High School graduate and was a member of their National Championship Softball program.

She attended Santa Ana College and then transferred to Cal State Fullerton where she earned her math degree and teaching credentials. Mrs. Chop then earned her master's degree at National University.

For the past 12 years Mrs. Chop has taught math in the Whittier Union School District. She was a leader on their campus and especially in technology.

When not in school, Mrs. Chop enjoys spending time with her husband and three elementary age children. Their hobbies include camping, biking, and hiking.



Hillview High School welcomes new Algebra teacher, Sarah Chop.

Ladera Elementary School

2515 Rawlings Way, Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7505



Dr. Dustin O'Malley
Principal

Return of the Leopards

It's great to be back! After six long months without students on campus, we were thrilled to welcome our Ladera Leopards back to their classrooms. Our students instantly brought our beautiful campus back to life with their enthusiasm, curiosity, kindness, and energy.

The reopening of Ladera took tremendous work and preparation by teachers, staff, parents, and students. In the typical Ladera fashion, the transition back to campus went very smoothly and students and staff are enjoying the in-person interactions and instruction while ensuring maximum safety for all.

It is quite remarkable to walk through our hallways and watch our amazing teachers simultaneously teach students who are physically

in their classrooms and online using multiple cameras, screens, and online tools. Even though this is something that we have never done before, it is no surprise that the Ladera teachers, staff, and students have risen to the occasion.

Go Leopards!



Third-grade students Casey Ruddick (left) and Shion Babai (right) pass the soccer ball during recess.

Legacy Magnet Academy

15500 Legacy Road, Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7339



Dr. Jennifer Harrison
Principal

Virtual Or Hybrid, There's No Stopping Our TIDE!

Learning is in full swing at Legacy Magnet Academy, both hybrid and virtual. Leading up to September 29, the Legacy staff worked tirelessly to prepare the campus with the students' safety, wellbeing, and learning at the forefront, and the result was a smooth and seamless transition from all virtual learning to a mix of virtual and hybrid. The students and teachers didn't miss a beat! It has been such a joy to see students on our campus for the first time, and to watch as they begin to forge relationships with staff and students that will carry them through the next seven years of their educational experience.

One big highlight...all of the student clubs that have started up: ASB, Community Service Club, Peer Assistance League, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), AME, Digital School Newspaper, Robotics, Chess, Gamification, Running Club, Speech and Debate and Math Club, with more being added weekly. Time to catch the wave!



Sixth-grade lunch area with Legacy Magnet Academy students enjoying their lunch break.

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Loma Vista *Elementary School*

13822 Prospect Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7528



Dr. Lauren Steinmann
Principal

Diving into Hybrid Learning!

Loma Vista had a strong start to the school year as students dove back into Distance Learning and learning with new curriculum. Throughout that time, the staff worked tirelessly to prepare our campus for the return of students. This included signage all over campus for distancing and masks, touch-free thermometers and hand sanitizer dispensers in each classroom, the addition of handwashing stations and bottle filling stations, Livestreaming equipment and training for teachers, and more. Additionally, we added new systems and updated schedules. As restrictions lifted, we welcomed back approximately half of our student population to campus on September 24. Having students

back on campus definitely brings the school to life and we are grateful for the opportunity to continue teaching our students both in person and virtually! The resilience and grit of our students, staff, and parent community has been incredible. We continue to show the world we are #LomaVistaSTRONG!



Staff members Andrea Owen, Andrea Rangel, Bianca Garcia and Nicole Nguyen welcome Hybrid students back to campus with smiles and encouraging words.

Myford *Elementary School*

3181 Trevino Dr., Irvine, CA 92602 • 714/734-1875



Rena Fairchild
Principal

Myford Welcomes Back Students

Myford enthusiastically welcomed back students after many months apart. As staff prepared the campus for an exceptionally safe environment, teachers were busy creating a strong community with their students during distance learning. With many of our students remaining virtual, teachers continue to support and engage both virtual and hybrid groups through live-stream instruction and virtual breakout rooms. Students returned to campus excited to see their friends and teachers and our school is buzzing with their energy once again. Myford is committed to making sure students know that we are all still connected. Student Council members starred in the Welcome Back video, walking families through “A Day in the Life of a Myford Student.” They also organized Spirit Days and other activities to



Siblings Natalia, Tiago and Sebastian Ackerman are excited to start their first day back at Myford School.

promote school spirit. Myford PTO continued to provide support for staff and students through virtual programs and activities. We know it's going to be an incredible, albeit unconventional, year!

W.R. Nelson *Elementary School*

14392 Browning Ave., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7536



Shannon James
Principal

Nelson Welcomes Joshua Strong in the Tiger Family

Joshua Strong is our new school counselor and will be serving the students, families, and staff at Nelson and Red Hillelementary schools.

Josh has experience as a K-12 and college level counselor for about 10 years. Three of those years, he experienced a hybrid system with both online and classroom learners. He is acutely aware of the obstacles our students, teachers and families are



Meet Joshua Strong, the new school counselor at Nelson.

currently facing. He will lean on his hybrid experience to help our school thrive during these unique times. Josh has already started to build strong relationships with his schools. He will provide counseling and support with a focus on Social Emotional Learning. Josh also plans to work with families to increase parent engagement. When you talk to Josh, it does not take long to see the absolute passion and joy in what he does. We are excited to welcome Josh into TUSD!

Orchard Hills *School*

11555 Culver Dr., Irvine, CA 92602 • 714/730-2078



Melinda Smith
Principal

Off to a Great Hybrid Start!

Orchard Hills School students and staff have successfully started the next chapter of their learning adventure. Hybrid learning is up and running and our campus is once again buzzing with smiles, chatter and laughter. Some of our hawks have chosen to remain virtual, while some students chose to

return to campus. All safety measures are in place and students and staff are going about their normal daily routines. We love seeing students back on campus and hearing the day to day chatter filling our quads and classrooms. While this new environment is very different, we know it's not forever. One thing this has taught us all, is how to build resilience in times of uncertainty.



Students arrive for their first day of hybrid learning at Orchard Hills School.

Pictured, left to right, fourth grader Trey Huang, Principal Mindy Smith and fifth grader Nash Wilford welcome students back on campus.

Peters Canyon *Elementary School*

26900 Peters Canyon Rd., Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7540



Dr. Kristy Andre
Principal

Trailblazers take on Hybrid

The Peters Canyon Trailblazers continue to rise to any challenge. Our teachers welcomed back half our student population to in-person hybrid learning and introduced live-streaming to our virtual students at home. One teacher, Stephanie Lemos, who teaches third grade, shared that the technology can seem

overwhelming at times. Still, once she logs on to see her students virtually and greets the students back in person, everything works itself out. Mrs. Lemos creates an environment that is calm, positive, and flexible and reminds students of this daily importance.

Tracey Smith, our fourth and fifth-grade teacher, uses multiple Google Meets to celebrate students' published writing. Mrs. Smith has found that students can interact virtually with their peers through Google Meet and still participate in class discussions. It is truly amazing to see our whole community coming together to support each other during this time.



Peters Canyon students Jack Steinmann and Henry Steinmann head into their first day of in-person Hybrid learning.

Pioneer *Middle School*

2700 Pioneer Rd., Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7534



Tracey Vander Hayden
Principal

Pioneer Welcomes Our Wildcats!

Pioneer Middle School's re-opening was a historical moment for all students and families. Pioneer has many students attending on-campus hybrid classes,

while other students are learning virtually from their homes. A recent parent/student survey was sent out, and here are a few comments from our students and families: "For the first time, my son begged to go to school! It was a great week!" "I made one new friend because it's so hard to make friends with students because of the coronavirus." "One success from my first day was that it was still easy to learn and catch on to what we were being taught." Providing students with opportunities to interact with their hybrid



Pioneer counselor Juan Morante, along with ASB students Sienna Morgan and Emma Schnell welcome hybrid Wildcats.

and distance learning friends continues being a priority. Overall, Pioneer's Safety/Attestation Plan was a success in maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment for everyone on Pioneer's campus. Welcome back Wildcats, we missed you!

Red Hill *Elementary School*

11911 Red Hill Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7543

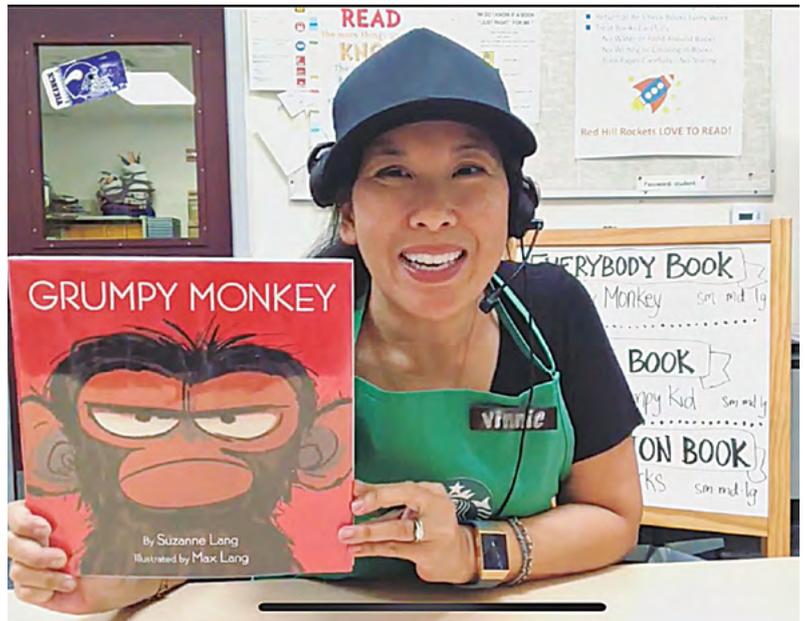


Sean Lindsay
Principal

The Reading Bunch

When Red Hill Elementary School suddenly transitioned last March to distance learning, our library media technician Vinnie Yeung was determined to keep her strong connection with Red Hill students. Taking inspiration from some of the YouTube videos that her daughters watched, she

created an entertaining video series called “Super Happy Fun Reading Time.” Week after week she posts a vivid and vibrant video on her website. She dons a thematic costume and, in character, reads aloud a variety of picture books from our library’s amazing collection. For this school year, Ms. Yeung has transitioned her videos to a Schoology course, and she has expanded her video offerings to include a new teaching series that zooms in on a variety of library skills, such as alphabetizing, researching, and the parts of a book. Her imagination stirs our students’ imagination, and we are so grateful to her.



Red Hill library media technician Vinnie Yeung posted read-aloud videos for students as part of “Super Happy Fun Reading Time.”

Sycamore Magnet Academy

1402 Sycamore Ave., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7360



Rafael Plascencia
Principal

Engaged Elbows, Engaged Minds, Engaged Hearts

“Hey Brooklyn, good morning! Welcome to Sycamore Magnet Academy!” is what first grader Brooklyn Vasquez heard while engaging elbows with school principal, Rafael Plascencia, on her first day of hybrid learning. Many other students heard and felt the same greeting

from Mr. Plascencia and staff. This simple, yet powerful, act is one that is helping to build culture and community as we establish a safe, loving, and learning environment at Sycamore Magnet Academy.

Many elementary and middle school students returned to campus to participate in the hybrid model of learning. Through the efforts of teachers and staff members plans were created and then recreated to ensure a safe return for all students and teachers. As the students and teachers settle in we will shift the focus to teaching and learning. We are also excited to begin working on our character traits of respect, empathy, and perseverance.



Sycamore Magnet Academy Principal Rafael Plascencia and first grader Brooklyn Vasquez exchange elbow greetings.

Tustin Adult School

1701 San Juan St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7395



Will Neddersen
Coordinator

Persistence and Determination Lead to Success

Our first graduate for the 2020-21 school year is Hamid Refaei. Hamid has been a student at Tustin Adult School since January 2018. Hamid started taking computer classes and our Citizenship Preparation classes. He also took an ESL Conversation class. In one of his classes, he learned from our guidance counselor, Stacie Sevcik, that we could support him as he wanted a job, but was facing the challenge of not having an



Hamid Refaei is Tustin Adult School's first high school diploma graduate for the 2020-21 school year.

American high school diploma. Through transcript evaluations, a plan was created for the classes needed. Hamid showed persistence and determination as he worked through each of the classes with the support of our teachers to earn his high school diploma. Tustin Adult School's Diploma and Equivalency programs support adults in achieving their high school diploma or equivalency certificate. The diploma classes and equivalency preparatory classes are offered through independent study to allow students to complete at their own pace with teacher support and guidance.

Tustin Connect *Online School*

14741 North B St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/430-2052



Erick Fineberg
Principal

It's a Great Time to Be a Maverick

After a six-month absence, Tustin Connect teachers and staff could not have been more excited to welcome our students back for in-person weekly instruction and check ins. With some of our students continuing to work from home 100% of the time, teachers met the challenge of simultaneous in-person and virtual instruction. As you can see from the picture, our teachers have turned into

news anchors with iPad cameras, multiple screens, and devices. Thanks to Measure S and the last five years of online teaching at Tustin Connect, we were prepared for this hybrid model of instruction. Additionally, we were fortunate to add several new staff members as our program has nearly tripled in size from last year. The growth has afforded us the opportunity to expand our teaching staff, grow our PTA, and provide a more robust experience to more students than ever. It's a great time to be a Maverick!



First/second-grade teacher Sharon Maeda provides instruction from her classroom hub while her students can't get enough of her awesomeness.

Tustin High School

1171 El Camino Real, Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7414



Dr. Jon Tuin
Principal

Link Crew Welcomes the Class of 2024!

Link Crew is a Tustin High School Student Leadership Program that focuses on training selected 11th and 12th graders known as “Link Crew Leaders” as mentors for incoming freshmen. Although it looks a little different this year, our THS Link Crew program is committed to helping the ninth graders successfully transition through various academic events and activities throughout the school year. In September, our Link Crew leaders welcomed the Class of 2024 for on-campus tours. More than 100 students took part in groups of 10 or less to tour the Tustin campus before hybrid classes began. For some of these students it was their first time on campus ever! The goal of our Link Crew advisors, Lindsay Fay and Alicia



Link Crew Leaders Leslie Montoya and Wasi Khan in action with incoming freshmen.

Fortier, is “to plan fun virtual events, mentor and guide freshmen to have an amazing school year.” Go Tillers!



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Tustin Memorial *Academy*

12712 Browning Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705 • 714/730-7546



Brooke Carreras
Principal

Magical Learning Moments

Sandy Foreman began teaching in Tustin Unified in 2004 and has taught grades 1-4. She currently teaches second grade Advanced Primary Learners at Tustin Memorial Academy. Sandy loves bringing the magic of childhood alive in her classroom by making learning fun and connecting instruction to the lives of her students.

Recently, Mrs. Foreman taught features of non-fiction text. She selected the mentor text, “The Magic School Bus Going Batty: A Book About Bats” by Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen, showed the Magic School Bus Episode 17 “Going Batty,” and even dressed up as the main character in the story, Mrs. Frizzle. Students completed a directed drawing lesson on bats and were immersed with other artifacts to learn about various features of non-fiction text. When Sandy is around, you may also find her decked out in Dr. Seuss attire or even teaching adjectives dressed as a holiday turkey!



Tustin Memorial Academy teacher Sandy Foreman dressed as “Mrs. Frizzle” from the Magic School Bus “Going Batty” TV episode.

Tustin Ranch *Elementary School*

12950 Robinson Dr., Tustin, CA 92782 • 714/730-7580



Kathi Denny
Principal

Cool Coyotes Back on Campus

Last month we successfully opened our school’s doors for in-person (hybrid) students, and we connected with digital learning students online through live-streaming. This is due to the hard work of our staff, our community, and our amazing Cool Coyotes. Without all of you and your trust, we would not have had such an outstanding reopening. Having students

back on campus fills our hearts with joy. Our teachers

and staff have overcome every obstacle the pandemic has thrown in their path and our students and families have shown incredible flexibility, grit, and determination.

Together, with you as our partners we get to see smiling eyes above masks as we safely gather together (six feet apart) to learn and thrive. This experience has shown us the power of a tightly woven school community (Ohana) and how doing this work together only makes us all stronger. Thank you for your support and trust. We take it very seriously. Your children are the reason we do what we do. TOGETHER we are Coyote STRONG.



Tustin Ranch staff welcomes students back into the classroom for hybrid learning.

C.E. Utt Middle School

13601 Browning ave., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7573



Heather Bojorquez
Principal

Utt's Custodial Staff Soaring High

On September 29, Utt Middle School's Hybrid Cohort B Falcons smoothly and safely began their first day back to campus. The campus was carefully prepared to ensure all students and staff were safe in classrooms, lunch zones and high traffic areas. The seamless opening of Utt Middle School

would not have been possible without the teamwork of our amazing custodians, Ruben Lopez, Sam Lara, Jorge Rios and Gerardo Melecio. For months, the custodians supported Nutrition Services with their food distribution, assisted in the development and implementation of Utt's safety attestation, and quickly adapted to new schedules of disinfecting and cleaning protocols. All this effort was done with flexibility, positivity and collaboration. To show our appreciation, the staff celebrated our Falcon custodial staff on October 1

with signs of appreciation and a special treat reminding them "Utt's Custodians are soaring high!" Thank you, custodial team for all you do; you ignite our Falcon pride!



Utt's custodial team, from left, Gerardo Melecio, Sam Lara, and Jorge Rios, show they are "on fire!" Not pictured is Ruben Lopez.

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Tustin Public Schools Foundation

150 El Camino Real, Suite 140, Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/832-6299 • www.tpsf.net



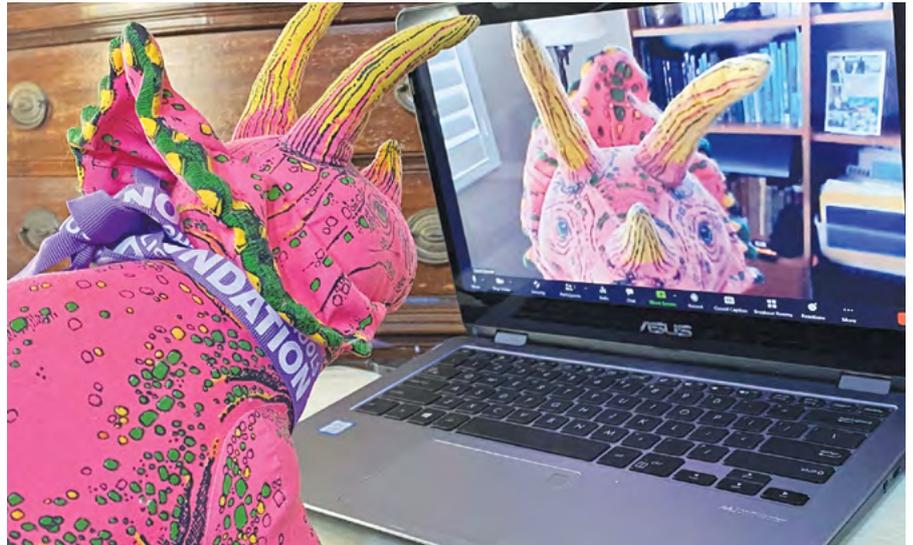
Carol Burby Garrett
Executive Director

TPSF Supports Learning Wherever It Happens

Tustin Public Schools Foundation Board President Kristin Simpkins presented a \$60,000 grant to Tustin Unified School District Board of Education President Francine Scinto at a recent school board meeting. These funds will help

schools upgrade their remote learning platforms to provide the safest and most effective learning environment for students. Schools will be able to upgrade to Zoom Pro or to purchase other software to enhance distance learning. These licenses will help all Tustin Unified elementary, middle and high schools continue to communicate securely with students, whether they are at school or learning from home. The grant is part of the Foundation's efforts to respond to the emerging needs of Tustin Unified schools.

The Tustin Public Schools Foundation partners with community members, businesses, corporations, and other funders to enhance the school experience for Tustin Unified students. For more information, visit www.tpsf.net.



Dino ZOOM: The non-profit Tustin Public Schools Foundation supports learning wherever it happens.

Technology in TUSD Schools

Tustin Unified School District, 300 South C St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7301 Ext. 306



Dr. Grant Litfin
Assistant
Superintendent,
Administrative
Services

Engineering from A Distance

Tustin Unified students and teachers have made an incredible set of transitions from in-person instruction to distance learning, and now into a hybrid model for teaching and learning. Career Technical Education teachers like Ed Hernandez, T-Tech Engineering teacher at Tustin High School, have had to make these adjustments and then some. It takes incredible effort to shift traditionally hands-on classes like engineering and

make them productive for students even when building, welding, 3D printing, CO2 cutting, or milling in a workshop isn't possible. Because this hands-on piece is more challenging, TUSD engineering programs have pivoted to utilize their Surface Pro devices to focus more on SolidWorks certification, 3D modeling, and computer science/coding. Teachers are also finding unique ways of engaging students, from using multiple cameras to vary perspectives to doing demonstrations with machines to shorten the learning curve once students return. Innovative teachers are another reason it's great to be a student in TUSD!



Tustin High School "T-Tech" engineering teacher Ed Hernandez uses several cameras and computers to engage his students each day of hybrid instruction. TUSD Teachers have each found their own way to innovate their tech set ups to engage students at home and in the classroom.

Business Services

Tustin Unified School District, 300 South C St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7301 Ext. 302



Anthony Soria
Chief Financial
Officer

2020-21 Budget Updates

The overall process of developing the 2020-21 budget for the Tustin Unified School District has been a roller coaster. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the state was forecasting a year of moderate increases for K-12 education funding. In March, everything changed as the pandemic virtually shut down the economy. As a result, Governor Newsom was forced to make drastic changes to the state's budget, which initially projected \$15 billion in funding cuts to K-12 education.

On March 27, the federal government passed a \$2 trillion stimulus package to provide emergency relief funding to assist states with the detrimental financial impact of the pandemic. Subsequently, the state allocated a substantial portion of the federal funds to K-12 schools for the 2020-21 fiscal year, which would assist in preserving funding for the

time being.

Although this is positive news, the state is relying on \$11 billion in delayed cash payments to be disbursed to school districts, with hopes that a second stimulus package would be passed prior to the start of the 2021-22 fiscal year. While a second stimulus is in discussions at the federal level, nothing has been approved at this time. Therefore, K-12 education continues to face uncertainties that could result in potential funding reductions in the upcoming fiscal years.

In response to the changes in state funding, Business Services staff made updates to the District's budget that was approved by the TUSD Board of Education at its September 14 meeting. The updates reflect preserved spending levels for District programs and improves the level of structural deficit spending projected in future years.

Educational Services

Tustin Unified School District, 300 South C St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7301 Ext. 309



Dr. Maggie Villegas
Assistant
Superintendent

TUSD Teachers Transition to Livestream Instruction

Hybrid in-person instruction began for students choosing to return to the classroom on September 24 for elementary schools and September 29 for secondary schools. Students attending in-person were greeted by their teacher and welcomed back into

a new classroom environment that included virtual classmates who were participating from home. Tustin Unified teachers were supported by over 100 "Lead Pioneer Teachers" who helped to train and support their teacher colleagues with the challenging task of learning how to incorporate both in-person and students at home via livestream. TUSD teachers dedicated themselves to learning this new approach and have been successfully providing instruction via this model to their students in-person and at home. All TK-12 teachers received a new iPad and a tripod to help display the instruction and the students at home.



An elementary classroom at Beswick Elementary School is ready to livestream to students at home.

Nutrition Services

Tustin Unified School District, 300 South C St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7301 Ext. 342



Teresa Squibb
Director

The Meals Go On

COVID-19 creates new staffing and meal service challenges for Nutrition Services, but TUSD Nutrition Team continues to rally. Tustin Unified began its new year on August 13 in a

100% distance learning mode and Nutrition Services provided meals to families “drive-through” style. As TUSD moved to the new Hybrid schedule, Nutrition Services worked with school sites to set up systems to offer meals to both students coming to campus and students who remained in distance learning.

The United States Department of Agriculture’s extension of their program waivers has provided relief for all Tustin Unified families. The waiver allows TUSD to provide free breakfast and lunch to all Tustin students. Elementary students are offered To-Go



Sycamore Magnet Academy kitchen crew, from left, Leticia Ramirez, Flori Denny, Gretchen Truebe and Marylou Villapando assemble To-Go bags for students.

meal bags at dismissal. Secondary students are offered hot lunch during the school day and are offered To-Go bags as they leave for the day. Families who remained on distance learning may also pick up meals on Wednesdays. TUSD Nutrition Services is ready to provide meals for our students.

Kindergarten Readiness

1151 San Juan St., Tustin, CA 92780 • 714/730-7592



Lauralee Cabibi
Principal

New Protocols in Preschool

It was all smiles as preschoolers were welcomed back to in-person instruction on September 28. Teachers were excited to meet their students whom they got to know via Google Meets. Students and their parents did a great job following the new safety protocols that were put in place this year by wearing masks and social distancing during sign-in. One of the biggest changes that was made this year is that parents now digitally

sign-in via an app. Prior to arriving at school, parents complete a digital health card each day. Once they get to school, parents now scan a QR code and sign their child in to class on their phone rather than passing a clipboard to one another. Teachers review the signature and approve the sign in. It is just one more way our program is keeping children and teachers safe!



Helen Estock preschooler Mila Carillo does a great job of keeping safe by wearing her mask during a fine motor activity.

Tyson's Book Review

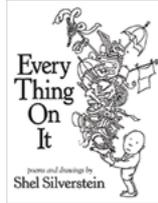


Tyson

Poems, Poems, Poems!

"Everything On It" by Shel Silverstein isn't really a book, but is a collection of wacky poems. He is a creative writer with a very strange sense of humor. Some of his poems are funny, most are strange, and almost all are unrealistic! Look at this poem called "Housebroken."

The puppy's housebroken at last?
Lord only knows when he was needin' it.
You've trained him to go
On the newspaper? Fine.
But please-not while I'm readin' it.



See what I mean? The puppy is finally house trained, but Shel Silverstein twists the poem by questioning why the puppy is doing his business on the newspaper while the person was reading it! Shel Silverstein thinks out of the box and brings unexpected ideas to his poems. Not all books need to have a storyline. A book of poems can be just as enjoyable! Read this one and you'll like it too!

Tyson is an athletic 7th grader who loves basketball and skateboarding. His favorite subjects are PE and math. He is a gentle pet owner and loves taking care of puppy, Chewie, and 3 guinea pigs. He enjoys going out to eat and trying different foods.

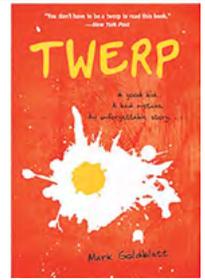
Sean's Book Review



Sean

A Bad Decision

Twerp is a humorous book by Mark Goldblatt about a 6th grader in 1969 named Julian Twerski. Julian is a good kid who makes bad decisions, which makes him seem like a "bad



kid." When his English teacher, Mr. Selkirk, tells him that if he does a journal on his crazy life and decisions, he can get out of writing a report on Shakespeare (which Julian hates). Throughout the book, interesting stories are always being told by Julian. Some of the incidents include hitting a bird with a rock, helping out his BFF by writing a love letter for his best friend's crush, and accidentally burning off his friend's eyebrows! A middle schooler could relate to Julian's point of view on life. In conclusion, *Twerp* is a very fun and suspenseful book that can be enjoyed by all types of readers.

Sean Cheng is a 6th grader and enjoys speed cubing, playing basketball, and performing tricks on his scooter. His favorite subjects at school are math and PE. He loves teaching tricks to his new puppy and taking care of his 3 guinea pigs. He looks forward to boogie boarding at the beach!

Toy Store Items–Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put TUSD in the subject line.

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| BIKE | MARBLES |
| DOLL | CRAYON |
| TRIKE | PENS |
| BOOK | COMPUTER |
| LEGOS | DOLLHOUSE |
| SOLDIERS | BUGGY |
| BALLS | KITCHEN |
| BUBBLES | TEA SET |
| CROQUET | BAT |
| BLOCKS | BALL GLOVE |
| KITES | |

Entries must be received by **December 30, 2020**
From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.!

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

Congratulations to Brody and Jen Weathers
Winner of our September Word Search Contest!

THRIVE IN TUSTIN UNIFIED



TUSTIN UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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