

# School News

*Education + Communication = A Better Nation*

**Covering the Westminster School District**



Volume 18, Issue 109

January 2023

## Lending a Hand to the Community



**Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, Manuel Cardoso, passes out backpacks during the WTA, CSEA and WSD Cares TREEmendously event.**

[www.SchoolNewsRollCall.com](http://www.SchoolNewsRollCall.com)

# We're as invested in our community as you are!

As the only hospital based in Tustin, our goal is to make our community healthier by providing comprehensive, full-service acute care with state-of-the-art robotics technology:

- 24/7 Emergency Care
- Imaging, Lab and Radiology Services
- Intensive Care
- Pediatric Subacute Unit
- Respiratory and Rehabilitation Program
- Robotics-assisted Orthopedics
- Robotics-assisted Surgical Weight-Loss and General Surgery
- Spine Pain and Surgery

Together, we're building a healthier community.  
Visit our website to learn more!



**Foothill Regional  
Medical Center**

14662 Newport Ave., Tustin 92780 | [FoothillRegionalMedicalCenter.com](http://FoothillRegionalMedicalCenter.com)  
(714) 619-7700 | [FoothillRegionalCares@AltaHospitals.com](mailto:FoothillRegionalCares@AltaHospitals.com)

## INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT



**Dr. Charles  
Hinman**  
*Interim  
Superintendent*

### **Westminster School District is the Place to Be!**

Westminster School District was in the spirit of giving this month and we continued to lend a hand to the community.

Many of these traditions are new to me, but I am enjoying learning the new culture of Westminster School District. Since arriving at the district, I jumped right in and attended the California School Boards Association Conference in San Diego.

To provide background, I previously led the West Covina Unified School District for six years as Superintendent, prior to retiring in July 2021. I also served as Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education, site administrator and teacher in several notable districts across Orange County including Newport Mesa Unified, Saddleback Unified and Santa Ana Unified School Districts. In addition, I served as the Interim Superintendent of Fountain Valley School District from January 2022 to April 2022.

We look forward to this year with tons of exciting activities, events and of course for our students to continue pursuing academic excellence.



**Board of Trustee members (right to left) Frances Nguyen, Tina-Gustin Gurney, David M. Johnson and Interim Superintendent, Dr. Charles Hinman at the CSBA conference in San Diego**

## Board of Trustees



**David M. Johnson**  
President  
Area 1



**Frances Nguyen**  
Vice President  
Area 4



**Jeremy Khalaf**  
Clerk  
Area 5



**Tina Gustin-Gurney**  
Member  
Area 2



**Khanh Nguyen**  
Member  
Area 3

### United Leadership | California School Boards Association Conference in San Diego, CA

*By David M. Johnson, President, Board of Trustees*

In a show of diligence and unity, Westminster School District provided outstanding participation at the annual conference for California school boards. Four out of five trustees and our interim superintendent spread out to various workshops and came together each night in fellowship. As a result, our district's leadership is well-rounded and united.

Our community has blessed the Westminster School District with a board that works well together, representing all unique aspects of our community while collaborating to create ever stronger results for our students and employees.

The Board of Trustees and Interim Superintendent, Dr. Charles Hinman, attended the California School Boards Association (CSBA) Conference in San Diego. The three-day event provided district leaders with an opportunity to learn, collaborate and discuss ways to help continually improve the district.

We chose various workshops such as Student Mental Health, District Marketing, Dual-Language Immersion, and Fiscal Responsibility. Each of us brought back enhanced insights to share with our district. Even our areas of greatest strength are polished for excellence.

WSD continues to champion student outcomes – working diligently behind the scenes to ensure that we are the preferred elementary school district in Orange County.



**Board of Trustee members Tina-Gustin Gurney, Khanh Nguyen and David M. Johnson at the CSBA conference in San Diego**



**Kay Coop**  
Founder/Publisher



Netragrednik

# School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

[www.schoolnewsrollcall.com](http://www.schoolnewsrollcall.com)

Covering the  
**WESTMINSTER SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**FOUNDER/PUBLISHER:** Kay Coop  
562/493-3193 • [kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com)

**ADVERTISING SALES:** 562/493-3193

**CONTENT COORDINATOR:** Barbra Longiny  
**GRAPHIC DESIGNER/PRODUCTION:** Emily Ung,  
Mie Kawamura

**COPY EDITORS:** Kate Karp, Anna Zappia

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Nancy Lueder

**Netragrednik** by Neta Madison



@SchoolNewsRC



SchoolNewsRollCall



SchoolNewsRollCall



**SCHOOL NEWS ROLL CALL, LLC**

P.O. Box 728, Seal Beach, CA 90740  
562/493-3193

[www.schoolnewsrollcall.com](http://www.schoolnewsrollcall.com)

Copyright © 2006, School News Roll Call, LLC  
Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is strictly prohibited unless otherwise stated. Opinions expressed by contributing writers and guest columnists are their views and not necessarily those of *School News Roll Call*. This publication is privately owned and the right is reserved to select and edit content. The Westminster School District does not endorse the advertisers in this publication.

## Happy New Year!

A new year is always exciting with hope for a better tomorrow.

In this issue you will read articles on a variety of topics. A school PTA brainstormed ideas for fun family events, students wrote their teachers letters of appreciation, Stacey Middle School students were invited to sing the National Anthem at the unveiling

of the new Mendez Tribute Monument Park., students supported local families in need with a soup drive, students learned about the origins of forensic science, and so much more..it's the beginning of a great year!

Be sure to enter our word contest on page 10 (all ages may enter).

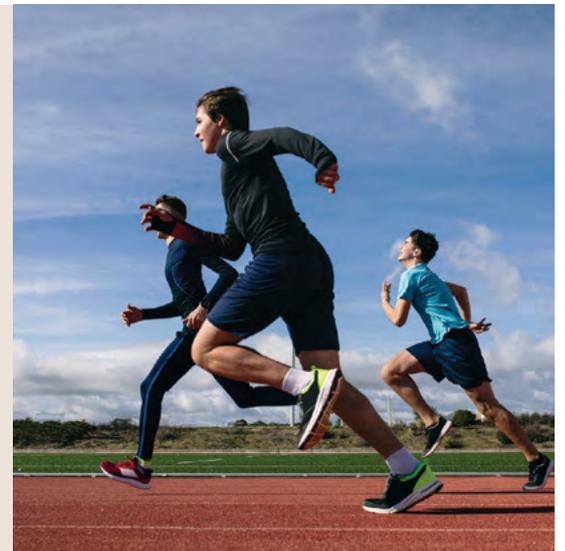
Our next issue is March 15



## Carbon Health

# When Life Throws You a Curveball, Carbon Health Urgent Care Is There

- ✓ Primary Care
- ✓ Urgent Care
- ✓ Sports Physicals
- ✓ X-ray and Labs
- ✓ Covid, RSV / Flu Testing
- ✓ Same-day appointments
- ✓ Walk-ins welcome



## Convenient Locations

- Orange County
- Long Beach
- The South Bay

## Pediatric Orthopedic Surgeons Help Kids Heal Around Their Growth Plates



**Torin Cunningham, M.D.**  
medical director,  
Orthopedic  
Center,  
MemorialCare  
Miller Children's &  
Women's Hospital  
Long Beach

The bones of adults and children share many risks for injury, but children's bones are unique. Children have areas of cartilage located near the ends of their bones called growth plates, which are the last parts of their bones to harden. Because of this, growing kids can have a unique injury called a growth plate fracture.

Growth plate fractures are most common in fingers, wrists, ankles, and feet, but even occur in knees. These injuries are more common in boys because girls tend to finish growing earlier than boys. The risk of a growth plate fracture peaks in adolescence and is usually due to competitive sports or recreational activities. If not treated properly, growth plate fractures can stunt a child's growth or lead to crooked or uneven limbs.

Fortunately, pediatric orthopedic surgeons are specially trained to help children heal correctly after they have suffered a growth plate fracture. These surgeons complete additional training to operate on growth plates and soft tissue, providing specific care for children's bone and joint disorders.

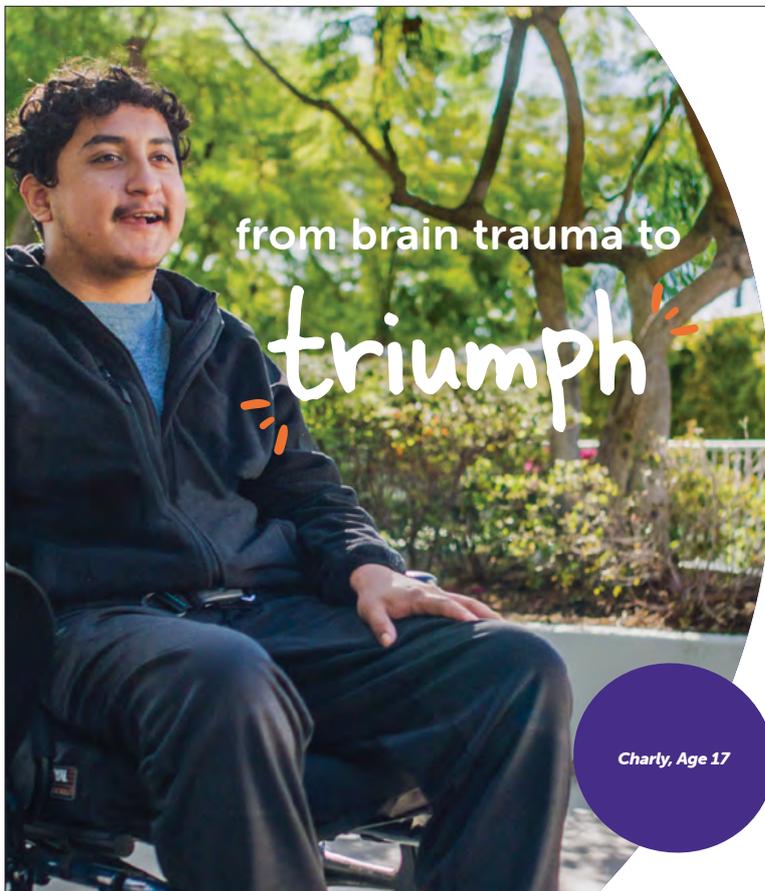
Besides growth plate injuries, pediatric orthopedic surgeons also treat a wide range of pediatric injuries to ensure children can heal and grow properly.

Pediatric orthopedic surgeons also specialize in caring for:

- Bone tumors
- Foot and lower extremities
- Hand and upper extremities
- Hip deformities and reconstruction
- Spinal deformities and scoliosis

At MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach, the Orthopedic Center is dedicated to helping your children grow and heal from growth plate and other pediatric injuries properly.

For more information on pediatric orthopedic specialists, visit [millerchildrens.org/ortho](http://millerchildrens.org/ortho) or call (714) 377-6993.



from brain trauma to  
**triumph**

**Charly, Age 17**



It takes a village.

Charly suffered a fall while biking — a severe brain trauma that threatened his life. Until Miller Children's & Women's Hospital helped his brain heal. Our therapists helped him walk and talk again and our highly specialized pediatric team dedicated themselves to his recovery. Because we knew, to lift Charly back up again, it would take a village. So when we watched Charly walk the stage at high school graduation — supported by his physical therapist — we knew he'd only keep going.

Learn more.

[millerchildrens.org/care](http://millerchildrens.org/care)

Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach  
Cherese Mari Lauthere Children's Village  
Outpatient Specialty Centers from the  
South Bay to Orange County

# Orange County Department of Education



**Dr. Al Mijares**  
Superintendent

On a crisp December morning, the City of Westminster and the Orange County Department of Education celebrated the opening of a new park honoring the historic case of Mendez v. Westminster, which put an end to forced segregation in California's public schools while laying the foundation for the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark Brown v. Board decision.

City officials, local dignitaries, students and community members turned out in force for Mendez Tribute Monument Park's dedication ceremony, marking the completion of a five-year collaborative effort. But a few days before its official opening, I had an opportunity to preview the park with Sylvia Mendez, a civil rights icon whose story is central to the case.

Nearly 80 years earlier, in 1943, Gonzalo and Felicitas Mendez sought to enroll Sylvia and her two brothers, Geronimo and Gonzalo, Jr., at 17th Street School, known then as "the white school." Despite being American citizens who spoke English — the family lived and worked on a Westminster farm — they were turned away and directed instead to Hoover Elementary, a campus designated for Mexican American children.

Sylvia Mendez was just 8 years old at the time. She would later describe Hoover as "a terrible little shack" with dirt for a playground.

The Mendez family ultimately hired an attorney and teamed up with four other Orange County families who had similarly been denied access to their neighborhood schools. Their case, Mendez, et al v. Westminster et al, argued that 5,000 children throughout the county were unjustly harmed by unconstitutional segregation policies.

In 1946, U.S. District Court Judge Paul J. McCormick ruled in favor of the five families, and his decision was later upheld by the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The case ended on April 14, 1947 — one day before Jackie Robinson broke baseball's color barrier with the Brooklyn Dodgers. Seven years later, the Supreme Court declared segregated schools unconstitutional in its sweeping Brown v. Board decision.

Gonzalo Mendez died in 1964 at age 51, and his wife Felicitas passed in 1998 — but not before urging her daughter to share the family's story far and wide.

On Monday, Nov. 28, bronze statues of Gonzalo and Felicitas were unveiled for the first time in the new quarter-acre park, which also features a large textbook monument and statues of two students, symbolizing the children impacted by the court's decision. Surrounding these displays are drought-resistant plants, a dry creek bed and interactive stations with content from OCDE's staff of

See **OC DEPT OF ED** • Page 14

**GLOBAL VISION**  
**OPTOMETRY**  
*Family Eye Care*

**We offer Myopia Management with OrthoK or soft contact lenses or eye drops.**

**Contact our office for more details.**

*\*Mention this Ad for \$200 off Myopia Management package.*

- Eye Exams - Glasses & Contact Lenses
- Full Optical - Name Brands & Fashion Eyewear
- Medical Eye Exams - Red/Dry/Pink Eye
- Minor Eye Injuries/ FB Removal
- Lasik/Cataract Consult
- Corneal Topography & Retinal Photos
- Myopia Management
- In House Lab Available Glasses Ready Same Day! (SV, Rx in stock only)

Insurances we accept:  
VSP, EYEMED, SPECTERA, MES, SUPERIOR, DAVIS, VBA & more

**STEPHANY VONG, O.D AND ASSOCIATES**

18569 Main St.,  
Huntington Beach, CA 92648  
(Located in the 5 Points Plaza)  
**(714) 780-2008**  
[www.globalvisionoptometry.com](http://www.globalvisionoptometry.com)

**BEACH CITIES**  
DANCE

All Levels Welcome

FREE Trial Classes

**18838 Brookhurst Street**  
**Fountain Valley, CA 92708**  
**(714) 963-2110**  
**www.bcdsdance.com**

[beachcitiesdancestudio](https://www.instagram.com/beachcitiesdancestudio)  
[Beach Cities Dance Studio](https://www.facebook.com/BeachCitiesDanceStudio)  
[beachcitiesdance](https://www.tiktok.com/@beachcitiesdance)

Acro - Ballet - Pointe - Jazz - Tap - Lyrical - Hip Hop  
Contemporary - Competition Teams - "New" Adult Classes

# Anderson *Elementary (K-6)*

8902 Hewitt Pl., Garden Grove, CA 92844 • 714/894-7201 • anderson.wsdk8.us



**Kim Breckenridge**  
Principal

## The Power of Peer Partnerships

One of the most powerful strategies to support student learning is the use of peer partnerships. When students work with a peer, they have the opportunity to share their ideas out loud, practice new skills and get feedback on projects. Working with a peer also gives students the opportunity to collaborate, building of the strengths of each of the students in the group. As Paul Solarz said, "Collaboration allows us to know more than we are capable of knowing by ourselves." Peers can often take information in a lesson and rephrase it in a way that makes connections for other students. At Anderson, we capitalize on the strength of peer partnerships and give students both opportunities and structures to maximize their work together. Here's to the power of peers!



**Third graders Dinh Dinh Nguyen and Sofia Huynh collaborate.**

# RAISED ON ROCKVIEW

Rockview Family Farms proudly serves schools throughout Southern California. Choosing local means fresh, delicious, and nutritious milk for your family! Dairy and dairy-free options now at a store near you.

**ROCKVIEW**  
FAMILY FARMS

[www.RockviewFarms.com](http://www.RockviewFarms.com)

## History Depot

Learn about  
World History  
US History  
Videos • Art • Music  
Study Habits

**FREE Enjoy! History Buffs Teachers Students**

**HistoryDepot.com**

HOME - AUTO - BUSINESS - LIFE - HEALTH  
DISABILITY/LONG TERM CARE

**TAX FREE RETIREMENT INCOME**  
If you are saving money for retirement in an IRA, SEP, 401k, 403b, or 457 account... scan this QR code to learn how tax free can be better than tax deductible.

**PRATT**  
PRATT INSURANCE  
BROKERS  
ASSET PROTECTION SPECIALISTS

**LONDIE PRATT, ADVISOR**  
877-695-6634  
LONDIE4HBW@GMAIL.COM  
P.O. BOX 5544,  
HUNTINGTON BEACH, CA 92615

# Clegg Elementary (TK-5)

6311 Larchwood Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92647 • 714/894-7218 • clegg.wsdk8.us



**John Staggs**  
Principal

## Practicing Character

Clegg Elementary School honors Veterans Day every year by creating a special veterans "Wall of Honor." Here our students are first given red and blue stars that they take home. The students then ask their parents if they have anyone in their family who is a veteran or if they know anyone who is a veteran. If so, the students fill the stars out with the person's name, their branch of service, and their rank. They then bring these stars back to the school to have them proudly displayed on our Wall.

Clegg Elementary also honors Veterans Day by having a donation drive for items that are needed to help support the Fisher House. The VA's Fisher House in Long Beach is a beautiful "home away from home" for the families of veterans and other military service members who are receiving care within the VA Long Beach Healthcare System.

The Fisher House provides temporary lodging in a comfortable and relaxed setting that is only steps away from the medical facility. Guests can stay at the Fisher House in a two-story, 13,500 square-foot home that offers 16 spacious private guest rooms, each with a private bathroom, and at no cost for as long as their loved one is hospitalized.

This project is a great lesson for our students. The event gives them the chance to have opportunities to contribute. This helps with their self-esteem, especially when they realize that they can also help to make a big difference in someone's life. Our students also get to practice some wonderful character traits such as caring, gratitude, patriotism, charity, selflessness, and courage.



# DeMille *Elementary (K-6)*

15400 Van Buren St., Midway City, CA 92655 • 714/894-7224 • [demille.wsdk8.us](http://demille.wsdk8.us)



**April Derr**  
Principal

## Vietnamese Dual Immersion Program

Students in our Vietnamese Dual Immersion Program studied and prepared for 4 weeks to participate in the Vietnamese Dictation/Spelling Competition hosted by the Union of Overseas Vietnamese Language Schools (TAVIET) on December 31, 2022. It was the first time our students represented our school. 10 students from Grades 3-4 competed in Level 1 (Ages 8-9).

22 students from Grade 4-6 competed in Level 2 (Ages 10-11). 4 students from Grade 6 competed in Level 3 (ages 12-13), along with 6 former DeMille VDLI students who are currently at Warner Middle School. There were 5 possible places students could win for each level. For Levels 1 and 2, our students took home all 5 places! For Level 3, 2 students from Warner Middle School tied in 4th place. They will be receiving their trophies and cash prizes during the Tết Festival at OC Fairgrounds at the end of the month. We are so proud of their hard work and accomplishments!



## Fun Things and Places—Word Search Contest

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

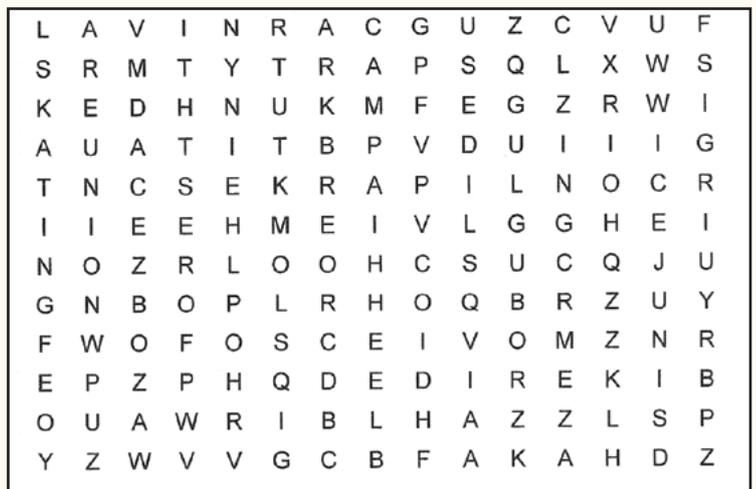
When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: [Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com](mailto:Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com) Please put Westminster in the subject line.

Entries must be received by **March 30, 2023**

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble!

Thank you Barkate / Nehi Orthodontics  
for sponsoring our contest.  
[BarkateNehiSmiles.com](http://BarkateNehiSmiles.com)

- |           |          |           |
|-----------|----------|-----------|
| CARNIVAL  | PARTY    | ZOO       |
| HOME      | MOVIE    | HIKE      |
| SCHOOL    | POOL     | BIKE RIDE |
| PARK      | FOREST   | REUNION   |
| SLIDES    | CAMP     | CRUISE    |
| SWINGS    | SEASHORE | SKATING   |
| ROAD TRIP | FARM     | VIDEOS    |



# Eastwood *Elementary (K-6)*

13552 University St., Westminster, CA 92683 • 714/894-7227 • eastwood.wsdk8.us



**Jonathan Edelman**  
*Principal*

## Art Matters

At Eastwood Elementary School in the Westminster School District, we understand that art matters. Art encourages fine-motor skills in children, helps children learn to problem-solve, and provides opportunities for students to take a break from screens to think creatively.

As things take one more step towards normalcy, Eastwood, with support from our amazing PTA, has partnered with Art Masters to bring art lectures and lessons to all of our students. Students will participate in art lectures focused on Edgar Degas, Charles Sheeler and Joan Miro, to name a few. After learning about these artists, their historical context, and artistic style and medium, students will participate in art lessons to re-create works of art inspired by these art masters. Students will use a variety of artistic materials and supplies to explore different mediums of art to create masterpieces of their own.

At Eastwood, we encourage students to explore their passions and talents. Whether it be digital media, writing, agriculture, public service or art, we look to expose students to different opportunities that may lead to careers and bright futures.



# Finley *Computer Science Magnet School*

13521 Edwards St., Westminster, CA 92683 • 714/895-7764 • finley.wsdk8.us



**Pam LeMuix**  
*Principal*

## Secret 'Kindness' Agents

It was a great start to the new year for Finley Elementary School teachers, who were surprised when they returned from winter break and found welcome-back letters with messages of appreciation and well-wishes for a happy new year. The letters were written by students in Finley's Secret Agent Club. The club was started by Monique Coomes, Finley's school counselor, as a way

to help children feel more connected to their school as well as to develop positive relationships with their peers and collaborate.

"We know that when students feel connected to their school community, they perform better academically," Ms. Coomes said. "And when students identify ways they can make others feel better and take positive action, they develop a stronger sense of empathy."

Finley's Secret Agents have also been busy creating more than 300 Valentine's Day kindness messages that will be passed out to parents during morning drop-off. They painted rocks with inspiring words and hid them in the school's reading garden.

"It makes me feel great to know that someone is going to feel happy when they find a message of kindness," said fourth-grader Danna Mendoza, one of the group's most active Secret Agents.

"I hope we can bring more happiness to the school," Sophia Casares said.



# Fryberger *Elementary School of Environmental Science*

6952 Hood Dr., Westminster, CA 92683 • 714/894-7237 • fryberger.wsdk8.us



**Michelle Scheiber**  
*Principal*

## New Ideas for Family Events

Each school year, our PTA meets to brainstorm ideas for fun family events at Fryberger. We value our families and love to have opportunities for students to bring their families on campus for a little fun.

In the month of December, our PTA sponsored our first Family event of the year. Our Holiday Event included pictures with Santa, letter writing to Santa (with a promise to receive a response letter back), and holiday crafts. Students and their families were served donuts and hot chocolate and thoroughly enjoyed bringing their parents to their school for a little fun. As a bonus, our local police department attended our Holiday Event

and enjoyed interacting with the school community. Officers answered student questions, posed for pictures, and gave tours of their police cars. In addition, a book table was set up for students to take home a book or two of their own. We look forward to our next event!



# Hayden *Elementary (K-5)*

14782 Eden St., Midway City, CA 92655 • 714/894-7261 • hayden.wsdk8.us



**Mark Murphy**  
Principal

## Soup Drive

Hayden is more than just a local school; it is a major part of the community. One of the ways we support our community is our annual soup drive. The soup drive helps support a local interval house that works with local families in need. Hayden is very honored and proud of the partnership it has built with the interval house over the

years and we look forward each year to help them anyway we can, especially around the holiday season. With the guidance from Mr. Archer, a 5th grade teacher, our soup drive was another huge success. This year Hayden students helped to collect 995 cans of soup. At Hayden we feel it is extremely important to teach our students the practice of giving back to those less fortunate than us. The students and families of Hayden make all of us very proud to be apart of the team.



OC Dept of Ed • *From Page 7*



**Dr. Al Mijares**  
Superintendent

professional educators, who also developed lesson plans and activities for teachers.

As the towering likenesses of her parents were revealed, Sylvia Mendez and her siblings stood front and center. Other invited guests took photos and applauded.

“I’m just so happy,” Sylvia said. “I know my mother and family are looking at us from heaven, and they are so happy. Thank you for honoring them.”

In this season of gratitude, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Mendezes, along with the Estrada, Guzman, Palomino and Ramirez families, all of whom fought for access and equality on behalf of generations of students they would never meet. As Felicitas

Mendez said, they were taking action not just for their own children, but para todos los niños — for all children.

The Mendez case is worth celebrating because it broke new ground not just for Orange County but for our entire nation, broadening and strengthening the principles on which this country was founded.

Now and forever, Mendez Tribute Monument Park will serve as a space to gather behind shared values, to reflect on those principles, to revisit a watershed moment in our history and to learn more about the everyday Americans who made it possible.

For more information on Mendez Tribute Monument Park, along with lesson plans and activities, visit [www.mendezpark.org](http://www.mendezpark.org).

# Johnson *Middle School (6–8)*

13603 Edwards St., Westminster, CA 92683 • 714/894-7244 • johnson.wsdk8.us



**Daniel Owens**  
*Principal*

## Making History

Johnson Middle School sits on the historic location of the Munemitsu farm. This farm also became an integral part of one of Orange County's most important civil rights cases, *Mendez v. Westminster*.

The 40-acre farm and its importance has been somewhat overshadowed over the years and is virtually lost to history to many of our Westminster residents and the country as a whole. The Westminster School District and the City of Westminster have worked hard to pay proper tribute to the families involved and to the locations where history was made.

The Westminster School District has renamed its central office in honor of the Mendez family. Johnson Middle School's gymnasium has been named for the iconic Sylvia Mendez. The City of Westminster has also recently opened the Mendez Tribute Monument Park and Freedom Trail, which will tell the story of what happened in the city beginning in 1944 when the Mendez

children tried to attend their first day of school but were turned away.

The ground that Johnson Middle School students walk on each day is the same ground that the Mendez and Munemitsu families walked on in 1944; Johnson Middle School strives to embrace this fact and strengthen our students' knowledge of this historical case by using new curriculum, park field trips, and historical fiction and non-fiction books.

The book *The Kindness of Color*, by Janice Munemitsu, outlines the true story of the two families whose paths connected and led to the landmark case and the desegregation of the California public schools. And *Sylvia & Aki*, by Winfred Conkling, is a historical novel based on the two young girls who chose kindness and friendship during a time when their families were going through massive changes.

Both of these books were placed in classroom libraries on the Johnson campus, and will help our students understand the turmoil that the Mendez and Munemitsu families had to endure on their way to changing history.



**Johnson Student's showoff some of their new books added to their classroom's library.**

# Land School

15151 Temple St., Westminster, CA 92683 • land.wsdk8.us • 714/894-7311 Student Services • 714/898-8389 Child Development



**Nicole Baitx-Kennedy**  
*Executive Director,  
Early Education &  
Expanded Learning*

## Half-Way There

It's hard to believe that we are halfway through the school year! So far this year, Land has experienced several wonderful moments full of growth, joy, and celebrations.

Not long ago, we had an amazing office upgrade in order to accommodate our school's Early Education and Expanded Learning teams that are sharing the same workspace. With that, we also recently welcomed our newest member to the team, Shazia Batla, an accountant. Currently we

are in search of one more team member to make us whole. WSD is always looking for team members throughout the district. If you are interested in full-time or part-time work, we have something for you! Early Education and Expanded Learning is a great place to be!

Our Holiday Performances were a total success too, thanks to the wonderful teachers who helped facilitate an amazing show for our parents to come and enjoy. It was such a pleasure to see the children's smiling faces as they sang for their family members! Land School also had a wonderful student performance at the January 12th school board meeting. We hope that you were there to cheer on our youngest learners as they shared some great songs with the board and community!

Fostering and spreading kindness is a big part of our culture here at Land School. This holiday season, our staff members created unique handmade cards with a sprinkle of love and which they shared anonymously with each other. It was delightful to see our staff's reactions when they first opened their cards!



**Handmade Christmas Card Exchange**

All in all, Land School has experienced several big accomplishments this year, and is expecting many more. That is why we are so excited to announce that this January our Early Education Department will be launching our new Parent Resource Center and Learning Link at Fryberger!

This is a perfect place for our parents to come on a drop-in basis for parent education, Mommy and Me time, community resources, health screenings, and more. Everyone with a child from 0-5 years of age is welcome. Please check out our web page, or call for more information.



**Holiday Performance**

# Meairs *Elementary (K-5)*

8441 Trask Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92844 • 714/372-8800 • meairs.wsdk8.us



**Dr. Kathy Kane**  
*Principal*

## Meairs Running Club

On December 10th, the Iva Meairs Running Club participated in their first event of the year, the “Run For A Claus” meet sponsored by the Orange County Marathon. Students, family members, and our staff ran either the one mile or 5K course on the University of California, Irvine campus.

For the last 10 years our third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students have had the opportunity to join the Running Club. This is a fun way to get some exercise and experience the thrill of crossing the finish line and having a medal placed around your neck. This year we had

almost 40 students come out to run with the Club. The Club meets on a weekly basis with teachers Mr. Jeff Nakano, Mr. David Kim, and Principal Dr. Kathy Kane.

Twenty of the students were able to attend the Run for A Claus event and come home with a medal. The Club takes a break during the month of January, but once February rolls around it is time to start practicing for the “Kids Run the OC” event in May. This event takes place at the Orange County Fairgrounds on the same weekend as the OC Marathon.

This run is for children only, and so our parents have to sit this one out and cheer for their children. If they want to run they will need to sign up for the Marathon!



**Meairs Running Club**



**Run for A Claus**



**Meairs Coaches**

# Schmitt *Elementary (K-5)*

7200 Trask Ave., Westminster, CA 92683 • 714/894-7264 • schmitt.wsdk8.us



**Sarah Nead-Rendon**  
*Principal*

## Holiday Traditions

It has been wonderful getting back to our holiday traditions. For the first time in two years, we were able to have our photos with Santa and PTA bake sale event.

We were excited to host this event and offer our Santa photo opportunity to our families and the community. Students and their families were able to come and get a picture with Santa as well as enjoy some goodies from our PTA bake sale. We had a fantastic turnout and it is lovely to see our families with their smiling faces dressed in their holiday outfits. We appreciate our volunteers who helped orchestrate this event and the donations for our delicious baked goods. We also had our Winter Holiday Program and every class performed. The students were



**Staff photo with Santa**

eager to perform on stage for an audience and our parents were also thrilled to come and see their children sing some of our most favorite holiday songs. These festive events brought the holiday spirit to Schmitt.



**Winter Holiday Performance**

# Schroeder *College & Career Academy*

15151 Columbia Ln., Huntington Beach, CA 92647 • 714/894-7268 • schroeder.wsdk8.us



**Dr. Shannon Villanueva**  
*Principal*

## Schroeder Academy's Sensational Spellers

On Thursday, December 15, 2022, Schroeder College and Career Academy held our annual spelling bees. There were two competitions, a 4th/5th grade spelling bee and a 6th grade spelling bee. All spelling bee participants were the winners of their classroom spelling bees. Congratulations to all the classroom spelling bee winners! The competition was tough, and everyone did a fantastic job. The winners for the 4th/5th grade spelling bee were 1st place-Krystine Nguyen, 2nd place-Cole Ho, and 3rd place-Marc Sanchez. The sixth grade spelling bee winners were 1st place-Katelyn Nguyen, 2nd place-Kristen Marcos, and 3rd place-Ben Nguyen. Congratulations!!! Krystine and Katelyn are sisters. They will be moving on to represent Schroeder in the district wide spelling bee. Thank you to our sensational staff who helped make the spelling bees a great success, Ms. Garvey-Coordinator, Ms. Griffith-Pronouncer, Mr. Chien, Ms. Schulz & Dr. Villanueva-Judges. Great job team! Good luck to Krystine and Katelyn at the district spelling bee!



# Sequoia Academy *GATE Magnet Elementary*

5900 Iroquois Rd., Westminster, CA 92683 • 714/894-7271 • sequoia.wsdk8.us



**Alisha Tardif**  
Principal

## Forensic Detectives

In December, Sequoia Academy's fifth-graders attended the Tiger Woods Learning Lab for four full days of inquiry-based learning. They immersed themselves in a forensic-science experience in a 35,000-square-foot state-of-the-art technology facility. Each

fifth-grader became a junior detective and used their powers of observation, scientific knowledge and problem-solving skills to help uncover the truth in "The Case of the Dracula Tear Ruby."

First, students learned about the origins of forensic science and the first United States laboratory, established in 1923 in the Los Angeles Police Department. Next, the forensic team explored the uniqueness of fingerprints and learned that even identical twins have different patterns and classifications of fingerprints. The junior crime solvers then learned and implemented real-world techniques that included fingerprinting, DNA and handwriting analysis, chromatography, and the difference between acids and bases. They viewed fibers and other evidence under microscopes. Students spent time analyzing handwriting for line quality, spacing of words and letters, pen pressure, slant and placement of titles. The junior detectives then dove into chromatography, where they explored color mixing, visible light spectrum, wavelength and techniques used to separate color mixtures.

The next investigation utilized DNA samples from suspects and victims. Under microscopes, the junior crime detectives analyzed hair strands and fibers recovered at the crime scene. They analyzed mystery liquids for clarity, pH level, acids and bases. To conclude the investigation,



students synthesized their knowledge and evidence and applied it to the hypothetical crime scene victim, Ruby Stone, and ruled out suspects Sammy Safire, Swift Lee, Ice Tee and Roma Florence.

The fifth-graders cited evidence to confirm the guilty suspect by using the expertise and knowledge gained throughout the week and by implementing the scientific method of forensic science. This educational experience empowered students to pursue their passions and explore a career many had never considered.



# Stacey *Middle School*

6311 Larchwood Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92647 • 714/894-7212 • stacey.wsdk8.us



**Wendy Baird**  
*Principal*

## From Their Hearts

At Stacey Middle School, we value the kind of memorable experiences that will enrich the lives of our students.

Stacey Middle School students were recently invited to sing the National Anthem at the unveiling of the new Mendez Tribute Monument Park. This park was created to honor the Mendez family and their dedication to fighting for the equality

of all students. Mrs. Valverde, Stacey's beloved Spanish teacher, arranged a group of students and prepared them to perform. Our Stacey students sang from their hearts, and were very honored to be a part of such an important historic event.

The students did such a great job of singing at the Mendez Tribute Monument Park that they were invited to sing the National Anthem at the Westminster School District's board meeting on December 9th. Again, they were amazing! The students were met with enthusiastic cheer and applause after their performance, and we are so proud of them and their many talents.

In addition to sharing our students' strengths with our community, we also value learning about the culture of our community. We know that teaching our students about the various cultural traditions that their families celebrate will help us to better understand one another.

The students were fortunate to be able to celebrate Día de Los Muertos with Westminster High School. The celebration consisted of Westminster High School students coming to Stacey Middle School, performing dances, and sharing facts about Día de Los Muertos with our students during lunchtime. The next day our Spanish classes were invited to Westminster High School to participate in their Día de Los Muertos activities.

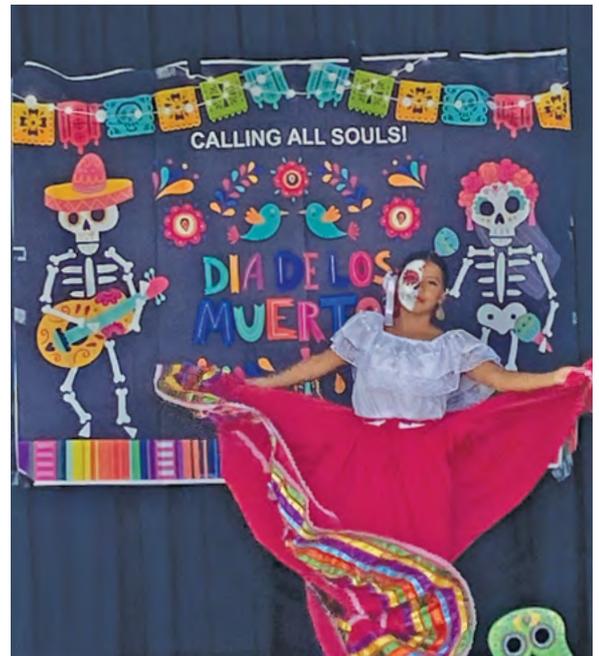
Our students also watched a variety of performances and participated in arts and crafts. It was a fantastic celebration!



**Stacey student performing at the Westminster School District board meeting.**



**Stacey students with Sylvia Mendez at the Mendez Tribute Monument Park**



**Día de Los Muertos dancer**

# Warner *Middle School (6-8)*

14171 Newland St., Westminster, CA 92683 • 714/894-7281 • warner.wsdk8.us



**Dr. Kenneth Lopour**  
*Principal*

## Students Earning Academic Honors

Warner Middle School students continue to work incredibly hard, and find success, both in their academics and extracurricular activities. At the end of our first trimester, we were able to award nearly 550 of our students with either a Faculty Award (those earning a 3.0-3.5 GPA) or the Principal's Award (those earning a 3.5-4.0). This means that over half of our total student population is earning academic honors. Additionally in December we held a "Growth

Celebration" to honor those students who have shown year-over-year growth on the STAR test in either Math or English Language Arts. We were able to honor nearly 700 hundred students which represents nearly 80% of our student population. We could not be more proud of our student's overall academic achievement. Another exciting program here at Warner is our Vietnamese Dual Language Immersion program. We are excited to be the first middle school in the state to offer this opportunity. These amazing students can continue on to AP courses at I and eventually earn their Seal of Bi-literacy when they graduate at the high school level.



**A few Warner students celebrating their STAR test growth.**



**A few members of our Vietnamese Dual Language Immersion program participating in a Spelling Bee.**



**Here are some of our robotics students presenting to our Board of Education.**

# Webber *Elementary (K-6)*

14142 Hoover St., Westminster, CA 92683 • 714/894-7288 • webber.wsdk8.us



**Robert Murdock**  
*Principal*

## Family Movie Night

Our wonderful Webber PTA put on a fantastic “Winter Wonderland Family Movie Night” in December. Our students and their families were overjoyed to come together to celebrate the holiday season. Parents pre-ordered dinner for their families, and were able to eat and watch the movie in Webber’s

newly remodeled multipurpose room. School staff members partnered with the PTA board to decorate the room for the season, and prepare food, beverages, and treats for the families in attendance.

We would like to extend a big Webber thank you to Misty Cooley our PTA president, and her fantastic team, for making such a memorable event for our school community.



**Happy  
Valentines**



YOU'RE  
SWEET

# Willmore *Elementary (K-5)*

7122 Maple St., Westminster, CA 92683 • 714/895-3765 • willmore.wsdk8.us



**Tieumi "Domi" Ellis**  
*Principal*

## Días de los Muertos

The Willmore Dual Language Academy recently celebrated "Día de los Muertos" in collaboration with Westminster High School (WHS). The event's origins are a blend of Mesoamerican ritual, European religion, and Spanish culture.

Our school's classrooms were decorated with beautiful altars, bright orange marigolds called cempasuchil, Pan de Muerto, and pictures of loved ones. The students arrived in traditional dresses and face paint. Our wonderful PTA also decorated our school walkways with multicolored papel picado. This Aztec and Nahua tradition dates back over 3,000 years in honor of family ancestors.

Westminster High School hosted nearly 200 of our students at this event. Their Spanish classes even set up and decorated special altars and activities in Abbey Square!

All of the WHS classes came out to look at and vote on their favorite altars, maquetas, and cementerios. Our students also participated in activities such as Day



of the Dead bingo, mask-making, a butterfly garden, a spin-the-wheel event, pinata making, a shaving cream "cloud" coloring, and a photo station. Folklorico performed throughout the day too, which created an exciting and culturally enriching experience for our students.

Our Willmore Thunderbirds are so grateful to the WHS Spanish Club, the WHS AP Spanish teacher, Maestra Sylvia Ramos, and Maestra Annette Gutierrez for planning and organizing this special event for our students.

