

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Fountain Valley School District



Volume 19, Issue 110

March 2023

Read Across America Day



Dr. Stopp reading to students at Oka Elementary School.



MICHAEL H.
Kindergarten Teacher
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Dr. Katherine Stopp
Superintendent

SUPERINTENDENT

There is only one thing better than listening to someone read a story, which is... reading a story to a group of elementary school students! It is truly exhilarating to hear their laughter, the discussion, and requests for more! While it's enjoyable for all, it's much more than fun. Researchers share that "the single most important activity for building knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children" (Fischwer et al., 2004).

Last week, FVSD celebrated Read Across America Week. Staff and students from all over the District visited elementary schools to read aloud their favorite books and share their love of storytelling. I had the pleasure of reading three of my favorites to kindergarteners, first graders, and fifth graders: *Stephanie's Ponytail*, by Robert Munsch, *Beryl's Box* by Lisa Taylor, and *Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox.

I strongly encourage you to make the time to read aloud to your children. That time you spend together reading, listening, and discussing stories is invaluable. Remember, reading aloud and sharing a book is not just for early and emergent readers. We are never too old to enjoy a good book with others.

Here's to reading!

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Leaders Who are Readers for Life!

By Steven Andrew Schultz, President Pro-Tem

Every time you open a new book you are opening yourself up to a new life. That's why we want our students to be leaders who are readers for life. America has raised generations of adults who know how to read but who don't want to read and that is not an educated person.

In FVSD, we expanded our library hours in all ten schools, bought tens of thousands of new books so our students in our middle and elementary schools can have classroom libraries too, and our trustees, superintendent, and assistants, and even the Fountain Valley Fire Department, visit schools to read to children.

At Gisler, all students and staff were given the same book to read together. I read a chapter and felt the full circle magnitude of the moment, for my mother was a teacher at Gisler and it was my fourth-grade teacher Mrs. Susie Crandall who made me excited about reading when I was her student at Gisler. And now, here I am, a school board trustee reading to the same school that made me a leader and reader.

The Board has added a renewed emphasis on reading and increased communication home on how parents can help build readers. When children see their parents read, when parents talk to children about what they are reading, when parents and children read the same book together, and when books are prominently displayed at home, children are far more likely to grow into adults who choose to read.

Susie Crandall and I still communicate because she did more than teach me how to read, she inspired me to want to read and I see the value and understand the power of every page I turn, turns me into a better person...and that is the point of education.

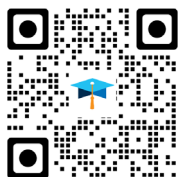


A young boy with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a yellow sweater and a green backpack, is walking outdoors on a paved path. He is looking off to the side with a slight smile. The background shows shadows of trees and a green chalk drawing on the ground.

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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



School News

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**Covering the
FOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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This is our 19th year publishing the excellence from the Fountain Valley School District. Thank you for being loyal readers and supporters of public education.

Parents please see page 5 CalKIDS to see if you qualify to help kickstart your child's college savings plan.

Enjoy Spring Break and we'll be back May 10 with our next issue.



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Gary Feldman, M.D.
MemorialCare Miller Children's
& Women's Hospital Long Beach

How to get kids on a good sleep schedule when it's time to "Spring Forward"

By: Gary Feldman, M.D., developmental & behavioral pediatric and sleep medicine, Stramski Children's Developmental Center, MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach

Spring is an exciting time when we receive an additional hour of sunlight. While the annual daylight savings time, "spring forward," offers more sunlight in the evening, it also means that we lose an hour of sleep. This time change can disrupt normal sleep patterns for children.

Some tips to help your child adjust to the time change:

- **Gradually Shift Bedtime** — Have your child move their bedtime up by 20-minute increments each night starting three days before the time change.
- **Keep a Bedtime Routine** — Bedtime routines help cultivate strong sleep cues to help your child fall asleep at bedtime. If your child is not falling asleep after bedtime, don't give in to excuses they may make to get out of bed. Keep them calm and preserve the bedtime routine.

- **Turn Off the Light** — Ensure your child's room is dark at bedtime and expose your child to light at wakeup time.
- **Wake Your Child Up on Time** — In the morning, don't compensate for the lost hour of sleep. Wake your child up based on current clock time.
- **Patience is Key** — Be patient if your child is sleepy for a few days. Try not to let them nap if it's not their usual practice.

Teenagers may take longer to adjust to the new time change.

This year's daylight-saving time begins at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 12, 2023. Don't forget to mark your calendar to set your clocks forward one hour. Here's wishing you and your family healthy sleep.



Athena, Age 2



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Tony Strickland
Mayor

Hello everyone, I'm Tony Strickland – one of four newly elected Council Members and the Mayor of HB. It is a pleasure to serve our City's 200,000 constituents, and I am grateful for the opportunity to work side by side with our residents, businesses, and visitors.

As your Mayor, I want to be active in the community and I am eager to meet with you! Over this next year, I will host a series of Town Hall meetings as well as Coffee with the Mayor events all across our City. I want to meet with residents and business from Sunset Beach to Southeast Area and Goldenwest to Downtown. It is important for me to listen and understand the issues our community cares about.

In addition, I have come up with a program that recognizes those in the community doing great work! I would like to honor those unsung heroes in Surf City that make a difference or have accomplished an amazing feat! Each month, I will personally present folks with a certificate here at City Hall. If you have someone that deserves a certificate, please email media@surfcity-hb.org.

Lastly, you can reach me at tony.strickland@surfcity-hb.org or call 714.536.5553 to set up a meeting. For a list of upcoming events and the latest news, visit SurfCityBreak.com.



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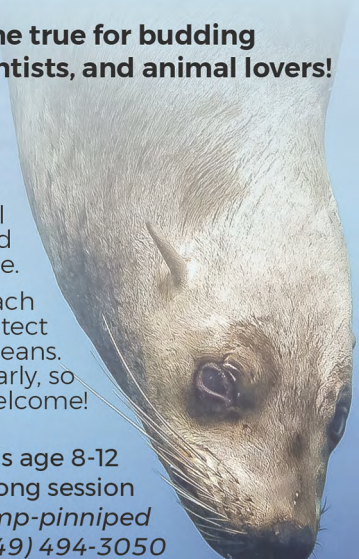
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Packed Slate of Programs

By Laura Jenkins, Senior Youth Services Librarian

We are excited to usher in spring with a packed slate of programs for children and teens at the Huntington Beach Public Library! Read on to learn more about upcoming fun, free programs for youth and families.

LEGO Kids Club

Tuesday afternoons at 3pm in the Central Library Tabby Theater.

Families with children ages 6 and older are invited to build and create together in LEGO Kids Club, a S.T.E.M.-based building program. Become an engineer as you design a city, build a boat, craft your dream house, or blast off in a custom rocketship. We'll provide the LEGOs - you provide the imagination!

Wonderful Women Scientists Take-Home Activity Kits

Explore historical women in science through take-home activity kits celebrating National Women's History Month! Each Wonderful Women Scientists Kit will include short biographies, activity instructions, resources for further exploration, and most activity materials. Kits are available while supplies last from all HBPL locations, starting Saturday, March 11.

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Women in S.T.E.A.M. Career Panel

Thursday, March 30, 6-7pm in the Central Library Theater.

The Library invites you to join us for an evening panel discussion for tweens, teens, and their families featuring highly successful women in the fields of science, technology, engineering, art, and math. This year's panelists include two travel nurses, a technical video game artist, a senior civil engineer, a published children's book author, and a NASA-trained astronomer. Panelists will share their experiences, career path journey, and inspirational advice, and audience members will have the opportunity to engage with them directly during a Q&A session.

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Roch Courreges *Elementary (K-5)*

18313 Santa Carlotta, Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4280 • www.courreges.fvgsd.us



Lisa Tanita
Principal

February Celebrations

2023 started off with a bang with an amazing Lunar New Year celebration at our flag ceremony. This cultural educational performance was an engaging way for students to learn more about the Lunar New Year. We are so grateful to our amazing

PTA and Courreges families for this terrific event!

February followed with our Read Across America Week, inspiring students to develop a love of reading—and kindness!

Our guest author, Danielle LaBriola, shared the beauty behind kindness to create a ripple effect. She inspired us with her “Love Bug” story that promoted kindness with actionable deeds. Students also participated in a literacy walk, interacting with the books *The Dog’s Colorful Day* by Emma Dodd and *The Couch Potato* by Jory John.



Last but not least, in February we celebrated our Courreges teacher of the year! Rachelle Coy has been teaching in the Fountain Valley School District since 2016 and is currently teaching third grade as well as serving as site lead at Courreges Elementary School for the 2022–23 school year. A colleague shared, “Rachelle

has played an integral role in the lives of students and teachers since she began here. She has such an incredible wealth of knowledge and engages her students in a way that I admire.”

Ms. Coy connects with each student and facilitates rich conversations that promote critical thinking and next steps for each child. She is a team player, always willing to share her knowledge with her colleagues. Ms. Coy leads by example and is always looking to grow as an educator to make a difference in the lives of her students.

As a dedicated, caring, innovative, knowledgeable and impactful teacher, she gives her time, heart and energy to everything she does. Courreges is blessed by her presence each and every day and is honored to celebrate Ms. Rachelle Coy as its 2023 Teacher of the Year.



James H. Cox *Elementary (K-5)*

17615 Los Jardines E., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4240 • www.cox.fvgsd.us



Cara Robinson
Principal

Teacher of the Year

Cox Elementary is proud to recognize our 1st-grade teacher, Mrs. Jennifer Hopkins, as our Cox Teacher of the Year. Jennifer is widely respected as a hard-working, dedicated educator with a giving heart and an open mind. She is loved by her colleagues and her students. Jennifer is a nurturing teacher with high expectations for her students. You walk into her classroom and you can practically feel the “hug” of her environment.

Beyond the classroom, Jennifer’s reach is far and wide. Jennifer serves on our school site multicultural committee, our visual and performing arts committee, our school site action team, our school site council, and our PTA, among others. Her commitment to her professional colleagues and her students is second to none. She has been integral in our safety team, spearheading our disaster relief supplies and protocols to keep our site prepared for emergencies. She has been a part of our multicultural fashion show event, which has become part of our school culture where we showcase cultural fashion and performance arts.



Teachers Jessica O'Malley, Kim Cassidy, Jennifer Hopkins, Kellie Smith, principal Cara Robinson

Harry C. Fulton Middle School (6–8)

8778 El Lago St., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/375-2816 • www.fulton.fvdsd.us



Jenny Salberg
Principal



Molly Kuykendall
Assistant Principal

ELA: Novel Units

Fulton's English Department has been busy reading, analyzing, and discussing great literature! All three grade levels studied class novels: *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park for sixth grade, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry for seventh grade, and *Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai for eighth grade.

One academic and interactive activity included holding a Socratic seminar at the conclusion of the novel unit. A Socratic seminar is a student-run, student-directed discussion about any given topic. For our novel units, students discussed their own interpretations of the novel, asked each other challenging questions about the literary elements of the text, and formed their own conclusions about the overall meaning of the book.

Other interactive activities held at the end of reading included:

Sixth grade: Students watched a TED Talk presented by Salva Dut, the protagonist of *A Long Walk to Water*. Students listened to Mr. Dut discuss his real-life journey from being a Lost Boy of the Sudanese Civil War to a refugee of that war to his relocation in the United States. At the conclusion of the TED Talk, students evaluated Mr. Dut's message and creatively presented their ideas.

Seventh grade: Students formed their own dystopian societies after exploring the dystopian society in *The Giver*. Students created visuals that showed their society's structure and rules and then presented their society to the class.

Eighth grade: Students expressed their understanding of *Inside Out and Back Again* through collaboration and their own unique strengths. Some ways students thought critically about the readings was by engaging in creative writing, debates and mock trials.

Overall, Fulton's English students have been busy



this winter. The class novel units can be summed up by reporting that the students did an amazing job!



Robert Gisler *Elementary (K-5)*

18720 Las Flores, Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4211 • www.gisler.fvgsd.us



Katherine Pavidis
Principal

Excited about Reading!

Winter at Gisler has been packed full of learning fun and school spirit!

We started February off with our Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Carissa Nunn. Chosen by peers for her ability to help and support not just her students but fellow staff members as well. She is driven by her love for learning and caring for others!

Our student council lead the charge with decade theme days: 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's, and 90's.

In early February, after months of preparation, we sent our 5th graders off to Outdoor Science Camp in the mountains for three days. These students had the opportunity to gain independence, experience adventures (ropes course and archery), work as a team, learn about forest ecology, appreciate nature with day and night hikes, and meet new people. Soon thereafter, we were celebrating our 100th day of school.

We wrapped up our February with Read Across America week and the beginning of our One School, One Book community program. Our campus is buzzing with the excitement of reading!



100 days smarter



Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Carissa Nunn



5th graders at Outdoor Science Camp

Kazuo Masuda *Middle School(6–8)*

17415 Las Jardines W., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4250 • www.masuda.fvsd.us



Jennifer Morgan
Principal



Matt Ploski
Assistant Principal

Dance Team Preparing

This past week at Masuda Middle School, the school's developing dance team has been hard at work preparing for their second performance to support the Volleyball team in the pep rally next week! The team has grown this year, with

19 years, having trained in dance styles of Modern, Ballet, Jazz, Contemporary, Lyrical, and Hip Hop. Under their leadership, the team has grown to include 22 dancers who have varying degrees of dance experience. As a former Fountain Valley Dance Team coach, Sarah has brought in the current head coach, Kelela Batinga and captains from the Fountain Valley High School's Dance Team to work closely with Masuda's Dance Team, creating exciting choreography and high energy routines! Sarah and Andrea are really excited to announce their team will be competing at the Miss Dance Drill Team USA Nationals Competition on April 1, 2023.

new teachers Sarah Hong and Andrea Derkum being the coaches. Both Sarah and Andrea have been dancing for



William T. Newland *Elementary* (K-5)

8787 Dolphin St., Huntington Beach, CA 92646 • 714/378-4200 • www.newland.fvgsd.us



Kathy Davis
Interim Principal

Teacher of the Year

The impact a teacher has on a student is remarkable and can inspire children to achieve greatness. Michelle Siefker exemplifies the best qualities a teacher can possess. What I believe makes Michelle a remarkable teacher is her tireless commitment to her students. She wholeheartedly believes that it is her personal responsibility to ensure that every

child will learn. She expects that every child will achieve and she does not give up until they do. She makes no excuses for her students or herself.

Her students adore her and don't want to miss a minute of time with her. I appreciate her ability to bond so well with her students and to get the very best work from them.

Michelle profoundly appreciates the precious time she is afforded with the young children placed in her care and recognizes that she is an important part of molding their lives. She loves having a role in shaping the future.



Isojiro Oka *Elementary (K-5)*

9800 Yorktown Ave., Huntington Beach, CA 92646 • 714/378-4260 • www.oka.fvgsd.us



Julie Ballesteros
Principal

Our Wolfpack Teacher of the Year

Oka Elementary is honored to announce Mai Pham as its 2023 Teacher of the Year. Mai is an extraordinary person and educator, one who has truly touched the lives of her students and staff

every day for the past seven years here in the Fountain Valley School District.

Ms. Pham is intuitive, creative, thoughtful, and firm, but so kind. She takes pride in building a strong foundation for her students' educational careers. The high expectations and structure of her class are so positively conducive to learning that her students are truly inspired to grow.

From the way Mrs. Pham always teaches in a positive, supportive, and safe environment, our families know that she is committed to providing their children with everything they need to reach their potential. The children come in as a piece of clay, but they leave as a masterpiece.

Mrs. Pham does this by fostering independence, teaching problem-solving skills, and instilling in her students the importance of hard work and caring for others. She has built a classroom family that loves and supports one another. Her students feel safe in sharing their feelings, concerns, and constructive feedback to each other in a respectful way through daily community circles.

Mai is not only an extraordinary educator, she is also a true teammate and friend. She makes her peers feel valued and loved through her generosity. Mai is respectful, humble, and never expects praise. Each year her strengths are highlighted in teamwork, communication, consistency, differentiated instruction, and above all, her incredible love for children. Congratulations to Ms. Pham on this well-deserved honor.



Mai Pham was brought to tears when she opened a box revealing she was chosen as Oka's Teacher of the Year.

Urbain H. Plavan *Elementary* (K-5)

9675 Warner Ave., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4230 • www.plavan.fvdsd.us



Dr. Patrick Ham
Principal

A Miracle Worker!

Kristi Manthorne, our talented Transitional Kindergarten teacher, has been named Plavan Elementary School's Teacher of the Year for 2023. Mrs. Manthorne joined the FVSD district in 2000, and transferred to Plavan Elementary School in 2013-2014. She started as our kindergarten teacher and then transitioned to TK in 2015.

Mrs. Manthorne is first and foremost a loving wife and mother to her daughters. In the classroom, she is described by her colleagues as a "miracle worker" with our four- and five-year-olds. Because of her amazing example and grace both in and out of the classroom, she is greatly admired and respected by her colleagues.

Here are a few quotes from her peers.

"I have had the privilege of working next to Kristi for a decade. During that time, I have been so impressed with her dedication to students and the school community. She is dependable and repeatedly impresses me with her

knowledge, flexibility, and thoroughness as she plans "hands-on" learning activities for her students. Her love for her students is apparent upon walking into her classroom, and she is committed to making her students, team, and colleagues feel like family. She provides an environment and learning opportunities that set the foundation for her students to succeed!"

"Kristi Manthorne works hard for her students every day. She is a learner, and always strives to improve her craft. She implements strong academics, visual arts, and social emotional practice in her classroom. She is a lifelong learner and is always incorporating the best teaching practices, like CGI and Workshop. She goes above and beyond and always has a smile on her face. I believe she is a great representative for Plavan's Teacher of the Year."

We are truly blessed that many of our students' first-year experiences are with Mrs. Manthorne. Her classroom is excellent and welcoming in every way. Congratulations, Mrs. Manthorne! You embody the very best of Plavan Elementary School.



Samuel E. Talbert *Middle School (6–8)*

9101 Brabham Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92646 • 714/378-4220 • www.talbert.fvdsd.us



**Jay
Adams**
Principal



**Brandon
LoMonaco**
Assistant Principal

2023 Teacher of the Year

Talbert is proud to honor Mr. Loren Howard, Science and Elective Teacher, as our 2023 Teacher of the Year. Mr. Howard's nominating peers love how he "has always been at the core of the 'Talbert Magic,' that special culture where staff share their personalities/

time/energy to create a caring, amazingly positive learning and working environment." Mr. Howard is touted as being "the embodiment of 'doing it for the students,' and as having an absolutely addictive energy!" He is undoubtedly an indispensable member of the Talbert family.

We at Talbert are blessed by Mr. Howard's positive energy and outlook. Not only the kids, but the parent community and his teaching peers benefit immensely from all that he has to offer! We are proud to present him as our Teacher of the Year on the basis of his outstanding contributions to the lives of the children (and adults) whose lives he touches daily.



Talbert Celebrates Mr. Howard.



Mr. Howard's Artwork Adorns the Talbert Campus.

Hisamatsu Tamura *Elementary* (K-5)

17340 Santa Suzanne St., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/375-6226 • www.tamura.fvgsd.us



Chris Mullin
Principal

Read Across America Week

Recently, across Tamura's campus, there was a great celebration of reading as we participated in the fun of Read Across America Week. From spirit days to fun events, students and staff engaged in activities designed to further fuel a love of reading. We had numerous guest readers throughout the week from previous employees, fire and police officers, and our district superintendent, Dr. Stopp.

As educators, we know reading helps grow students' vocabulary and their understanding of the world. It is necessary for learning, so instilling a love of reading at an early age is the key that unlocks the door to lifelong learning. Additionally, reading books aloud creates a

source of pleasant, entertaining and exciting formative experiences for children to remember. Children who value books are more motivated to read on their own and will hopefully continue to hold those values for the rest of their lives. Instilling a love of reading early gives a child a head start on expanding their vocabulary and building independence and self-confidence. It helps children learn to make sense not only of the world around them but also people, building social-emotional skills and, of course, imagination.

We are so grateful to our teachers, staff and volunteers for bringing these celebrations to our campuses! In addition, a huge thank-you to our families for joining us in celebrating a love of reading and for a fantastic week across Tamura!



Mr. Talley reads to Tamura students for Read Across America Day.

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