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Covering the Fountain Valley School District



Volume 19, Issue 112

June 2023



Fountain Valley School District's Monster Concert Unites Musical Talents in a Spectacular Showcase





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The Certificated Celebration



Dr. Katherine Stopp
Superintendent

We recently had the privilege of celebrating the remarkable tenure of our certificated staff. The Certificated Celebration, hosted by the Fountain Valley Education Foundation and the Fountain Valley School District, was an opportunity to recognize the dedication and commitment of our staff members who have reached significant milestones of service.

Fifteen years of service were celebrated for the following esteemed certificated staff members: Julie Ballesteros, Leo Brignardello, Julie Gonzales, Autumn Heredia, Melissa Kim, Molly Levitt, Frieda Lim, Liz Madden, Jessica Micle, Nicole Schlosser, Amelia Terich, and Kevin Yamabe. It was an honor to acknowledge their unwavering loyalty to our district.

Moreover, we took great pleasure in honoring staff members who have dedicated twenty years of service: Jay Adams, Cara Robinson, Jill Summerhays, Polly Villarreal, and Toni Webber. Their two decades of commitment are truly commendable.



Certificated Retirees

The celebration also recognized the outstanding achievement of teachers who have completed twenty-five years of service: Becky Guess, Lisa Halterman, Laurel Harkins, Brooke James, Janelle Johnson, and Patti Ostovarpour. Their long-standing dedication has left an indelible impact on countless students.

Finally, we had the privilege of celebrating the exceptional thirty-year service of Beth Fockler and Cecilia Barton, who have devoted three decades to FVSD. Their remarkable commitment is truly exemplary.

Collectively, these remarkable educators have contributed a total of 465 years to the Fountain Valley School District, touching the lives of numerous students, families, and colleagues. We are profoundly grateful for their unwavering positive influence, day in and day out.

During the event, heartfelt speeches were delivered by colleagues of retiring educators Sue Gauldin, Mary Jimenez, Dawn O'Neil, and Jeff Siemens, who have made extraordinary contributions throughout their careers. Their dedication will be remembered with deep appreciation.



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25 Years of Service



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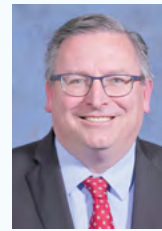
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Member

Fountain Valley School District's Monster Concert Unites Musical Talents in a Spectacular Showcase

By Dennis Cole, Board Member

Music filled the air and hearts swelled with pride as students from Fountain Valley School District and Fountain Valley High School's instrumental music programs came together to celebrate their talents at our Monster Concert. This signature musical extravaganza, held in May, showcased the remarkable musical abilities of students across elementary, middle, and high school levels. With heartfelt performances and unwavering support from dedicated educators, the Monster Concert proved to be a resounding success, leaving an indelible mark on all who attended.

The Monster Concert provided a unique platform for students of all ages to join forces and share their passion for music. Under the guidance of their middle school Music Directors—Mr. Covacevich, Mr. LaMantia, and Mr. Miller—and the elementary music instructors, including Fred Canada, Shaun Carmer, Andrew Gonzales, Naomi Goshima, Megan Kimmel, Mary Lieblang, Edwin Lovo, Namiah Miller, Julie Morimoto, and Daisy Swanson, the students honed their skills and prepared meticulously for this momentous occasion. Their tireless efforts and dedication were truly commendable, as they worked diligently to ensure a

remarkable showcase. Thank you to our partner Arts & Learning Conservatory for providing the elementary music instructors.

In addition to the elementary and middle school instructors, the Monster Concert owed much of its success to the support of Fountain Valley High School Music Directors Maxwell Lowe and Jackson Lai, along with their team. The event not only served as a celebration of musical accomplishments but also highlighted the importance of music education within the community. By nurturing the talents of young musicians, the Fountain Valley School District has demonstrated its commitment to providing a well-rounded education that extends beyond academics.

The success of the Monster Concert would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of everyone involved. The Music Directors, instructors, and support staff deserve heartfelt gratitude for their unwavering dedication and hard work. Their passion for music and commitment to nurturing the students' abilities have left an indelible impact on their lives.

We thank the Fountain Valley Schools Foundation for all of their support for our music programs.





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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



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Jennifer Rodriguez
coordinator,
Injury Prevention Program,
MemorialCare Miller Children's
& Women's Hospital Long Beach

Our Injury Prevention Team Encourages Proper Car Safety to Keep Kids Safe

By: Jennifer Rodriguez, coordinator, Injury Prevention Program, MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach

Car accidents can be devastating but by taking the appropriate precautions, you can help prevent injury and death.

Using the appropriate car seat for your child's age, height, and weight is crucial. California law requires infants to be rear-facing until they are 2 years old or have reached the seat's maximum height and weight limit. At that point, children will transition to a forward-facing car seat. Next, children will transition to a booster seat. Children age 8 or older or 4'9 or taller, may use the vehicle seat belt as long as it fits properly.

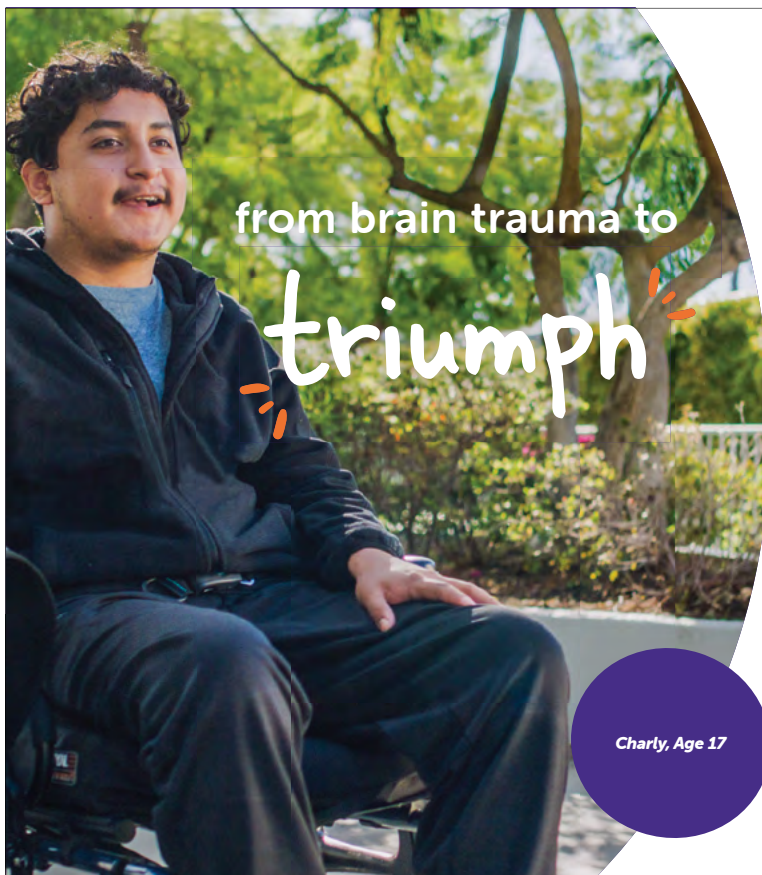
Having the car seat properly installed is also critical in maximizing safety. When installing the seat, make sure it is tightly secured and doesn't wobble or move more than an inch in any direction.

Emphasize the importance of seat belts to children as soon as they are old enough to understand. Make it a rule for everyone in the car to buckle up, every time — no exceptions.

Parents can lead by example by making sure you buckle up as well. Seat belts are the most effective way to protect against serious injuries in a car.

The Injury Prevention Program at MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach focuses on providing safety education to prevent injury. Dedicated injury prevention coordinators offer bicycle, pedestrian and car seat safety, infant CPR classes, as well as certified bicycle and skateboard helmets for children in need. The Injury Prevention Program team attends community events throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties regularly, so that they can educate children and their families on how to stay safe and avoid hospitalization.

For more information on how to keep your child safe in the car, visit millerchildrens.org/injuryprevention.



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

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Ask Dr. Shari



Dr. Shari Sweetnam

Good for the Mind & Great for the Heart

The way we choose to spend our time and the activities in which we engage help form our value system. With a wide array of possibilities and opportunities, volunteering is a positive and vastly beneficial way of helping young people develop a strong sense of self.

Volunteering offers benefits spanning from the intellectual and spiritual to the educational and professional. As young people give of themselves and their time, they can learn about being selfless. In a busy world of “pursuit of personal happiness,” too often the intrinsic values of empathy and giving are the lessons that are overlooked. Helping others via a structured volunteer program is a positive and safe way to develop oneself in this regard.

As Mahatma Gandhi said, “The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in the service of others.” Teens who experience growth at an early age are likely to continue cultivating positive behavior and friendships.

Motivational Speaker, Founder of *The Brainpower Programs for Schools*, Author, Consultant, Radio Host contact: info@doctorshari.com, twitter: DrShariS, Youtube: Dr. ShariS, LinkedIn: Dr. Shari Sweetnam

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Roch Courreges *Elementary (K-5)*

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Lisa Tanita
Principal

A Special Friend

As we close the 2022-2023 school year, I am so proud of the remarkable growth and achievement of our students. The year has been filled with challenges big and small, and our students have developed a growth mindset that will support them in the classroom and beyond.

Their achievements are a testament to their hard work, dedication, and the support they have received from our amazing faculty and staff. Together, we have joined with each other to persevere, grow, and develop so that each Cougar can shine to their fullest potential.

One shining example of our amazing staff is our Classified Employee of the Year, Ms. Nicole Mauzey. Patient and kind, Ms. Nicole tackles each task with a smile and a real “can do” spirit. She is always looking for new ways to support an inclusive environment for all.

Ms. Nicole cares not only for her students, but for all of the many students she encounters. It is clearly evident that her goal is to help all students succeed. Whether it is with a small group, or assisting with note-taking or learning new material, Ms. Nicole Mauzey always works tirelessly and is a positive influence on our campus.

This month our school had its first Multicultural Night. A special thank-you goes to our amazing PTA and school community, who helped us celebrate the diverse cultures that make our community special. The students enjoyed traveling around the world experiencing interactive displays, beautiful performances, and culinary delights from all over.



James H. Cox Elementary (K-5)

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



Cara Robinson
Principal

Thank You PTA!

As the year winds down, we want to thank our parent-teacher organization for their help in providing our students with experiences and activities that spark their imagination. This year was the first after many years that we were able to host assemblies and send students off on field trips. It was wonderful to be able to host a large volume of parent volunteers again--thank you for giving your time to support our kids!



TNT Dunk Assembly



Multicultural Fair



Mobile Dairy



Volunteer Luncheon

Harry C. Fulton *Middle School (6-8)*

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



Jenny Salberg
Principal



Molly Kuykendall
Assistant Principal

2nd Annual Middle School Chess Tournament

*By Karlyna Macey,
Library/Media*

On Saturday, May 6th, Fulton Middle School had the honor of hosting the 2nd Annual FVSD Middle School Chess Tournament. 38 players from the chess clubs at Fulton, Masuda, and

Talbert participated. A special thank you to members of both the Fountain Valley Chess Club and the FV High School chess club who officiated. Beginner, intermediate, and advanced participants played a total of 4 rounds. Each participant received a certificate and trophies were awarded in the following categories:

Beginner:

- 1st - Jaiden Grajeda (Masuda)
- 2nd - Nguyen La (Fulton)
- 3rd - Hailey Kinoshita (Masuda)

Intermediate:

- 1st - Kevin D. Nguyen (Masuda)
- 2nd - Remy Phan (Fulton)
- 3rd - Hunter Lam (Fulton)

Advanced:

- 1st - Owen Carrillo (Masuda)
- 2nd - Braden Vasquez (Masuda)
- 3rd - Namon Nguyen (Fulton)

Participants who did not receive a trophy received a medal of participation.

Congrats to our winners, and a HUGE thank you to all the students who took part in this special event. We look forward to keeping the game of chess going strong in our district!



Deep in the Game



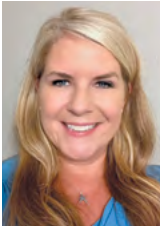
Trophy Table



Job Well Done!

Robert Gisler Elementary (K-5)

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



Katherine Pavidis
Principal

We are Proud!

The end of the year is here and we couldn't be more proud of all the hard work of our young scholars and the growth they have made this school year! Buddy time, coding/robotics, readers/writers workshop, assessments, Gator Gatherings, field trips, family bubble night, and more are just a few of the ways our Gators have demonstrated the 5 C's: Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, Creativity, and Character.



Coding: Learning how to design our own programming to make something move, change shape, or change color.



Writing is fun!



A huge shout out to our P.T.O. and our Gator community for keeping us all connected by helping to provide us opportunities to grow academically and social-emotionally. A review of P.T.O. events from this year: Gator Gallop, Family Picnic Night, Movie

Night, Lion King Theater Production, Red Ribbon Week Basketball assembly, Field Trips, Clothing Drives, Kona Ice, Robotics/Coding, 5th gr. Outdoor Education-Science Camp, Carnival, Bubble Night, Skate Nights, Imagination Machine, Restaurant Dine out nights, and more. More than that long list of activities, we want to thank you for showing us that together we are stronger and if we put our minds to it, anything is possible!

Have a great summer Gators, we will see you in August!



Family Bubble Night: Thank you P.T.O.



**Student Council representing THE GATOR WAY...
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Kazuo Masuda *Middle School(6-8)*

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



Jennifer Morgan
Principal



Matt Ploski
Assistant Principal

Mental Health Awareness

For Mental Health Awareness month at Masuda, we have been highlighting the importance of mental health, self-care, and valuable resources. Our Monarchs were able to experience the fun and therapeutic experience of

bonding with four baby goats. Students and staff enjoyed the rare and joyful interactions, while having a chance to relax and get some fresh air. In addition to the baby goats, we had presentations given to our 7th grade class through the Orange County Department of Education on Mental Health and Wellness. Lastly, our amazing Peer Assistance Leadership students put together slideshows and videos for homeroom classes to highlight mental health resources on campus, as well as why we need to be supportive and helpful of our peers. They also made beautiful posters that were displayed around campus. Our students coming together to advocate for the importance of mental health is truly a representation of what it means to be a Masuda Monarch!



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

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



Kathy Davis
Interim Principal

Fifth Grade Outdoor Science Camp

Newland 5th graders attended outdoor science camp during the week of May 30-June 2. Three Oaks Outdoor Science School is located in Crestline, CA near Lake Arrowhead. Newland students enjoyed the week complete with adventurous

hikes, outdoor science education/activities, and a week of camaraderie with fellow students and staff members. Some of the week's highlights include a "scary" night hike, and all-day challenging hike to Strawberry Ridge and great food. Newland was thrilled that they were able to provide this memorable experience for their 5th graders.



Isojiro Oka *Elementary (K-5)*

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



Julie Ballesteros
Principal

Oka Wolfpack Fundraising Success

This Spring, the Oka Wolfpack community joined together to support our school activities and educational programs through our annual Jog-a-Thon fundraiser. Our “Let’s GLOW Crazy” themed Jog-a-Thon fundraiser set a goal of raising \$40,000. Together our students, staff and community raised over \$60,000! They even accomplished our 50-state challenge, receiving donations from family and friends from all 50 states. We are incredibly grateful for the generosity and support displayed by the Oka Wolfpack. This successful fundraiser will provide our students with field trip experiences, coding and robotics lessons, art education, supplemental educational programs, school wide assemblies, hands-on materials, classroom supplies and much more. As a special thank you for surpassing our fundraising goal the children and staff had the opportunity to SLIME the principal! The Oka Wolfpack is incredibly grateful for the amazing families and staff members that support our children’s education. Go Wolfpack!



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

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



Dr. Patrick Ham
Principal

Honoring Three Amazing Classified Employees

Classified employees include office managers, health clerks, custodians and bilingual, library, and behavior instructional technicians, plus our noon duty and transportation staff. They are the heroes who care for our students after a scraped knee, comfort after a poor choice, and ensure the safety and cleanliness of our school. Plavan

would like to honor three of our classified employees for their dedication and commitment.

I have the honor of recognizing Mrs. Liesel Zepeda as Plavan Elementary School's 2023 Classified Employee of the Year. Mrs. Zepeda is an exceptional employee who impacts not only the culture of the front office but also the climate of the entire school. Her kindness and joy are contagious. She elevates the atmosphere of our front office with her seasonal decorations at holiday times. She also spreads joy to the entire school community with her positive spirit and her creative Spirit Day attires. Our school community simply adores and respects who she is and what she brings to us on a daily basis.

Mrs. Zepeda is also a leader in her community. She is the president of the Parent Association for the FVHS cheer squad, and also leads the annual Fountain Valley Bike Parade. Congratulations and thank you for bringing your amazing spirit to Plavan Elementary!



**2023 Plavan Classified Employee of the Year,
Liesel Zepeda & her beautiful family.**

Two terrific classified employees will also be retiring at the end of this school year. Our office manager, Kathy Baran, has been part of the Plavan community for the past decade. As our SOM, she has been the heartbeat of our school. Her skills in the areas of organization, planning, and communication will be difficult to replace. Her love for students and co-workers will also be greatly missed.



**Dayna Agbulos & Kathy Baran –
Thank you & Congrats on your retirement!**

Kathy has a keen ability to identify the students who might need extra love and support. She is the first person to show love and rally people around those who may be facing challenging times. When I asked Kathy what she will miss the most about working at Plavan, she shared that she will miss welcoming new students and families.

She especially wanted to say thank you to our parent community for their unwavering support, love, and always giving back to our students. "The love, kindness, and support from our parents is truly overwhelming!" After retirement, Kathy looks forward to traveling and spending more time with her husband Ed and son Seth.

Dayna Agbulos is much more than our special education instructional assistant (IA). She is a second instructor collaborating with Mrs. Craig to help make our resource program the outstanding program it is today. During her 20+ year tenure, Mrs. Dayna has served as our noon duty supervisor, Special Day Class IA, kindergarten IA, and also our front office support. She is irreplaceable, because she willingly steps in to support whenever a need arises.

But what our staff and community appreciate most about Dayna is her love for our students. She knows all the children by name, knows their academic needs, the growth they've made, their work habits, and most importantly, their overall well-being.

When asked what she will miss the most, Mrs. Dayna shared that she will greatly miss the friendships and the growth that our students make with time and hard work. "Knowing where students started and where they end up is truly a rewarding experience. I love it when students come back and visit to say thank you years after leaving Plavan."

Mrs. Dayna is looking forward to having extra time after her retirement. She plans to spend that time with her husband Jesse and her children and grandchildren. and take longer walks with her dogs! Thank you, Kathy and Dayna for your years of service. Congratulations and enjoy your retirement!

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

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



Jay Adams
Principal



Brandon LoMonaco
Assistant Principal

Talbert's Future Stars!

During the month of May, Talbert Middle School recognized some of our outstanding students: Talbert's *Students of the Year* for the 2022-2023 school year. At the FVSD school board meeting held on Thursday, May 11th,

we had a group celebration to honor these fabulous students for their accomplishments and for their exceptional contributions to our school. We are so proud to applaud: Wyatt Mio and Remy Kluwe, Sixth Grade; Rodrigo Cuntapay and Maddy Rakhshani, Seventh Grade; and Brooke Knutsen and Jolie Pham, Eighth Grade. The entire school staff is extremely proud of their accomplishments—not to mention incredibly thankful for the opportunity to work with such stellar students.



Students of the Year: Brooke Knutsen, Jolie Pham, Rodrigo Cuntapay, Maddy Rakhshani, Remy Kluwe, & Wyatt Mio

Hisamatsu Tamura Elementary (K-5)

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



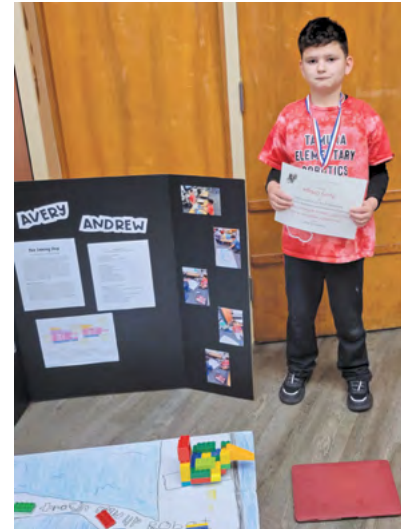
Chris Mullin
Principal

Celebrating Our Robotics Program

STEAM plays an integral part at Tamura Elementary. Recently, the teachers and students at Tamura were able to

celebrate and brag about their robotics program. Over the past year, several students have spent two hours a week after school working on robots by integrating coding, electronics, engineering, and creating scenarios and story boards.

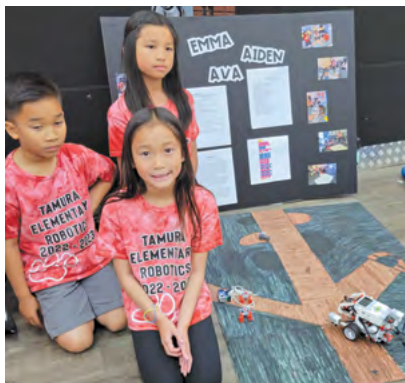
This year-long endeavor culminated recently, and the students finally got to show off their hard work to their family, friends, and our Fountain Valley School District board members and staff. The robotics program's mentors, Mrs. Hom and Mrs. Huelle, were beyond proud of the work that our students accomplished throughout the year, and they rejoiced at being able to honor the class.



STEAM is an educational model that builds the creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills our students will need in the 21st-century workforce. Classes such as our robotics program create an interdisciplinary approach to learning that combines science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. It harnesses the natural symbiosis between these disciplines to foster creative problem-solving, collaboration, and critical thinking.

Students use these creative processes and multiple methods of inquiry and investigation in STEAM projects such as robotics, which helps them develop a range of hard and soft skills. As we face increasing change, challenges, and complexity, STEAM, with its focus on not only the “how” and the “what” but also the “who” and the “why,” is specifically designed to develop future innovators. It encourages students to approach real-world scientific problems with consideration for their impact on humanity. Our lessons also focus on deep questioning and finding novel solutions rather than memorizing standard facts and figures.

Tamura is proud to celebrate our robotics program's staff and students, and we look forward to continuing it as well as other STEAM-related projects in the future.



Orange County Department of Education

OCDE's Continuous Commitment to Strengthening School Safety



Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent

Our children deserve to learn and grow in safe and secure environments, where they can thrive academically and emotionally. And parents should be confident that when they send their children to school, they will return home just as healthy and happy as when they left.

Yet in too many instances, we have seen this social contract ripped apart by the devastating reality of school violence, leading to the familiar cycle of shock, grief and anger.

I wish I could say I had answers sufficient to prevent this country's next mass shooting. I do not. I can only extend my most heartfelt condolences to anyone impacted by senseless violence, and I can reaffirm here the sustained commitment of the Orange County Department of Education and leaders throughout our region to proactively protect our students and staff.

To give you some background, California schools are required by law to update their Comprehensive Safe School Plans each year. These plans outline each campus's planned responses to various crises, and they are routinely reinforced through site-level drills, including evacuations and shelter-in-place exercises.

Of course the strategies for promoting safety will vary by campus and are ultimately up to each district's locally elected school board and leadership teams, in partnership with teachers, families, staff, students and communities. But our department eagerly supports this work with trainings and workshops throughout the year, covering such topics as safe school plans, behavioral threat assessments, earthquake preparedness, resilience strategies and active-shooter behavioral indicators.

Meanwhile, OCDE works closely with the Orange County Sheriff's Department and other local law enforcement agencies to study everything from

cyberbullying to how to best secure school facilities. One key partnership worth noting is with the Orange County Intelligence Assessment Center, or OCIAC, which leverages the reach and resources of the Sheriff's Department, the FBI and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to detect, investigate and prevent criminal and terrorist activity.

OCDE and the Sheriff's Department also team up every summer to host the Safe Schools Conference with the California Department of Education. This three-day event brings together more than 500 educators and law enforcement personnel from throughout the state to discuss issues and trends related to campus violence, bullying, social media, human trafficking, gangs and substance abuse.

In the case of critical incidents impacting schools, OCDE's Crisis Response Network deploys psychologists, nurses, social workers and other personnel to support students and staff during and after emergencies. This team also conducts trainings for schools, youth service providers, parents and students.

Finally, OCDE champions positive school climates and anti-bullying through initiatives such as the Multi-Tiered System of Support framework, Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports, or PBIS, and our One Billion Acts of Kindness campaign, which kicked off in 2016 to promote character and amplify civility in our communities.

In Orange County, we view the pursuit of safer schools as a race with no finish line, and that means our commitment must be equally unwavering and enduring. New threats will continue to emerge, but so too will new technologies, strategies and best practices for protecting students and schools. Above all, we vow to stay vigilant and informed, work closely with our law enforcement partners, and adapt our approaches accordingly.

We owe our children and families nothing less.

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