

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Monrovia Unified School District



Volume 10, Issue 45

September 2023

Congrats to our PBIS Medal Winners!



Seven MUSD schools were awarded silver designations from California PBIS for their exceptional implementation of the framework during the 2022-2023 school year. PBIS prioritizes nurturing positive behavior and fostering supportive learning environments.

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Monrovia Schools Off to a Fantastic Start for 2023-24



Dr. Ryan D. Smith
Superintendent

We were thrilled to welcome our students back to school for the 2023-24 school year on August 16th! Since then, it's been a fantastic start to the year, and I'm excited to share how our students will grow over the coming months. Below are some key updates I thought you would like to know more about for 2023-24.

Our five elementary and two middle schools received recognition from the California Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Coalition for implementing PBIS. PBIS is a set of ideas and tools schools use to improve behavior. This recognition exemplifies Monrovia Unified School District's newly developed [Strategic Plan](#) at work. Implementing PBIS is just one way our schools address the Supportive, Inclusive, and Student-Centered School Cultures focus area and its goal of ensuring that all students belong to a school community built upon positive, supportive, and caring relationships.

We're excited to share that Monrovia High School has secured a place in the respected *U.S. News & World Report's* 2023-2024 Best High Schools list. MHS ranked 2,757 out of 25,000 high schools, putting the Wildcats in the nation's top 12% of high schools. This outstanding ranking highlights the dedication of our students, families, staff, and the entire Monrovia community. Thank you for your ongoing support for our schools as we prepare our graduates for college, career, and life in Monrovia!

Monrovia Unified has also created partnerships with outstanding local organizations to help provide free medical services to our students. Vision to Learn (VTL) returned to our schools to give 1,266 vision screenings to students across Bradoaks, Wild Rose, and Santa Fe. Based on the screenings, 300 kids got eye exams, and VTL staff estimates that approximately 200 students will get a pair of glasses at no cost in September.

The other partnership is with Western University of Health Sciences. Their dental students visited CELC to conduct free dental exams for our Cubs. Over the coming weeks and months, Western University will provide these free exams to students in grades TK, K, and 3!

These collaborations reinforce our dedication to [Engaged Parents, Families, and Community, as outlined in our Strategic Plan](#), and embody a powerful commitment to our students' well-being.

Finally, we've gone through several back-to-school nights at our school sites! Each site opened up its doors to welcome new and returning families. These community events allow parents to meet their student's teachers and better understand how each class will go. Seeing our classrooms full of families at our schools was a joy.

We look forward to sharing this school year's growth and accomplishments. Thank you for being part of the Monrovia Unified School District community. Here's to a fantastic year!



MUSD parent meets with Mayflower teacher after their info session for Back to School Night on August 24th, 2023. These events allow families to get a better idea of what to expect for the school year and build a rapport with their child's teacher.



CELC student received dental screening from Western University dental students on August 31st, 2023. This new partnership will allow MUSD students to get dental screenings throughout the year.

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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher

Welcome back to another new school year. This is our 10th year collaborating with the Monrovia Unified School District and there is an endless resource of excellence to publish.

Superintendent Dr. Smith begins this issue with his message on the



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previous page. Congratulations to Monrovia High School being ranked in the nation's top 12% of high schools.

Thank you for continuing to include *School News* among your reading choices.

Our next issue is November 8.





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Bradoaks *Elementary Science Academy*

930 East Lemon Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2100 •



Dr. Jayne Nickles
Principal

Great Year Ahead!

After a fun and rejuvenating summer, the Bradoaks community is excited about what the new school year brings! During the first several days of school, students are busy learning the routines and expectations of a new grade level. Many activities of the new school year focus on the social-emotional well-being of our students while building community and developing friendships.

During the last part of August, we had our Second Annual Welcome Back Picnic, which was sponsored by the

PTA STEAM Committee. Fun activities were planned, such as relay races, a water balloon toss and an activity in the makerspace where students made circuit bugs. It was a great night of fun for all!

As a science academy, we have several fun science-themed activities scheduled for the near future. Coming in October, all grades will be focusing on the science standards with creative hands-on lessons all about pumpkins. The culminating activity is our traditional Pumpkin Drop.

The 2023–24 school year is off to a great start! Go Bobcats!



Canyon Early Learning Center

1000 South Canyon Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2001 • celc.monroviaschools.net



Angel Arias
Principal

Off to a Great Start

Canyon Early Learning Center (CELC) kicked off the 2023-2024 school year with over 80 families attending a parent orientation and workshop. During this event our parents and guardians learned about CELC's mission and vision, as well as its policies and procedures.

Parents also had the opportunity to hear about Zoo Phonics and how their children will be using this educational tool daily in their classrooms as a part of the school curriculum. Our parents were also informed about the different parent-engagement activities that CELC will host throughout the school year.



CELC also had a very successful first day of school on August 17. The enthusiasm and excitement was felt by everyone on campus as the students met their teachers, made new friends, and saw their classrooms for the first time. Families were invited to join and stay with their children on their first day of school too.

Teachers used this opportunity to orient the parents on what their children will be learning in their classes, and toured them around the campus. The students and their families also had the opportunity to take pictures with the "My First Day of Preschool" sign.

One of CELC's first anticipated activities was Grandparent's Day in early September. Grandparents were invited to celebrate with their grandchildren by participating in fun activities such as making Play Dough, reading books, and creating priceless artworks to take home.



CELC has had a lineup of visitors within a few weeks of our opening. First, Monrovia's School Resource Officer Thomas Montes stopped by to visit each classroom to welcome our "CUBTASTIC" students back to school. Next, dental students from the Western University of Health Sciences conducted free dental exams for our Cubs. CELC is indeed off to a great start!



Canyon Oaks H.S./Mountain Park/Monrovia Community Adult

930 Royal Oaks Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-3000 • cohs.monroviaschools.net/



Flint Fertig
Principal

Variety of Goals

Monrovia Adult School's 2023–24 school year is off to a great start! We began our program year on July 31 with a full cohort of nursing assistant students studying to provide care to seniors and patients in hospitals and long-term-care facilities.

Since August, our Pharmacy Technician, Medical Assisting and Construction programs have begun. We are proud to be partnering with Habitat for Humanity to give our construction students hands-on experience while providing much-needed housing to families in our community.

We are very excited about our Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Training Program starting at the end of September. This class trains students with real-life experience to work with individuals struggling with mental health, substance abuse and psychological trauma. We are currently the only public adult school in the area to offer this training.

Monrovia Adult School's English as a second language classes are filling quickly, once again approaching our prepandemic numbers. Our ESL program serves a diverse student body representing over 20 countries and speaking

over 16 different languages. In addition to our classes in English and civics, we offer our English-language learners special classes in conversation practice, vocational English and citizenship to assist students as they assimilate into the community and the workplace and become United States citizens.

Through collaboration with the Employment Development Department (EDD), Monrovia Adult School hosts quarterly job fairs for current and former students as well as the public at large. The job fair in July attracted over 100 job seekers and over 20 Monrovia businesses. MCAS is hosting another EDD job fair on Oct. 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

MCAS also facilitates job fairs geared toward those looking for employment specifically in the medical field. Monrovia Adult School works with several community partners to determine workforce needs for local businesses and medical facilities and to provide our program graduates with access to employment opportunities.

Monrovia Community Adult School offers a variety of educational programs that empower students from diverse backgrounds to gain life-sustaining employment, transition to further education, and achieve their personal learning goals. Please come by and see how we can meet your educational goals.



Clifton *Middle School*

226 South Ivy Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2600 • clifton.monroviaschools.net



Scott Moses
Principal

To Future Accomplishments!

Clifton continues to find ways to offer opportunities to keep our students engaged socially and academically. As the school year gets rolling, we focus on new beginnings, opportunities and relationships.

Students are already hard at work on their academic journeys.

It is never too early to begin planning a child's future. At Clifton, we strive to make sure that there is a plan in place and a place for everyone at Clifton. We dedicate our ideals to every Clifton Cub to being college and career-ready.

We are already preparing for athletics, which includes football, volleyball and cross-country. We have so many students ready to represent Team Clifton. We are also planning for our Club Rush, where all our clubs and staff



advisors recruit students to join a club or a program that suits their interests. We have music and arts, athletics, robotics, newspaper and many more to offer our student body.

We are also proud to expand our Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) program to offer an elective opportunity to learn college- and career-preparation strategies. This program will support our campuswide focus on ensuring that their plans for university start here.

Finally, we are proud to begin our year as a Positive Behavior and Intervention (PBIS) Silver Recognition Award recipient. As always at Clifton, we are proud of what we can accomplish, and we continue to focus on a campus where every Cub is Courteous, Polite and Respectful!

Mayflower *Elementary*

210 North Mayflower Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2200 • mayflower.monroviaschools.net



Michele Costarella
Principal

Watch D.O.G.S. Program

Mayflower School is proud to be launching the Watch D.O.G.S. program again this year! This program has proven to be valuable and helpful to the students and community at Mayflower School.

Several years ago, we began a special program aimed at building culture and providing students with mentor support. The program, Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students), is a nationally recognized program that welcomes fathers and father figures of students to spend time on campus, working directly with students inside D.O.G.S. outside the classroom. Six years ago, our inaugural launch drew



participation from a core group of nine dads. These D.O.G.S. provided support with various school events and activities and were visible on campus any day of the week. Watch D.O.G.S. has been key in boosting our positive school climate, as dads are a part of welcoming students upon arrival, assisting with learning in the classroom, participating in recess

activities on the playground, and ushering students to the car line.

This year, we are excitedly anticipating a great response in participation. We look forward to welcoming the new and returning dads willing to serve our community. These Watch D.O.G.S. dads volunteer their time, serve as vital male role models to our students, and support the Mayflower community in so many ways.



Welcome Back to School



Monroe Elementary

402 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2300 • monroe.monroviashools.net



Richard Morrison
Principal

Roaring Into the New Year

Monroe Elementary School was excited to welcome its Mighty Lions back to school, and gave its families some great opportunities to get back into the swing of things for the new school year.

We offered two in-person registration days for our parents and guardians to complete their beginning-of-the-year processes, receive important school and district information, and stock up on school spirit wear. We also offered our families an opportunity to meet their new teachers. We had a wonderful event where the students and their families could come to school and interact with their teachers on the day before class began. It was a great way to kick off the school year on a positive note. These events allowed our students and teachers to “hit the ground running” on the first day of school.



Students meet their new teachers at the Meet Your Teacher Event.

Monroe also hosted its annual Back to School Night. This event gave parents and guardians an opportunity to hear our classroom and school-wide expectations, the curriculum, and news of other events. Our awesome PTA and many of its community partners also attended the event to promote and provide support and opportunity to students outside of the classroom.

We are very proud to announce that our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program has earned Tier One Silver Medal Award status from the California PBIS Coalition. This year our school will be going for the gold as our students continue to ROAR across campus (being Respectful, On task, having a positive Attitude, and being Responsible)! Monroe is looking forward to another great year full of learning, fun family events, and positivity.

Monrovia High School

845 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2800 • mhs.monroviashools.net



Adrian Ayala
Principal

Kicking Off in Style!

A new school year always conjures up many different feelings for parents, students and teachers alike. The nervousness surrounding a brand-new year is combined with the optimistic belief that a new year brings new opportunities and new adventures. That may be most true if you are an incoming freshman beginning your high school career.

Such was the case when the Monrovia High School Link Crew welcomed over 300 new ninth-graders to their New Student Orientation on Monday, Aug. 14. The Link Crew is an organization of 80 juniors and seniors who are committed to making the transition to high school a more smooth and enjoyable experience for their newest Wildcats. Students engaged in small-group activities, received a school tour, and, most importantly, found a connection to an older student who can mentor them throughout the year. It also hopefully helped take away some of the anxiety of starting high school.

Students aren't alone in having the first-day-of-school jitters. To help our newest Wildcat parents, Monrovia High School hosted a New Parent Night on the 14th as well. The administrative team and the climate and culture coordinator shared with parents some of the many reasons that MHS is a great place to call home. Time for the many questions that new parents have was reserved for the end of the evening, and parents went home knowing that their children were in good hands and that MHS was going to be their "home away from home."

The first day of school arrived on Wednesday the 16th, and with that came the Renaissance Passport to Success. MHS adjusts its bell schedule on the first day of school to have the first 90 minutes be a campus just for its freshmen. They engage with several teachers as well as the administrative team as they learn what it means to be a Wildcat and then make a commitment to graduate. The symbolic signing of the graduation gowns is the culmination of their induction into the Wildcat family and sends them on the path to "Living Life the Wildcat Way!"





Jennifer Maljian
Principal

A Night of Connection and Empowerment

As summer's warmth gradually gives way to the crispness of autumn, schools across the nation come alive with the anticipation of a new academic year. One event that has become

a cherished tradition for families and educators alike is the Back to School Night. This annual gathering is a celebration of collaboration, engagement, and the promise of a bright future for our students.

The success of any event often hinges on its initial impression, and our Plymouth staff and teachers nailed it this year. Parents and guardians were welcomed with open arms and warm smiles. A sense of belonging and community permeated the air as our families entered the school.

Back to School Night provides a unique opportunity for parents to meet their children's teachers, learn about classroom expectations, and establish lines of communication. The event also featured stations where parents could engage in ways to support their students and learn about our extracurricular activities and how to participate with the Plymouth PTA. Teachers, too, were eager to share their enthusiasm for the upcoming year, and fostered a sense of partnership with parents.



Education is a collaborative effort between schools and families, and empowering parents with the tools and knowledge to support their children's learning is crucial. The success of Back to School Night extends beyond individual classrooms; it also builds a sense of community within the school. Families had the opportunity to connect with each other, fostering relationships that can be instrumental in creating a supportive learning environment.



As we celebrate the success of this year's Back to School Night, we also look forward to the promising year ahead. The connections formed, the knowledge gained, and the sense of community cultivated during this event will undoubtedly contribute to a year of academic achievement and personal growth for our students.

Back to School Night isn't just an event; it's a testament to the power of collaboration and community in education. Its resounding success lies in its ability to bring together educators, parents, and students in a spirit of unity and shared purpose. As we continue this journey into the new academic year, let us carry the spirit of Back to School Night with us, knowing that together, we can empower our students to reach new heights of success.



Becky Perez
Principal

Our Cougar Scholar Assemblies

When young people feel a strong sense of belonging at school, they are much more likely to show persistence, admit when they are confused and ask for help, and share their creative ideas to others.

Santa Fe's first three days of school were launched with a strong emphasis on community building. Centered around what Santa Fe calls "Cougar Coaching" groups, the entire school was divided into small groups that focused on team building, spirit competitions, and a deep dive into the Cougar Code of responsibility, respect, and involvement.

To launch the year, our Cougar Coaching teams spent time getting to know each other and building trust. Name games, community circles, and team-building activities broke the ice and helped our children and staff bond early on. With circle norms and get-to-know-you dialogue, our small groups began to build trust and a sense of belonging very quickly.

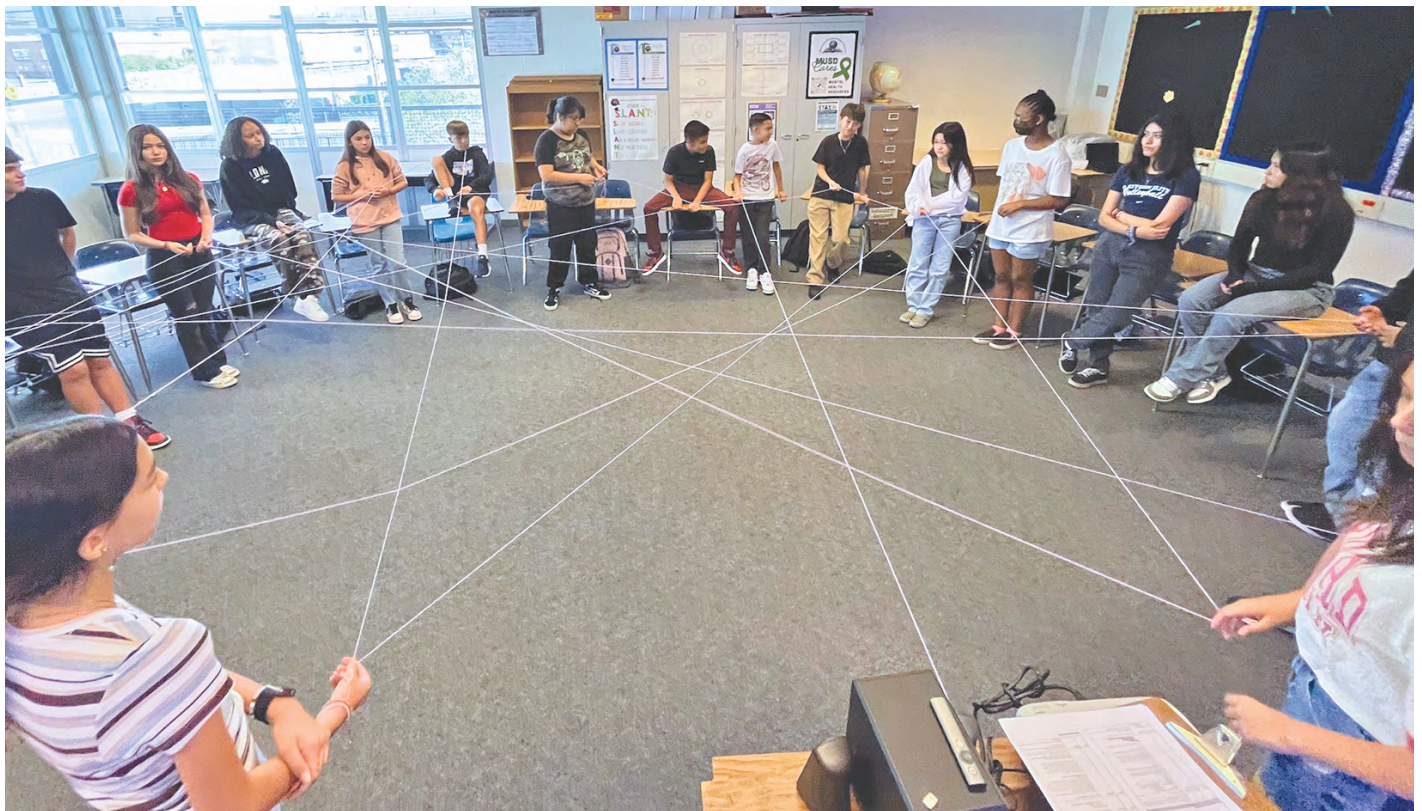
Each group then spent time unpacking the Cougar Code and discussing its importance, as well as what it looks and sounds like to live by. Respect, for example, a broad and general concept, was broken down into three components: empathy, kindness, and self control.

Each team then illustrated how the Cougar Code should look and sound like in a specific area of campus. The result was a detailed collection of slide decks and posters about how our community should interact throughout the school. During our weekly morning virtual assemblies these illustrations are highlighted as a reminder of our agreements on campus.

The scholars' favorite part of those three days was diving into school spirit. Cougar Coaching groups developed an identity complete with team names, chants, posters, decorated doors, and colors. Every classroom door at the school was proudly dressed up with the name and logo of each group. As a grand finale to the week, grade-level spirit assemblies showcased the spirit of each team, and one winning team was chosen to take the trophy for the month.

After the fun and energy, our scholars had a chance to look back on their first week of school, take a sense-of-belonging survey, and share their thoughts. After reflecting on her first few days, eighth-grade scholar Cora shared, "The best thing about school so far is Cougar Coaching with Mrs. Sparks."

Our Santa Fe scholars and team members will lean into the communities they have built to lay a strong foundation for the future. There's powerful learning ahead.



Wild Rose *School of Creative Arts*

232 Jasmine Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2500 • wildrose.monroviashools.net



Paige Ramos
Principal

Bear News

Wild Rose School of Creative Arts is a BEARY BUSY place! As we welcome our students and staff back to school Wild Rose is buzzing with excitement and school-wide projects. Over summer we began the process of building a new playground, replacing the roof on the entire school and received a new emergency bin. Our school year is off to a

great start and we look forward to the benefits of each of these projects. Our next project will be remodeling our garden spaces with FoodEd. Our students are delighted to get started on the new garden projects and beautification of our campus. Go Bears!

