

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District



Volume 16, Issue 45

November 2023

Undefeated!



Esperanza High School's girls flag football team was undefeated in preseason and league play during the inaugural season of the sport in the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District.

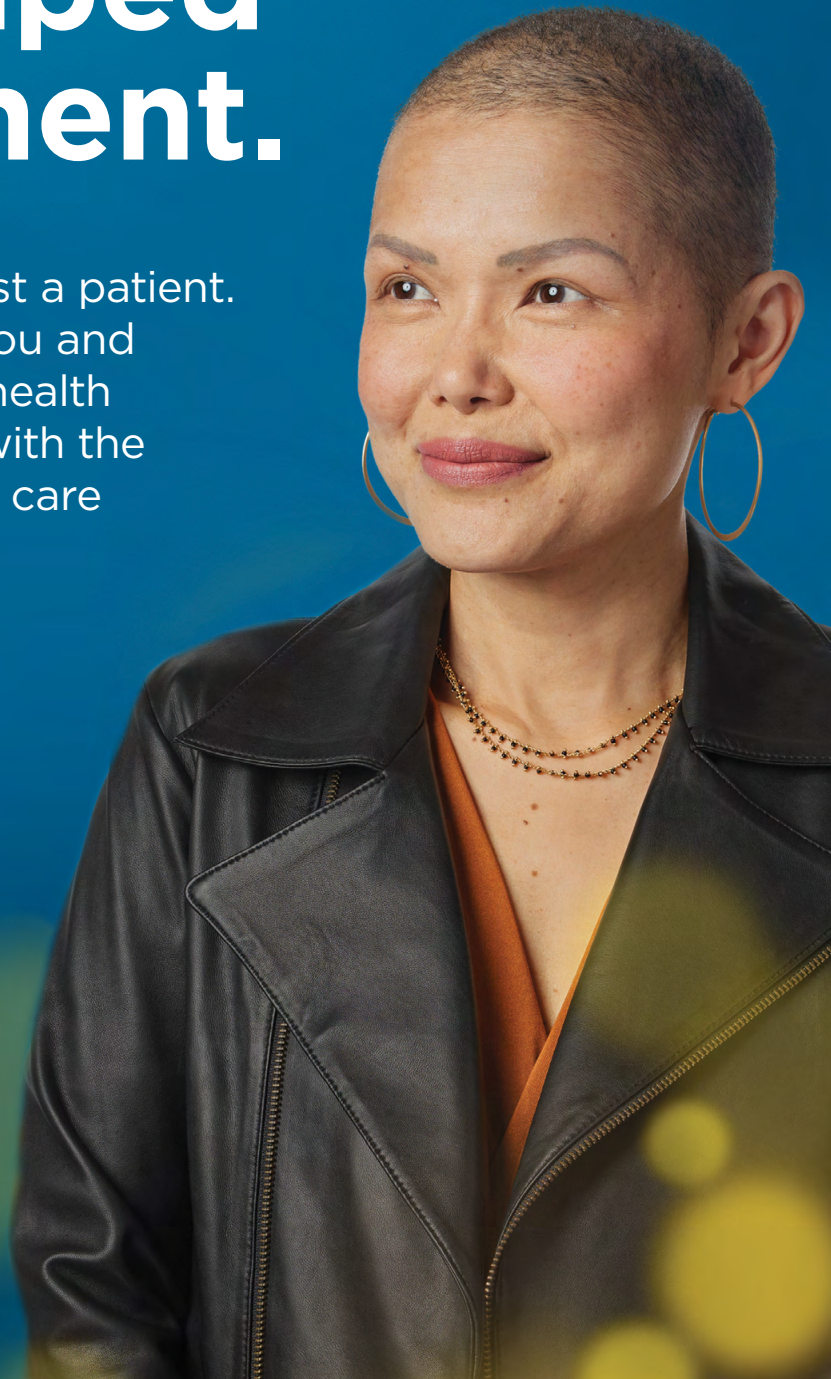
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PYLUSD Students Excel on AP, IB, and Cambridge Exams



Dr. Alex Cherniss
Superintendent

As the proud superintendent of the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District (PYLUSD), I am thrilled to share the outstanding performance of our students in the 2023 Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Program exams. These programs have not only brought accolades to our district but also opened doors to higher education opportunities and admission to prestigious universities across the nation.

In our district, we offer a robust array of AP courses courtesy of the College Board at our comprehensive high schools—El Dorado, Esperanza, Valencia, and Yorba Linda. These courses cover a diverse range of subjects, including arts, English, history and social science, math and computer science, the sciences, and world languages and culture. Valencia is the proud home of the district's IB and Cambridge AICE diploma programs. The IB Program provides a challenging two-year pre-university curriculum, leading to the prestigious IB Diploma. Meanwhile, the Cambridge AICE Program empowers students to tailor their studies to their unique interests, abilities, and future plans within an international curriculum framework. I will now highlight the remarkable achievements of our students following the 2023 exams in each of these programs.

The number of AP exams taken by PYLUSD students increased by 6.67%, with a 2% increase in the pass rate compared to 2022, totaling 4,494 exams administered. Students not only increased the number of chemistry, computer science principles, and literature AP exams taken but also maintained the previous year's pass rate. An uptick in the number of environmental science, statistics, and United States History exams taken was accompanied by an increase in the pass rate. Each of our comprehensive high schools, El Dorado, Esperanza, Valencia, and Yorba Linda, demonstrated exceptional results, with pass rates ranging from 83% to 88%.

Valencia's Class of 2023 boasted 63 IB Diploma winners, the highest in Orange County. Remarkably, our students outperformed the world average on 13 IB exams, including economics, computer science, psychology, biology, and history, with score increases ranging from 18% to 75%. The school saw a substantial increase in the number of 10th to 12th-grade students taking Cambridge exams, with a 122% increase in the total number of exams given and a 9% boost in the overall pass rate.

We congratulate our students for their achievements on these exams and share a heartfelt thank you to our educators and parents for their continuous support and encouragement. Together, we are shaping a brighter future for our school district community.



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PYLUSD High Schools have Success Inaugural Season of Girls Flag Football

From the District

Following the unanimous vote to officially sanction girls flag football as a California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) sport, this fall marked the inaugural season of the sport at Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District (PYLUSD) high schools. All four of the district's comprehensive high schools—El Dorado, Esperanza, Valencia, and Yorba Linda—participated with teams of their own.

CIF is the governing body for all high school sports in the state of California. The decision was made amidst the sport's growing popularity across the state. Flag football offers players action-packed competition without the full-body contact involved in tackle football.

After the CIF decision was announced, all four PYLUSD comprehensive high schools worked to create teams for competition with the support of the district. In addition to attracting first-time athletes, each school found that students who play softball, basketball, water polo, soccer, lacrosse, and track as their primary sport signed on to play flag football.

"The players already possess extreme athletic skills," Esperanza High School Athletic Director Keri Walters shared. "They really picked up flag football quickly and the rest is history."

Esperanza High's flag football team played strong all season with an undefeated record in preseason and league. By October, the team was ranked 3rd in the nation on the MaxPreps flag football rankings.

At Valencia High, interest in the sport was immediately apparent. "The girls proved to be hard-working, dedicated, athletic, coachable, and excited for the opportunity to make history as Valencia High School's very first flag football team," wrote Coach Bilhartz.

At El Dorado High, over 30 athletes participated in the sport across the junior varsity and varsity teams. Ray Elliott, the Athletic Director at El Dorado, was encouraged by the team's fantastic performance during the season. Enthusiasm for the sport spread throughout the community as parents, teachers, and fellow students attended the matches in large numbers.

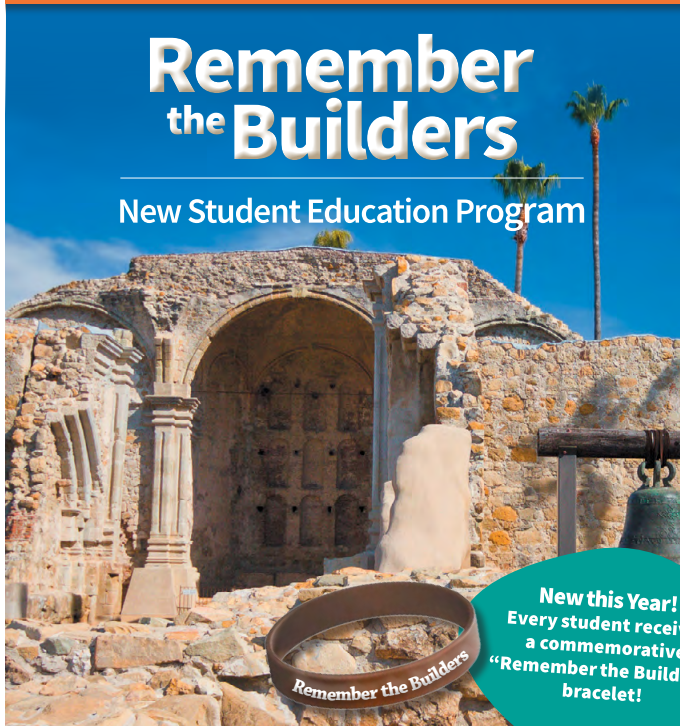
"The games have been fun to watch and truly showcase the players' dedication and the joy they bring to the field," Yorba Linda High Principal Dr. Richard Dinh noted. "The future of women's flag football is bright at Yorba Linda High School."

The growing excitement surrounding the addition of flag football is a testament to the importance of including girls in athletics. The district is proud to support its high schools as they work to further girls' involvement in excellent athletics programs.

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R.E.A.C.H. Foundation

21520 Yorba Linda Blvd., Suite G503, Yorba Linda, CA 92887 • 714/323-9706 • www.reach4pylusrd.org

By Gisele Nguyen, President

Since 2012, the REACH Foundation has been dedicated to providing programs and events that expose students to 21st Century learning skills in Academics, foster creativity through the Arts, and promote healthy lifestyles through Athletics. We believe that these three pillars serve as the foundation for students to REACH their highest potential.

On October 28th, the REACH Foundation collaborated with Inside the Outdoors (ITO), an award-winning organization administered by Orange County Department of Education, to host the 4th Annual Experience Your Environment event at Carbon Canyon Regional Park. During this event, students had the opportunity to inquire about topics related to climate resiliency and environmental literacy. They engaged in hands-on activities to learn how reducing organic waste can build climate resiliency; how the wise use and protection of water resources helps safeguard us during drought, and how native plants need less water and support our native wildlife. Students also met ITO's animal ambassadors and explored the largest coastal redwood grove in Orange County.



The REACH Foundation extends our heartfelt gratitude to our distinguished Community Partners: the California Native Plant Society, Deep Drip Watering Stakes, Municipal Water District of Orange County, OC Waste and Recycle, and Inside the Outdoors. Their partnership and unwavering support of the REACH Foundation have enriched our PYL community.



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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



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Netragrednik

Welcome back to a new school year. By now students are settled into their routines and are focused on their academic goals.

This is our 16th year publishing the PYLUSD *School News*. I often hear from alumni who continue to read *School News* and over the years

graduates have come back to teach in the District and contribute articles.

As we look forward to celebrating Thanksgiving, I have much to be thankful for including, you our readers. Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Our next issue is February 7.



Bernardo Yorba *Middle School (7-8)*

5350 Fairmont Blvd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7400 • www.byms.org



Beth Fisher
Principal

Strong in Athletics and Academics

The start of the school year has brought a couple of athletic victories as well as academic accolades for Bernardo Yorba Middle School. BYMS participated in their inaugural season with the Orange County Charter School League in the area of soccer. Our Boys team made it to the playoffs, while our Girls team made it to the finals. In our own PYLUSD Middle School league, our Girls' team took first place in our league, while the Boys Team took third place. As our State test scores have come in, we are proud to share that our school came in with the second highest science scores on the CAST assessment among all PYLUSD middle schools. We are proud of our scholar athletes!



Brookhaven *Elementary School (TK-6)*

1851 N. Brookhaven Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7110 • www.brookhavenelementary.com



Laura Fisher
Principal

Student Leadership Abounds at Brookhaven

As part of our Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) plan, our first Peer Assistance Leadership (PAL) group has been formed at Brookhaven. Based out of the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE), "the PAL Peer Assistance Leadership Program is a school-based, peer-to-peer youth development program for students in grades 4-12 built upon a philosophy of students helping students. The mission of our PAL program is to develop youth leaders who connect with their peers to create a caring, safe, and supportive school environment for all." The group, led by Mrs. Sarah Walls is designed to increase student leadership. In addition to leadership lessons, the students have the opportunity to be involved in the Welcome, Eco, Peer Mentor, or Game Crew. Each crew is responsible for supporting the school community in different ways.



Abby, member of the Game Crew, and Zoe, a member of the Welcome Crew, supporting Childhood Cancer Awareness month.

Bryant Ranch School (TK-5)

24695 Paseo de Toronto, Yorba Linda, CA 92887 • 714/986-7120 • www.bryanranchschool.com



Shannon Robles
Principal

A School Where Students Belong

At Bryant Ranch, we are all part of the Explorer family. We offer many opportunities for students to get involved because we recognize the importance of students feeling a sense of belonging and making learning fun. Our Garden Club students

are busy planting and learning about the environment and nature. The students look forward to their bi-weekly meetings and plan to host a farmer's market again this year. Our upper grade students had the opportunity to apply to our Student Leadership group. These students focus on ways to help the school and community, while developing communication, planning and leadership skills. Beyond the school day, our amazing PTA hosts many family events, including our annual Trunk or Treat, with several hundred

students bringing their families for an evening filled with fun activities for all. We are all Explorers at heart and our students and staff feel a sense of pride and belonging.



Buena Vista Virtual Academy (K-12)

4999 Casa Loma Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7026 • www.buenavistavirtual.org



Jamie Jauch
Principal

In-Person Labs

Buena Vista Virtual Academy, a K-12 independent study school, offers students online learning with opportunities to participate in group enrichment activities on campus. This allows students to enjoy hands-on learning and positively socialize with peers while exploring their creativity through technology and the arts.

High school students wanting to earn UC/CSU a-g lab science credit can come in once per week to do in-person labs. These are engaging, small group opportunities for hands-on learning that extend online instruction and enrich scientific knowledge building. These courses allow students to advance their learning



and credit accumulation on their pathway to accessing higher education. K-5 students have the opportunity to attend field trips and in-person classes to engage in lessons that focus on inquiry and STEM enrichment. And middle school students can engage in crafting events, field trips, and science camps.

Families looking for flexible, nurturing, individualized instruction are welcome to enroll.



El Camino Real High School (Continuation High School 9-12)

1351 E. Orangethorpe Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7060 • www.ecrhs.pylusd.org



Scott Mazurier
Principal

A Culture of Acceptance

At El Camino Real High School, we are changing the narrative in our students' education and lives. Through individualized academic support, student-first wellness philosophies, and a commitment to building the four domains of agency (efficacy, mastery, belonging, and identity) in every student, we have created a culture of acceptance with an emphasis on a growth mindset that allows us to provide our students with opportunities to be successful in every aspect of life. We believe that we are much more than a credit recovery program. We intentionally and strategically create systems of support that allow our students to not only endure their challenges but to push through them to become their best selves on a daily basis. We are most proud that our students continue to describe ECRHS as "a home, a family, and a place where we are safe and supported."



ECRHS Students are proud to be a part of the Raptor Family.

El Dorado High School (9-12)

1651 N. Valencia Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7580 • www.edhs.org



Joey Davis
Principal

Girls Flag Football

El Dorado High is excited to add a second sport in the last year. In 22-23 we added a girl's beach Volleyball team, and new for the 23-24 school year is Girls Flag Football. This fast paced sport is fun to watch and play. Over 80 girls expressed interest in playing and we have 30 girls representing two teams. The Varsity team is currently 14-2 overall and 9-1 in league. They have been invited by the San Diego Chargers to play in the postseason tournament. Our two coaches are both teachers on campus. We have Mr. Donnie Bladow and Ms. Mykaela Clemmer. Most of the girls playing are active in other sports, soccer, softball, lacrosse and basketball to name a few. It has been fun to watch them grow and learn a new game. They've picked up on many of



the skills quickly and really gelled as a team early on. We are excited to see where this new sport can go

Esperanza High School (9-12)

1830 N. Kellogg Dr., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/986-7540 • www.esperanzahs.com



Jeff Giles
Principal

Esperanza Girls' Flag Football

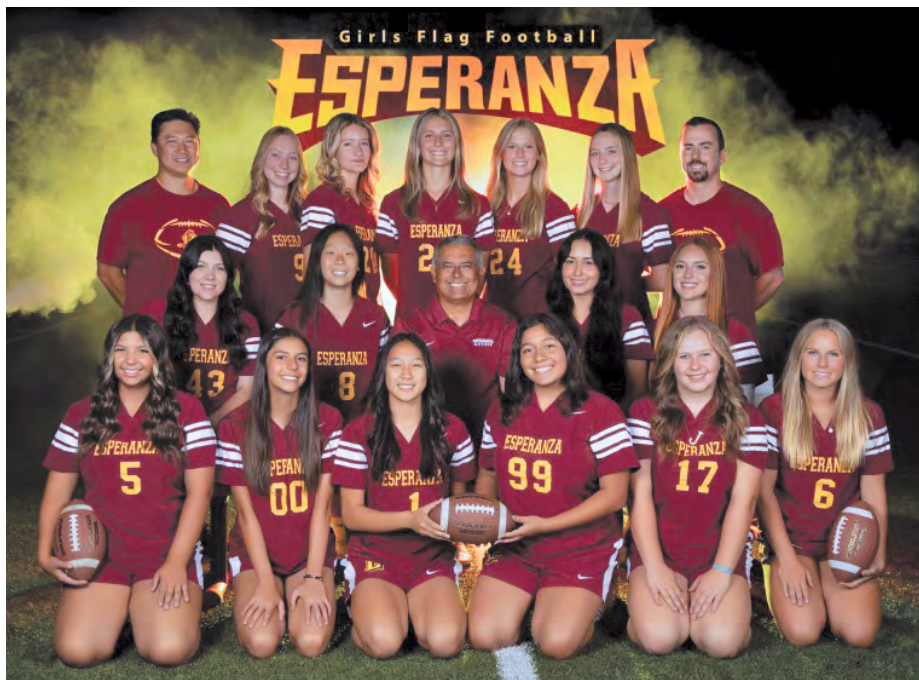
CIF's newest sport is girls' flag football, and Esperanza has taken the new sport

by storm. Esperanza's girls' flag football team's success is rooted in diversity. Almost every girl on the team is a star player in another sport.

This athleticism has led

to a 19-0 record and a No. 3 national ranking, according to MaxPreps. Comprising players from softball, girls' basketball, soccer, water polo, and golf, Coach Jimmy Valverde leads this eclectic group to victory. Quarterback Madi Lam, also a standout point guard, shines with 3,400+ passing yards and 61 touchdowns. The offense boasts Bailey Frazier, Ellie Frazier, Alexis Quon, all basketball players, and Taylor Shumaker, a softball star. On defense, Bailey Frazier excels with 61 flags pulled, and Emma Gribben, a water

polo player, follows with 58. The team showcases class and hard work, impacting the inaugural flag football season in the CIF Southern Section.



Fairmont Elementary School (TK-6)

5241 Fairmont Blvd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7130 • www.fairmontelementary.com



Anne San Roman
Principal

Showing Our Falcon Pride

Fairmont Elementary School's PBIS kick-off was full of enthusiasm. School-wide behavior expectations were explicitly taught to students as they traveled throughout the campus during the first week of school. The lessons focused on showing Falcon PRIDE, which is be Prepared, Respectful, Inclusive, Diligent, and Engaged.

This focused event was to help prevent unwanted behaviors, while also providing universal support to create an environment where all students can succeed.

As a result, PRIDE cards were quickly earned by students from all over the campus. The students then had the opportunity to use their PRIDE cards at the Falcon Fun Zone to purchase items such as books, Pop Its, erasers, art time, and even a trip across the street with the principal to get ice cream.

At the end of September our assistant principal, Mrs. Cooan, followed up with grade-level assemblies focused on good student behavior. The students were reminded of their expectations, and learned about even more ways that they could earn PRIDE cards.

With PBIS in full swing at Fairmont, the excitement and motivation is undeniable. Our Fairmont staff and students are working diligently "Together Toward Tomorrow."



George Key School (Special Education) / Venture Academy (Adult Transition Program)

710 E. Golden Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7170 • www.georgekey.org/ / 701 East Golden Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7178 • ventureacademy.pylusd.org

Rebecca Allan, Principal

George Key students and staff have been busy since the start of the school year working on academics, citizenship and fun seasonal activities. Our school is busy addressing curricula through use of Readtopia and ReadtopiaGo programs including our pre-k to our young adults. Students enjoy reading classic books that are adapted to their skill set. We recently had a school pumpkin patch in which children selected their own pumpkins and decorated them with families and friends.

Venture Academy students have started their school year addressing literacy, career, job training and daily

living tasks. Venture academy recently started a video production elective for our students interested in video design. Venture Adventures made its first appearance two weeks ago. Students composed, videotaped and edited the video which describes upcoming events, includes the Pledge of Allegiance and gives a brief tour of Venture classrooms. Well done Venture academy video crew! Venture will be celebrating fall with their first adult transition dance of the year. The Fall Festival takes place on November 3rd with a country theme, line dancing and games! Students are decorating and making posters for the event. A good start to the school year!



Glenknoll Elementary School (TK-6)

6361 Glenknoll Dr., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7140 • www.glenknoll.org



Terry Mulcahy
Principal

Ms. Miller Takes Students Back In Time to Study Early Man

A great teacher will do whatever it takes to get their students interested in the subject they are teaching. Ms. Miller, sixth grade teacher at Glenknoll, is that kind of teacher. She puts her heart and soul into helping history come alive for her students. Sixth grade students begin their study of ancient history by learning about early man.



They study the artwork that was left in caves by early artists to learn what life was like for those people. Ms. Miller takes on the role of cave art docent, and leads her students back in time. She even dresses for the part! She explains the images seen on the Lascaux caves in France, and other caves around the world. Her students are then invited to enter a dark cave right here at Glenknoll where they become the artists and leave writing of their own to describe their life. What a great way to help students imagine what life would have been like for the early humans! Thank you, Ms. Miller for helping your students travel back in time so history can come alive for them.

Glenview Elementary School (TK-6)

1775 Glenview Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/986-7150 • www.glenviewbulldogs.org



Viridiana Fraga
Principal

Glenview Keeping It PAWSITIVE!

Glenview Elementary School has been recognized with the California Distinguished PBIS Golden Award for our exemplary Positive Behavioral Programs for our students.

Through daily interactions, the staff at Glenview instill our school-wide expectations in our students. PAWS: Practice Safety, Act with Integrity, Work Hard, and Show Kindness.



The goal is for our students to adhere to our expectations throughout multiple school settings. Here at Glenview, students are constantly receiving positive acknowledgment for demonstrating P.A.W.S. The Glenview team recognizes positive student behavior on a daily basis through positive verbal praise, class paws, Glenview Greats, and our students' favorite Bulldog Bucks. By earning Bulldog Bucks students are able to exchange at our Bulldog Pound. The Bulldog Pound opening was successful on Friday, October 13, thanks to the community approach. Parents and staff came together to open the highly anticipated interactive store for our

students. Students were thrilled to be able to exchange their Bulldog Bucks for snacks, balls, pens, fidgets, and a popular principal party. At Glenview, we continue to commit to supporting our students to become positive global citizens.



Bulldog Pound 2023-2024 is Now Open!

Golden Elementary School (TK-6)

740 E. Golden Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7160 • www.golden.pylusd.org



Kristin McDonald
Principal

Organizing, Culturizing—and Goldenizing!

Golden Elementary is taking our school to the next level with this year's theme to "Organize. Culturize. Goldenize!" Our school is organized with AVID strategies and a focus on essential questions to improve student achievement while

continuing to build a strong culture of excellence, kindness, and community spirit.

Golden has already invited parents to eat lunch on campus during Lunch with a Loved One and held a Family Movie Night. Both events were highly attended by families, and they provided the opportunity to come onto campus and connect with other families.



Students loved eating a special lunch with their loved ones on the grass, and families were excited to safely come onto campus to be part of their children's day.

The feedback was positive, and our school looks forward to creating more opportunities to organize, connect, and build a strong Golden Community where we can all work together in partnership to support all our Golden Eagles. This is what Goldenizing is all about! We take every opportunity to make sure our commitment to our students and community is at the next level, adding our "Golden" touch, to Goldenize!

Kraemer Middle School (7-8)

645 N. Angelina Dr., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-1551 • www.kraemerms.org



Michael Young
Principal

Diversity Club

During the month of September, Kraemer's Diversity Club expertly facilitated various activities to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. This student run organization has been in place at Kraemer for three years and regularly holds meetings

during Kraemer's intervention/enrichment period--"PRIDE". The club coordinates morning announcements, displays around campus, and homeroom competitions each month with the clear purpose of celebrating the unique diversity of our student body and local population. In addition, Kraemer's nutrition services team often collaborates

with the student run club to prepare food from the culture being celebrated. The international cuisine is then offered to all students who sign up for this special enrichment activity. Kraemer is proud of our students' leadership, civic engagement, and partnership in creating a thriving culture of acceptance and inclusion at Kraemer Middle.



Lakeview Elementary School (TK-5)

17510 Lakeview Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7190 • www.lakeview.pylusd.org



Stephanie Given
Principal

Lakeview Lions Participate in the Great Shakeout and More!

Safety is a top priority at Lakeview Elementary and for PYLUSD. All Lakeview Lions participate in monthly fire drills, quarterly earthquake drills and yearly disaster drills. We practice these drills so our minds and bodies are prepared in the event

of an actual emergency. Principal Given has charged the Lakeview student body and staff to beat the clock of having buildings evacuated and all accounted for within



5 minutes! This past October 19th at 10:19am, all 400+ students, staff and volunteers completed this challenge right at 5 minutes! After, the Lakeview Staff assembled and walked through safety team roles and responsibilities, thus bringing to life our Comprehensive Safe School Plan. Students brought out books and activity pages to help keep them busy during the extended drill.

The staff will debrief to identify revisions to ensure more efficient practice moving forward. Thank you to our parent volunteers who participated in the drills. Go Lions!



Linda Vista *Elementary (TK-5)*

5600 S. Ohio St., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7200 • www.lindavistaelementary.org



Kathleen Escaleras-Nappi
Principal

Linda Vista Lions WIN Math Program

Being a successful scholar at Linda Vista means identifying relationships, comprehending patterns, and making future predictions about math everyday. Using our mathematical skills helps us carry out a variety of important daily tasks and this year we are committed to improving our overall math skills. This year Linda Vista has started a new math intervention program called



our Lions WIN Math Program where students are able to come after school to focus on foundational math skills and gain confidence in specific math strategies. Our hope is to have approximately 30% of our students participate in our program this year and continue to hone in on our school wide math scores by utilizing math groups, CGI (cognitively guided Instruction), and hands on strategies that allow students to visualize math concepts. Our first few weeks of our Lions WIN Program have been successfully attended and students have enjoyed various math games such as Reflex math, using card games, probability cups, and more. A love of math is key to student success and lifelong learning here at Linda Vista.



Mabel Paine *Elementary School (TK-5)*

4444 Plumosa Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7210 • www.mabelpaine.org



Geoff Smith
Principal

Achieving Greatness Together

The staff and students at Mabel Paine are committed to this year's theme of "Mustangs working together to achieve greatness." At Mabel Paine, we believe that all students are capable of achieving greatness, and the only way in which we can accomplish this is by working together.

There are three focus areas that we are targeting to help carry out this theme. They are high-quality instruction, collaboration, and citizenship. All students at Mabel Paine are provided with standards-based instruction, and our teachers are differentiating their instruction to meet the needs of all the students. The teachers are also continually collaborating with one another to help develop effective strategies to support their students.

We also encourage our students to collaborate with one another, and our classrooms provide many opportunities for them to work together. It is not uncommon to walk into any classroom on our campus and see children working in small groups or pairs. Our students are learning the great power of working together!



At Mabel Paine, we also look for opportunities to recognize our students for doing the right thing, in the right place, and at the right time. Each week our teachers will send students to the office and be given a positive office referral. We are so proud of our students here, and we are excited to see them all achieve greatness!



Melrose Elementary School (TK-5)

974 S. Melrose St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7220 • melrose.pylusd.org



Janice Weber
Principal

Elevate and Celebrate!

This year, Melrose Marlins administration, teachers, and staff are working together to elevate our Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) practices so that students know, understand, and are recognized for exhibiting the Marlin High Fives of being Respectful, Responsible, Helpful, Kind, and Safe. Teachers and staff held PBIS lesson rotations to teach students what the Marlin High Fives should look like in every location on campus. When staff members notice students exhibiting the High Fives, students receive Marlin cards along with a smile and specific praise. This year, students earn prizes from the prize truck, monitored by Ms. Lynne, for collecting and turning in Marlin cards! In addition, teachers nominate a Marlin of the Week who is modeling the High Fives in class and on the playground! Marlins of the Week receive a personalized certificate and a treat, and have their picture featured in the community Friday Flyer! Marlin students are also recognized by our P.E. Teacher, Mr. Beltran, for being Jedi PE Masters and great examples for others. Way to Go, Melrose Marlins!



Morse Elementary School (TK-6)

431 E. Morse Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/524-6300 • www.morseschool.net



Kelly Farrell
Principal

Lights, Camera, Action!

We are excited to announce WNN (Wildcat News Network) as Morse Elementary's video-production company! Our video-production class is off to a fantastic start this school year as students dive into the world of filmmaking with enthusiasm and creativity. They have been working diligently on various projects that have not only sparked their imaginations but also enriched their learning experiences.

Students released their first video featuring Morse's Trunk-or-Treat, the Bookfair, Red Ribbon Week, sixth grade's Otter Pop Fundraiser and BooGrams, College Wear Wednesday, Spirit Day Friday, and more! One of the most valuable lessons our students are learning is the importance of teamwork and effective communication. They are working collaboratively in groups, assigning roles, and learning how to share their ideas and feedback

constructively. Students have already learned how to write scripts for their videos, develop visual plans for their projects, and operate cameras and experiment with sound recording. They are now in the process of learning how to piece together footage, add special effects, and create polished final products.



Parkview *Home School (TK-12)*

2189 N. Kraemer Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7050 • www.pylusdparkview.org



Dominique Polchow
Principal

Curriculum Connections

Parkview has a long tradition in the community of successfully supporting homeschool efforts to those new and experienced in this incredible learning journey. Established in 2001, Parkview School is a TK-12th grade program designed for students who desire an alternative to the traditional classroom instruction.

Partnerships with our Parkview families are crucial in successfully educating our students. To further this collaboration, new this school year is Curriculum Connections. This program is designed to bring parents/guardians together to further support the learning experience of our homeschooled students through topics of interest presented by the principal. The idea is to promote a community of parent educators sharing instructional strategies and tips with one another. As they say, "it takes a village to raise a child" and this is so very true in the homeschool world of education.

Rio Vista *Elementary School (TK-5)*

310 N. Rio Vista St., Anaheim, CA 92806 • 714/986-7240 • www.riovistaschool.org



Brandon Frank
Principal

Future Ready

As part of the effort to ensure all students are Future Ready, Rio Vista Elementary School held assemblies that engaged students in learning about internet safety, including how to make protective passwords, how to stay safe online by not sharing personal information, and how to identify phishing and other scams. This was part of the Rio Vista PTA being chosen as a recipient

of the ConnectSafely Safer Internet Day 2023 grant. This grant was established to help schools and youth-serving community organizations participate in Safer Internet Day using resources and materials created by ConnectSafely, the official coordinator of Safer Internet Day in the United States. Ultimately, students were able to demonstrate their ability to be Future Ready by engaging in question-and-answer sessions following the great learning modules and videos that were part of the assemblies. Rio Vista Leopards are internet safe!



Rose Drive *Elementary School (TK-5)*

4700 Rose Dr., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7250 • www.rosedrive.pylusd.org



Trisha Gray
Principal

PBIS Excellence

Over the years the Rose Drive team has been dedicated to Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Rose Drive is honored to have received the recognition of Platinum Certification in PBIS.

PBIS is an evidence-based

tiered framework that supports our students' behavioral, academic, social, emotional and mental health needs. When implemented consistently, it improves our students' social and academic skills. Most importantly, it also creates a warm and welcoming school environment where students can grow and learn.

To qualify for the achievement level of Platinum, Rose Drive demonstrated excellent scores on the TFI, or Tiered Fidelity Inventory. PBIS reviewers visited the school and observed our students and staff members engaging in Rose Drive's clearly stated and explicitly taught core values.



These core values are being Safe, There and Ready, Acting Responsibly, being Respectful, and Showing Compassion, also known as the Rose Drive STARS.

Students, staff and all of our Rose Drive community members are able to name and demonstrate these core values to support this positive school climate. The students are also positively reinforced with STARS cards when they demonstrate these core values. They may collect these cards to earn various rewards and special privileges.

Rose Drive also has many student groups, such as Gardening Club, grade-level Big and Little Buddies, Kindness Squad, and Team Roadrunner. This means that our students are able to engage in many activities that will nurture their opportunity to become involved with and show care for their community. Rose Drive continues to work towards PBIS excellence, and looks forward to another wonderful school year!

Ruby Drive *Elementary School (TK-6)*

601 Ruby Dr., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-1921 • www.rubydrive.org



Lisa Carmona
Principal

Reveling in Robotics at Ruby Drive!

Ruby Drive Elementary scholars are coding and problem solving in the engaging, new Computer and STEM Lab. Students are working with Sphero Activity Kits which use coding at any level through blocks or text. The Code-and-Go Robotic Mice make coding fun as students work together by laying out a route, by code, for the mouse to follow.

The STEM lab excitement continues with Artie 3000, the robot that will make a drawing for the student that codes Artie's directions line by line. In addition, students have opportunities to work with their peers to build code obstacle courses. Having robotics at Ruby Drive encourages Ruby Drive scholars to collaborate and learn valuable investigative skills that they will be able to use inside the classroom and possibly in their future workplace.



Sierra Vista Elementary School (TK-6)

1811 N. Placentia Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7270 • www.sierravistaelementary.org



Debbie Kojima
Principal

Math Strategies

Sierra Vista Eagles work hard each and every day to build in foundational math strategies to set them up for success as mathematicians! First through sixth graders are building math fact fluency with district supported instructional programs such as Reflex and Frax. Programs such as these help our Eagles develop math fact fluency and building conceptual knowledge for fractions. A student with a high amount of math fact fluency allows them to free up their cognitive load to do more complex mathematical work. In addition, all of our mathematicians: TK through the sixth grades work on a variety of rich and immersive standards based mathematical lessons each and every day! These mathematicians are working hard, and we are so proud of their efforts!



Instructional tools such as Reflex and Frax help to build foundational math skills that benefit our Eagles in their academic careers.

Topaz Elementary School (TK-6)

3232 Topaz Ln., Fullerton, CA 92831 • 714/993-9977 • www.topazschool.org



Eva Matthews
Principal

Topaz Begins the 23-24 School Year!

We begin our 23-24 school year with our traditional staff picture. All of our staff beaming with Tiger pride! At Topaz we enjoy celebrating the entire staff, especially our unsung heroes. Happy National Custodial Day to Mr. Pedro and Mr. Faustino! Our plant managers are



always the first to arrive each day and last to leave campus, taking pride in our school daily and it shows. They clean messes no one dares to touch and they befriend all in our community. You will hear their names throughout the school with joy from students to staff, we appreciate you! October is such an exciting and busy month and we can't wait to share with you all of our fun events in the next edition.



Travis Ranch School (TK-8)

5200 Via de la Escuela, Yorba Linda, CA 92887 • 714/986-7460 • www.travisranchschool.org



Kristen Petrovacki
Principal

A Recess To Remember

When you reminisce on your journey in school, do you remember your favorite recess activities? For me, it was swaying on the swings and participating in lively handball games. Recess is a great pastime and a powerful tool for learning, social development, and overall well-being. Our elementary school community recently celebrated a new addition to the playground, a dynamic obstacle course that challenges students' coordination, strength,

agility, and mental focus. Our students are responding positively with excitement and patience to this newest outlet for energy. We are very grateful to our fabulous PTA for supporting this effort. Likewise, our district's maintenance and facilities department did an excellent job with the installation. We also recently reopened our Reading Garden, providing students with a peaceful, quiet space to wind down and enjoy a slower pace with a good book. We are proud that Travis Ranch provides diverse options for Trailblazers to enjoy their free time and fosters an environment that values physical and mental well-being.



Dr. Cherniss joins our Principal and PTA for the elementary playground ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Tuffree Middle School (7-8)

2151 N. Kraemer Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7480 • www.tuffree.org



David Okamoto
Principal

Core Values Lead to Success

Tuffree Middle School continues to be a fantastic middle school! To quickly list our recent awards, Tuffree has been named a Gold Ribbon School, a 2022 National Forum to Accelerate Middle School Reform and CA School to Watch, a 2021 California Distinguished School, and a 2021 Gold Medal PBIS School. We were also awarded the 2020 California PBIS Community Cares top award.

With this being my second year as principal at Tuffree, I couldn't be more proud to be a part of the Tuffree "family" of students, staff, and parents. This year we aim to "LEVEL UP"! both inside and outside the classroom. We definitely aim to achieve this year, and so far we are off to a great start!

When I walk into the classrooms I see students engaged in their course content. When I talk to students outside of the classrooms at break and lunch, they consistently tell me what they are learning about, and they can also explain to me what they have learned for the day!

Additionally, each day we continue to reinforce our three core values of respect, responsibility, and teamwork on campus. You can see these words around campus, in our announcements, and posted in the classrooms. When students are asked about our values, the words "Respect, Responsibility, and Teamwork" are their immediate response.

In the next report I will be sharing some great updates on our progress here at Tuffree Middle School. There are some great things in store for us as a school, and I am happy to help lead us forward as the proud principal of Tuffree!

Go, Falcons!

Tynes Elementary School (TK-6)

735 Stanford Dr., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-5550 • www.johnotynes.org



Tonya Gordillo
Principal

The Tiger Report

Tynes Elementary School has kicked off the year with a new way of communicating through a video production called The Tiger Report! The Tiger Report is created by our 6th grade GATE students. To be part of

the Tiger Report team, students went through an application process that included a presentation to their peers.

Each week, our Tiger Report team produces a video to be shown campus wide. The Tiger Report crew shares reports on information such as campus updates, weather reports, celebrations, random facts, or even a joke or two. Students are learning many skills like video editing, script writing, communication techniques, and much more! This experience provides a great connection with our STEM curriculum and unites the



campus by keeping everyone informed. Our Tynes Tigers excitedly await the next episode available every Monday. Our awesome 6th graders have gone above and beyond to produce amazing videos for the campus to enjoy!

Valadez Middle School Academy (6-8)

161 E. La Jolla St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7440 • www.valadezacademy.org



Dr. Christa Borgese
Principal

Pep Rally

Valadez Middle School Academy (VMSA) has had a phenomenal start to the school year. From PBIS assemblies and rotations the first week of school to ASB lunchtime activities on Fridays, the students have had several opportunities to feel included, welcomed and have some

fun! Our PE teacher, Jeffrey Udarbe, with support from his team, our ASB teacher, and Band Director planned our first Pep Rally before the Middle School Volleyball Tournament. The whole student body came out to show their school spirit and wish their volleyball team luck. They were treated to music, activities, and a volleyball showcase. The students are also looking forward to their first Mix It Dance next week with a "Remember Me" theme to recognize Dia De Los Muertos. Here's to a wonderful 2023-2024 school year.



Valencia High School (9-12)

500 N. Bradford, Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/996-4970 • www.vhstigers.org



Chris Herzfeld
Principal

Academic Powerhouse!

Valencia High School is proud to announce that nine seniors are among the top half-percentage of students in the nation to receive the honor of 2023 National Merit Scholar semifinalist: Jessica Chao, KangSan Kim, Nathan Lee, Alicia Ma, Asher McCathern, Joseph Park, Tanya Vidhun, Alyssa Wong, and Dong Yoom.

Also, 33 additional students scored in the top 5% in the nation and qualified as 2023 National Merit Commended Students.

We're proud to announce that 11 students' AP scores earned them the College Board's National Recognition Award, including National Hispanic, African American, and Indigenous Awards: Kelsey Allison, Shrika Andhe,

Emiliano Berber, Daniel Calleros, Jared Chou, Cameron Ray Dagarag, Gabrielle DeCuir, Josephine Huang, Hayden Martin, Serena Melton, and Shane Valdez.

Two Tigers received perfect AP scores this year: Hector Aguirre in Computer Science A and Baizhou Liu in Computer Science Principles.

And finally, VHS is proud to announce that we were once again the top International Baccalaureate (IB) program in Orange County, with 63 students awarded International Baccalaureate (IB) Diplomas last spring. A record 168 students earned the Val Tech diploma, including 40 dual IB/ValTech. Also, 11 AVID students earned Val Tech diplomas.

Valencia High School continues to set the pace for high expectations in a nurturing environment, leading to success for students of all backgrounds.

Van Buren Elementary School (TK-6)

1245 N. Van Buren St., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7100 • www.vanburenelementary.org



David Cammarato
Principal

Building Community

The beginning of this school year has been nothing short of exceptional, and it has set a remarkable tone for the months ahead.

What makes this year truly stand out is the daily leadership that we have seen from both our staff members and parents. Their enthusiasm has not only elevated the learning experience, it has also fostered a sense of unity among students, teachers, and families.

From the very first day of the year our parents have been actively participating in school events, PTA meetings, and volunteer opportunities. They have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to their children's education. Van Buren is all about community, as well as taking the opportunity to make this school a great place to learn!

The dedication of our parent community is unparalleled, and we have held many events that bring our families together. This included our PTA pancake breakfast, where parents came together to help assemble new playground

equipment and enjoy a meal. We also had a huge turnout for our Trunk or Treat event in October.

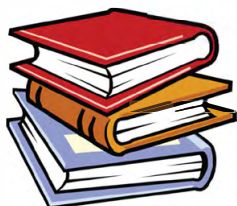
But our community events are not confined to the school grounds. They also extend into the surrounding area with PTA restaurant nights that not only support this group but also help connect families together.

The Van Buren staff is actively committed to fostering and supporting student learning. This year we have focused our attention on small-group instruction, AVID learning strategies, and supporting students in need through after-school interventions.

This cohesive effort has made it possible for students to overcome obstacles, feel valued, and develop a genuine love for learning. This remarkable start to the school year, driven by the unwavering commitment of both parents and teachers, has set a standard of excellence that will undoubtedly continue to shape our educational journey.

The dedication and cooperation between all Van Buren stakeholders has created a thriving and dynamic learning community, one where every child's potential is nurtured and celebrated.

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL



2023 – 2024



Wagner *Elementary School (TK-6)*

717 E. Yorba Linda Blvd., Placentia, CA 92870 • 714/986-7180 • www.wagnerwildcats.org



Kyleen Fennema
Principal

Everybody Belongs at Wagner

Check out the Wagner Kindness Crew in action! Started in 2021 by teachers Maddie Kiblinger and Jennifer Gill, the Kindness Crew is made up of over seventy remarkable upper grade students with one mission - to help make sure Wagner is a positive place where everybody knows they belong. They do this by spreading positivity, inclusivity, and goodwill. These volunteer students

organize games and activities, check in on their fellow students, spread compliments, coach fellow students, and more to make our recess breaks full of connection and positive social interactions. Crewmembers, identified by their brightly colored vests and friendly smiles, go above and beyond by being a consistent, welcoming presence on our playgrounds and proactively seeking out students who are playing alone. Thank you Kindness Crew for making sure every Wildcat knows they are an important part of the Wagner Community!



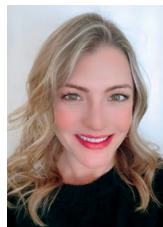
Kindness Crew sets up a reading picnic



Just a few of the wonderful Kindness Crew students

Woodsboro *Elementary School (TK-6)*

7575 Woodsboro Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807 • 714/986-7040 • woodsboro.pylusd.org



Melanie Carmona
Principal

Woodsboro PTA hosted a Fall Family Fun Night on October 20th. Students and families were invited to dress in costume to celebrate the fall season. After a costume parade and contest, everyone participated in Trunk or Treat with decorated cars and plenty of candy. Other activities included dancing to the DJ music, enjoying dinner

from The Family Pizza food truck, visiting the Book Fair and capturing memories in the photo booth. There were also several raffle prizes up for grabs. To end the evening, families gathered on the lawn for a screening of Hotel Transylvania 3, complete with concessions. This event was an entertaining way to celebrate fall at Woodsboro, and heartfelt thanks go out to our dedicated PTA leaders and volunteers for making it all possible.



Yorba Linda Middle School (6-8)

4777 Casa Loma Ave., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7080 • www.ylms.org



Paige Stills
Principal

Week of Welcome

Yorba Linda Middle has hit the ground running this year, welcoming approximately 830 students to the 2023-2024 school year. We launched our annual “Week of Welcome”, which dedicates the first week of school to community and culture building. We hold the belief that when students feel connected to school, students will thrive academically. Students participated in a variety of activities that centered around our PBIS Core Values of Resiliency, Empathy, and Potential. YLMS also earned a Platinum PBIS statewide recognition this year, which represents our school’s commitment to our MTSS systems to ensure that students experience a positive school culture. Our academic focus this year is supported by the launch of “B3”, which stands for Building a Better Bobcat which occurs once a week. During B3, students are assigned to a teacher to get academic support. Lastly, we held our family picnic during lunch and hosted approximately 687 family members!



Yorba Linda High School (9-12)

19900 Bastanchury Rd., Yorba Linda, CA 92886 • 714/986-7500 • www.ylhs.org



Dr. Richard Dinh
Principal

School Safety a Priority

Yorba Linda High School is widely known for our high student academic performance and college acceptance rates. What we also take pride in is our maintaining a safe environment where all of our students and staff members can thrive academically. So on October 23-27, Yorba Linda High School participated in the annual Red Ribbon Week to further

educate our students on the dangers of drug use, and the importance of healthy decision-making.

To start the week, the Orange County Sheriff’s Department specifically spoke to all of the students about the dangers of fentanyl. The goal of this assembly was to equip our students with essential knowledge about fentanyl, and to raise awareness about the grave

risks that are associated with fentanyl use, which in recent years has become a significant public health concern across the nation.

Additionally, Yorba Linda High School’s ASB planned specific activities to help promote the event, including anti-drug themed dress-up days where both students and staff could participate. We are proud to be a safe school community, one where students can thrive academically and build a positive foundation for life after high school.



Yorba Linda High School teachers wearing hats and sunglasses to “shade yourself from drugs”

Madeleine's Review



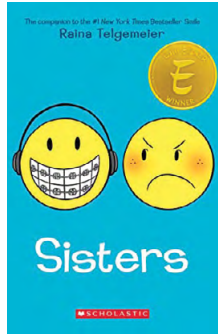
Madeleine J.

A Tough Relationship

Sisters by Raina Telgemeier is a graphic novel that's about herself. She wants a little sister, but when she finally gets one it's not how she expected at all! Her sister's name

is Amara, and when she was 2 or 3, they started to fight and argue all the time. Later, their mother had another baby named Will. A major event from the story was the family's road trip to Colorado to visit their cousins. I didn't think they would make it through the whole trip because they were fighting a lot in the car. I felt glad and surprised because they finally made it.

The author's writing style is narrative, because the story is from the narrator's point of view. I think you should read this book because there were a lot of exciting and thrilling adventures.

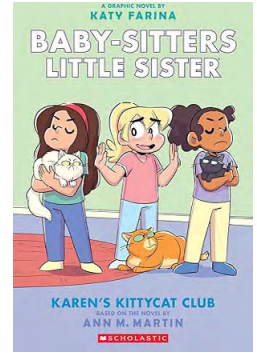


Karen's Fun Club!

Karen's Kittycat Club by

Katy Farina is one book of a series called "Baby-Sitters Little Sister." It is about a girl named Karen who has an older stepsister named Kristy that works with her friends to babysit. This gave Karen an idea! She decided that she would get together with her friends, Hannie and Amanda, and start a "kittycat club," which is like babysitting but with cats.

One emotion I felt while reading it was surprised, because at first I thought they wouldn't even get through their first meeting. They would waste too much time arguing over simple things, because they are younger kids and not that mature. Karen and her friends were really excited about cat-sitting, but they found out it was harder than they expected to get adults to hire them! You should read this book because it has suspense, and laughs!



Madeleine is in 4th grade, and she likes to do martial arts, and she has a passion for drawing, swimming, making stories, and reading books.

Musical String Instruments Word Search Contest

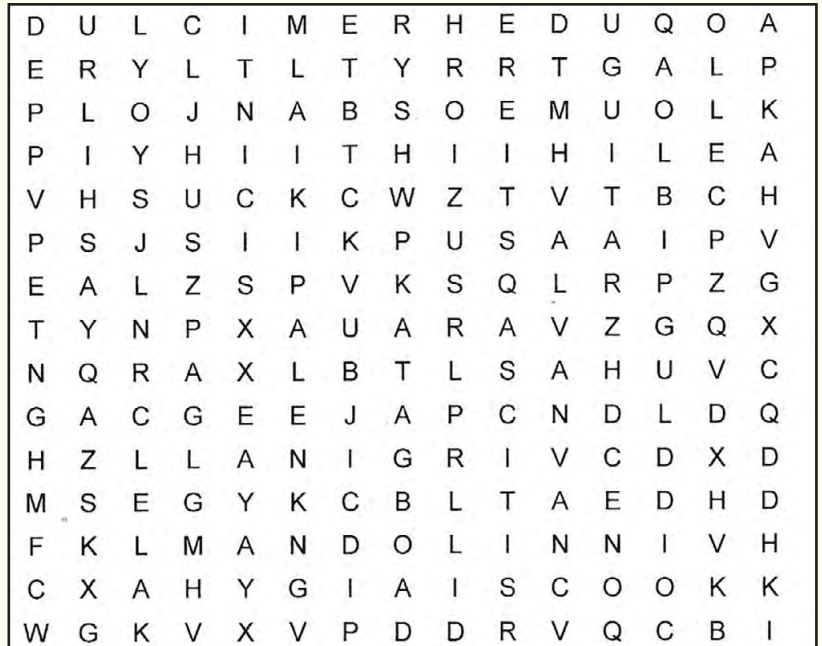
Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

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

Entries must be received by December 15, 2023

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a *School News Roll Call* card/dice game, GAZUMP.

BALALAIKA	LYRE
BANJO	MANDOLIN
BASS VIOL	ORGAN
CELLO	PIANO
CLAVICHORD	SITAR
CONTRABASS	UKULELE
DULCIMER	VIOLA
GUITAR	VIOLIN
HARPSICHORD	ZITHER
LUTE	



Orange County Department of Education



Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent



Dr. Ramon Miramontes
Deputy Superintendent of Instructional Programs

Times and technologies may change, but ensuring students feel a sense of connection at school is just as crucial as ever. Arguably, it's never been more important.

I'm talking specifically about being involved with

clubs, sports, music and other activities that not only enhance personal growth but have also been shown to improve students' academic performance and their well-being.

Research from the National Institutes of Health tells us that when students feel connected to their school, they are less likely to feel anxious, sad or have thoughts of harming themselves. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests these benefits are long term, leading to improved health outcomes into adulthood.

Now, let me introduce you to two OCDE programs that have a history of engaging students across Orange County: the Academic Decathlon and Pentathlon.

The Academic Decathlon was established in 1968 as the brainchild of former Orange County Superintendent Dr. Robert Peterson. Students take on 10 challenges, giving speeches, doing interviews, writing essays and answering questions in such subjects as art, economics, literature, math, music and social science. Think of this as a mental Olympics, culminating with the Super Quiz Relay, an exciting live competition.

For middle school students in grades six, seven and eight, OCDE offers the Academic Pentathlon. This is a five-event competition that focuses on fine arts, literature, math, science and social science, building up to its own Super Quiz Relay.

Both events bring students from different achievement levels together to compete, but it's not just about winning and losing. These are months-long endeavors that are equally about learning, growing and making the kinds of lasting friendships that emerge when students tackle challenges together. This year's decathlon theme is "Technology and Humanity," reflecting one of the most important issues of our time.

Scholarly competitions like the decathlon and pentathlon aren't the only options available. Public school students in Orange County can also connect through campus clubs, sports teams, career exploration programs, student government, community service projects, the performing arts, cultural clubs, peer mentoring, service learning projects and much more. Ultimately, it's about understanding the aptitudes and interests of each student and finding the activities that will most engage and inspire them.

So here's my call to action: As parents and educators, let's envision education beyond the classroom walls. Let's introduce each learner to activities that will help them truly belong to their school. Let's consistently inspire the next generation of leaders, thinkers and achievers to engage in transformative experiences that will enrich their lives and potentially impact their communities.

The connections they forge today will not only shape their current academic achievements but will also lay the foundation for more resilient, fulfilled and empowered individuals in the future.

For more information about the Orange County Academic Decathlon and Academic Pentathlon, or if your middle or high school is interested in starting a program, contact OCDE Coordinator Kristin Rigby at 714-966-4435 or krigby@ocde.us

200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa CA 92628 • 714/966-4000
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