

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Saddleback Valley Unified School District



Volume 7, Issue 23

October 2023

Student Voice is Integral to the Success of SVUSD's Programs and Resources



SVUSD welcomes its 2023-2024 Student Board Member and High School Representatives:
Tamika Bush-Craig (Silverado High School), Bianca Nicula (Laguna Hills High School),
Aubrey Sanders (Trabuco Hills High School), Layle Le (Mission Viejo High School), Nathan Centeno (El Toro High School)

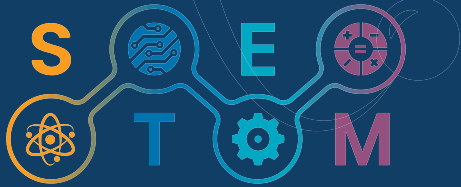
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HAVE QUESTIONS?

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Board of Education



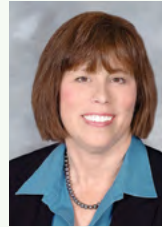
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Vice President



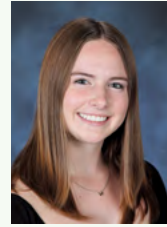
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Amanda Morrell
Member



Dan Walsh
Member



Kaitlyn Heinecke
Student Member

Welcome to the 2023-2024 School Year!



Dr. Crystal Turner
Superintendent

Saddleback Valley Unified School District was busy this summer supporting students and modernizing our schools. Two highlights were SVUSD's Summer Music Camp and Newcomer Camp, both offered at no cost to our students.

Invited to participate regardless of their musical background, Summer Music Camp served approximately 300 students in grades 5-8. Students had the opportunity to be introduced to new instruments outside of their regular school year music instruction. Students were taught to hold the instrument with correct form, utilize the proper technique to create the best sound, read sheet music, play in an ensemble, and made friends in their new music family. This program is taught by an incredible team of SVUSD middle school directors and professional musicians.

Eight days of instruction culminated in an impressive performance that showcased the students' skills.

Another exciting learning opportunity was SVUSD's Newcomer Camp. This camp provided multilingual newcomers an opportunity to practice their English acquisition skills. Held at Olivewood Elementary for incoming Kindergarten through 7th grade students and at Los Alisos Intermediate for 8th through 12th grade students, students participated in activities to support their reading, writing, listening, speaking, and social-emotional skills. Additionally, parents had the opportunity to attend the Parent Academy to learn about the ELD program in our District and resources and programs available to help support their students.

Each summer, our Facilities Department tackles multiple modernization, construction, safety, and deferred maintenance projects to provide the best learning environment possible for our students. A few of this summer's projects include new playgrounds at multiple elementary schools, shade covers for outdoor learning spaces, completion of a \$15 million HVAC upgrade project, new furniture for thirteen school sites, pool modernization, roofing, slope abatement, fencing to close perimeter gaps, and installation of classroom instructional technology. In addition, work continues at some of our sites to provide

STEM labs, new libraries, parking lot improvements, offices with a single point of entry, and more.

Finally, we are proud to have installed our 2023-2024 Student Board Member, Aubrey Sanders (THHS) and welcome our High School Representatives, Layla Le (MVHS), Bianca Nicula (LHHS), Nathan Centeno (ETHS), and Tamika Bush-Craig (SHS). Incorporating the voice of our students is an integral part of improving services and programs in SVUSD. Each of these remarkable student leaders also serves as a member of our Student Advisory Council, comprised of over 30 students representing each of our comprehensive high schools, as well as each of our alternative learning environments.

I look forward to an incredible year together!

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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Netragrednik

School News

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UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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endorse the advertisers in this publication.

Welcome back to another new school year. It is always an exciting time for students reconnecting with old friends, making new friends, meeting their teachers and settling into a routine.

Dr. Turner begins this issue

on page 3 with her message of the summer opportunities and the preparations for the new school year.

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

Our next issue is February 14.



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Educational Services

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Liza Zielasko
Assistant
Superintendent

Summer Music Camp

SVUSD's Summer Music Camp celebrated its third year this past summer. Students from across the District in grades 5-8 had the opportunity to build upon our established K-12 pathways in instrumental music and connect with musicians across our schools. After only a week and a half, our students were able to learn and perform multiple pieces of music with great success. We have an incredible team of teachers, directors, walk on coaches, and student volunteers who help ensure camp success each year. The team is greatly appreciated for all they do for our students to ensure a well-articulated and meaningful music experience in SVUSD!

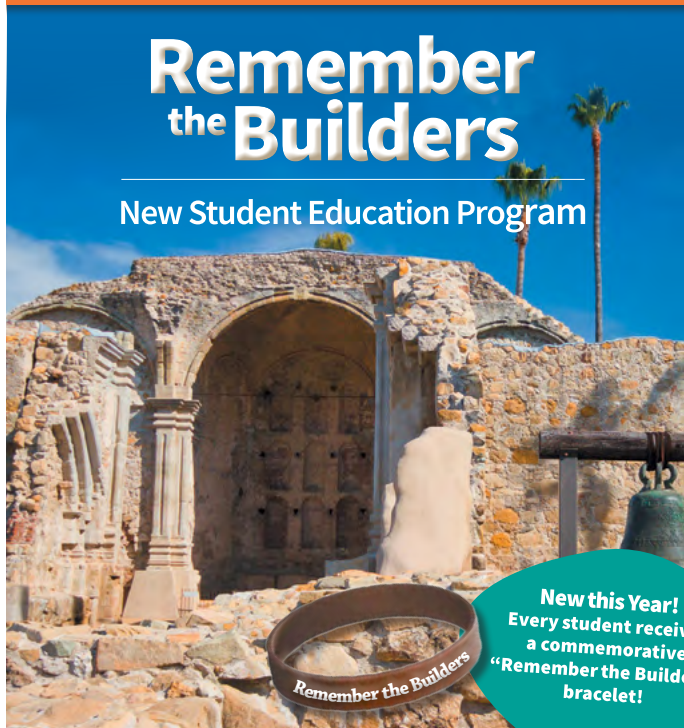


SVUSD Governing Board with our Summer Music Camp Staff.
(L to R) Board Member, Dan Walsh; Board Clerk, Suzie Swartz;
Board Vice President, Dr. Edward Wong; RSM Music Director, Phil Felix;
walk on coach, Lisa Cherry; Serrano Music Director, Bryan Ngo;
Los Alisos Music Director, Nancy Wetzel; La Paz Music Director, Dan Robbins;
Camp Coordinator, Athena Reyes; and Board President, Barbara Schulman.

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Halloween Safety Tips

As Halloween approaches, it's soon to be one of the most magical times of the year. Children eagerly anticipate indulging in sugary treats while parents grapple with managing the candy frenzy. Fortunately, a few helpful tips and tricks can ensure a stress-free Halloween for both kids and parents.

Before heading out to trick-or-treat, eat a light meal or snack rather than going out on an empty stomach to prevent snacking on the candy during door-to-door visits. In addition, it's important to remind kids that they shouldn't eat any candy until their loot can be inspected later.

Inspect wrapped treats for any signs of tampering such as unusual appearance, discoloration, holes, or tears, and throw out anything that looks suspicious. If you have a food allergy, be sure to check labels on all treats, and do not consume any home-baked goods.

Eating large amounts of candy in one day won't harm one's health, but consuming sugar daily can lead to weight gain, high blood pressure, diabetes, or cardiovascular disease. According to the 2020-25 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, children ages 3-17 should have no more than 10% added sugars in their total diet.

After Halloween night, kids may find themselves with a treasure trove of candy. Parents can use this as an opportunity to teach portion control by limiting candy consumption following Halloween. Leftover sweets can be donated to local charities and soldiers overseas through donation drives.

It's important to remember that young children can choke on gum, peanuts, and hard candies so be sure to remove any from goodie bags.

Apart from the food, many children traveling in the dark pose safety concerns. Costumes should be light-colored and easy to see at night. Using flashlights and adding reflective or glow-in-the-dark tape to costumes and treat bags makes kids more visible at night.

Keep electronic devices tucked away. Walk, don't run, and make eye contact with drivers before crossing the street. Also, keep electronic devices put away when crossing the streets, make eye contact with drivers, and avoid staying out too late.

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Athena, Age 2



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Business Services

25631 Peter A. Hartman Way, Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/586-1234



Robert Craven
Assistant
Superintendent

Busy Summer of Preparation

The SVUSD Business Services division was busy on many fronts over the summer supporting our students and preparing sites for the new school year. Food Services provided daily meals for over 100 students in the community at the Orange County Library El Toro branch. Students in summer programs and summer school throughout the district also received meals, with the department serving over 17,600 meals

during the summer. This year, all school sites are serving free breakfast and lunch for all students.

SVUSD Kids Factory ran programs in Mission Viejo and Lake Forest over the summer, supporting students with daily activities, games, and fun. The program saw more than 200 students across 3 campuses. Kids Factory is up and running this school year on campuses in Mission Viejo and Lake Forest, providing an opportunity for student after school care.

The Technology Department prepared new chromebooks for 3rd, 7th, and 10th graders, along with installing new equipment and performing maintenance on district network systems. They prepared the upload of information for the new school year to ensure learning materials would be available for students, and converted the district communication system from School Messenger to ParentSquare. The Business Department finalized the 2022-23 school year finances, ordered supplies for this new school year, assisted with processing new employees, and finalized this year's budget.

At sites around the District, the Facilities, Maintenance, and Construction department was busy completing upgrades during the summer. Projects included new playgrounds, roof installations and repairs, slurry, painting, field maintenance and much more. The 15 million dollar HVAC replacement and upgrade project was completed, along with modernizations at four school sites. It's been a very busy summer as the department now transitions to supporting our students and staff during the school year.

Human Resources

25631 Peter A. Hartman Way, Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/586-1234



Dr. Darvin Jackson
Assistant
Superintendent

HR Highlights

In light of a challenging labor market, the Human Resources Department has attracted both highly qualified certificated and classified staff over the past several months. This past spring, SVUSD revamped its Super Saturday Certificated Recruitment Fair. SVUSD interviewed and selected from over 250 potential employees to fill vacant positions during the spring and summer. SVUSD also has been successful

in attracting new classified employees through our hiring incentive program. Current employees referred more than 50 over the past year and will be eligible for the \$500 once the new employee passes probation. In addition, we hired over 125 new employees who will be eligible for the incentive once they pass probation. Due to the success of the program, SVUSD has extended the program through December 2023.

SVUSD has benefited from additional funding such as the Learning Recovery Grant, which has allowed the district to hire additional positions to eliminate K-1 combo classes at all sites. This effort provides some relief at these levels due to the challenges of providing instruction for two different grades as well as age levels. We are excited to see our students reap the rewards of our homogeneous classes.

The District has received funding to provide staff development specifically targeted for our classified staff. To ensure we meet the needs of our staff, the Human Resources Department, in collaboration with CSEA representatives, is in the process of creating a survey to ascertain the various learning opportunities our classified staff seek. This survey will be delivered by email in the coming weeks. The Classified All Staff Professional Development has been scheduled for January 29. We look forward to a successful and enriching day with our staff.

As always, we thank you for your continued commitment to our students, staff and the community at large.

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL



2023 — 2024





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Orange County Department of Education



Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent



Dr. Ramon Miramontes
Deputy Superintendent of Instructional Programs

In the Star Wars universe, whenever a spacecraft makes the jump to light speed, the stars outside the cockpit stretch out into luminous streaks. It's a mesmerizing visual of acceleration that brings to mind the dizzying advancement of technology here on planet Earth — and the urgent need for educational systems to keep pace.

With artificial intelligence poised to reshape workplaces and society at large, the Orange County Department of Education is moving ahead with an ambitious initiative that will evaluate and determine the best approaches for integrating AI into teaching and learning. This could include more personalized learning, real-time feedback for students and teachers, or the automation of routine tasks, allowing educators to focus more on matters that demand human insight, judgment and creative thinking.

While the outcomes have yet to be determined, we do know this won't be a solitary endeavor. Led by our Educational Services division, OCDE is taking the first steps of a collaborative journey that will involve school district leaders, industry partners, educators, parents and students. And we envision it taking place in three distinct phases.

The first phase will seek to elevate AI literacy and leadership, establishing a common understanding and terminology in Orange County. The second phase will develop strategies and an implementation plan in collaboration with leaders of the county's 28 independent school districts. Finally, a third phase will evaluate our efforts, gather data and plan for the future. OCDE's commitment to continuous improvement and community engagement ensures that the feedback loop will remain open, fostering a culture of learning and adaptability.

OCDE has long sought to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to emerging technologies, but AI represents something we haven't quite seen before. These newer tools simulate human intelligence, enabling computers to perform tasks that typically require human cognitive abilities. As such, they have the potential to impact just about every aspect of our work and lives, from teaching and learning to health care, transportation, media, energy, finance and customer service.

While ChatGPT and other publicly available services aren't perfect, remember that they are programmed to learn from us, which means they can and will evolve exponentially. In other words, the examples we see today are the worst versions we're going to encounter moving forward.

Preparing students for an AI-driven future isn't just about passing along technical skills. It's about teaching adaptability, critical thinking and ethical decision-making. By integrating AI literacy across educational settings,

See **OC DEPT. OF EDUCATION** • Page 9

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OC DEPT OF EDUCATION • From Page 8

OCDE and our partners will be able to equip students with the capacity to navigate an increasingly complex world without losing those traits that make us uniquely human, like kindness, character and artistic expression. And through community engagement, we can pursue a shared vision for AI that aligns with our local values and needs.

The need for education to remain in stride with technology is undeniable, and the Orange County Department of Education has long been a leader in this arena. But collaboration is the key to what lies ahead. That's how we'll ensure that the next generation isn't just ready to embrace the challenges of an AI-driven world, but that they're poised to drive innovation, forge new paths and contribute meaningfully to a future that's constantly in motion.



Grandma,
Why Do
You Have
Cracks In
Your Face?



Is a question many grandmothers have heard from their grandchildren. When a grandchild finds her beautiful lost doll, she understands beauty is more than skin deep.

By Kay Coop | Illustrated by Melanie Florio

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Cielo Vista *Elementary School*

21811 Avenida de Los Fundadores, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 • 949/589-7456 • www.svusd.org/cielovista



Dr. Frances Hansell
Principal

Go Hawks!

Cielo Vista is proud to be recognized by the State of California for achieving Bronze status for our work with a Multi-Tiered System of Supports for

Social-Emotional Behaviors, formerly known as PBIS.

Our staff and students work diligently to ensure everyone is provided with a safe, respectful and responsible learning environment at school. With thanks to our teacher leaders Katey Thompson, Nisa Yazarel, Jennie Chavez, Carly Sullivan, Nicole Sawyer, and Becky Prickett, Cielo Vista students follow the Hawks' Way with positive attitudes, respectful actions, responsible work ethic, kindness and self-control. We are working towards Silver status this school year. Go Hawks!



de Portola *Elementary School*

27031 Preciados Dr., Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/586-5830 • www.svusd.org/deportola



Brendon Morrow
Principal

STAR Words

It is with pleasure that we welcome back our community for another fantastic school year. Along with academics, our staff will continue to focus on kindness and safety amongst both our children and adults this year. We are so thankful our community understands that some of our safety procedures may include things that are more time-consuming or less convenient for our parents. We are equally thankful our staff and parents continuously set high expectations and remain stellar examples of kindness each day.

Our MTSS SEB (PBIS) program and incentives continue to grow. With the focus on our STAR words (Safety, Taking Responsibility, Acting with Kindness, Respect) students will continue earning STAR bucks from our staff for exhibiting these taught expectations.

Individual, classroom, and school-wide incentives will be available as the STAR bucks accumulate. While we will always have individual situations and differences to teach through with our students, the culture of the school continues to be positive and moving in the right direction.

For anyone who has not already done so, please feel free to introduce yourself in writing or as you see me around campus. I am excited to continue this journey and be your partner in education. On behalf of our entire staff, it is an absolute pleasure and HUGE responsibility to take your most prized possession into our care each day. Thank you for your trust, your open mind, and most of all, your support.

For additional resources beyond this message, please visit the other links on our webpage where you will be able to access useful information, including our wonderful PTA and various electronic newsletters.

Del Cerro *Elementary School*

24382 Regina St., Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/830-5430 • www.svusd.org/delcerro



Dawn Lam
Principal

Swimming Together

Dolphins kicked off the school year with our annual theme, “We each may be one of a kind, but at Del Cerro we swim together.” We want all of our Dolphins to feel unique and special; therefore, our teachers spent the first few weeks getting to know our students’ strengths and interests. In addition, we have shared with our community that “swimming together” means we all have a common goal of ensuring that everyone feels safe and supported to achieve.

Along with our community approach to our school theme, our staff has prioritized teaching students how to “ride the wave,” which establishes our core values of respect, responsibility, integrity and safety. These values were explicitly taught in the classroom, in school rotations and with principal visits. Students earn Splash tickets to reinforce riding the wave, and our fabulous PTA opened our Wave store this month. Dolphins are excited to be “swimming together” in the 2023-204 school year!



Del Lago *Elementary School*

27181 Entidad, Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/855-1125 • www.svusd.org/dellago



Jonathan Kaplan
Principal

Electronic Marquee at Del Lago

Del Lago Elementary has added yet another item to beautify our school – an electronic marquee! Besides the multi-colored lighting and stunning displays, our marquee is a central point of information for all families. Together with ParentSquare, our information and communication systems keep everyone in our school

community up to date with all of the events, spirit days, school photos, and much more. A HUGE thank you to our amazing Parent Teacher Association (PTA) for raising the funds necessary to purchase and install this wonderful tool for our school. Our families are the best! Drive by and see what is happening at Del Lago – and Go Dolphins!



El Toro High School

25255 Toledo Way, Lake Forest, CA 92630 • 949/586-6333 • www.svusd.org/eths



Dr. James Martin
Principal

50th Anniversary

El Toro High School celebrated its 50th Anniversary on September 22. Alumni and staff members representing the last five decades gathered at ETHS to revisit memories, see the campus, and connect with friends from throughout El Toro's 50 years. The ETHS Museum had memorabilia such as yearbooks, trophies, programs, photos, articles, and quotes submitted by alumni

and staff to commemorate the golden anniversary. The Chargers enjoyed food and ice cream, face painters, hair color, and tattoos – all for free. Principal Dr. Jimmy Martin, SVUSD Board President Mrs. Schulman, former principal Dr. Don Martin, and English teacher Jim Shields addressed the crowd. The Chargers also enjoyed performances by the instrumental and vocal music programs along with the pep squad, as well as video cameos from some notable alumni such as Kaitlin Sandeno, Nolan Arenado, and Paul Skenes. Thank you to all who made it to celebrate ET's 50th Anniversary!



Esperanza Special Education

25121 Pradera Dr., Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/830-5470 • www.svusd.org/esperanza



Raymund Bueche
Principal

Career Start

Career Start serves over seven hundred 7th grade to adult students within SVUSD. Its main office is housed within the Esperanza Education Center. Career Start serves four middle schools, four high schools, Silverado, and the Adult Transition Program. The mission of Career Start is to empower young people with disabilities and foster increased independence and success in a competitive integrated employment. This

mission is carried out through three distinct programs: TPP (Transition Partnership Program) partners with the California Department of Rehabilitation to provide enhanced, coordinated vocational services, including DOR Student Services and employment preparation, job development, and short-term support services to successfully transition students with disabilities into meaningful employment. Students enrolled in TPP participate in activities aligned with Pre-Employment Transition Services (PRETS), including job exploration counseling, work readiness training, and workplace readiness training.

WAI (WorkAbility I) provides comprehensive pre-employment skills training, employment placement, and follow-up for middle school, high school, and ATP students in special education who are making the transition from school to work, independent living, and postsecondary education or training. Program services are appropriate to individual student needs, abilities, and interests.

The WAI program offers students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) the opportunity to complete their education while obtaining marketable job skills and provides an understanding of job-seeking and job-keeping skills.

Ticket to Work is designed to educate and empower Social Security disability students and beneficiaries about their benefits and employment opportunities.

Career Start seeks employers in the business community who will give students with disabilities a chance to prove themselves in a competitive, integrated employment setting. If you have questions about Career Start, please contact Ray Bueche at raymond.bueche@svusd.org or (949) 830-5302.

Foothill Ranch *Elementary School*

1 Torino Dr., Foothill Ranch, CA 92610 • 949/470-4885 • www.svusd.org/foothillranch



Howard Johnston
Principal

What's new at Foothill Ranch?

Many modernization projects are occurring simultaneously at our school. A new lunch area, MPR, library, and STEAM labs are just a few spaces getting a modern transformation. Most recently, our attention turned to landscaping. A former Bobcat and rising Eagle Scout worked with a team of forty

people to revitalize the kindergarten garden spaces. Jess Matthew, a Trabuco Hills High School sophomore, invited students, parents, friends, and neighbors to transform these spaces in just one day. Part of his design included installing weed barriers, repainting benches, planting trees/plants, and adding pathways. His team worked wonders (and put in a lot of sweat equity) on three outdoor spaces to create magical spaces for all to enjoy. We at FRE are grateful to the community for their ongoing support as we wrap up modernization projects and work to provide a beautiful campus for all of our students.



Gates *Dual Language Immersion Elementary School*

23882 Landisview Ave., Lake Forest, CA 92630 • 949/837-2260 • www.svusd.org/gates



Diana Clearwater
Principal

Collaboration

We are proud and excited as we embark on an exciting collaboration between Gates Dual Language Immersion Elementary School, the University of California Irvine, and the California Commission on

Teacher Credentialing. Gates was awarded the Teacher Residency Implementation Grant by the CTC which allows Gates to interview and select UCI students to be resident teachers in training at Gates. Our highly qualified bilingual teachers will serve as mentors to the next generation of bilingual teachers, who will be eligible for a financial incentive to stay in the teaching profession at Gates and in SVUSD. Gates currently has six resident

teachers with four talented mentors. During the duration of the grant, Gates and UCI will collaborate to prepare 24 teachers for careers in bilingual education!



Adrian Rodriguez, Elena Ingram, Karina Calderon, Ingrid Gonzalez, Ashley Villanueva, Elisa Garcia, Eloiza Gomez, Anthony Moreno (not pictured: Kristine Shishido)

Glen Yermo *Elementary School*

26400 Trabuco Rd., Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/586-6766 • www.svusd.org/glenyermo



Jennifer Televik
Principal

Starting the Year Strong

The 2023-2024 school year is off to a great start at Glen Yermo! Our students have quickly gotten back into their routines and are eager to learn. During the first few weeks of school, we spent time teaching what great ROAR behavior looks like, as part of our award-winning PBIS program. Our students also practiced learning skills to support collaboration and success in reading and math.

Glen Yermo is proud to be able to provide a number of specialized programs at our school including Reading Intervention, ST Math, GATE, PBIS, Social Emotional Learning, and GRIP. In addition, our wonderful PTA provides additional enrichment opportunities for our students through Art Masters, Family Nights, and much more. We invite you to visit and see first-hand what a wonderful school and community we have here at Glen Yermo!



La Madera *Elementary School*

25350 Serrano Rd., Lake Forest, CA 92630 • 949/770-1415 • www.svusd.org/lamadera



Jennifer Gass
Principal

Each Koala CARES

I am honored to serve as the Principal of La Madera Elementary School in Lake Forest, CA, home of the Koalas.

This year, La Madera earned silver recognition by California PBIS for demonstrating excellence in the implementation of the core features of PBIS. I am so proud of our staff for creating conditions to maximize academic and social-emotional-behavioral outcomes for all students.

Each student and staff member at La Madera CARES each and every day. The “CARES” acronym is the heart of our school culture. Our entire staff aims to promote positive behavior expectations on our campus. Each Koala works to demonstrate: Community of Respect, Act with Integrity, Responsible, Engaged in Learning, Safe & Self Controlled. All students and teachers are encouraged to be innovators, to take risks and grow together as a community of learners!



La Paz Intermediate School

25151 Pradera Dr., Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/830-1720 • www.svusd.org/lapaz



Tiffany Harville
Principal

Making a Pawsitive Impact

Our theme for the 23-24 school year is “Making a Pawsitive Impact”. We are challenging staff, students and community to make a Pawsitive Impact that’s contagious and supports one another. At La Paz, we want our students to understand and believe that they have the ability to impact the world positively.

They understand that no one gets anywhere by themselves. We are partnering with both our staff and our community because together we are truly better. This year our theme reflects our collective commitment to fostering an environment where students can flourish academically, emotionally, and socially. Our goal is to create a school culture that not only values academic excellence, but also places great emphasis on nurturing kindness, empathy, and respect. Students have already begun taking pride in their campus and working with our community during our first Campus Beautification. Leopards are ready to make a Pawsitive Impact in 2023-2024!



La Tierra Early Childhood Center

24150 Lindley St., Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/707-5276 • www.svusd.org/schools/elementary-a-l/la-tierra-early-childhood-center



Emily Arias
Principal

Model Peers Preschool Program

La Tierra opened a new Model Peers Preschool class this August. In an effort to increase inclusivity at La Tierra, the Model Peers Program was designed to provide opportunities for students with IEPs to learn alongside their typically developing peers. Our peer

models are made up of 3- and 4-year-old children and relatives of Saddleback Valley USD employees. We are proud to be offering this wonderful opportunity to our District staff. The class follows the California Preschool Learning Foundations which outlines key knowledge and skills that most children can achieve when provided with the kinds of interactions, instruction and environments that research has shown to promote early learning and development. The students in this class learn together by engaging in hands-on, play-based activities. All students in the class have the opportunity

to develop meaningful friendships, increase self-esteem, build academic readiness skills, and increase appreciation for diversity and respect for all people.



Mrs. Kahle is reading a story that correlates with the monthly theme from the Frog Street Curriculum, *Helping Grandpa and Grandma*.

Laguna Hills *High School*

25401 Paseo de Valencia, Laguna Hills, CA 92653 • 949/770-5447 • www.svusd.org/lhhs



Bill Hinds
Principal

Hawks Hail Our Heroes

On Friday, September 8th, Laguna Hills High School held their annual “Hawks Hail Our Heroes” football game. This game is dedicated to our veterans, active military, and first responders. The event started with exhibits from the

United States Marine Corps, the United States Army, the California Army National Guard, Laguna Hills Police Services and Orange County Sheriff’s Department, the Orange County Fire Authority, and the California Highway Patrol. The Hawks then honored four local “Hometown Heroes” for their contributions to our community and beyond. Junior, Ryah Stefani, performed “God Bless America” and the LHHS Choir performed the National Anthem. The ceremony

concluded with an OC Sheriff helicopter flyover. All in attendance wore red, white, and blue to join in on the celebrations. The Hawks are thankful for the service of all veterans, active military, and first responders.



Lake Forest *Elementary School*

21801 Pittsford Dr., Lake Forest, CA 92630 • 949/830-9945 • www.svusd.org/lakeforest



Caryn McGrew
Principal

Welcome to Lake Forest

I am honored to be serving as the principal and excited to join this wonderful school community! Our staff embraces the SVUSD Mission of SV Connects and are enjoying building positive relationships with our students and families at the beginning of this school year. We encourage parents to be active members in

our school community through PTO, ELAC, and volunteer opportunities. We are committed to providing a safe, positive, and engaging learning environment for ALL students. We start each day with Morning Announcements and our school-wide pledge to encourage students to RIDE the WAVE of “Reaching Individual Daily Excellence because We are Respectful, Always Safe, Very Responsible Every Day!” Staff are dedicated to supporting each student’s academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs every day. We received Silver Recognition by the California PBIS Coalition for our excellence in implementing school wide expectations and providing positive behavior interventions for students.



Linda Vista Magnet Elementary School

25222 Pericia Dr., Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/830-0970 • www.svusd.org/lindavista



Dr. Shannon Wyatt
Principal

Disney's Musicals in School is at Linda Vista IB Magnet!

We are excited to announce that Linda Vista is one of five schools in Orange County to be chosen for the Disney Musicals in Schools program put on by Segerstrom Center for the Arts. This is a three-year partnership with the Center in which artists from Segerstrom come to Linda Vista and assist teachers and staff members in producing a musical. This year we have chosen Finding Nemo as our musical. Students will participate in seventeen weeks of after school rehearsals. There are opportunities for students to sing, dance and act in the musical, and also to work behind the scenes as stage or tech crew members. We will have a culminating performance at Linda Vista in March and as a fantastic bonus, students will also perform on stage at Segerstrom Center for the Arts!



Lomarena Elementary School

25100 Earhart Rd., Laguna Hills, CA 92653 • 949/581-1370 • www.svusd.org/lomarena



Grace Cruikshank
Principal

Heroes Breakfast

At Lomarena Elementary School, we take great pride in our commitment to serve the children and families of our Laguna Hills Community. This year, Lomarena boasts lower class sizes, individualized small group instruction, a full time counselor, and a full time academic coach to ensure that our students and teachers have access to the most current research and strategies for educating our children. Our school is also proud to be a warm neighborhood school holding high expectations for ourselves and our students. Our acronym of "PRIDE" is at the core of our school culture as our entire staff aims to promote positive behavior expectations on campus and in our community. Our Lions know how to Persevere, show



Respect, have Integrity, show Diligence and have Empathy! Pictured here is a glimpse of our Heroes Breakfast held on September 11th where our Lomarena Lions honored all First Responders, Active Military, & Veterans.

Los Alisos *Intermediate School*

25171 Los Lobos Way, Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/830-9700 • www.svusd.org/losalisos



Michael Marzilli
Principal

Lobos Celebrate!!!

What a great start to our school year! We have seen so much school spirit around campus. Congratulations to our Lobos that have already earned some amazing accomplishments. Our honor roll students who earned a 3.50 GPA or above received a donut before the school day to celebrate.

Our ABCOS students who earned As, B, C along with Os or S in citizenship received an ice cream sandwich to celebrate. The Mission Viejo monthly character trait was responsibility. Pictured here are the students teachers nominated for demonstrating responsibility. These students have been supportive of their peers, consistently attending, and completing their school work. Awesome job, Lobos!



Melinda Heights *Elementary School*

21001 Rancho Trabuco, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 • 949/888-7311 • www.svusd.org/melindaheights



Kathryn Martin
Principal

Welcome to the New School Year!

The dedicated educators at Melinda Heights look forward to a 2023-2024 of connections, growth, and purpose as we teach and learn with nearly 1000 Mountain Lions. At Melinda Heights, our mission is threefold. We aim to challenge our students with purposeful use of scholarly tools and strategies,

provide a balanced educational program, and instill the character traits necessary for success in the world of tomorrow. Melinda Heights Mountain Lions ROAR as they pledge: "I am Responsible, I Own my choices, I Act with Integrity and I show Respect." The outstanding team at Melinda Heights has embarked upon this new school year with great enthusiasm and is committed to providing a safe, challenging environment that will empower our children to become innovative thinkers, and engaged, inspired learners prepared for a bright future. Here's to a year filled with growth, achievement, and endless possibilities.



Mission Viejo *High School*

25025 Chrisanta Dr., Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/837-7722 • www.svusd.org/mvhs



Tricia Osborne
Principal

MVHS Football-Tradition Never Graduates

With a long tradition of success, Mission Viejo High School Football is one of the most successful high school programs in the country. A California State Title in 2015, seven CIF Southern Section Championships and 25 South Coast League titles, the Diablos are consistently ranked in polls and currently

#2 in Orange County Top 25. Head Coach Chad Johnson is in his 19th year of coaching high school football, the last six years at MVHS. Coach Johnson is well-respected for his knowledge of football and placing students first. As stated by one of his players, "Coach Johnson always has the players' best interests at heart." The team travels to Washington DC to play private school St. John's. Highlights of their trip will include visits to many national monuments as well as the White House! Good luck and Go Diablos!



Montevideo *Elementary School*

24071 Carrillo Dr., Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/586-8050 • www.svusd.org/montevideo



Lisa Graham
Principal

Together, We ROCK!

Montevideo Elementary is a 2022-2023 California PBIS Silver Award Winning School!

We ROCK! We seek to be Responsible, Optimistic, Courageous, and Kind in every area of our school and life. Our Staff creates positive, safe classrooms and

playgrounds that promote strong relationships with students as they teach, model, and encourage ROCK behavior. Throughout the day, students earn ROCK tickets as they display the attributes of ROCK within our school. Tickets are spent in our "You ROCK" stores then brought to a Flag Ceremony and placed into the Tower of ROCK for a school-wide reward. As an added celebration, each month the

students nominate a classmate that has ROCKed it. The selected students are celebrated at a Flag Ceremony, where they spin the Wheel of ROCK which provides their entire class with a reward. Our passion is to educate the whole child with love and support. We love our school family!



Olivewood *Elementary School*

23391 Dune Mear Rd., Lake Forest, CA 92630 • 949/837-6682 • www.svusd.org/olivewood



Alex Perez
Principal

Welcome to Olivewood Elementary School!

Our Mustang family is excited to welcome a new group of lifelong learners. Not only are we focused on building academic capacity, but we are addressing the need to develop social and emotional capacity. We promote an inclusive learning environment where students from different ethnicities, upbringing, and lifestyles can collaborate and combine abilities. With the support of our caregivers and P.T.A, we provide an exceptional learning experience for all of our students.

It is extremely important that we highlight areas of growth and achievement. We establish a stable foundation for comprehension across all subjects while elevating academic rigor. Our teaching staff continues to remain focused on increasing capacity by conducting structured Professional Learning Communities, analyzing data, and creating short term goals and long-term goals.

As a Mustang family, we recognize our achievements and make powerful moments, highlight our bright spots and open doors.



Portola Hills *Elementary School*

19422 Saddleback Ranch Rd., Trabuco Canyon, CA 92679 • 949/459-9370 • www.svusd.org/portolahills



Ed MacNevin
Principal

PHE Receives PBIS Silver Award

Over the years, the entire PHE staff started a school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework to create a supportive environment at the PHE to encourage a positive and safe learning environment for all students. PHE was just awarded the PBIS Silver award by the Orange County Department of Education for their positive PBIS progress. The idea behind PBIS is that when the District, schools, teachers, staff, parents and students all work together to create a kind and supportive school culture, it improves the social, emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes for all students. Behavioral expectations were defined in the student handbooks passed out on the first day of school and echoed when the students toured the school with the teachers. To reward students

for appropriate and kind behavior, the staff gives students Compass Coupons. The school disciplinary focus shifts from “caught being bad” to “caught being good.” Changing the relationship between the adults and the students creates a positive community focused on the students’ success rather than their failures. To add to the overall vision for the school, Mr. Mac asked the parent volunteers at PHE PTA to support the PHE PBIS program by setting up a “PBIS Store” to reward students for earning the Compass Coupons. This small element of the PBIS program allows parents to help build a supportive school community and it is the one that generates the most excitement for the students. The PHE PTA has scheduled one PBIS Store per month, per class. The students can pay for prizes with their Compass Coupons, or save them for a future store visit. Our students are already earning Compass Coupons for good behavior.

Rancho Cañada *Elementary School*

21801 Winding Way, Lake Forest, CA 92630 • 949/786-5252 • www.svUSD.org/ranchocanada



Jennifer Kajdasz
Principal

New School Year, New Fresh Look

Rancho Cañada was excited to return from summer break to see all the new updates to our campus. The most noticeable change was to our front office; it has a different location which allows for better wayfinding, as well as bringing added safety measures to our main entrance. Our students were especially excited to see the freshly painted, resurfaced blacktop. It is complete with new games that the students themselves chose by taking an interest survey last year. Our library was also a part of our modernization with modern shelving and comfortable seating options now available for our students to be able to sink into a good book. The update was completed with bright paint and graphics placed down the hallways, a new electronic marquee was installed (thank you PTA) and in a few short months, we will also be able to enjoy our innovative outdoor learning spaces.



Rancho Santa Margarita *Intermediate School*

21931 Alma Aldea, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 • 949/459-8253 • www.rsmintermediate.com



Tyler Morgan
Principal

Rise Above

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year. My name is Tyler Morgan, and I am honored and privileged to serve as Principal of RSM Intermediate. This is my fourth year at RSM, and I am excited to continue building and sustaining the solid relationships and the hard work of ensuring students are safe and have access to the best education. My wife Kristen and I have four children: Presley (16), Charlotte (14), Hudson (9), and Robert (4). We are so privileged to be a part of the RSM community. I hope everyone had the opportunity to rest, recharge, and spend quality time with family and friends over the summer. It's now time to refocus and move forward this year.

Our theme this school year is "Rise Above." Our Theme encapsulates the spirit of resilience, determination, and

growth that we want to instill in our students. Past years may have been filled with unprecedented challenges, but they have also shown us the strength that lies within each and every one of our students. We rise above those challenges, embrace change, and make the most of the opportunities that lie ahead.

Throughout this academic year, we will focus on empowering our students to embrace their potential and reach new heights. Our students can achieve remarkable accomplishments with the proper guidance, support, and effort. We will work collaboratively to give our students a rich and meaningful educational experience that fosters a lifelong love of learning. We understand that students need interaction and community for developmental growth. RSM has great teachers, counselors, and staff to meet their needs.

I look forward to meeting you and am excited about this year's journey as we "Rise Above."

Robinson *Elementary School*

21400 Lindsay Dr., Trabuco Canyon, CA 92679 • 949/589-2446 • www.svUSD.org/robinson



Suzy McMasters
Principal

Meet our Robinson School Guidance Counselor, Mrs. Carlson

Meet Mrs. Moshelle Carlson, the Robinson Elementary School Guidance Counselor.

Mrs. Carlson holds a BA in English, a Master's Degree in School Counseling and a Pupil Personnel Services Credential. She is at Robinson two days a week as a general education resource, which means she's on campus to support all students in several

different ways. Mrs. Carlson supports school-wide goals and programs, like Second Step and PBIS, and is a vital part of our multi-tiered system of support for students. She provides supplementary classroom lessons for all grade levels, collaborates with school staff to support students, runs small groups to build skills or provide group counseling, and in some cases provides support for individual students. Robinson Rattlers think Mrs. Carlson is RAD! She helps us grow to reach our academic potential.



San Joaquin *Elementary School*

22182 Barbera, Laguna Hills, CA 92653 • 949/581-3450 • www.svUSD.org/sanjoaquin



David Shun
Principal

A Moment to Celebrate

It was an exciting interactive celebration here at San Joaquin Elementary as we partnered with parents to honor the achievements of our students! Our students were recognized for their amazing academic success and we enlisted the help of their parents to surprise them on their special day.

Before student names were called, we invited their parents/care-givers to come on stage and form a tunnel. As we call our students up, they happily ran through the tunnel to receive their award on the other side as a symbol of their emerging success. It was a shared moment with happy smiles and positive vibes between our students, family, and school that none will soon forget!



Santiago *STEAM Magnet*

24982 Rivendell Dr., Lake Forest, CA 92630 • 949/586-2820

www.svusd.org/santiago



Kristin Thomsen
Principal

Welcome Back to School

We are thrilled to welcome you back to another exciting year at our STEAM school! As we embark on this new academic journey, we want to take a moment to share some of the incredible resources and opportunities that await our students.

One of the aspects that sets Santiago apart is our commitment to outdoor learning spaces. We understand the importance of connecting with nature and the positive impact it has on students' overall well-being and academic success. Our green outdoor learning spaces provide a peaceful and immersive environment where students can explore, learn, and engage with the natural world.

In addition to our unique outdoor areas, we have an Innovation Lab, a hub of creativity and curiosity. This state-of-the-art facility is equipped with a wide range of resources, including cutting-edge technology, tools, and materials. Whether it's robotics, coding, or 3D printing, creating pottery, or sewing, our students have the opportunity to dive into the world of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) through hands-on experiences. The Innovation Lab is designed to foster collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, preparing our students for the challenges of the future.

At our school, learning is not confined to the traditional classroom setting. We believe in providing our students with diverse and immersive learning experiences that extend beyond textbooks and lectures. Through Project Based Learning, our students actively participate in real-world projects that are relevant to their lives and interests. This approach empowers them to take ownership of their education while developing valuable skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving.

As we kick off the new school year, we want to express our gratitude for your continued support and partnership. We are excited to embark on this educational journey together and look forward to witnessing the growth and achievements of our students. Together, we can create a dynamic learning environment that nurtures their passions and prepares them for a bright future.

Serrano *Intermediate School*

24642 Jeronimo Rd., Lake Forest, CA 92630 • 949/586-3221

www.svusd.org/serrano



Jordan Reed
Principal

Get Connected

Welcome to the 2023-24 school year. It is an honor to introduce myself as the new principal at Serrano Intermediate School and to join this amazing school community. I am so excited for the opportunity to lead Serrano Intermediate School.

Although this is a new position for me, I am not new to SVUSD. Some of you may know me already as I was an assistant principal at El Toro High School for the past five years. Prior to ETHS, I was an assistant principal at La Paz Intermediate for three years. I have really enjoyed my time getting to know the students, families, and communities within SVUSD.

Our theme this school year is "Get Connected." We want the students to connect with the staff and community. We want the staff to connect with students and families. We want the families to connect with the staff. We want our students, staff, and families to connect with the community. When students have positive relationships with all educational partners, they are more likely to be successful.

During the course of the year, it is my hope that I connect with all educational partners to ensure a safe, inclusive learning environment for all students to be successful, grow, and SOAR like a Seahawk.

It has been a great start to the school year. Our students just completed the Serrano Seahawk Flight School (First 20 Days) which is an introduction to the school rules and student expectations. All students earned their wings and received a Seahawk Flight School sticker.

Serrano Intermediate is ready for an amazing 2023-24 school year. Go Seahawks!

Silverado *High School*

25632 Peter A. Hartman Way, Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/586-8800

www.svusd.org/silverado



David Gordon
Principal

The Silverado Eagles are SOARing!

The new school year brings many new faces to Silverado. We welcomed to the Eagle's Nest a new Assistant Principal, School Counselor, two teachers and many new classified staff. Silverado applied for and received Gold level recognition for our PBIS program. Implementing PBIS with fidelity has helped to shape a positive school culture! A new school year means we launch PBIS with a new group of students and our launch in the District Board Room was a great success!



Glenn Giokaris
Principal

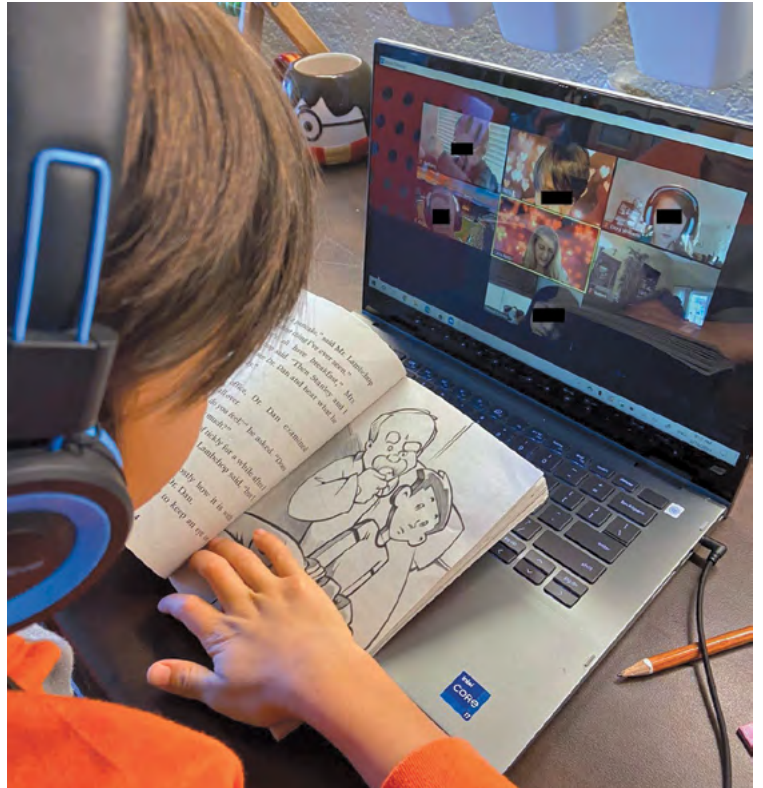
Cultivating Young Readers with a Personalized Approach

SVA's early elementary teacher Carla Nellis has a passion for teaching young students to read that is rooted in the magical moment when a child realizes they are now readers.

Carla's approach to teaching reading begins and ends with data. Carla meticulously and continuously assesses each student's reading skills. This data becomes the compass guiding her teaching, enabling her to tailor instruction and form fluid reading groups that evolve to meet students' changing needs.

In addition, Carla works to ensure students are engaged and having fun while learning to read. Carla's curriculum aligns seamlessly with District standards and includes quality literature, picture books, and innovative projects. In online groups, students connect with characters, practice sequencing, and even delve into STEM projects like designing zip lines.

At the SVUSD Virtual Academy, Carla Nellis not only imparts knowledge, but also nurtures a lifelong love for reading.



Trabuco *Elementary School*

31052 Trabuco Canyon Rd., Trabuco Canyon, CA 92678 • 949/858-0343 • www.svusd.org/trabuco



Dr. Lindsey Gatfield
Principal

Field Study Program

This month at Trabuco Elementary, students attended field trips to the Field Study program. Mr. McAlinney's class was the first group in the District to try out the new 5th grade project-based learning experience.

In the picture shown, students are assessing the topography of the mountains to determine fire risk based on wind speed, humidity, and foliage conditions.

Fourth grade students attended Field Study to understand the effects of flooding and to learn preventative practices. They explored soil samples, identified changes to the landscape over time by excavating fossils, and used stream tables to simulate flooding. Miss Garcia's class

designed a garden, learning about native versus non-native plants and animal traits and adaptations. They studied climate and used weather tools to measure patterns.

Students come from all over the county to the Field Study Program, and Trabuco Coyotes love having the program right here on our campus!



Trabuco Hills *High School*

27501 Mustang Run, Mission Viejo, CA 92691 • 949/768-1934 • www.svusd.org/thhs



Alicia Foulk
Principal

THHS Expands Unified to Include Performing Arts

Trabuco Hills added a second VAPA Unified class this year, focusing on Performing Arts. Co-taught by Ken Haro and Kara Johnson, our new VAPA Unified class focuses on choir and drama. After four years of VAPA Unified/Unified Arts classes that focused on both visual and performing arts,

we've proudly expanded into two VAPA Unified classes focusing on visual arts and performing arts separately. Look for our new VAPA Unified class in our fall Choir concert on October 30 at The Bridge in RSM! Trabuco Hills continues to be a Unified Champion School where students with and without disabilities work together in all of our Unified classes and clubs on campus. We are thrilled to find new and creative ways to be inclusive and watch our students thrive.



Trabuco Mesa *Elementary School*

21301 Ave de las Flores, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 • 949/858-3339 • www.svusd.org/trabucomesa



Dr. Kristan Bruce
Principal

Engagement and Leadership

Trabuco Mesa Bulldogs have had a wonderful start to the 2023-2024 school year! We kicked off our year with our PBIS refresher assemblies and all students were given a campus tour and strategies for staying “respectful, responsible, and safe.” Students

have been working hard to earn our Top Dog Paws and are excited to go shopping at our upcoming Student Store.

Our first flag ceremony was also a resounding success! We were proud to showcase our Unified Champion Schools Program and welcomed three guest speakers from Trabuco Hills High School. They spoke to us about the benefits and positive impact of inclusion and

youth leadership and the vision to create a world where people of all abilities are welcomed in their communities to learn, work, compete, and play with the same rights and opportunities as others. We look forward to this new school year and all of the exciting things in our future!



Valencia *Elementary School*

25661 Paseo de Valencia, Laguna Hills, CA 92653 • 949/830-3650 • www.svUSD.org/valencia



Carolyn Fries
Principal

Building Relationships!

At Valencia, our staff strives to build strong relationships with families. Early in the school year, families were welcomed for Books, Bagels, and Buddies one morning before school. This was an opportunity for all students to bring their family to enjoy breakfast together and shop at the Book Fair. That same week, teachers and staff hosted Literacy Night. This evening dedicated to literacy included Bingo for Books and literacy informational sessions led by teachers. The grade level specific stations were designed to teach parents different literacy skills to use at home with their children. The following week, teachers conducted goal-setting conferences. We know that each and every individual student is

important and want to focus our attention on each child's unique talents, skills, and needs. These conferences were focused on getting to know each child, go over beginning of the year data, and set goals for the 2023-2024 school year.



Halloween 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 Saddleback Valley in the subject line)

Entries must be received by November 15, 2023

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift certificate redeemable at Barnes & Noble.

Thank you **Barkate / Nehi Orthodontics** for sponsoring our contests.

www.BarkateNehiSmiles.com

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|---------------|----------------|
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| CANDY | JACK O LANTERN |
| CARVE | MUMMY |
| CEMETERY | SKELETON |
| COSTUME | SPIDER |
| DECORATIONS | SWAMP CREATURE |
| FRANKENSTEIN | TRICK OR TREAT |
| FRIGHTFUL | VAMPIRE |
| GHOST | WEB |
| GHOUL | WEREWOLF |
| GRAVE | WITCH |
| HAUNTED HOUSE | ZOMBIE |





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