

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation



Covering the Newport-Mesa Unified School District

Volume 20, Issue 105

December 2023

ATTEND SCHOOL EVERY DAY!

Start

Stay

Finish

STRONG

BOARD OF EDUCATION



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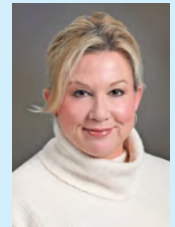
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2. Must be a current school employee to qualify for Summer Saver; retired school employees are not eligible. Limited to one share per school employee Member.

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SCHOOLSFIRST 
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Attendance Matters: Start, Stay, Finish Strong!



Dr. Wesley Smith
Superintendent

We are nearly halfway through the 2023-24 school year, and I'm in awe of all the great things our students have so far accomplished in their learning and extracurriculars. Not only are our students performing above state and county averages on the statewide Smarter Balanced Assessment test, but they are also being recognized for their strides in Positive Behavior and Intervention Systems, and earning amazing opportunities thanks to the National Merit Scholarships and the Simon Scholars Program.

As we continue into the holiday season, it's important to keep this positive momentum. A key component of that is good school attendance.

Everyone knows the importance of spending time with families and friends during the holidays, but it's just as important to remember that we can do so much more comfortably during breaks from school. Students have a Winter Break from December 25 through January 5 to ensure they have ample time to rest, rejuvenate, and spend time with their loved ones. (Note: Early College High School has Winter Break from December 25 through January 12.)

That said, sometimes we get sick, and it's always best to stay home when you feel ill. We appreciate you keeping your child home during illnesses so other students and district staff can stay healthy.

Outside of illness, and whenever possible, please schedule student appointments after school and plan family vacations during school breaks. Every day matters and important lessons and concepts continue to be taught even when your child is ill and during the holiday season. Your students' presence on campus is invaluable to creating a strong, positive school environment for their peer group and the school community as a whole. It is vital that all students continue to attend class every day that they are healthy. Let's continue to make this a great year!

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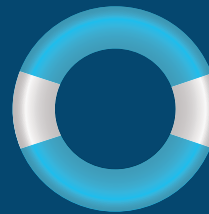


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Covering the
NEWPORT-MESA

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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endorse the advertisers in this publication.

Another year is coming to a close and holiday celebrations are in full swing. On page 5 the Costa Mesa and Newport Beach Fire Departments have excellent safety tips in the kitchen and for holiday lighting.

The students are halfway through this year and the holidays will be an excellent time to include the public

libraries among their activities. The Costa Mesa and Newport Beach libraries have lots of programs for all ages (please see page 7).

Of course, we have our word search contest on page 26 — all ages may enter.

Our next issue is February 7. Until then Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!



Happy Holidays!

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Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue



Dan Stefano
Fire Chief

Another year is of holiday celebrations is here. A time to make memories, offer thanks and reflect on the year past. As we gather together with our loved ones and share in new memories, Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue wants to share a few important holiday safety tips to remember:

- Remain in the kitchen when food is cooking; most kitchen fires occur because cooking is left unattended
 - Use flameless candles in place of lit candles
 - Water your Christmas Tree daily
 - Always turn off holiday lights before leaving home or going to bed
 - Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen
 - Make (and practice) a safety plan for your family for any emergency
 - For additional safety tips, visit www.ready.gov
- Happiest of holidays!



P.O. Box 1200, Costa Mesa, CA 92628 • 714/754-5106

Newport Beach Fire Department



Jeff Boyles
Fire Chief

The Newport Beach Fire Department would like to share some essential holiday light safety tips to ensure a joyful and safe holiday season. Holiday lights add a magical touch to our celebrations, but it's important to use them safely. Here are some key points to keep in mind:

Quality Lights: Choose lights with the UL label, indicating they have passed safety tests. LED lights are energy-efficient and produce less heat.

Inspection: Before using, carefully check lights for damage, frayed wires, or loose connections. Discard damaged lights.

Outdoor Lights Outdoors: Use outdoor lights only outside to withstand the elements.

Follow Instructions: Adhere to the manufacturer's guidelines for installation and usage.

Outlet Safety: Avoid overloading outlets and use power strips with surge protectors.

Extension Cord Safety: Use suitable extension cords and keep them clear of walkways.

Turn Off at Night: Switch off lights before bedtime or when leaving home. Also consider using timers.

Prevent Hazards: Keep lights away from flammable materials and maintain clear exits.

By following these tips, you can ensure your holiday lights shine safely. Happy Holidays from the Nbfd!

P.O. Box 1768, Newport Beach, CA 92658 • 949/644-3104

City of Costa Mesa



John Stephens
Mayor

Successful Year

This year, 2023, has been a successful year in Costa Mesa, and we look forward to more progress in 2024.

In November, Northgate Market opened Mercado Gonzalez on Harbor and Wilson.

It is a beautiful store with 27 "puestos" that sell food from throughout Mexico. If you haven't been there, please do so during the Holidays. The Mercado is the biggest store opening in Costa Mesa for the last several years!!

Remember to visit our Snoopy House holiday display on the front lawn of City Hall (77 Fair Drive) beginning Friday Dec. 15 through Dec. 22. The event is free to the public and will include train rides, entertainment, carolers and snow!

Of course, it wouldn't be Snoopy House without free pictures with Santa Claus and candy canes.

Snoopy House has been a holiday tradition in Costa Mesa for more than 50 years, and we enjoy making it available to local families here at City Hall every year. See you there!

77 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/754-5107
www.costamesaca.gov





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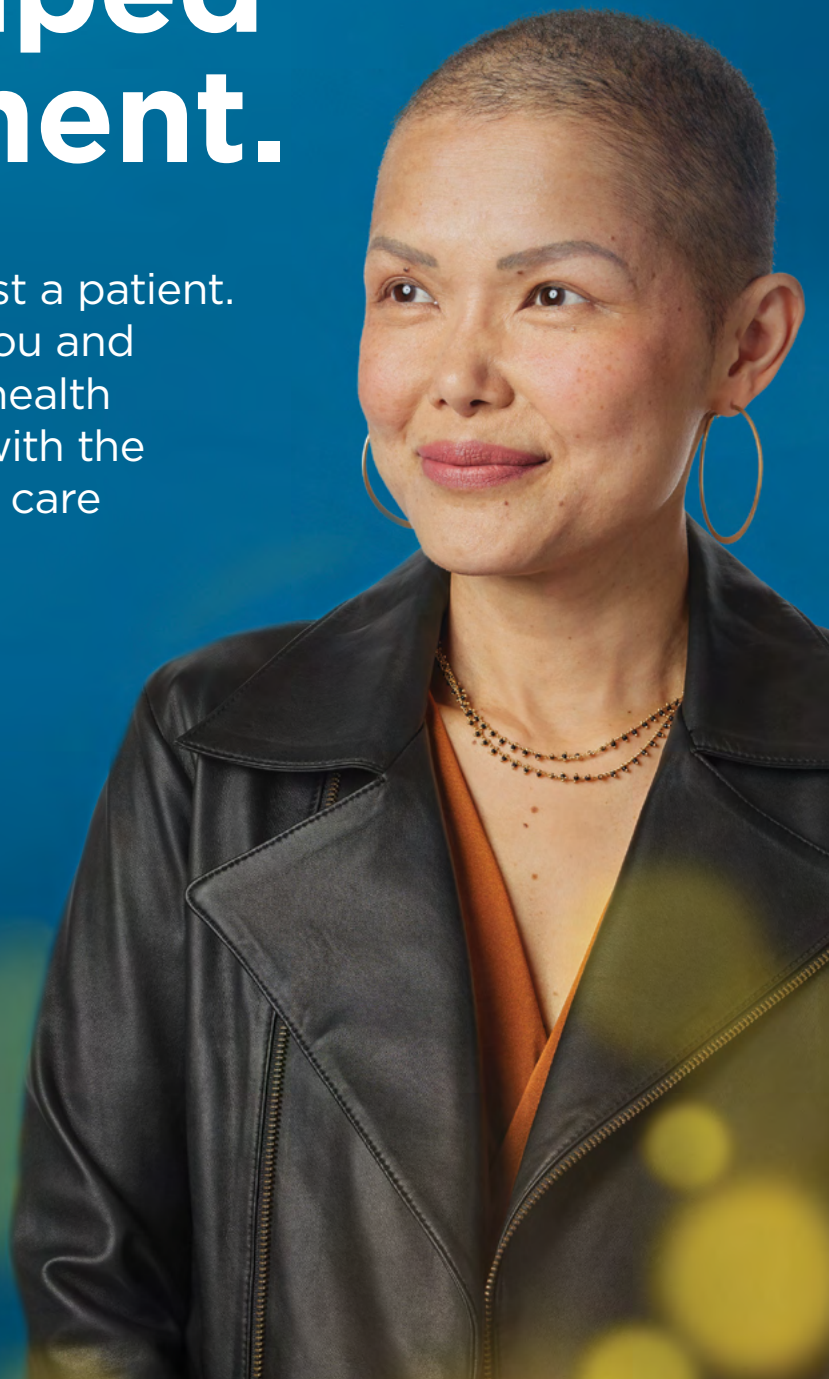
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Newport Beach Public Libraries



Christine Chapel
Children's Librarian,
Mariners Branch,
Newport Beach
Public Library

Here Come the Holidays!

Are you looking for new ways to celebrate the winter holiday season? Join the Newport Beach Public Library for these wonderful, free programs in December and January!

<https://www.newportbeachlibrary.org/calendar/children-s-calendar>

Wonderful Winter Crafts | Balboa Library
Wednesday, December 20, 2023, 3:00 – 4:00
Presenting crafts to make and give (or keep) as we welcome the winter season at the Balboa Library.

Bookshelf Book Hunt | Central and Mariners Libraries
Wednesday, December 27 – Sunday, January 7 all-day
Go on a book hunt December 27 - January 7 at the Central Library and Mariners Library and win a prize!

Stuffed Animal Sleepover | Corona del Mar Library
Friday, January 12, 2024, 11:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. (drop-off)
Bring your stuffed animal friends (1 per child) and let them have an overnight adventure at the library!

Family Game Day | Central Library
Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. Join us for an afternoon of family fun with board games and puzzles!

Dinosaur Mania | Balboa Library
Wednesday, January 17, 2024, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Join us at the Balboa Library for crafts centered on everyone's favorite prehistoric creatures, the dinosaurs.

Middle Grade Book Club | Central Library
Thursday, January 18, 2024, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Calling all book lovers in 4th-6th grades – our new book club is especially for you! Registration is required.

Penguin Crafts | Mariners Library
Thursday, January 18, 2024, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Black and white and fun all over. Celebrate Penguin Awareness Day with crafts from the frozen poles at Mariners Library.

Percy Jackson Party | Central Library
Tuesday, January 23, 2024, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Welcome to Camp Half-Blood! You're invited to a party celebrating all things Percy Jackson and the Olympians! Join us for crafts and games.

Family BINGO | Central Library
Tuesday, January 30, 2024, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Join us for a fun-filled family BINGO hour! Children and their caregivers are invited to play a few friendly rounds of BINGO together with the opportunity to win some fun prizes.

Reminder: Closures
All NBPL locations will closed December 24th, 25th, 31st and January 1.

Central Library 1000 Avocado Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92660
949/717-3800 • www.newportbeachlibrary.org/kids
Mariners Branch 1300 Irvine Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92660
949/717-3838
Balboa Branch 100 East Balboa Blvd., Balboa, CA 92661
949/644-3076
Corona Del Mar Branch 410 Marigold Ave., Corona Del Mar, CA 92625
949/644-3075

Costa Mesa Public Libraries



Sarita Dangond
Branch Manager,
Costa Mesa
Donald Dungan
Library



Vivian Strabala
Branch Manager,
Costa Mesa
Mesa Verde
Library

Costa Mesa Libraries, part of OCPL, are community hubs, connecting people to essential services and resources and building communities of lifelong learners.

OCPL helps our communities learn, explore, connect and have fun! Our programs explore arts, culture, health, civics, science, history and technology.

Career and business resources

assist job seekers and small businesses. Online, library patrons access databases, research materials, stream videos, listen to ebooks and receive reference services and homework help via chat.

Systemwide Programs:

WINTER READING CHALLENGE – Read books and complete challenges to earn badges, register at

www.ocpl.beanstack.org.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS OC Public Libraries has compiled resources and designed programs to support our families in getting ready for school.

DISCOVER & GO Explore Orange County museums and attractions through this exciting partnership between OC Public Libraries and local cultural institutions.

PARK PASSES OC Public Libraries is partnering with California State Parks and the California State Library to offer free State Parks vehicle-day use passes, available for circulation at all branches of public libraries in California.

Please visit your branch in person or online at www.ocpl.org/events for current programming information, including storytimes, author events, book clubs, and fun events for children, teens, and adults!

OC Public Libraries www.ocpl.org

Costa Mesa-Donald Dungan Library
1855 Park Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92627
949/646-8845
Hours: Mon – Thurs 10am – 7pm
Fri - Sun 9am – 5pm
Check the calendar for all events
<https://ocpl.org/events?type=All&location=721>



Costa Mesa-Mesa Verde Library
2969 Mesa Verde Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626
714/546-5274
Hours: Mon – Thurs 10am – 7pm
Fri – Sun 9am – 5pm
Check the calendar for all events
<https://ocpl.org/events?type=All&location=1021>





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

Toy Safety this Holiday Season

The holidays are a time of magic and festivities for children and adults alike. It's also one of the busiest times of the year for emergency departments treating common holiday dangers. To guarantee children's safety, parents and caretakers must recognize potential risks to help ensure the whole family enjoys a happy and healthy holiday season.

The Injury Prevention Program at MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach provides important safety information to families to help prevent injuries year-round and avoid hospitalization.

"The Injury Prevention team provides safety education to children and families in our community at community events throughout Los Angeles and Orange Counties and with public awareness campaigns that provide families resources and education to enhance a child's health and wellness," said Jennifer Rodriguez, injury prevention coordinator, Miller Children's & Women's. "Toy safety and holiday safety are key areas to educate the community to reduce — or avoid— trips to the hospital."

There are many steps families can take to protect their little ones from the hidden hazards in toys. When choosing a gift, it is important to be knowledgeable about selecting the right toy for a child.

Some of the things to be mindful of when choosing a toy are:

- Consider a child's age and if the toy is appropriate
 - If a toy needs batteries, be sure it has a secure battery hatch
 - Beware of sharp edges and toys with long strings or cords
 - If giving a bike, scooter, skateboard, etc., provide a helmet
 - Avoid small or moving parts
 - Follow the age guidelines listed on the toy or its packaging
- "Choking on toys or ingesting something brings a lot of kids to the hospital during the holidays," said Rodriguez. "It's not only important to teach parents about toy safety, but also the entire family. Toys intended for older children may pose a risk to younger, curious siblings. A toddler could swallow a part that has been left lying about which can cause choking or suffocation."

Batteries and magnets also pose a serious threat if swallowed. Parents should be cautious of batteries — always read instructions to be sure a toy is safe for your child. Inspect riding toys to make sure that they are sturdy, and that safety gear is worn during use.

Once playtime is over, use a bin or container (without hinges or holes that could catch little fingers) to store toys. Toy chests should have a safety lid so they can't injure or trap a child.

"Toys are an important part of child development," says Rodriguez. "Being mindful of their potential dangers will enhance their experience."



Athena, Age 2



It takes a village.

At just seven weeks old, Athena's heart stopped. MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital saved her life. Our cardiac specialists, nurses and therapists all worked together. Reassuring her family. Helping her grow strong. And forging a successful path forward. Because we knew, to help Athena, it would take a village. Dozens of highly trained pediatric specialists across our network. Giving families access to exceptional, specialized care. Now Athena can be a kid again...and her heart is full.

Learn more.
millerchildrens.org/care

Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach
Cherese Mari Lauhere Children's Village
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South Bay to Orange County

Early Childhood Education

2985 Bear St., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-5000



Michelle O'Neill
Coordinator

Celebrating School Wide Events

Autumn is finally here, the preschoolers at Whittier Elementary enjoyed the tradition of walking in the Halloween parade with their peers. The parade is just one of many festivities the fall season has to offer, and staff and students enjoyed the school occasion. The event is also a great way to build community, foster a sense of belonging, and display school spirit. The preschoolers had a lot of fun dancing and walking in front of their peers, teachers, and family members. During dramatic play center the preschoolers learned how to practice putting on costumes, share treats among each other and use their acting skills



to be different characters. During dramatic play center the preschoolers also learn how to negotiate, cooperate and gain language and literacy skills.



Nutrition Services

2985 Bear St., Building B Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-5000 • web.nmusd.us/departments/nutrition-services



Todd Hatfield
Director

Meet the Team: Mr. Schatti

*By Pam Williams, MPH, RD
Nutritionist*

Meet Nutrition Services, operations manager, Tom Schatti, who just happens to be an executive chef. His culinary skills and knowledge of food impact the way Nutrition Services provide meals to our students. How so?

According to Mr. Schatti, “The most important thing is to make sure that all food given to each student is prepared properly and delivered safely.”

“Secondly, we do our best to provide fresh foods that taste good. We reinvent



Tom Schatti

the classics such as sandwiches, salads, pizza or calzones. We want students to enjoy breakfast, lunch and snacks.”

He also stated that, “We follow the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines. Within these guidelines, we commit to providing foods that are nutrient dense, and support student learning.”

If you ever encounter Mr. Schatti, you will experience his passion for food and hard work. And if you ever meet him, thank him for his commitment to our students.

Adams *Elementary (K-6)*

2850 Club House Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7935 • adams.nmusd.us



Dr. Joe Erven
Principal

Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment

In the realm of education, the quest for academic excellence is often accompanied by various assessment methodologies that gauge a student's understanding, skills, and overall growth. Among these approaches, Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment (SBA) stands out as a comprehensive tool that not only evaluates students but also provides a well-rounded view of their abilities. Recently, a group of our outstanding Adams Elementary students

received awards in recognition of their achievement on the SBA, marking a significant milestone in their educational journey.

Each of the students receiving a medal scored at least 100 points above state proficiency on the Language Arts SBA or 85 points above state proficiency on the mathematics SBA. Students showing a large increase in scores were also recognized.

As we celebrate the academic accomplishments of these students, we also celebrate their growth as well-rounded individuals equipped with the skills needed to navigate an ever-changing world.



Roy O. Andersen *Elementary (K-6)*

1900 Port Seabourne Way, Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-6935 • andersen.nmusd.us



Dr. Tiffany Lewis
Principal

Blast from the Past!

In an era where traditional school fundraisers often take a back seat to digital campaigns, Andersen Elementary's recent Jog-A-Thon evoked an old-fashioned community vibe that left participants reminiscing about the good old days. The event, held on a crisp Thursday morning, transported families and participants back to a time when community engagement was at the heart of school fund-raising.

What made this Jog-A-Thon stand out wasn't just the old-school charm but the overwhelming support from parents and the community. The turnout was spectacular, with parents enthusiastically cheering on their children, reminiscent of scenes from vintage school movies. The sight of families lining the track with homemade banners and signs added a touch of nostalgia to the event.

Surpassing all expectations, the fund-raising goal was not just met but exceeded! The money raised during this event will benefit various facets of Andersen Elementary. From funding enriching assemblies that broaden students' horizons to ensuring that field trips remain an integral part of the curriculum, every

dollar collected will go toward enhancing the educational experience. Moreover, it will bolster art programs, nurture creativity, and contribute to supporting recess activities, recognizing the importance of play in a child's development.

The Jog-A-Thon served as more than just a fund-raising event—it was a reminder of the power of communal effort and the significance of supporting education beyond classroom walls. Bringing together families, teachers, and the community at large rekindled the spirit of togetherness that is often overlooked in today's fast-paced world.

As the echoes of laughter and encouragement from the event lingered, Andersen Elementary reveled in the success of meeting financial targets and fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose. The Jog-A-Thon proved that sometimes, a touch of old-fashioned charm can work wonders in uniting a community for a noble cause.



Back Bay/Monte Vista *High School*

390 Monte Vista Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6900 • backbay.nmusd.us



Dr. Kirk Bauermeister
Principal

A Special Campus

By Valeria Orozco, Student Board Member

At Back Bay High School, the teachers and administrators work hard to create an environment that is safe, loving, and inclusive. Because of our small school size, every staff member knows every student by name, and finds it easier to assess if any student is having a problem.

Our school offers a wellness space where they can go if they are struggling. We also have a school counselor, school psychologist, and therapy sessions on the school campus. The principal also does check-ins with every student each quarter to check on grades and mental health.

I personally have never felt this safe and supported at any NMUSD school that I have attended. The teachers go above and beyond in every

classroom by creating a safe space and motivating us. I am proud to call myself a Back Bay Bull Dog because not only are the adults there for me personally, but the students on our campus are also nonjudgmental and supportive of individuality.

My hope as a student board representative is to change the perception of how the community perceives Back Bay High School. We are a special campus that allows students to express themselves and grow at their own pace.



California *Elementary (K-6)*

3232 California St., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7940 • california.nmusd.us



Dr. Jason Kunczewicki
Principal

Heroes Day Assembly

A “Heroes Day” assembly took place at California Elementary School on Wednesday, November 8th to commemorate the Veteran’s Day Holiday. During the Assembly, the flags of all Military Service Providers were held by our Spirit Squad, a Patriotic Song was sung by all students, and Veterans of the Armed Services were called by name to the front of the assembly with their California Cougar relative. If the member of the Armed Forces was not able to come or has passed on, the student representing them held a picture in their honor. During the assembly, the students were reminded about the purpose of the holiday, how important our military service is to our country, and how they can honor fallen heroes. Over 60 families of Military service men and women were called to the front. After the assembly, the families were treated to a continental breakfast by our Parent Teacher Association.



College Park *Elementary (K-6)*

2380 Notre Dame Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7960 • collegepark.nmusd.us



Alice Formanek
Principal

Our Student Leaders

A few of our dedicated College Park teachers—Mrs. Cheffer, Mrs. Randall, and Mrs. Ramos-Rios—are Student Council advisors for our fourth-through-sixth-graders in the Student Council program. The group consists of 20 students who were elected to their positions this fall. They gave speeches to students and parents in the MPR about why they would be a good fit for the job. We were very proud of our brave Cougars who took the stage!

This elected group of upper-grade students is responsible for many things around campus, such as helping with our weekly Friday Flag Decks and assisting with keeping our campus clean. Also, a great new program the students were recently trained in is peer mediation. The students have a set schedule of when they help students during recess and lunch with any conflicts that may arise. They use their training to calmly talk with students who may need assistance with a friend, help during a game, or clarification of the school rules. We're so proud of our student leaders at College Park!



Corona del Mar *High School (7-12)*

2101 Eastbluff Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-6000 • cdm.nmusd.us



Dr. Jake Haley
Principal

The ASB's November Wellness Wednesday

By Summer Perry, Student, 11th Grade; and Sophia Razipour, Student, 11th Grade

As the weather cooled down, the CdM ASB's Wellness Committee planned and set up a table with hot Starbucks coffee and donuts to help start the morning off on campus! On the 15th of November, in the quad before school, CdM students and faculty members were treated with complimentary glazed donut holes as well as Starbucks coffee in front of the school's fall-themed kindness wall done for Kindness Week.

Co-commissioner of ASB Wellness and Junior Addie Briggeman, along with freshmen Sophie Trinh and Cody Packard, are members of the ASB's Wellness Committee, and attended the Wellness Wednesday event. Briggeman mentioned that the "ASB already does Welcome Wednesdays, and since people seem to enjoy walking through the gates and seeing fresh coffee and donuts waiting for them, the Committee thought

to also have an event like that instead of the usual Wellness Wednesday at Lunch event." When planning this monthly activity, the committee considers what the students have enjoyed in the past, which includes donuts!

History teacher Mr. Captan, a renowned and notable coffee-lover, made sure to stop by to grab some coffee that morning. Captan stated, "I think it was a great treat and surprise for a morning at school." He "usually makes [his] coffee right here at school," and appreciated the effort that the Wellness Committee put into providing the coffee, which somewhat gave his own coffee machine a well-deserved break.

The Wellness Wednesday activities, which are scheduled monthly with careful planning, typically take place during lunchtime in the ASB room. Students are encouraged to attend and indulge in the food offerings or participate in enjoyable crafts. The primary goal of the activity is to promote important themes and concepts such as the value of inclusivity and the importance of being kind to one another.

Costa Mesa High School / Middle School (7-12)

2650 Fairview Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-8700 • cmhs.nmusd.us



Dr. Dipali Potnis
Principal

Exceptional Performance

This fall, our middle school students had an exceptional performance in Frozen Jr.

Those that attended the event shared their excitement in the talent and efforts that our students displayed.

We commend our

Mavericks for dedicating their time and being as graceful and focused on the production as they were. The synergy on stage was impressive, and the attention to detail did not go unnoticed. We are thankful to our feeder elementary schools for building the confidence in our young students to perform at the elementary level. With this exposure in their elementary years, we can see the fruits of their labor at the middle and high school level.

Once again, we are so thankful to Mrs. Dow for directing the production and for empowering our students to give it their all in this spectacular show.



Davis Magnet (K-6)

1050 Arlington Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7930 • davisagnet.nmusd.us



Stacy deBoom-Howard
Principal

Thankful and Happy

November is a time to remind ourselves of the many things we are THANKFUL for here at Davis. We are so thankful for the support of our PTA, our Foundation, our families, and our extraordinary staff members who help meet the needs of all students and most importantly the smiling students we see every day.

When we asked

our students what they're thankful for, they expressed their appreciation for various aspects, including "kindness from others, playing with friends, learning from teachers, enjoying school activities, and the support of parents and family."

Veterans Day

We held our First Annual Veteran's Day Flag Deck on November 10th. Our Ducks paid tribute to more than 25 Veterans representing all branches of the military. The morning was truly beautiful, with 600 students waving flags while our choir guided us through the rendition of "America the Beautiful."

We wish our entire Davis community a safe and happy Holiday Season. We look forward to a bright New Year!



Early College *High School (9-12)*

2990 Mesa Verde Dr., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7990 • earlycollege.nmusd.us



Dr. David Martinez
Principal

Fall Activities

ECHS held its first of two fall Virtual Information Nights for prospective new students and their parents on October 25th. This event was for those who were interested in applying for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. If families missed

that event, the next virtual ECHS Information Night is scheduled for December 6th at 6:30 p.m.

The 2024-2025 ECHS application is available online on our website at <https://earlycollege.nmusd.us>. Applications are being accepted now through May 3rd, 2024. Applicants and their parents or guardians will receive a response one to two weeks after submitting the application. Please call 714-424-7990 on Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. if you have any questions, or refer to our website for more information.

October was a month when ECHS was preparing for its WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) accreditation visit, which occurred during the week of October 15th-18th. In advance of this visit, in early



October, our ECHS students beautified the campus by creating a Kindness Rock Garden. They also painted a second student-inspired mural with

symbols that exemplified our positive and inclusive ECHS school culture.

November was full of big events. On November 3rd, ECHS held its "Let's Be Kind" Awareness Day in advance of the N-MUSD Kindness Week held from November 13th through the 17th. This event not only served as a reminder of the importance for everyone to exhibit kindness and build positive and trusting relationships, it also reminded us about character building as a part of our PBIS matrix.

ECHS also held its seventh annual California College Application Success Campaign event on November 16th. We celebrated every senior in our Class of 2024 for submitting at least one college application. While the seniors completed their applications in our MPR, the ninth- through eleventh-grade students took part in panel breakout sessions facilitated by our teachers on how to prepare for college.

Eastbluff *Elementary (K-6)*

2627 Vista del Oro, Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-5920 • eastbluff.nmusd.us



Dr. Jennifer Heckert
Principal

Show your Otter PRIDE

An Eastbluff Otter shows PRIDE each day! Eastbluff prioritizes safety and positive choices. Our goal is to reinforce students for positive actions when they focus on P- Prepared, R - Respect, I - Integrity, D - Determination, and E - Excellence. Our goal is to create a safe, accepting, and positive place to learn.

Each day students have opportunities to earn Otter PRIDE tickets for their PRIDE choices. Students who earn a certain number of tickets are celebrated at our weekly Otter Rally (AKA flag deck).

In November we focused on RESPECT. We learned that respect is earned and there are different actions to show respect. We also recognized students from each class with Otter PRIDE awards for demonstrating respect. Each student is invited to have a special lunch with the principal. We are so proud of our Eastbluff Otters for showing their Otter PRIDE!



Horace Ensign *Intermediate (7-8)*

2000 Cliff Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92663 • 949/515-6910 • ensign.nmusd.us



Samantha Payne
Principal

Undefeated and Champions!

Ensign Intermediate is celebrating our exceptional athletic teams this quarter! Our eighth grade boys volleyball team had an undefeated season and went on to win the championship. This team is led by the coaching powerhouse,

Kari Rush and her daughter Mackenzi Merten. Volleyball is strong here at Ensign and we are proud of the dedicated work our kids commit to during the season. We are excited to see what is in store for your volleyball girls in the coming season. Both our seventh and eighth grade girls basketball teams were undefeated and took home the championship wins as well. Our basketball

program has a long history of success under the masterful coaching of Mr. Harrell and Mr. Shinto and we look forward to seeing our boys learn, grow, and excel under their coaching in the upcoming season. Congratulations to our mighty Seabees!



Estancia *High School*

2323 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6500 • estancia.nmusd.us



Michael Halt
Principal

A Busy Fall Season for the Eagles

October and November were spirit-filled months for Estancia High School! Estancia celebrated Homecoming in early October with circus-themed spirit days, a pep assembly, a victorious football game, and a dance. Over ninety students who were nominated by their teachers for their academic performance

or character during the first quarter of the school year were honored at our Student of the Quarter Recognition with many families in attendance. Estancia's Varsity Football team celebrated the treasured bell remaining at Estancia after the annual Battle of the Bell game in late October. In November, the class of 2024 participated in the College Application Campaign through their

English classes and submitted applications to UC, CSU, out-of-state, private, or community colleges. Estancia's Acts of Random Kindness Club, ASB, and Link Crew worked collaboratively to make Let's Be Kind Day a special experience for students. Estancia's ASB also promoted Unity Day on our campus and encouraged students and faculty to wear orange to show that Eagles united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion to prevent bullying.



Estancia High School's ASB and Link Crew Leaders ready to celebrate Let's Be Kind Day.

Harbor View *Elementary (K-6)*

900 Goldenrod Ave., Corona del Mar, CA 92625 • 949/515-6940 • harborview.nmusd.us



Randy Lempert
Principal

Veterans Day Assembly

In a heartwarming display of patriotism and gratitude, Harbor View School recently hosted a Veterans Day assembly that left a lasting impression on our students, staff, and the community. All of our students enthusiastically honored the men and women who had served in our United States armed forces by writing letters, creating art, and singing songs.

The assembly featured several touching moments. This included our Harbor View choir, the students reading a summary of the uniqueness of each branch of the military, and a special student message that talked about the meaning of Veterans Day.

Special guests included members of the Harbor View community who had served in the armed forces. Ten veterans proudly sat in front of the crowd and shared their experiences with our Harbor View students. The students learned about the years they had served in the military, and the many places that they had traveled to world-wide while serving.

This event presented a valuable lesson in civic responsibility, and instilled in the minds of our students a deep appreciation for the many sacrifices that were made by these brave men and women. Under the guidance of our Harbor View parent volunteers, this special Veterans Day assembly was a powerful tribute that will stay in the hearts of our Harbor View students for years to come.



Heinz Kaiser *Elementary (3-6)*

2130 Santa Ana Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6950 • kaiser.nmusd.us



Matt Broesamle
Principal

Nurturing Space

As we know, recess and lunch breaks are important times for students to unwind, socialize, and explore their interests beyond the classroom. Our school counselor, Mrs. Rochin, recognizes the importance of providing a nurturing space where students can express their creativity and build lasting friendships. A few months back, Mrs. Rochin introduced knitting

to our students as an alternative activity at recess and lunch, and our students are loving it!

No previous knitting experience is required, and Mrs. Rochin is excited to teach eager participants the art of knitting from the very basics. In fact, some of the students that have just learned to knit over the past few weeks are teaching others as they join in on the fun each day.

We believe that this initiative will not only enhance the overall school experience for our students but will also contribute to a positive and inclusive school culture. We are so grateful for Mrs. Rochin's dedication to fostering a sense of community within our school and for her creative approach to promoting valuable life skills.



Kaiser Knights knitting and socializing during recess and lunch

Killybrooke Elementary (K-6)

3155 Killybrooke Ln., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7945 • killybrooke.nmusd.us



Laura Taylor
Principal

Kindness Week

Kindness is a superpower that everyone possesses! During the week of November 13th to 17th, Killybrooke celebrated Kindness Week, a time to define kindness and highlight the ways in which we can be kind both at school and in the community.

The week kicked off with lawn greetings from the Let's Be Kind organization, founded by a former Colt. On Monday, staff members greeted our families with music and special signage that contained kindness messaging. The students participated in Kindness Bingo during lunch to connect with their peers. On Tuesday, the students also collaborated to build an extensive acts-of-kindness paper chain.

On Wednesday, the students participated in spreading kindness confetti, which are special notes of encouragement. On Thursday they made friendship bracelets to exchange.

During this special week our incredible PTA also sponsored speaker Brent Poppen, who came to talk with our students and share his message of perseverance and inclusion. On Friday we were showered with fun by a DJ Dance Party hosted by our Best Buddies program, with DJ B Diamond mixing some tunes. We were even fortunate to have some dance skills highlighted by members of the CMHS dance team.

Overall it was a remarkable week, but at Killybrooke, we know that kindness and inclusion extend beyond an assigned week, and so we strive to maintain this culture every day.



Abraham Lincoln Elementary (K-6)

3101 Pacific View Dr., Corona del Mar, CA 92625 • 949/515-6955 • lincoln.nmusd.us



Dr. Kristin DeMicco
Principal

Let's Be Kind

Kindness is a Lincoln thing, so we were especially excited when the Let's Be Kind organization reached out to see if we wanted to be part of this year's Let's Be Kind week. Adding a second Kindness Week to our school year (we also celebrate in February) was an easy

decision to make, and we are so grateful to Let's Be Kind for supporting our efforts. From school-wide Let's Be Kind T-shirts to lawn signs and chalk art, our week kicked off with a great deal of excitement and enthusiasm for spreading kindness on our campus. One of our families even brought a drone to school and helped us capture an incredible moment when students and staff worked together to spell the word kind and surround it with a heart out on the field. It is always a great day to be a Lincoln Leopard!





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Imagine a Beautiful Smile!**



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Newport Beach • Ladera Ranch • San Clemente

Mariners *Elementary (K-6)*

2100 Mariners Dr., Newport Beach, CA 92660 • 949/515-6960 • mariners.nmusd.us



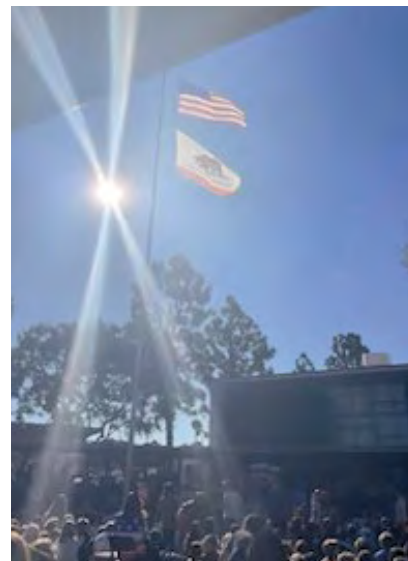
Antoinette Coe
Principal

Mariners' Veterans Day Celebration

Mariners proudly continued its cherished tradition of honoring Veterans from the United States Armed Forces. In collaboration with our dedicated PTA, students and community members warmly welcomed Veterans to our campus, extending heartfelt recognition for their service and providing a platform to share their inspiring personal accomplishments, challenges, and triumphs.



The celebration featured a moving performance by our school band, a stirring song from our school choir, and engaging classroom presentations by our esteemed Veterans. The essence of the event can be encapsulated in one word: SPECIAL. We express profound gratitude for the time our Veterans have devoted to our country and for graciously sharing their experiences with the Mariners community.



As we reflect on this memorable occasion, we are reminded of the enduring spirit of patriotism. We extend our deepest appreciation for the selfless contributions of our Veterans and the time they spent with us on our Mariners Campus.

Monte Vista Independent Study⁽⁷⁻¹²⁾

<https://montevista.nmusd.us>



Dr. Racquel Stephens
Principal

Engagement and Community

Monte Vista Independent Study is in full swing, and our outstanding staff is working hard to create a robust community of learners. Our teachers and students are front runners in finding ways to connect and engage students through homeroom, in-person, and digital platform activities.

October was a busy month at Monte Vista as we participated in Red Ribbon Week activities for both the middle and high school students. The students dressed up each day during the week of October 23rd to the 27th to the theme of "Be Kind to Your Mind."

The 12th-graders at Monte Vista recently had their first senior meeting to explore college and career opportunities, and to learn about the various career pathways, financial aid, scholarships, and ROP classes that are available. The seniors will also be having a series of workshops designed to highlight an area of college and career interest, such as college applications, Orange Coast College admissions, and using Schoollinks.

The seniors are also starting to identify topics for their senior project, which will be centered around an issue in the community that is of importance to them.

Our middle school students recently completed their Egg Drop experiment in science! Monte Vista has incorporated hands-on learning alongside independent study schoolwork to provide robust educational experiences for its students.

Our secondary students are on the home stretch of the semester, with finals approaching the week before winter break. We are proud of Monte Vista as a viable and robust independent study option for students in the NMUSD!



Students at Monte Vista preparing for their Egg Drop science experiment

Newport Coast *Elementary (K-6)*

6655 Ridge Park Rd., Newport Coast, CA 92657 • 949/515-6975 • nce.nmusd.us



Heather Darrow
Principal

Jog-A-Thon

At Newport Coast Elementary, we value parent and community participation. It is not uncommon to see parents at NCE, each day, helping in classrooms, assisting with the flow of traffic during drop-off, supporting students in the library, or helping with supervision on our expansive field. The support of our families and community

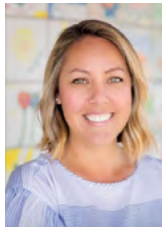
also goes beyond the day-to-day interactions. Our NCE Foundation recently raised funds to help add a new facility to our school. With the addition of the Hillside Project, our students will have direct access to the field at every recess, and our school community will have a place to gather when we have assemblies or large events at Newport Coast Elementary. Equally important, our PTA and our families raised over \$81,000 during our annual jog-a-thon this past November, which provides special programs and events for our students throughout the year. We are fortunate to share, with our families and community, a common vision and high level of commitment to our students. Way to go, Coyotes!



NCE Coyotes eagerly ran laps at their 2023 jog-a-thon!

Newport Heights *Elementary (K-6)*

300 E. 15th St., Newport Beach, CA 92663 • 949/515-6970 • newportheights.nmusd.us



Terri Clarke
Principal

Best Self at NHES

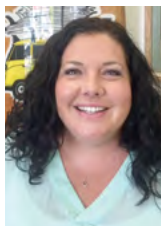
With the addition of our full-time counselor at NHES, students are becoming their best selves as they explore new opportunities throughout the school day. Miss Smith, our elementary counselor, provides weekly alternative recess options for students like art, yoga,

walking club, and games. Students have the opportunity to gather together, engage in lively conversations, and participate in these fun activities. Miss Smith also supports students in the classroom by leading lessons and activities around kindness, problem-solving, positive friendships, and more. In coordination with our PBIS team leaders Mrs. McNally & Mrs. Lang, Miss Smith is helping cultivate leadership in our students through the PAL (Peer Assistance Leadership) program. This year, our students can also look forward to PAL activities plus handball, four square, and hopscotch tournaments at recess and lunch!



Newport Elementary (K-6)

1327 W. Balboa Blvd., Newport Beach, CA 92661 • 949/515-6965 • newportel.nmusd.us



Amanda Estrada
Principal

Art Enrichment

Newport Elementary is committed to providing a well-rounded education that includes various opportunities for arts enrichment during the school day. These programs not only foster creativity,

they also allow our students to explore different artistic mediums and forms of expression.

The Art Masters program at Newport Elementary is designed to introduce children to the world of famous artists and their unique styles. Six times during the school year our students attend an engaging assembly where they learn about the life and work of renowned artists. Following these assemblies, the students are then immersed in a hands-on art lesson inspired by the showcased artist. This experiential learning approach allows our students to not only appreciate the contributions of historical and contemporary artists, but also apply their new-found knowledge to the creation of their own artworks.

Recess Art is a monthly creative opportunity that takes place during our lunch recess. This program provides students with the opportunity to unleash their artistic talents in a relaxed and informal setting. Each month the students are exposed to different artistic mediums and



styles, which encourages them to discover their preferred modes of artistic expression. Whether it's painting, drawing, or working with various craft materials, Recess Art allows our students to explore their creativity in a supportive and fun environment. This program not only nurtures individual artistic growth, it also promotes social interaction among the students and

volunteers who assist with the activity.

The Ukulele Club is a musical gem at Newport Elementary, one which caters specifically to those fourth- to sixth-grade students who are interested in learning to play the ukulele. The club provides a unique opportunity for students to explore the world of music and develop their talents. Under the guidance of experienced music teacher Mr. Funk, club members learn not only technical skills, but also the joy and camaraderie that music can bring. As they progress, they also have the chance to showcase their talents at school events, fostering a sense of accomplishment and pride.

These arts enrichment opportunities contribute to a vibrant and well-rounded educational experience, one which encourages our students to explore their creative potential and develop a lifelong appreciation for the arts.

Newport Harbor High School (9-12)

600 Irvine Ave., Newport Beach, CA 92663 • 949/515-6300 • nhhs.nmusd.us



Sean Boulton
Principal

Club with a Cause

By Sonny McBride

The dozens of clubs at Newport Harbor High School offer spaces for all kinds of students, from video-game enthusiasts to political junkies. One of the most well-established clubs is Green Team, a group that focuses on environmental causes. In this excerpt from the Beacon Broadcast podcast, I talk to Sabrina Schiefer, the president of the club.

Give us a quick rundown and summary of your group.

What are you guys all about?

Basically, we are an environmental club on Newport Harbor's campus. We do a lot of different projects, but all of them are focused on sustainability and bringing more ecofriendly habits to our school.

What have you guys done so far to help the environment?

I think the most impactful things we've done are our recycling drives. The past two years, we've done two paper drives near the end of the first semester. We've also done two recycling contests with plastic bottles and aluminum cans. We've also started doing recycling at football games, which has gotten a pretty good turnout as well.

What do you have to say to those who are pro building highways and factories?

As for highways and factories, it is inevitable—we do live in an industrialized world and we are very car-centric, so we do kind of need that. But instead of investing in expanding that, we can invest more in things like building better public transportation and building various places where we can make a beneficial environmental impact. Climate change is definitely something we've all witnessed, especially here, living in a coastal community. We could see that with the weather changes, we see that directly with the heat, and we see world news all the time. We are trying to make an impact, even if it's just changing one person's mind at school.

Paularino Elementary (K-6)

1060 Paularino Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7950 • paularino.nmusd.us



Annalisa Schwartz
Principal

At Paularino, we are very fortunate to have a wonderful reading support team to meet the unique needs of all our students. On top of our excellent classroom teachers who deliver first best instruction in the classroom and work diligently to meet the needs of all learners, our four reading support teachers have an “all hands on deck” approach to assist our Panthers in the area of reading.

Through reading assessments and input from our classroom teachers, the reading support team has identified students who need extra intervention with reading in addition to their in class learning. Our reading support team scheduled time within the day in collaboration of the classroom teachers so all students get reading instruction at their level. These interventions have helped many of our Panthers already and will continue as the year progresses. We are so proud of the progress our Panthers have made this year and their dedication to learning!

Great job Panthers!



Pomona Elementary (K-6)

2051 Pomona Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6980 • pomona.nmusd.us



Cindy Pedroso
Principal

Historic, Busy Month!

November has been a very busy month for our Panthers! We honored our sixth-grade students at the Eagle Pride Award ceremony. This award is intended to inspire the students to continue their outstanding behavior both academically and personally. Students are chosen for being well-rounded, exemplary children and not just recognized for academic accomplishments.

After school, our musical theater is rehearsing *The Wizard of Oz*, to be performed this month. The students are

thrilled to present the classic story to our staff, students, and community members.

We also celebrated Let's Be Kind Week. Let's Be Kind started in 2018, with 200 slices of pizza and a Newport-Mesa student's desire to show kindness to her classmates. From there, her mom designed a small Be Kind logo, and the student gifted a T-shirt to each of her classmates. Finally, 700 tees later, the first official Let's Be Kind Day happened on the Costa Mesa Middle School campus. Every year, schools across NMUSD celebrate kindness activities in honor of the family's mission.



Everett A. Rea *Elementary (K-6)*

661 Hamilton St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6905 • rea.nmusd.us



Dr. Lorie Hoggard
Principal

Family Involvement is a Priority

Rea is proud to be a certified AVID school. AVID stands for “Advancement Via Individual Determination.” It is a systematic approach to building college readiness in the elementary grades. Students may also choose to join AVID in middle and high school to continue their college readiness experiences.

Through AVID, our students develop the academic habits they need to be successful in middle school, high school, and college, and in an age-appropriate and challenging way. Students learn about organization, study skills, and communication, and also learn to ask and answer high-level questions that go beyond those that just provide routine answers. Our strong college-going culture actively encourages our students to think about their college and career plans.

In close partnership with our PTA, we host several AVID Family Nights each year. These parent-child events are designed to strengthen the bond between school and family,

as well as build knowledge and motivation towards future college and career plans.

More than 250 students and family members came together for a recent AVID Family Night that focused on the importance of developing strong literacy skills. Families heard presentations from staff and students about the many classroom instructional routines and school programs that are designed to build effective skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Our staff and student leaders also shared the different ways in which parents can promote the development of student literacy at home.

The children’s librarian from the Donald Dungan Branch of the Costa Mesa Public Library served as a guest speaker, and shared the many resources that the local library can provide to our families. At the end of the evening the students chose a book to take home, and also received a backpack full of literacy materials to help promote outside reading and writing. The Fall AVID Family Night is one of four family nights that are held each year to promote an active family involvement at our school.

Sonora *Elementary (PK-6)*

966 Sonora Rd., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7955 • sonora.nmusd.us



Mia Doidge
Principal

Food Drive

The Sonora Eagles focused on building community and giving back this month! Students in grades 4th – 6th who serve on Student Leadership decided on hosting a food drive to support people and communities in Newport-Mesa and Huntington Beach. Students organized collection boxes, created posters and a

flyer, and encouraged students and families to donate food items to the local organization, Robyne’s Nest. Robyne’s Nest provides support for at-risk students to create a path for them to successfully complete high school and re-write their stories for a better future. Over two weeks, Sonora families donated over 80 bags of food, which equates to two truck beds full! We are so proud of our Eagles and our families for showing compassion and generosity to others.



Charles W. TeWinkle *Middle School (7-8)*

3224 California Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 • 714/424-7965 • tewinkle.nmusd.us



Dr. Ixchel Sanchez
Principal

On Wednesday, November 8th TeWinkle celebrated “Let’s Be Kind Day”. It was a heartwarming event that brought together students, teachers, and staff to foster a culture of compassion and empathy. The school buzzed with positivity as students engaged in various activities centered around kindness, including

uplifting messages posted around campus, and sharing stories of kindness. The atmosphere



reflected a collective commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive community. Teachers took the opportunity to emphasize the importance of kindness in daily interactions, reinforcing the idea that small gestures can have a profound impact. “Let’s Be Kind Day” had a multitude of positive impact on TeWinkle, it strengthened the sense of unity and camaraderie among students. The emphasis of kindness helps reduce the instances of bullying and fostered a greater sense of empathy among the students. Overall, “Let’s Be Kind Day” left a lasting, positive imprint on the school culture, promoting values that extended far beyond a single event.



Victoria *Elementary (K-6)*

1025 Victoria St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6985 • victoria.nmusd.us



Dr. Aaron Peralta
Principal

Victoria’s 60 years of Voyaging Jog-A-thon

Victoria Elementary continued a decades-long tradition on Wednesday, 11/15 as students participated in its annual jog-a-thon fundraiser. Organized by our school’s PTA, the jog-a-thon helps support several school activities throughout the year. All donations made through the fundraiser go directly back to Victoria Elementary through our STEM

Makerspace program, Arts band & show choir program, inspirational speakers, and other activities held throughout the year.

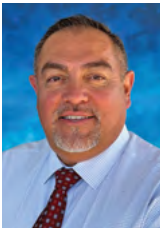


Each grade level was given 20 minutes to walk, run or skip along the school’s track, but parent donations were made prior to the event through flat pledges. This is

our largest and most important fundraiser of the year, and we were amazed to see our goal not only achieved, but our families went above and beyond that goal! We had several of our parent’s volunteer to help keep track of time and encourage students. It was great to see the kids running and being active together, as we try to encourage our students to live a healthy, and active lifestyle.

Whittier *Elementary (K-6)*

1800 Whittier Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6990 • whittier.nmusd.us



A Flourishing Hub of Celebrations and Achievements

Whittier Elementary has had an excellent start this fall, marked by various celebrations. Following the completion of Red Ribbon Week and

Conference Week, our PTA orchestrated a remarkable Fall Festival to conclude the week's events. During Conference Week, parents had the chance to review their child's



academic progress, while students engaged in the spirit days of Red Ribbon Week. The week's culmination was the Fall Festival, featuring fantastic music, delightful food, and an array of games for our students. Adding to the festivities, several student volunteers from NHHS graciously led various game booths, and we were honored by the presence of NMUSD Board President, Ms. Ashley Anderson. Moreover, students were

encouraged to decorate a pumpkin inspired by a book or literary character, and the creativity and inspiration displayed by Whittier students were truly impressive.



Wilson *Elementary (K-6)*

801 Wilson St., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6995 • wilson.nmusd.us



Celebrating Culture and Healthy Living

At Wilson, we believe in fostering healthy, culturally aware scholars. One way we nurture a healthy, drug-free environment is by participating in Red Ribbon Week. This year's theme is "Be Kind to Your Mind. Live Drug Free.", which inspired our dress-up days and activities. We also held our second and successful PTA-sponsored Trunk or Treat!

Lorena Rubio
Principal



To continue to equip our students with knowledge of diversity, we celebrated the traditions of Día De Los Muertos for the first time. We invited our staff, students, and families to participate by bringing in a picture of a loved one who has passed for our school's altar. Day of the Dead altars known as altares or ofrendas are set during the Day of the Dead celebrations on November 1 and 2 to honor the dead. This is an important part of Mexican culture and it is a special way to remember family members, pets, and friends who are no longer with us.

Woodland Elementary (K-2)

2025 Garden Ln., Costa Mesa, CA 92627 • 949/515-6945 • woodland.nmusd.us



Kim Maxwell
Principal

Kindness Week at Woodland

November 13th to 17th was Kindness Week here at Woodland! In partnership with "Let's Be Kind" (www.letsbekind.org), we celebrated different acts of kindness and friendship. During the week, our students and staff members dressed up as a different theme of kindness for each day, such as "Be Kind to Yourself" (wear your favorite color), and "Kindness Is A Bright Idea" (wear neon/bright colors).

The students also participated in two activities to promote and recognize kindness. Our "Kindness Comes In All Shapes" activity had the children write or draw acts of kindness on different shapes, which we put on display in the MPR and the office. Thank you to Melissa Guerin for leading this activity, and to the many parents and teachers who cut the shapes and helped the students with their writing and drawing.



The "Circles of Kindness" activity brought the students together on the blacktop by grade level to draw a ring of circles around themselves to represent their family and friends. As the circles got bigger, the individual circles from each student began to overlap with each other, which illustrated how kindness touches others. Thank you to Sara Babovic for facilitating this activity, and to the many teachers and parents who supported it as well. Woodland is proud to be a community of kind students, families, and staff members.

Toy Store Items–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: schoolnewsKay@gmail.com Please put NMUSD in the subject line.

Entries must be received by **January 31, 2024**

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble!

Thank you Barkate / Nehi Orthodontics

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- | | |
|----------|------------|
| BIKE | MARBLES |
| DOLL | CRAYON |
| TRIKE | PENS |
| BOOK | COMPUTER |
| LEGOS | DOLLHOUSE |
| SOLDIERS | BUGGY |
| BALLS | KITCHEN |
| BUBBLES | TEA SET |
| CROQUET | BAT |
| BLOCKS | BALL GLOVE |
| KITES | |

**Congratulations to
Jen Whitney and B. Owens
Winners of our October Word Search Contest!**



Note-ables



Kate Karp

Los Fabulosos

Los Fabulosos by the Grammy award-winning Lucky Diaz and the Family Jam Band is one of the wackiest collections of original children's music I can remember hearing. The first song, "Ridiculous," is just that — it's like the Beatles at their silliest, except with a Latin beat. As background music for the [video that Lucky Diaz](#) patched together using public-domain video footage that are probably older than your grandparents, it's wonderful, highlighting rapid-motion silent films of elaborate stunts, towering unicycles, a woman and a dog jumping rope, and a very old cartoon. "Elephant" and "Elevator" are energetic. Children can skip wildly to the elephants' rhythm, remembering to periodically hydrate, just as elephants do. "Elevator" plays on children's glee about being a "glutton for buttons"—just remind them to not play with the elevator in the real world. Other people need to use it, you know.



"Me Gusta" is a bilingual two-parter, with the Spanish and English flowing into each other and out again and then merging into a cha-cha. The song celebrates body awareness and the great things bodies do: "Me gustan mis ojos, they help me see the world. Me gustan los manos, holding hands make me smile. Me gusta ti—you make me hap-py!" This song may choke you up—it sounds like the best ending credits ever.

Me gusta Los Fabulosos. The collection was a worthy contender for a 2023 GRAMMY award for Best Children's Album—their second GRAMMY nomination for this category. Stream it [here on Spotify](#).

Sing & Soar with Nanny Nikki

"Nanny Nikki" Rung, her ukulele and her two Dapper Dudes have cued up a musical outing for us! We're going to dance at the playground, rock to the beat, and learn some valuable lessons while we're having the best time ever!



"Sing & Soar" is a dream of a collection of songs. Some will choke you up. Some will make you move. Each of them will leave you with a trail of earworms, and you won't mind a bit.

The infectious ska rhythm on the opener, "The Beat," introduces a celebration of street musicians who pound buckets and pails on the streets of Nikki's native Chicago and who sometimes get run off by the police! "Yuk Your Yum" talks about not raining on someone's parade. "Almost Made It" begins with being too late to get to the bathroom, but that's just the attention-getter—it's really about supporting your friends and yourself in never giving up on anything. "Playground Day" welcomes all children to play, no matter what they look like, where they come from, or how dirty they get.

The collection closes on a soft, thoughtful note with "I Can't Hear the Moon." Of course, you can't. You can't hear a smile, a touch or love, either, but you know they're there.

Children deserve a nanny like Nanny Nikki, and so did we when we were little. We can all have one now!

"Sing & Soar" can be streamed on [Spotify](#) and [Amazon Music](#).

'Strawberry Band,' The Story Pirates

When you were little, did you write songs and stories with dreams of publication?

Too bad the Story Pirates weren't around then. These artists and educators take silly stories that children make up and turn them into even sillier songs and videos. Piracy? Nah—they make a child's dream real!



The Strawberry Band is the most recent of the Pirates' compilations. The title song, based on a story written by a 5-year-old, introduces the band and teaches young listeners what a concept album is: a group of songs connected by a theme, "some more so than others," but you'd be correct in saying that the whole idea is spending your childhood in the best possible way.

"Weird Sisters" celebrates being different yet fabulous enough for others to emulate and to brush off bullies. "Glowy and the Friend Adventure" tells of a whale, lonely in his sea mansion, who finds a friend who's just right. "Fun Crazy Weird Hair Store" has a cautionary subtext: check the prices before pulling out your credit card and paying five thousand million dollars.

The music is wonderful and no mere afterthought. "Glowy," enhanced by Marile Bildsten's trombone, will be an earworm forever; the haunting melody of "Blue Night" would be perfect for a jazz concert.

Read the [original stories here](#). If you know any young authors who'd like to submit their own works, [here's the place](#).

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Winter Reading Challenge

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