

# School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Monrovia Unified School District



Volume 10, Issue 48

April 2024



**Monroe Elementary students rejoice in victory as they celebrate winning the Monrovia Elementary Olympics (MEOs) on March 28, 2024.**

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# Celebrating Monrovia's STAR Educators and Employees



**Flint Fertig**  
Interim  
Superintendent

We're still buzzing with excitement from the second annual STAR Awards at Monrovia Unified. This event recognized more than 40 employees across our schools and district whom their peers nominated for all they do on behalf of Monrovia students. Spectacular, terrific, amazing, and remarkable (i.e. STAR) are all words that describe this impressive group of educators. One nominee from each category was named that evening as the person of the year and will go on to represent

our district in county-wide recognition events if applicable. Congratulations to our following award winners!

- MTA Teacher of the Year:  
Rochelle Munoz - Plymouth Elementary
- CSEA Employee of the Year:  
Luisa Sanchez - Canyon Oaks & Mountain Park
- Support Provider of the Year:  
Noelani Reynoso - Counselor, Monrovia High School
- Confidential Classified Manager of the Year:  
Liana Beserra - Superintendent's Office
- Administrator of the Year:  
Greg Gero - District Office

The goal of the STAR Awards is not just to recognize individual excellence but also to unite the Monrovia community by celebrating the tremendous work of our exemplary educators. These educators, who serve our students so well in a variety of essential roles, are a testament to our collective dedication and commitment.

We are grateful to the entire Human Resources team for making this vision a reality by delivering a first-class, exciting, and memorable experience for all. It was a truly wonderful and proud moment for everyone and their families!

I would also like to thank the Board of Education, the Personnel Commission, and the leadership of both CSEA and MTA for supporting all of our employees and this event. Major kudos to our Food Services team for providing the terrific hors d'oeuvres at the reception. Thanks to the MHS custodial team, Principal Ayala and his assistant principals, and our MOT division for working together on the event's logistics.

Congratulations to all of our Employees of the Year and everyone nominated!



12:23

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## Los Angeles County Office of Education

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**Debra Duardo,**  
M.S.W., Ed.D.  
*Superintendent*

### Fostering Environmental Stewardship at LACOE

As we celebrate Earth Month this April, the Los Angeles County Office of Education is proud to champion a range of innovative initiatives that empower students, educators and communities to become leaders in environmental stewardship.

#### Learning by Doing: Immersing Students in Nature's Classroom

Nature serves as our greatest classroom, and Our Outdoor and Marine Science Field Study unit provides unparalleled opportunities for students to connect with the natural world. The cornerstone programs, the Outdoor Science School and the Marine Science Floating Lab, offer immersive, hands-on learning experiences.

Fifth and sixth graders can embark on a transformative journey at the Outdoor Science School, a residential program nestled in the San Gabriel Mountains. This five-day adventure fosters a deep appreciation for nature through exploration, experimentation and connection with the local ecosystem.

*See LACOE • Page 5*

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**517 S Myrtle Ave, Monrovia, CA 91016**



**LACOE • From Page 4**

Meanwhile, the Marine Science Floating Lab takes students on a thrilling exploration of the vibrant marine life in San Pedro Bay. Through a combination of scientific instruments and close observation, students uncover the wonders of the ocean and its crucial role in our planet's health. Both programs are testaments to the power of learning through direct experience in nature.

**Building a Greener Future:  
Empowering Educators and Schools**

The History-Social Science unit supports districts and schools who wish to submit and apply for the Green Ribbon school designation. The unit also provides opportunities to learn about civics engagement, combining History-Social Science content with science for students to earn the State Seal of Civic Engagement.

The STEM Science unit complements these efforts through a range of customized workshops for schools and districts. These interactive sessions delve into Environmental Literacy, Climate Change solutions and Sustainable Materials use. By equipping educators with knowledge and resources, we empower them to integrate environmental principles into the curriculum, fostering a generation of environmentally conscious citizens.

**Collaboration for a Sustainable Future:  
The Green Schools Symposium**

Our annual Green Schools Symposium serves as a vibrant hub for educators, administrators, and sustainability enthusiasts. This event offers a platform for sharing best practices, learning from sustainability experts and discovering innovative approaches to creating eco-friendly schools. Workshops on sustainable facilities management and advancements in green technology showcase the dynamic possibilities of a greener future for our schools.

These initiatives are just a glimpse into our unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability. By fostering a culture of environmental awareness and action within our schools, we empower students and educators to become stewards of our planet, building a brighter and more sustainable future for generations to come.

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# Bradoaks *Elementary Science Academy*

930 East Lemon Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2100 • [bradoaks.monroviaschools.net](http://bradoaks.monroviaschools.net)



**Calvin McKendrick**  
*Principal*

## Working Collaboratively

It is with great pleasure that I address the Monrovia community as your new site principal at Bradoaks Elementary Science Academy. It is wonderful to be back home where I spent my entire childhood, and where I had the opportunity to teach and lead in this school district for over eight years.

Since my arrival in March, I have been received by our students, parents, and staff members with an overwhelming amount of love and support. I have since met with the vast majority of our educational partners as well, and have been able to evaluate the state of our school in the wake of the recent fire.

It is my goal to work collaboratively towards cohesion, compassion, and healing. In my role, there is nothing more important than providing a friendly learning environment that will assure that our students and staff members will feel safe, healthy, and cared for every single day.

March was a busy month, one full of amazing opportunities for students to explore the world of science. We had visitors presenting to our first- and second-graders about what NASA does, and others explaining how they plan to extract various metals from asteroids. We plan to continue to strengthen our partnerships with other entities in the field of science too, such as with the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and various local aerospace and other companies.

We recognize that the curiosity to learn more about the world around us starts at a young age, and so we plan to continue to feed the passion of inquisitiveness through much exploratory and project-based learning.

In closing, I want to acknowledge the continued demonstration of resilience that has been manifested by our team during the Monrovia Elementary Olympics. On March 28th, the Bobcats were selected as the school with the most spirit in the entire district! Thank you, MEO Committee, for recognizing our efforts to bring the most energy to this event. I hope that we will continue to sustain this level of optimism and enthusiasm throughout the remainder of the school year!



# Canyon Early Learning Center

1000 South Canyon Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2001 • [celc.monroviaschools.net](http://celc.monroviaschools.net)



**Angel Arias**  
Principal

## Spring Blooms with Activity!

Spring at CELC has indeed been bustling with excitement and joy, thanks to a variety of engaging events designed to bring families together and create cherished memories. From heartwarming gatherings like Lunch with a Loved One, where bonds were strengthened over shared meals, to the educational yet entertaining Zoo

Phonics class for parents that fostered learning in a fun environment, and not to forget the delightful visit from the Easter Bunny, which undoubtedly spread cheer and excitement throughout the campus, each activity has left a lasting impression on those who participated.

CELC celebrated love by hosting the Lunch with a Loved One event, where families had the chance to enjoy a meal together on campus with their children. This special occasion not only brought families closer but also fostered a sense of community within the school, creating a heartwarming and memorable experience for all who participated.

CELC continued the spring fun with an exciting collaboration between the school and Monrovia Reads to kick off the Parent Education class series. This partnership aimed to educate parents about the benefits of Zoo Phonics and the importance of repetition in preschoolers' learning journeys.

During the classes, parents actively engaged in learning the hand movements and songs associated with Zoo Phonics. By immersing themselves in these activities, parents gained valuable insights into how they could support their children's learning at home effectively. Monrovia Reads provided tools and supplies

to parents, empowering them with resources to continue the educational experience beyond the classroom setting. This collaborative effort not only equips parents with the necessary skills and resources but also underscores CELC's dedication to fostering a supportive and enriching learning environment for all students.

Hosting such events demonstrates the dedication of CELC staff to go beyond traditional education and create memorable experiences that enrich the lives of students and families. These events not only promote a sense of belonging but also provide valuable opportunities for communication and collaboration between educators and parents. When parents feel involved and welcomed in their children's educational journey, it creates a supportive environment that enhances learning outcomes and overall satisfaction with the school community. By prioritizing family engagement, CELC is investing in the holistic development of its students and nurturing a positive and inclusive school culture.

Spring at CELC has truly been a time filled with warmth, togetherness, and unforgettable moments that will be cherished for years to come.



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

930 Royal Oaks Dr., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-3000 • [cohs.monroviaschools.net](http://cohs.monroviaschools.net)



**Fil Lujan**  
Principal

## Embracing Achievements: Open House at Canyon Oaks HS & Mountain Park School

Canyon Oaks High School & Mountain Park School have several highlights to share from our recent Open House event. It was an incredible opportunity for our community to come together, celebrate our students' achievements, and explore the exciting opportunities that lie ahead.

During our Senior Events meeting, parents and seniors collaborated to plan essential milestones such as Prom, Grad Night, and the Commencement Ceremony. Witnessing the dedication and enthusiasm of our community as they ensured these events were memorable and meaningful for our graduating seniors was genuinely inspiring.

Our FAFSA workshop offered invaluable insights and guidance to students and parents navigating the college financial aid process. It was heartening to see participants learn about completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and explore various financial aid options available for higher education.

Another highlight was introducing job training opportunities through MCAS (Monrovia Community Adult School) for our graduating seniors. These programs aim to equip students with essential skills and experiences for the workforce after graduation, setting them on the path to future success.



The Art Walk showcased our students' remarkable creativity and talent through captivating artwork and student-produced videos. It was a joy to see our students' diverse expressions and imaginations on display for everyone to enjoy.

I am grateful to all attendees who provided feedback through our student and parent surveys. Your input will help us gauge our effectiveness and guide our growth as we strive for continuous improvement to meet the needs of our community.

Thank you to everyone who attended our Open House event. Your support and enthusiasm contribute to the vibrant and supportive learning environment here at Canyon Oaks/Mountain Park. Let's continue to embrace the opportunities that lie ahead and inspire one another to reach new heights of success.







**Scott Moses**  
*Principal*

### **It's Been Quite a Season!**

Clifton continues to find new ways to keep our students engaged both socially and academically. This year we have adopted the focus that “Every Clifton Cub is College and Career Ready.”

Our student leadership has been hard at work in finding many ways to celebrate our students, and the recent Renaissance Rally was no exception. Students who showed outstanding achievement in the first semester were honored with a celebration that recognized their accomplishments. Our families were also able to attend and participate in games, music, dance, certificates, and swag bags!

In all, it was the start of an amazing tradition that brought together so many in our Clifton community to celebrate the awesome achievements of our students. We also hosted our first Astronomy Night with the assistance of our amazing PTSA, ASB, and AVID students, along with the robotics team and Mr. Traeger from the Monrovia High School Astronomy Club. The Monrovia Old Town Sidewalk Astronomers also helped lead the way. Families and community joined together to enjoy refreshments, gaze at the planets, and learn much about our local skies.

Finally, in partnership with the Monrovia Duarte Black Alumni Association and iDream Society, we were

honored to have host Chris Loos offer many inspiring words and lessons relative to the arts. Our students were also able to hear from singer and songwriter Armonie Jay about what it means to follow your dreams.

In athletics, we have had quite a season with the cross country and track and field teams achieving their personal bests and team awards at our invitationals, most notably at the MSAC Invitational. We are also proud of our girls soccer team who did an amazing job in their season. Congratulations to our Cub athletes!

We also want to extend recognition to our Clifton orchestra, band, and color guard, who in their respective categories brought home top prizes and trophies this season. Clifton is also proud of our robotics team, System Overload, for earning the coveted Bryson Cup and league championships!

Finally, we especially want to thank all of our students, staff, and families who came out to celebrate Clifton during open house. It was an amazing event, with a packed campus of visitors celebrating our students or just stopping by to learn what Clifton is all about. We continue to strive to find new ways to encourage and highlight our awesome students, and there is always more to come!

As always at Clifton, we are proud of what we can accomplish when we continue to focus on a campus where every Cub is Courteous, Polite and Respectful.



## Mayflower *Elementary*

210 North Mayflower Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2200 • [mayflower.monroviaschools.net](http://mayflower.monroviaschools.net)



**Michele Costarella**  
*Principal*

### Founders' Day Awards

Recently, Mayflower Elementary celebrated Founders' Day with a schoolwide awards ceremony and awards reception. Founder's Day is an opportunity to celebrate the legacy and work of the PTA founders. In conjunction, we honor those who keep the legacy alive through their work and commitment to our school community.

This year, Mayflower teacher Emily Gray was among the six award recipients honored.

Mrs. Gray received the Outstanding Teacher Award. She has been an excellent teacher at Mayflower Elementary for almost 10 years, teaching both the first and second grades as well as fulfilling a variety of leadership roles. She provides a warm, nurturing environment for students and meets their needs daily. She offers rigorous learning experiences while diligently supporting students with their social-emotional needs, creating a true class community. She has served our school in a multitude of ways. She is a model team member who supports her colleagues and fulfills the role of new teacher mentor.

Additionally, over the years, Mrs. Gray has demonstrated a tremendous capacity for serving as a leader. She has held leadership roles on both the site leadership team and the social committee. She is a writing trainer for teachers, has served as an iCoach, and most recently joined our school's district leadership team. Her cheerful demeanor and positivity always brighten everyone's day. Parents love her genuineness, and her students say that she makes it fun to learn and is the best teacher ever!

Additional community members receiving awards this year included interim superintendent Flint Fertig, Outstanding Administrator Award; parent Kristen Knight, Very Special Person Award; PTA president Natalie Tabor, Very Special Person Award; and parents Mr. and Mrs. Kaufmann, Honorary Service Award.

We congratulate Mrs. Gray and all the Mayflower Founders' Day Award recipients and sincerely appreciate their efforts and dedication!

## Monrovia *High School*

845 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2800 • [mhs.monroviaschools.net](http://mhs.monroviaschools.net)



**Adrian Ayala**  
*Principal*

### Go, Wildcats!

This year has turned out to be a memorable one for Monrovia High School athletics. We have hosted 13 boys athletic and 13 girls athletic teams across the fall, winter, and spring seasons. It has been a year of both familiar achievements and some new pinnacles well worthy of celebration.

This fall the Wildcat football team won another Rio Hondo League Championship.

Cross country experienced a resurgence too, with a qualification in the CIF prelims, and girls tennis is also growing and proved to be very competitive throughout the season.

During the winter season both the boys and girls soccer teams won the Rio Hondo League Championship. Our girls team went on to a historic playoff run, eventually reaching their first CIF championships game, and then winning a CIF Southern California Regional game.

The MHS cheer team participated in Monrovia's first CIF competitive cheer competition. Girls water polo continued to improve throughout the season to reach the quarter

finals in the CIF playoffs. Wrestling had two individual Rio Hondo League champions, one on the boys' side and one on the girls'. Girls and boys basketball will have new leadership next season, and we are excited with the direction that the programs are headed.

We are currently in spring season right now, and both golf and boys tennis teams are off to a great start. Our softball and baseball teams are challenging for Rio Hondo League titles as usual. Boys volleyball has grown to three levels and continues to build. Girls beach volleyball won league, and our track team continues to grow their numbers and is now striving for a Rio Hondo League title.

In anticipation of the 2024-2025 school year, our official athletic dead period (no athletic practice will be conducted allotting for family vacations) will take place from June 23rd to July 7th. Please try to make summer vacation plans during this time if possible. Tryouts for all current MHS students and incoming ninth-graders will be held from late May through June 23rd.

We are looking forward to another historic sports year in 2025 at MHS and cannot wait to see what our Wildcats have to offer. Love our Wildcats!

# Monroe Elementary

402 West Colorado Blvd., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2300 • [monroe.monroviaschools.net](http://monroe.monroviaschools.net)



**Richard Morrison**  
Principal

## The MEO Champions

Monroe Elementary School brought home the championship trophy for the 2024 Monrovia Elementary Olympic Games! It was a great day full of school spirit and strong athletic competition between all of our elementary schools.

The annual Monrovia Elementary Olympic Games is founded on the principle of celebrating strong minds, strong bodies, and strong character. This friendly competition focuses on the health and wellness of all our MUSD fourth- and fifth-grade students. Monrovia High School volunteers also serve as hosts and mentors at the MEO Games to help create a welcoming connection between the elementary and high school students.

Our student-athletes participated in a variety of track and field events, and medals were awarded to the first- through third-place finishers. Those students who did not participate directly in the games were treated to fun activities organized by our local Boys and Girls Club. They cheered on their classmates, showed their school spirit, and were treated to a nice lunch provided by the MUSD's Food Services Department.

Monroe wants to extend its deepest gratitude to coach/parents Katey Cabrera and Sonia Luginbuhl for their efforts to prepare our students for the event. We are so proud of all of our fourth- and fifth-grade students, and are grateful to everyone who helped organized the event.



**Monroe Elementary School Student Athletes and Coaches**



**Monroe Elementary School Spirit Squad**

# Plymouth Elementary

1300 Boley St., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2400 • [plymouth.monroviасchools.net](http://plymouth.monroviасchools.net)



**Jennifer Maljian**  
Principal

## Shining Display of Sportsmanship!

In a display of talent, Plymouth Elementary School showcased its athletic abilities and sportsmanship at the Monrovia Elementary Olympic (MEO) Games, particularly in the track and field events. The MEO Games, held annually, gathered young athletes from various elementary schools across the district to compete in a variety of sports, fostering camaraderie and healthy competition.

Plymouth Elementary's team proved to be a force to be reckoned with as they demonstrated exceptional skill and determination on the track. Athletes from Plymouth showcased remarkable speed, agility, and endurance, leaving a lasting impression on the fans in attendance. Their performance not only reflected their dedication to training but also their passion for sportsmanship and teamwork.

One of the standout aspects of Plymouth Elementary's participation was the unwavering support shown by its students toward all athletes. From cheering on their classmates to applauding competitors from other schools, Plymouth students embodied the true spirit of sportsmanship and camaraderie. Their

enthusiastic encouragement created an electrifying atmosphere at the event, fostering a sense of unity among all participants.

Plymouth Elementary's success at the MEO Games serves as a testament to the school's commitment to promoting physical fitness and sportsmanship among its students. Through rigorous training, mentorship, and a supportive environment, Plymouth has nurtured a culture of excellence in sports, instilling valuable life lessons of discipline, perseverance, and teamwork in its young athletes.





**Becky Perez**  
Principal

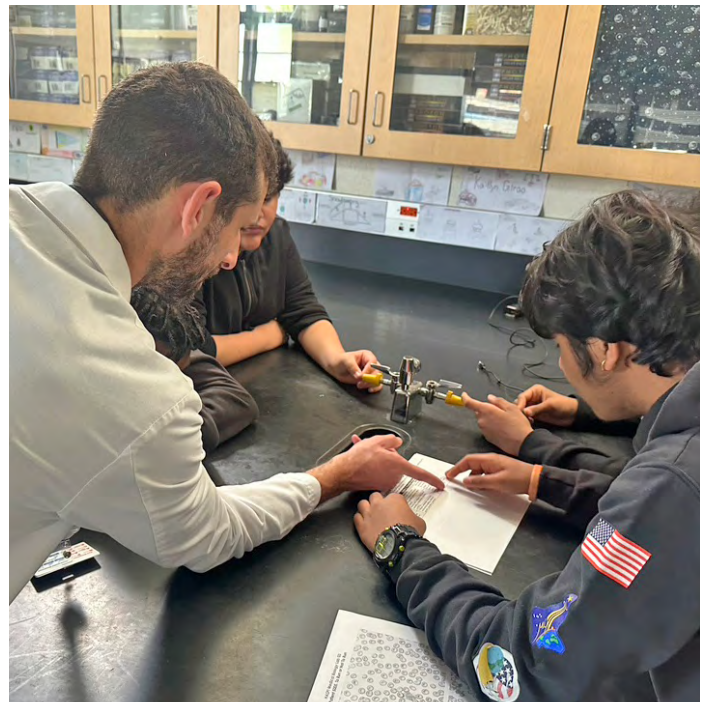
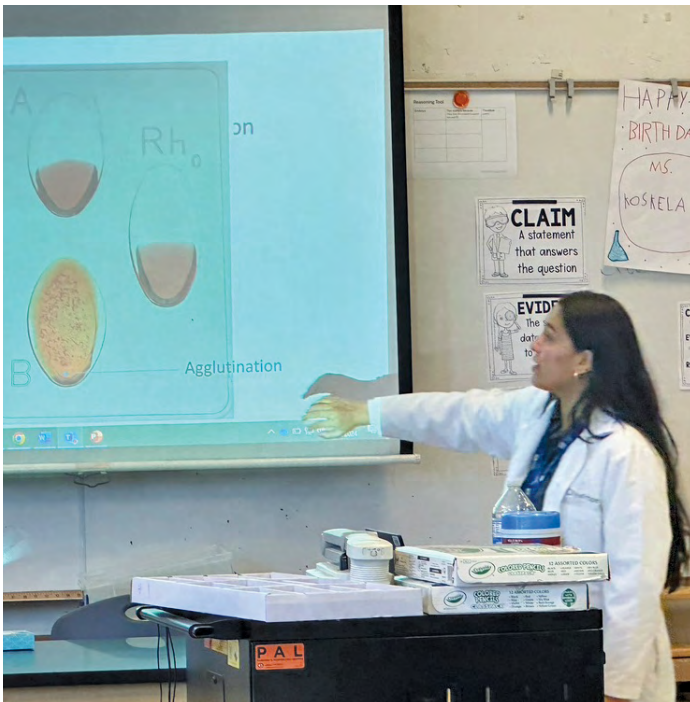
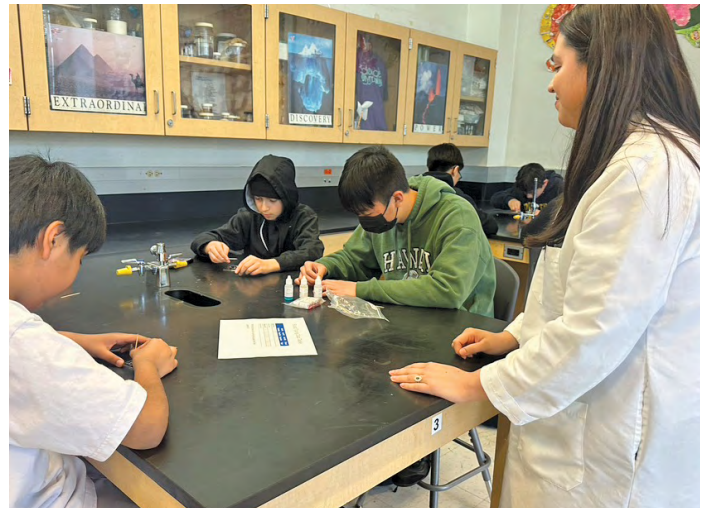
## Learning About STEM Careers

The magic in teaching comes from revealing how we can help our students solve problems and make a positive impact in the real world. To help us bring needed skills to life, Santa Fe has partnered with the City of Hope on a series of lessons that will illustrate the ways in which science can help us address the many challenges in health and medicine.

During the month of April, the City of Hope sent a team of educators to work with our classroom teachers on special lessons for Cougar scholars. Thanks to their help, our sixth-grade scholars learned about DNA, mutations, and cancer. They learned what DNA is, how to make a model of it, and how to translate the DNA code into a protein. The students also carried out an experiment to detect mutations in DNA sequences by using candy.

The seventh-graders focused on blood and blood cancers and practiced identifying a patient's blood type through a simulation. The eighth-graders focused on career options in pathology and analyzed printed medical slides. They also worked together in groups to analyze pathology images and make diagnoses.

After the lessons, many of our scholars came away inspired and motivated to continue to make connections between their classroom learning and the world of biomedical science. Santa Fe is grateful to the City of Hope for their help in bringing our learning to life, and for inspiring in our scholars an interest in medicine.



# Wild Rose School of Creative Arts

232 Jasmine Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016 • 626/471-2500 • [wildrose.monroviасchools.net](http://wildrose.monroviасchools.net)



**Paige Ramos**  
Principal

## Bear News

Wild Rose School of Creative Arts has been busy focusing on art activities, experiencing adventures, achieving greatness, and making memories. Over the last several months we provided exceptional opportunities for staff, students, and families. Mrs. Lomelin wrote a grant that afforded us several family art nights that included dinner. She was supported by Mrs. Prather and Mrs. Espinosa at each of these extremely successful events. Our PTA brought in the BMX Safety & Anti-bullying assembly for our staff and students which was an awesome event. Students learned about helmet safety as well as being kind to others all while professional riders showed amazing flips and jumps. Finally, our student athletes participated in the Monrovia Elementary Olympics games where they competed in several categories. Mrs. Sawyer and Mrs. Prather

practiced with our students daily to ensure that they were ready compete. We had a phenomenal turn out and many of our students won medals.

Thank you to all of the wonderful members of The Wild Rose Families who make all of this possible!



# Word Search Contest

## Words Associated with School

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# Parent To Parent



**Jodie Lynn**

## Internship at College

**Q.** Our 18-year-old son is supposed to have an internship this summer at the college he is going to be attending in the fall. However, he wants to live in a college apartment and this is where we have a problem. He's never been away and we are apprehensive of the environment he could be introduced to during the "summer" party group. Any rules that you could suggest?

**A.** Whether he is going early for an internship or moving into a dorm for the fall, this is a big step and most parents, as well as the kids themselves, are more than anxious about leaving home and entering college. If for some reason you feel like he really isn't ready to live on his own or not sure if he could easily be persuaded to party with the summer group, you might want to talk with the adult in charge of his internship and find out if there are other options for his housing. Oftentimes, there are families who take in college students just for the summer, especially if they are new to the area. It's more personalized because the people are doing it because they enjoy mentoring new kids and showing them around. You and your son can even meet them beforehand to get to know them a little bit better and you can ask about their rules and expectations. Either way, we have to let our kids go, let them make their own choices and hope for the best.

## Activities Away from Technology

**Q.** My 10-year-old son only wants to stay indoors, play video games and eat chips and the like. He doesn't like sports. I'm trying to get him outdoors and moving but he complains about the heat. Any ideas on how to get him away from becoming a couch potato and away from the TV?

**A.** There are plenty of programs that your son might like such as swimming, drawing, painting, camping, making pottery, volunteering at a pet shelter, cooking, graphic design for kids, etc. The whole idea is to get him into a scheduled activity three to five days a week. Some of the facilities where the activities take place have lunch served to the kids. It's usually a pretty healthy one at that. They should give you a weekly copy of them. If not, ask for one. Some programs allow kids to bring their lunch. This means that he will be eating less of the bad things and more of the good. He might even decide that eating fruit is a good break from chips. If your son can find something he likes and can participate in it with a friend, he'll be more willing to stick with it, especially if there's no pressure to be a super star. This will also give him less time to play video games or to watch TV.

## Getting a Driver's License

**Q.** What is the point in forcing a 16-year-old kid to get their driver's license if they don't want to drive? My husband and I do not agree on this topic. Our daughter doesn't want to drive and her dad is really trying to convince her to anyway. She has anxiety and the more he talks about it the more she backs away and gets upset.

**A.** While getting a license among teens was wildly popular just a few years ago, more and more are not so keen on the idea in today's society. A large percentage of teens are realizing that it's a big move to start driving and more responsibility than initially perceived. In fact, driving can be scary to many individuals regardless of their age, especially if they have anxiety. There are many reasons for the current trend of teens not wanting a license and a lot of parents are quite happy about it. Car insurance alone for a teen driver is expensive but other things like the cost of an additional car, gas and car repairs can be overwhelming. The constant worry and concerns about the safety of other drivers as well as that of the teen only adds to the challenges of the situation. Don't push your daughter to drive if she doesn't want to. It could actually make things much worse in the end. She's only 16, give her some time to come to terms with it instead of piling on extra anxiety. It's not worth it.

## A Helicopter Parent

**Q.** I have been a helicopter parent for so long that my children, ages seven and nine, are extremely apprehensive of taking any risks in various activities or doing anything where they may get even slightly hurt or disappointed. What have I done and how do I correct it?

**A.** There have been overbearing and overprotective parents for years; don't beat yourself up too badly. It's easy for parents to go overboard when it comes to their kids. However, this can continue into college years and beyond, but it doesn't have to. Your parenting style and the way you view your children will need to change. You'll need to allow them to get used to the idea that they can actually try things on their own. Go ahead and sign them up for things that they are truly interested in and will most likely do well at. A few successes will build their self-confidence and they will perhaps want to do more things that are new and different. It's the mistakes and bumps in life that we all learn from that make us stronger individuals, better able to handle future situations. We have to be allowed to fail.