

School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Duarte Unified School District



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Board President Dr. James Finlay and Mayor Vinh Truong following their April 25, 2024, joint State of the City and District Address

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SUPERINTENDENT

Duarte's 2024 State of the City and District Address

25 years of progress and promise were celebrated at Duarte's 2024 State of the City and Schools address on Apr. 25 at the Duarte Performing Arts Center. The "Duarte to the Future" theme was a fun and innovative way to come together as a community, making it a well-attended event by many families. The DeLorean car stole the show, garnering crowds of attendees to pose and take pictures in the classic relic. Student performances were another major hallmark of the event, demonstrating the talent at the heart of Duarte scholars.

School Board President Dr. James Finlay and Mayor Vinh Truong delivered the address to the community, highlighting the many ways the community has elevated over the years. Both the School Board President and the Mayor graduated from Duarte schools right before the year 2000, highlighting the fun theme of the Y2K era. The theme was prevalent throughout the night, from the music to the decor, and food.

While both the city and district have made strides forward, many exciting plans and projects lie ahead. From the continued advancement of projects such as the Andres Duarte property to the development of academic and athletic programs, Duarte Unified School District is well on its way to achieving another 25 years of progress.



**Dr. Gordon
Amerson**
Superintendent

Dirección del Estado de la Ciudad de Duarte y el Distrito 2024

El 25 de abril en el centro de artes escénicas, se celebraron 25 años de progreso y promesas en el discurso sobre el estado de la ciudad de Duarte y las. El tema "Duarte hacia el futuro" fue una forma divertida e innovadora de unirse como comunidad, lo que lo convirtió en un evento que contó con la asistencia de muchas familias. El auto DeLorean se robó el espectáculo, atrayendo multitudes para posar y tomar fotografías en la reliquia clásica. Las actuaciones de los estudiantes fueron otro sello importante del evento, demostrando el talento que hay en el corazón de los académicos de Duarte.

El presidente de la mesa directiva, Dr. James Finlay, y el alcalde Vinh Truong pronunciaron el discurso a la comunidad, destacando las muchas formas en que la comunidad se ha elevado a lo largo de los años. Tanto el presidente de la mesa directiva como el alcalde se graduaron de las escuelas de Duarte justo antes del año 2000, destacando el tema divertido de la era Y2K. El tema prevaleció durante toda la noche, desde la música hasta la decoración y la comida.

Tanto la ciudad como el distrito han logrado avances, quedan muchos planes y proyectos interesantes por delante. Desde el avance continuo de proyectos como la propiedad de Andrés Duarte hasta el desarrollo de programas académicos y deportivos, el Distrito Escolar Unificado de Duarte está en camino de lograr otros 25 años de progreso.

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Covering the DUARTE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Congratulations to the Duarte Unified School District — 25 Years! We are celebrating 25 years of publishing *School News* and it is extra special collaborating with the DUSD.

Have a wonderful summer and remember to include the library among your activity choices.

Our next issue is October 2.



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Jennifer Romero
Principal

Excursions and Adventures in Kindness

As always, we are thrilled to share the wonderful happenings within our school community. Learning at Beardslee Academy is not confined to the walls of our classrooms. Our fifth-grade students recently had an unforgettable experience at Pali Science Camp. Engaging in numerous science lessons and outdoor explorations, they immersed themselves in hands-on learning that will undoubtedly leave a lasting impact on their academic journeys. Meanwhile, our younger students in grades first through fourth have been embarking on various field trips, expanding their horizons beyond the traditional classroom setting. From visits to the Arboretum to enriching experiences at the California Science Museum and tide pools. Moreover, April has been a month of significance and reflection for us at Beardslee Academy. We proudly recognized Autism Awareness Month, fostering greater understanding and acceptance within our school community.

Additionally, April marked Community Service Month, during which our seventh-grade students demonstrated their compassion and commitment to making a difference. Through their efforts, they assembled wellness packs for a homeless shelter, giving back and making a positive impact on the world around them. At Beardslee Academy, we firmly believe that learning extends far beyond textbooks and lectures. It encompasses experiences, connections, and acts of kindness that shape our students into compassionate, well-rounded individuals. As we celebrate these accomplishments and milestones, we remain dedicated to nurturing a learning environment where every student can thrive and contribute meaningfully to society.



Ms. Roque's 2nd gr. at California Science Department



Ms. Lucero's 7th grade class



Selena Valencia 5th gr.

Duarte High School

1565 E. Central Ave., Duarte, CA 91010 • 714/990-3221 • www.duarteusd.org/dhs



Luis Haro
Principal

Advantages of our Early College Program

Duarte High School prepares students for college, career, and life. One innovative program that has been benefitting Falcons since 2008 is the dual enrollment Early College Program. This great partnership with Citrus Community College allows for students to complete college coursework while a high school student. It occurs during the school day on Duarte High School's campus. College professors teach a variety of courses that students take through a supportive 2-year or 4-year cohort program, affording the opportunity to complete up to 60 college units upon high school graduation. The sequence of courses is carefully selected and focus on lower division general education requirements for transfer, also known as the IGETC pattern. This allows students, upon completion of the program, to enroll in a 4-year UC or CSU at the junior level. This program affords families cost savings of thousands of dollars compared to the price of entering college after high school, and provides an accelerated

pathway for students to get head start on a graduate work or entry into their career of choice.

Another key benefit of the Early College Program is its ability to expose student to the rigors of college level coursework while still receiving the guidance and support available in a high school setting. This exposure not only helps student develop essential academic skills but also give that a taste of college life, helping to demystify the transition to higher education. Additionally, it fosters a sense of community among participants. Students form a strong bond with peers who share their academic interest and aspirations, creating a very supportive network that extends beyond the classroom.

The early college program offers our Falcons a tremendous advantage as they pursue their academic and career goals. Graduating high school having already completed 50-60 college credits not only is a huge time and money saver, but places our students in a great position for acceptance to top universities across the country. This is another example of our commitment to provide students with the tools they need to thrive in an increasingly competitive world.

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Sofia Valdez
*Director of
Child Development
Programs*

Preschool STEAM Family Fun Night: A Recipe for Success

Preschool education is a crucial stage in a child's development, laying the foundation for a lifetime of learning. At Duarte USD Child Development program, we strive to foster innovative ways to build this foundation by engaging young learners and their families through the STEAM approach, which integrates science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. And what better way to showcase the wonders of STEAM than through a fun-filled night?

At a recent preschool STEAM Family Fun Night, a unique event held at Andres Duarte Preschool, families gathered to participate in a variety of hands-on activities that sparked curiosity and creativity in both children and adults. The event was a resounding success, with parents impressed about the engaging and educational experience their children had.

The evening began with a series of interactive science experiments, during which young scientists, filled with excitement, explored various materials' properties. From creating erupting volcanoes with baking soda and vinegar to experimenting with magnets and static electricity, the children were captivated by the wonders of the natural world.

Next up was the technology station, where families had the opportunity- to try their hand at coding with kid-friendly programming languages. Children gleefully navigated robots through obstacle courses and programmed virtual games while parents marveled at the technological skills their little ones were developing.

The engineering station was a hit with budding architects and builders, who eagerly constructed structures out of blocks, ramps, straws, and other materials. Parents and children worked together to solve engineering challenges, fostering teamwork and problem-solving skills. Throughout the evening, families, including parents, bonded over shared experiences and newfound knowledge, creating lasting memories and strengthening the home-school connections. Parents were impressed by the hands-on learning opportunities provided by STEAM activities and expressed their appreciation for the school's commitment to fostering a love for learning in their children. We are thankful for our D.A.R.T. volunteers who, year after year, come to support this event with passion and commitment.

In the end, the preschool STEAM Family Fun Night was a resounding success. It showcased the power of hands-on, experimental learning to engage young minds and foster a love of STEAM disciplines. By providing a fun and interactive environment for families to explore together, the event left a lasting impression on all who attended, inspiring a new generation of lifelong learners.





Dr. Kelly Lawson
Principal

Maxwell Academy, An International Baccalaureate World School

Maxwell Academy is proud to provide the International Baccalaureate World School Primary Years and Middle Years Programmes. One major aspect of these programs is a focus on Service as Action. “Service as Action is a foundational element of IB that seeks to develop caring members of the community who

act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and their environment” (ibo.org). In the Primary Years, the grade 5 students present a unit of inquiry called Exhibition where they showcase their knowledge on a topic of importance to them in their community: small or large.

As part of this project, they research and learn about the topic and then participate in an action of service to help further the cause. An example of this would be students gathering canned goods after learning about food scarcity and donating



more than 350 canned goods to a local food bank. In the Middle Years, the grade 8 students participate in a Community Project. The Community Project builds on what they learned through their 5th Grade Exhibition and take it one step further. The students research the needs of their community, and then this time, with less guidance and more independence,

work in small groups to develop a way to use their gifts, talents, and passions to address or help meet these needs. One such Community Project focuses on using the group’s skillsets in different sports to put on a field day training for the younger students at our school. These Service as Action



Grade 8 Community Project

projects help students develop their skills, attitudes, and knowledge and provide them an opportunity to see themselves as lifelong learners who contribute to the community in positive and meaningful ways.



Grade 5 Exhibition

Mt. Olive Innovation and Technology *High School*

1400 Mt. Olive Dr., Duarte, CA 91010 • 626/599-5900 • www.duarteusd.org/MIT



Kevin Morris
Principal

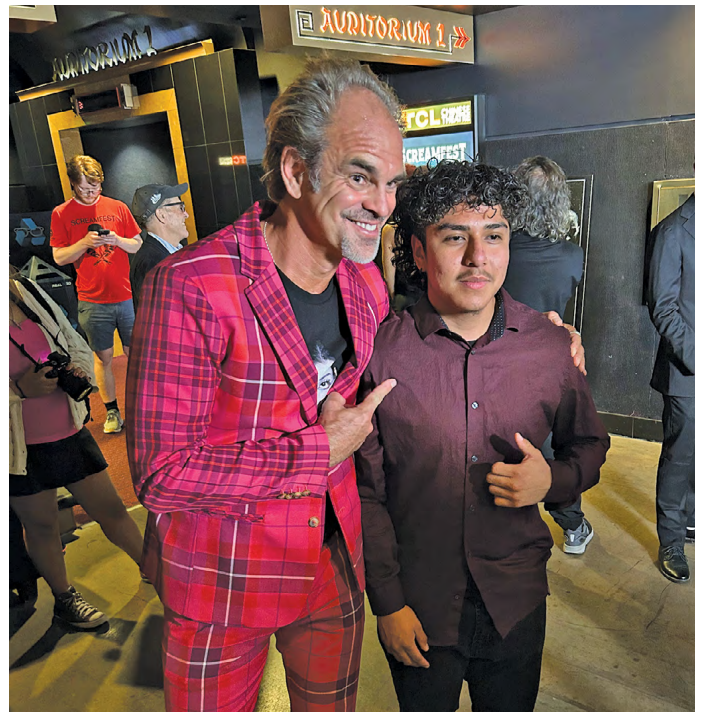
Mt. Olive Innovation & Technology Film Academy (MITFA)

Continuation high schools, falling under the broader category of high schools, serve as secondary educational institutions for students from grades 9 to 12. Among these are 1,299 traditional high schools, 762 alternative and continuation high schools, and a unique establishment known as Mt. Olive Innovation & Technology High School (MIT). MIT's mission is to equip students with the skills required for higher education or entry into the workforce.

What sets MIT apart is its commitment to non-traditional educational approaches, tailored to meet diverse student needs. This includes features like smaller class sizes, specialized programs, online courses, flexible scheduling, career-oriented classes, and an innovative academic model centered around cinematic arts.

In line with the philosophy of renowned educator Sir Ken Robinson, MIT believes in transforming education rather than simply reforming it. Instead of standardization, MIT prioritizes personalization, encouraging students to uncover their unique talents and fostering an environment where learning aligns with their passions.

At MIT, the Mt. Olive Innovation & Technology Film Academy (MITFA) shines as a cinematic arts academy catering to students from 9th to 12th grade. MITFA offers a comprehensive script-to-screen experience, delving into both creative and technical aspects of storytelling. Embracing Robinson's emphasis on creativity, MITFA recognizes the arts as integral to education, aiming



MIT's Joshua Santiago with actor, Steven Ogg.

to nurture each student's potential through hands-on learning and a project-based curriculum.

MITFA exposes students to various facets of filmmaking, including concept development, scriptwriting, casting, acting, editing, marketing, film finance, music scoring, animation, and more. This immersive approach prepares students for real-world careers in the film industry, whether they pursue further education in film programs, technical schools, or directly enter the workforce. By providing authentic industry experiences and access to cutting-edge equipment, MITFA encourages students to explore their creative passions within a supportive learning environment.

Operating as a specialized program within Mt. Olive Innovation & Technology High School, MITFA exemplifies the school's commitment to personalized and transformative education. This cinematic arts pathway offers students valuable connections to the film industry, empowering them to leverage their strengths and gain confidence for future success.



Teacher, Mr. Clayton working on movie make-up with Dewey Walker.

Royal Oaks STEAM Academy (K-8)

2499 Royal Oaks Dr., Bradbury, CA 91008 • 626/599-5400 • www.duarteusd.org/roe



**Dr. Esther
Tamanaha**
Principal

Our Learning Garden Project

We came back from Spring Break ready to start working on Our Garden Project. This year we have had one of our teachers Mrs. McCullough started A School Learning Garden. This Learning Garden Project will allow our Royal Oaks students to learn more about plants and how to help our school garden. Our students and staff have been working very hard already starting this

project. They have been collecting donations of cardboard that our students and parents have been donating. Many of our wonderful students have donated their recess time to help with the Garden, by laying the cardboard down, and starting to add the mulch as well. The students will continue to work on this garden project till the end of the year, and we will continue until next year as well. We are very excited to see what our future garden is going to look like all done!



Valley View Academy of Technology & Creative Learning (TK-6)

237 Melcanyon Rd., Duarte, CA 91010 • 626/599-5500 • www.duarteusd.org/we



Erin Fish
Principal

Valley View Dolphins Run!

Valley View Academy hosted its annual school track meet in preparation for the upcoming district meet. Over the last couple months, the students of Valley View have been preparing and practicing under the guidance of our coaches, Ms. Jansen and Mrs. Rodriguez.

The event included participants from grades Kinder through 6th grade competing in a range of track and field events including sprints, long distance races, relays, long jump and softball throw. The atmosphere was charged with excitement as our athletes gave it their all, cheered on by enthusiastic friends and family members. It was a fun day and a huge success. After the track meet was complete, ribbons were awarded to the top performers in each event, but every participant left with a sense of achievement and pride in their efforts and accomplishments. Our track meet was not just a showcase of athletic talent, but also a celebration of teamwork and sportsmanship. The camaraderie among competitors was evident as they congratulated each other on their achievements and offered words of encouragement. The track meet also provided the school community an



opportunity to come together and show their support for the young athletes. Parents, teachers and community members turned out in large numbers, creating a lively atmosphere at the event. The students who qualified for the district track meet are attending morning practices to prepare for the big day – the District Track Meet at Duarte High School. We wish our students the best of luck. Way to go Dolphins!



CAMPING–Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.
 When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put Duarte in the subject line.

Entries must be received by **June 15, 2024**
 From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
 a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble.

- | | |
|----------|------------|
| MAP | FOOD |
| BOOTS | SNACK |
| JACKETS | BEDROLL |
| COMPASS | MATCHES |
| GPS | FLASHLIGHT |
| BACKPACK | FLARES |
| THERMOS | CELLPHONE |
| KNIFE | CAMERA |
| TENT | BUGSPRAY |
| BLANKET | COT |
| WATER | |



Vacation–Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.
 When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put Duarte in the subject line.

Entries must be received by **June 15, 2024**
 From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win
 a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble!

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| CAR | GAMES |
| BUS | SNACKS |
| TRAIN | PUZZLES |
| AIRPLANE | PAJAMAS |
| BOAT | JACKET |
| SUITCASE | SNEAKERS |
| BACKPACK | SUNBLOCK |
| SWIMSUIT | HAT |
| MAPS | WATER |
| PASSPORT | SOCKS |



Los Angeles County Office of Education

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Fostering Environmental Stewardship at LACOE



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

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.

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.