

School News

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Covering the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District



Volume 16, Issue 47

May 2024

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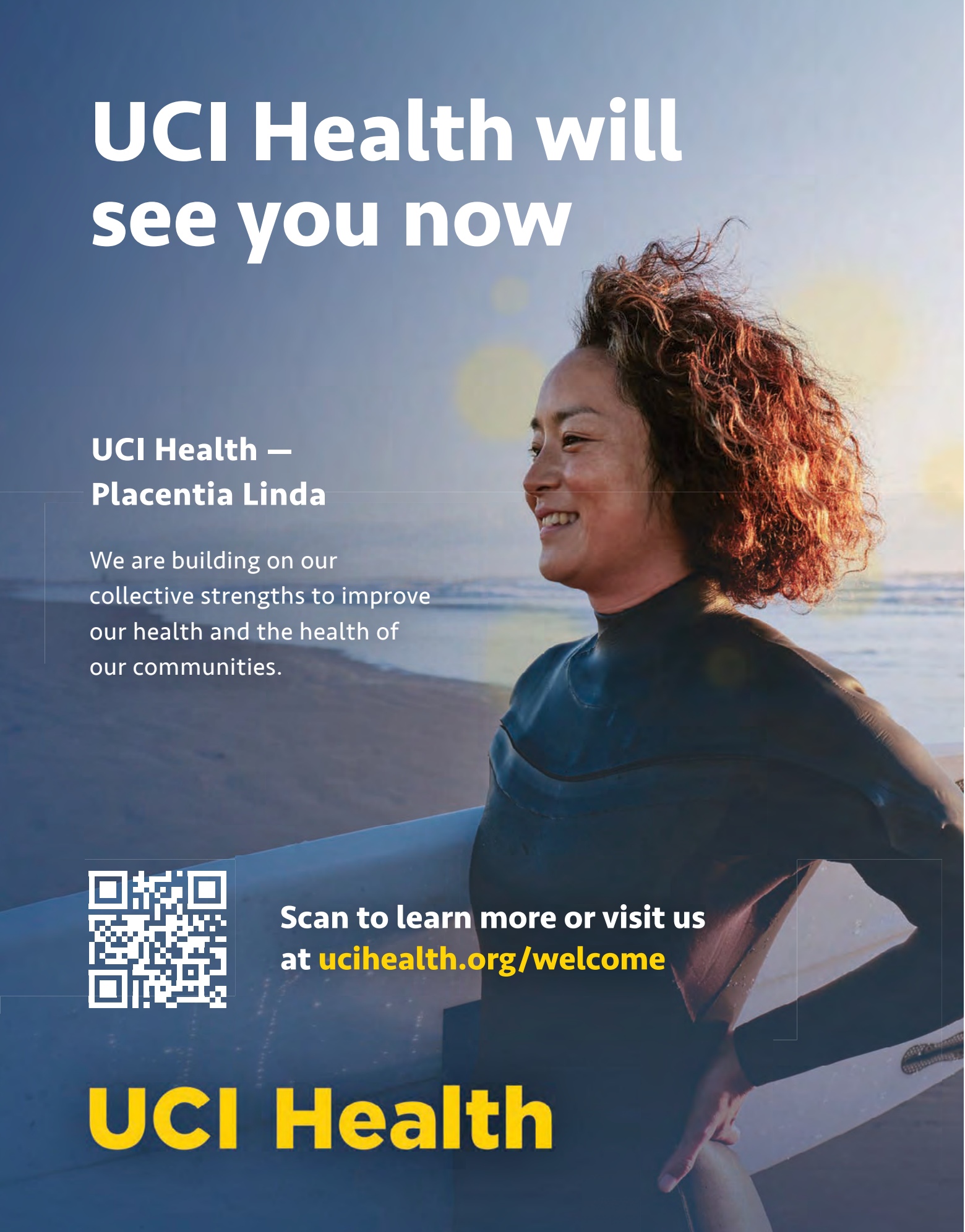
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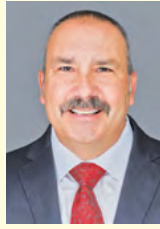
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Inaugural Middle School Wrestling Tournament Showcases Talent and Sportsmanship



**Dr. Alex
Cherniss**
Superintendent

As superintendent of the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District, I was thrilled to witness the historic debut of our wrestling tournament as a part of our newly revamped Middle School Athletics Program in April. Held at Valencia High School, this event brought together nearly 200 students from all six middle schools, showcasing their skills after a six-week season of practicing and dual meets.

The atmosphere was charged with excitement as these young student-athletes demonstrated their dedication and hard work through impressive performances. Beyond the competition, what truly shone was the remarkable sportsmanship displayed by every participant, reflecting our district's core values of collaboration and integrity.

The highlight of the evening was the awarding of district champion titles to wrestlers from each school, with Tuffree Middle School securing both the boys' and girls' team championship trophies.

This tournament underscored the importance of our Middle School Athletics program, emphasizing our commitment to Putting Kids First. It also highlighted the value of sports in fostering teamwork, perseverance, and sportsmanship among our middle school students. The success of the tournament is a testament to the collective effort of coaches, administrators, and supporters dedicated to promoting middle school athletics in PYLUSD.

This inaugural event marks the beginning of a tradition that will inspire future generations of wrestlers, encouraging them to pursue excellence both on and off the mat.



PYLUSD Set to Open New Diploma-Bound Program for Student-Athletes at Parkview School in Fall 2024

From the District

The Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District (PYLUSD) is excited to introduce the Universal Sports Institute (USI), launching in Fall 2024 at Parkview School. USI offers a free, personalized athletic and academic program for student-athletes in grades three through twelve, focusing on sports performance, leadership, and academics. It aims to provide high-quality services to students, including sports-specific workouts, recovery programs, and individualized training.

“The opening of our new Universal Sports Institute reflects our commitment to meeting the diverse needs and interests of our students, as evidenced by the increasing demand for specialized educational options. This facility will also provide a valuable service to our over 4,000 current student-athletes at our comprehensive high schools by providing sports-specific workout programs created by certified strength and conditioning coaches and opportunities for sports recovery and individualized training,” Superintendent Dr. Alex Cherniss shared. “USI will provide our students who might not otherwise have access to such resources, the opportunity to benefit from high-quality services.”

Located in Yorba Linda, USI features top-notch facilities like strength and conditioning rooms, agility training areas, and more. Experienced coaches will help athletes achieve their goals while offering personalized support. Academic courses are taken through the district’s independent study school, Parkview, which offers flexible scheduling and support for balancing academics and athletics.

Elementary students receive daily remote instruction and on-campus support, while secondary students have weekly live remote classes and access to honors courses. High school students can take AP and NCAA-approved courses. For those preferring a traditional setting, students in grades six through twelve can attend concurrent courses at district middle and high schools while participating in athletics, including the high-caliber CIF sports teams at El Dorado, Esperanza, Valencia, and Yorba Linda high schools.

Interested students and families are encouraged to learn more and apply for the 2024-2025 school year at usi.pylusd.org.

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R.E.A.C.H. Foundation

21520 Yorba Linda Blvd., Suite G503, Yorba Linda, CA 92887 • 714/323-9706 • www.reach4pyl.usd.org



Giselle Nguyen
President

Hands-On Experience through REACH Foundation High School Internships

As education nonprofit leaders, we are always seeking ways to provide students with meaningful, real-world learning experiences. The REACH Foundation's high school internship program offers an exceptional opportunity to do just that.

Through the REACH Internship program, students take on leadership roles in running district-wide initiatives by planning and leading events like the annual Shamrock 'n Run 5K/2K, the Middle School Track Meet, curate the From the Inside Speaker Series, facilitate the Experimental Design Program and support the First Lego League robotics competitions.

In the process, these young leaders develop a diverse skill set - from project management, event planning leaders to public speaking and teamwork. They also gain invaluable networking experience and references to highlight college applications.

By empowering students through the REACH internship, we are equipping them with the competencies and confidence to succeed in their future academic and career pursuits. Best of all, REACH Foundation Interns receive PVSA credit and valuable references to highlight on their college applications. It's an incredible chance to get hands-on work experience in high school and make a difference in our PYL community.



School News

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FOUNDER/PUBLISHER: Kay Coop
562/493-3193 • schoolnewskay@gmail.com
ADVERTISING SALES: 562/493-3193
CONTENT COORDINATOR: Barbra Longiny
GRAPHIC DESIGNER/PRODUCTION:
Emily Ung and Mie Kawamura
COPY EDITORS: Kate Karp, Anna Zappia
SOCIAL MEDIA: Nancy Lueder
Netragrednik by Neta Madison



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P.O. Box 728, Seal Beach, CA 90740
562/493-3193

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Ages
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Bernardo Yorba *Middle School (7-8)*

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



Beth Fisher
Principal

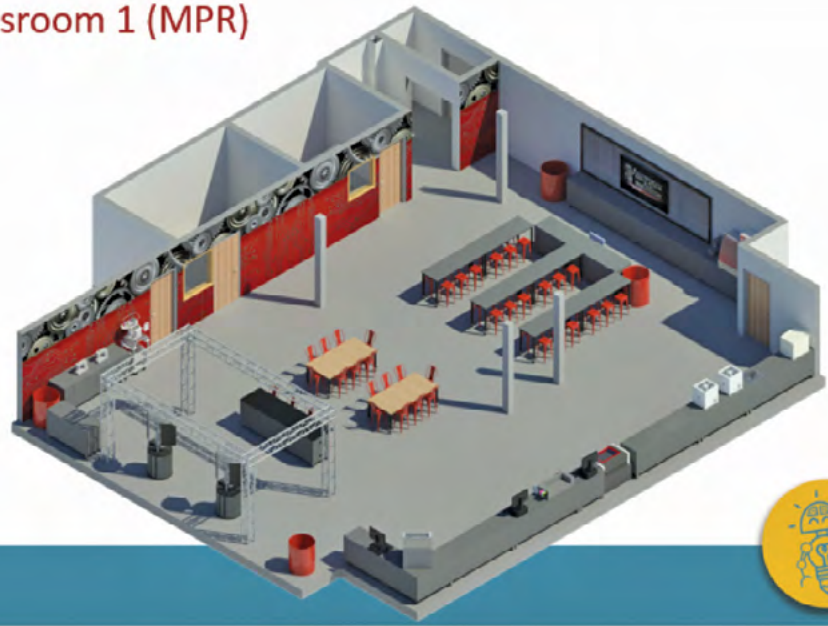
State of the Art Innovation Lab Come to OCSCS

As Bernardo Yorba MS prepares to convert to the Orange County School of Computer Sciences, we are overjoyed to be able to provide students creative and critical

thinking skills in a hands-on animaker space known as an Innovation Lab. Students will have the opportunity to take a schoolwide elective that focuses on 5 areas: engineering and manufacturing; entrepreneurship and marketing; traditional and digital art; video and print production; computer science, animation, and robotics. Students will have the opportunity to go through Stanford's Design Thinking process as they engage

in mastery learning experiences. We encourage you to follow us on Instagram at OCSCSEducation.

Classroom 1 (MPR)



Brookhaven *Elementary School (TK-6)*

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



Laura Fisher
Principal

Magical Moments Unfold: Brookhaven School Presents 'Aladdin Jr.'

The enchanting tale of Aladdin has taken center stage at Brookhaven School, as students showcased their talents in the vibrant musical production of "Aladdin Jr."

Sponsored by the dedicated efforts of the Brookhaven PTA and brought to life by a team

of passionate parent volunteers, this production was a magical experience for all.

Under the expert guidance of organizer Michelle Kadera, two casts of students have poured their hearts and souls into rehearsals, bringing the beloved characters of Aladdin, Jasmine, and Genie to life with energy and enthusiasm. From dazzling musical numbers to captivating performances, the performances transported audiences to the bustling streets of Agrabah.

With its message of friendship, courage, and the power of believing in oneself, "Aladdin Jr." not only entertains but also inspires. It's a testament to the hard work and dedication of the entire Brookhaven community, coming together to create a memorable theatrical experience that will be cherished for years to come.



Bryant Ranch School (TK-5)

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



Shannon Robles
Principal

Hands-On Learning in our TinkerLab

Bryant Ranch started a maker space, called the TinkerLab. Our TinkerLab is a school-wide makerspace for grades TK through fifth grade that provides hands-on, creative ways to encourage students to design, tinker, invent, and build as they engage in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Mathematic (STEAM) skills using



upcycled materials and kid-friendly tools. Explorers put their creativity to work and focus on grade level standards through hands-on learning. What happens when you combine 4th graders with Kindergarteners in the Bryant Ranch Makerspace? Why of course, Marble

Mazes. Our young scholars made mazes using boxes, paper straws, and marbles as part of their TWIG “Marble Run Engineers” science unit. Each Kindergartener designed a pathway for a marble to travel with a little guidance from our fourth graders. Our goal is for students to build, invent and tinker to foster creative learning.



Buena Vista Virtual Academy (K-12)

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



Jamie Jauch
Principal

Buena Vista Virtual Academy Students Earn Top Honors at Chapman Art and Writing Holocaust Contest

Buena Vista Virtual Academy is excited to announce that two of our students were recognized as finalists in the 25th Annual Chapman Holocaust Art and Writing Contest. The theme of this year’s international contest was “Answering the Call of Memory: Choosing to Act.” Students attended the awards ceremony at Chapman University on March 15th where they had the opportunity to meet holocaust survivors and listen to guest speaker, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and ISIS survivor, Nadia Murad.

Thanks to our talented and nurturing teachers, particularly our school contest coordinator Dana Leon, and the BVVA environment that allows for students to grow and excel outside of the classroom, freshman Hyde Nguyen was recognized for his amazing visual arts submission which highlighted the under-recognized struggles and accomplishments of disenfranchised people throughout history. And 11th grader Lelatasiosamoa (Lela) Siufanua won 2nd place for her short film highlighting Holocaust survivor Renee Firestone’s story.



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

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



Scott Mazurier
Principal

R.A.P.I.D. Academy

El Camino Real High School (ECRHS) is dedicated to nurturing holistic student growth, fostering success beyond the classroom. Our R.A.P.I.D. Academy recently explored local print shops to bridge theoretical knowledge with practical applications. Students were able to witness design principles in action. Our Science classes were offered a hands-on encounter with physics in flight through

visiting IFly. Lastly, our annual visit to Griffith Observatory showcased real-life applications of science and math concepts.

ECRHS aims to inspire students by showing them the relevance of their studies in everyday life. These immersive experiences not only deepen academic understanding but also cultivate mental and physical well-being. ECRHS continues to pioneer innovative approaches, empowering students to excel in diverse spheres. By connecting classroom learning with real-world contexts, ECRHS prepares students for a lifetime of success.



ECRHS students explore the Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles, CA

El Dorado *High School (9-12)*

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



Joey Davis
Principal

Academic WorldQuest Team

Congratulations to El Dorado's Academic WorldQuest Team on 2nd place in Washington D.C. on Saturday April 20th! The Academic WorldQuest is a competition for high school students from across the country representing more than 40 local World Affairs Councils. These Councils host community Academic

WorldQuest competitions throughout the year for the ultimate prize to represent their communities at the Academic WorldQuest National Competition. Academic WorldQuest tests players' knowledge of current international politics, geography, global economics, history, and world cultures. Over 3,000 students compete annually.

The El Dorado AWQ Team consisting of Bailey Alam, Arya Darvish, Greeva Ramani, Marlowe Snapp and Coach Mrs. Kelly Smith, for the past 3 years, has won the regional competition and has competed in Washington D.C. The prior two years they placed 4th place at Nationals and this year they placed in the top 3.



Mrs. Kelly Smith, Arya Darvish, Bailey Alam, Greeva Ramani, and Marlowe Snapp.

Esperanza High School (9-12)

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



Jeff Giles
Principal

Exciting News!

The Esperanza High School library has undergone a fantastic transformation! We're thrilled to unveil our newly renovated space, designed to inspire and empower our students. With vibrant new study areas, cozy reading nooks, and beautiful relaxation spaces, our library is now the perfect hub for learning, collaboration, and discovery.

Whether you're diving into research, exploring new worlds through literature, or simply seeking a quiet place to study, our revamped library has something for everyone. The library is also home to PYLUSD's only student art gallery. Artwork for the past 50 years has been collected and displayed for students to enjoy and be inspired. Beyond that, a revolving art gallery celebrates our current students' exemplary artwork. A beautiful space surrounded by beautiful artwork, the perfect environment for learning!



Fairmont Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Anne San Roman
Principal

Embracing Nature

In a transformative journey just after spring break, sixth-grade students from Fairmont Elementary School embarked on an enriching adventure to Green Valley Lake, nestled in the serene San Bernardino mountains. Over the course of four days and three nights, these learners delved into a world of exploration, discovery, and camaraderie all while fostering a deep connection with nature.

The camp experience was meticulously crafted to ignite students' curiosity and instill a sense of confidence, both academically and personally. Through immersive field studies and hands-on methodologies, they delved into scientific inquiry amidst a backdrop of towering pines and curious forest inhabitants. But perhaps the most

profound lessons were learned through the challenges they faced and overcame together.

Crucially, the camp provided a rare chance for students to detach from the distractions of modern technology and immerse themselves fully in the natural world. Away from the comforts of home and electronic devices, they forged deep bonds with their peers, discovering inner strengths and capabilities they might not have known existed.

As the students returned to school, their exhaustion was palpable, but so too was their joy and self-assurance. The experience had not only broadened their academic horizons but had also nurtured their independence and self-confidence, laying a foundation for future growth and success.



Rebecca Allan, Principal

Miss Placentia shares a story about Kindness

Madeline Smith, Miss Placentia, was here on April 16th to visit George Key, meet students and read a story. The students were happy to see her, in the words of one student “A Real Princess.” Thank you Miss Placentia for visiting and we would love you to return when you are available!



Venture Academy Choir performed at the April 16th board meeting and received a standing ovation! The Venture Academy Choir will be performing on Saturday, April 27th, at 12:30 p.m. as part of the Orange County Department of Education's Very Special Arts Festival to be held at the Main Place Mall. The Venture Academy choir is under the direction of Ms. Carmen Cointreau. Thank you to our families and staff that support our choir and our Adult Transition Program!



Glenknoll Elementary School (TK-6)

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



"Battle of the Books" is Back at Glenknoll

Glenknoll students love to read and love to take on a challenge! On April 18, twenty-four teams of students in grades three through six competed in Glenknoll's annual "Battle of the Books"! The competition has

been a tradition at Glenknoll for the past 10 years, but was interrupted by COVID-19. After a three-year hiatus, "Battle of the Books" is back!! Our librarian, Mrs. Amber Gribben, worked with volunteers to create a memorable event for our students. Each grade was assigned a book to read and student teams had one month to read and study the book. During the competition, students were asked questions based on events and details

throughout the book. A wrong answer resulted in a team's elimination. The final two teams in the grade level were the runners up and the winners! Students' amazing knowledge of the books was displayed in the many rounds (Ten rounds for the third grade book!) of rapid-fire questions they were able to answer. Thank you Mrs. Gribben! We are so grateful for the return of "Battle of the Books"!



Glenview Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Viridiana Fraga
Principal

Glenview Attends Outdoor Science Camp!

After months of anticipation, the day finally arrived for the 6th-grade students of Glenview Elementary to embark on their outdoor science camp adventure at ECOS. Excitement filled the air as they eagerly prepared to immerse themselves in a world of hands-on science learning and outdoor exploration. At camp, the students were able to participate in various engaging

educational activities. From exciting hikes where they learned about rocks, plants, and animals, to enjoying line dancing and making s'mores, there was never a dull moment. They also got to showcase their creativity by

putting on skits and playing collaborative games with their friends. One of the highlights was stargazing at night. The students also had the opportunity to showcase their survival skills by working together and using their imagination to build outdoor shelters amidst the natural surroundings. As they said goodbye to camp, they carried with them memories of laughter, learning, and new friendships that would stay with them forever.



Golden Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Kristin McDonald
Principal

We're All Included!

All students are important members of our Golden Community! We offer numerous educational programs at Golden, such as general education, GATE, and special education. However, at the end of the day, our staff believes that all our students belong at Golden and should collaborate with one another.

We have worked hard to remove labels and focus on ensuring that all students have access to Golden activities and programs. A great example of this is how our upper-grade SDC class attends library with a fifth-grade class. While in the library, students work together to check out books and spend time reading. The genuine friendships between all students involved have carried over to the playground, where students in different classes eat lunch and play together.

The spirit of inclusion is contagious and expands into other classes, and students model inclusive practices on the playground. Recently, another sixth-grade class has been playing board games with an SDC class, and our primary SDC class has Big Buddies that they meet each week. PAL members have volunteered to run lunchtime games to play with their new friends.

At Golden, when we say all students, we mean it! Everyone wins when we learn and include!



Kraemer Middle School (7-8)

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



Michael Young
Principal

Outstanding Leadership Program

Kraemer Middle is proud to announce our recent recognition as an Outstanding Leadership Program, an honor presented to schools with programs that have “proven spaces where student leaders grow as ethical, responsible, and servant-minded architects of change.” Programs include ASB & PEER Leadership where our motto is “serve before self”. Leaders are responsible for organizing school dances, assemblies, and

spirit days, while also shaping school culture. Specifically, they onboarded students during 7th grade orientation and workshops, teaching students what it means to “Be Kraemer”. Leaders also expertly hosted leadership development days, providing leaders from partner schools skills and activities to take back to their campuses. Most recently, ASB students attended the CASL Conference in Ontario where 14 of our leaders presented during “Meet the Pros” presentations. We are exceptionally proud of our students and acknowledge the vision and drive of our award-winning activities director, Ricky Castro.



Lakeview Elementary School (TK-5)

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



Stephanie Given
Principal

Scientists Launch Into the World of Inquiry, Curiosity and Creativity

What do density, serum, onions, osmosis, cashews, mold and dog saliva have in common? They were all part of this year’s Lakeview Science Fair inquiries! TK-5th grade students submitted their project boards containing an outline

of their hypothesis, process, and outcome along with charts, pictures and graphs to illustrate their experiment. Students shared about their process including mishaps and challenges with our volunteer judges: Mr. Salumbides (parent), Mr. Fleming (parent), Dr. Young (Asst. Supt of Educational Services) and Mrs. Muller (Elementary Education Coordinator). Classrooms previewed the showcase which culminated with an Awards Ceremony Thursday

evening. In attendance was Dr. Cherniss, Superintendent of PYLUSD Schools, who engaged with our young scientists and offered encouraging words. Congratulations to Lakeview’s overall winners: 3rd place tie - Sairaa B (2nd grade), 3rd place tie - Joanne L (3rd grade), 2nd place - Riyansh V (K), and 1st place - Caroline S (4th grade)



Lakeview’s 2023-24 Science Fair Showcase Winners

Linda Vista *Elementary (TK-5)*

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



Kathleen Escaleras-Nappi
Principal

Meaningful Learning Opportunities

This trimester, Linda Vista students have had a variety of meaningful learning experiences that are essential to supporting student growth and development.

Our three highlights of this trimester include Read Across America in combination with College and Career Day, our *Finding Nemo* musical, and our fourth-and-fifth-grade event, Bringing History to Life: Pioneer and

Colonial Days.

For our Read Across America event, we had over 18 guest readers who visited our classrooms, shared about their careers, and read their favorite books to our Lions. Students were excited to hear from our guest



Read Across America

speakers and ask questions about their professions.

Our second event, our school musical, has given students the opportunity to experience an

authentic musical through dance, song, teamwork, and grit. In collaboration with our amazing PTA and a local music school, 86 students participated in this year's musical, *Finding Nemo JR*. We were excited to bring this story to life at a major arts center in April.



Pioneer Day



Colonial Day

Finally, Linda Vista has a wonderful tradition of bringing history to life through fun-filled activities supported by our parents and teachers, where students get to experience and engage in activities, foods, and crafts that pioneers and colonials experienced hundreds of years ago. Students immerse themselves in the day, dressing up and moving all around campus as they learn with hands-on, real-world connections. Students look forward to these days, and they continue to be a tradition that our young scholars will cherish forever as learners.

Mabel Paine *Elementary School (TK-5)*

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



Geoff Smith
Principal

Mustangs Working Together

Our theme this year at Mabel Paine has been "Mustangs Working Together to Achieve Greatness." We are proud of our students who have come together to accomplish so much!

Student leadership groups are an integral part of our school, and we have two such groups on campus: the Kindness Crew, comprising our fourth-grade students, and the Fifth Grade Leaders. These groups

regularly organize activities and experiences for students to participate in around campus. The Kindness Crew provides activities during recess times, such as coloring or playing large Connect Four. They also created posters displaying kindness all around the campus and organized a drive to support a local animal shelter. The Fifth Grade Leaders assist

with our morning valet, organize lunchtime activities, run our Mustang Student Store, and support our primary grades during morning recess. Recently, two Fifth-Grade Leaders helped lead our PBIS Behavior Expectation Assemblies, where they described what positive behavior looks like.

We are proud of the amazing leaders we have at Mabel Paine, and we look forward to seeing them continue to be great leaders throughout their educational careers!



Melrose Elementary School (TK-5)

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



Janice Weber
Principal

Engaged Community

In an effort to support PYLUSD's focus area of Engaged Community, every Thursday from February 1st to March 7th, Melrose Elementary hosted *Disciplina Positiva* (Positive Discipline) classes for parents in Spanish for Melrose and Valadez families. *Disciplina Positiva* is a culturally and linguistically responsive approach to parenting

with love, dignity, and respect. Founded by Tony and Lisseth Orozco in 2010, this six-week training series promotes social and emotional development and the development of life skills in children and adolescents that positively impact families and the school environment. Melrose had an awesome turnout. Parents enjoyed the lessons and engaged with each other and the trainers in person and through WhatsApp. Pictured here with Tony, trainer Mariela Brenes,

and Valadez's and Melrose's Community Liaisons Reyna Roman and Susan Swinfard, are our amazing parents on their graduation day. They were awarded certificates and celebrated with a potluck, bringing a feast to share with each other. Melrose is proud to host another six-week series, similar but different content, on Thursdays from May 2nd to June 6th from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. in the gym. Child care is provided.



Morse Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Kelly Farrell
Principal

Community Engagement

One of the cornerstones of community engagement at Morse Elementary is the involvement of our parents and caregivers. We recognize the invaluable role that our families play in our community, and we actively seek to bridge the gap between home and school. From Parent-Teacher Associations and open houses to family fun nights and volunteering opportunities, our parents are always

welcomed into the fold and encouraged to participate and contribute to their children's full educational experience.

The Lunch with a Loved One event in February was an extra-special one, as our families were invited onto the campus to enjoy a meal with their children. Parents brought chairs, blankets, and umbrellas to share a picnic on the grass. The families all gathered together as our students shared stories about their day and participated in basketball, soccer, and corn hole.

The annual Open House event was a bustling one filled with excitement and anticipation. It began with our kindergarten students' performance of *The Little Red Hen* play. Students then proudly led their families around the school to share their favorite projects and accomplishments. From colorful displays of student artwork to interactive science experiments, each classroom exuded a sense of creativity and academic growth.

Morse also provided an opportunity for parents to discover effective literacy teaching methods during Literacy Night. Presentations were offered in both English and Spanish. While the parents learned about literacy strategies, their children participated in activities that focused on our featured book *Dragons Love Tacos*.

These events not only fostered a sense of community and collaboration, they also allowed our students, families, and the broader community to come together to support and enrich our educational experiences.

Parkview Home School (TK-12)

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



Dominique Polchow
Principal

The Universal Sports Institute

Established in 2001, Parkview has a long tradition in our community of successfully supporting students through an independent study model that can provide them with an alternative to the traditional classroom setting. We are designed to respond to the unique educational needs, interests, aptitudes, and abilities of these students by providing increased flexibility during the school day.

This is why the Universal Sports Institute pathway at Parkview is the perfect fit for student athletes. Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, we have been thrilled to have the opportunity to offer district students an educational option that can enable them to fully realize their athletic potential, while also receiving the same education and academic rigor as our other students in the PYLUSD. Here are what former Parkview students have to say about their learning experiences:

Dylan Proctor, valedictorian for 2022: "...Parkview has a wonderful staff and incredible teachers who are not only

committed to our academic success, but our success as individuals, overall." (Vanguard University.)

Tyler Kim, Parkview valedictorian of 2023: "I am eternally grateful for the guidance and support of the Parkview staff. Parkview has truly given me the chance to explore, learn, and follow my passions." Tyler incidentally graduated from high school with two associate degrees because of the flexibility he had to accelerate his learning. (Harvard University.)

Kyle Kang ranked No.1 in the country for tennis. He was also a quarter-finalist at the US Open Junior Championship, and won the inaugural US Open Junior Sportsmanship Award. Kyle chose Parkview to pursue his passion in tennis while also having the academic flexibility to travel. (Stanford University.)

As Tiger Wood says, "Education is a priority over any sport, because without a mind you can't contribute to society." The Universal Sports Institute pathway at Parkview School offers the best of both worlds. Learn more about this valuable option at pylud.parkview.org and usi.pylud.org.

Rio Vista Elementary School (TK-5)

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



Brandon Frank
Principal

STEM AVID Family Night

In March, Rio Vista held our annual STEM AVID Family Night. Over 400 community members engaged in "Light Speed Star SCIENCE Wars" STEM challenges with the help of the PTA and Valencia High School student volunteers. Attendees lined up early to receive door prizes upon entry and enjoyed a free Panda Express dinner. After eating, families heard about the career connections that can be made between the skills students use to solve STEM challenges and the college and career opportunities that lie ahead of them. AVID Ambassadors from Valdez Middle School continued the message by proudly showcasing aspects of our AVID program and its connection to secondary school. In addition, families worked together to solve three space-themed STEM challenges (Parachute Challenge, RocketLego Challenge, and Constellation Creation Challenge), while Storm Troopers from the 501st Legion marched about. It was an incredible community event that families said was out of this world!



Rose Drive *Elementary School (TK-5)*

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



Trisha Gray
Principal

Rose Drive Students Shine on Stage

We are thrilled to celebrate the spectacular success of our school's musical production of *Finding Nemo Jr!* This captivating journey under the sea came to life with the talent and dedication of 90 Rose Drive students spanning the grade levels from first to fifth. Led by the exceptional guidance of Kris Houston from Houston School of Music, and the invaluable support of Katie Tang, parent volunteer extraordinaire, our students embarked on an unforgettable

adventure. From auditions to rehearsals, each step was infused with enthusiasm, creativity, and teamwork. Through their commitment and passion, our students not only brought beloved characters to life but also learned the importance of collaboration and perseverance. The stage was transformed into an aquatic wonderland, captivating audiences with its vibrant colors and heartwarming storyline. This production not only showcased our students' artistic talents but also demonstrated the power of community and the joy of collective achievement. It is yet another shining example of what makes Rose Drive a great place to learn and grow.



Ruby Drive *Elementary School (TK-6)*

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



Lisa Carmona
Principal

Amazing Animals Visit Ruby Drive

Ruby Drive First Graders were excited to apply their recent knowledge of how animals use their body parts to survive (NGSS 1-LS1.A Structure- Function), during OCDE's Inside the Outdoors "Amazing Animals" visit. The scholars' knowledge began to form prior to the visit through several weeks of study using TWIG Animal Reporters. During the presentation, student knowledge was solidified by touching animal parts (tortoise shells, bird

feathers, etc) and live animals. Students collaboratively distinguished how various animals used camouflage, exoskeletons, scaly skin, and smooth skin, to move and survive. Student groups also determined which birds eat what type of food based on the shape of the beaks. Finally, the "young scientists" discussed how humans have borrowed ideas from animals for the safety, survival, and inventions of people (biomimicry). This captivating experience spurred the joy of knowledge and Ruby Scholars were grateful for this unforgettable visit.



Sierra Vista Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Debbie Kojima
Principal

Sierra Vista Loves Our Community Partnerships

Sierra Vista celebrates community partnerships! Recently, we had a special visit from Courtney Solomonson, a Sierra Vista parent, as well as the owner of TS Home Design Center in the surrounding area. Ms. Solomonson spent the morning as “Principal for the Day” on 3/27/24. In addition, we welcome our partnerships

with our emergency and rescue services. Placentia Police Department and School Resource Officer, Officer Cleveland, as well as Firefighter Adams from the Santa Monica Fire



Department, as well as Sierra Vista parent, came to share to our TK students about the importance of their role in our community and shared to our scholars about what they do each and every day! We are so thankful for the partnerships with our community! It truly takes a village!



Topaz Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Eva Matthews
Principal

Read Across America at Topaz

Topaz celebrated Read Across America! Reading to children daily is a great way to instill a passion for books. On Friday, March 1st, 2024, we celebrate the power of literacy. For so many children their dreams begin with a book, pages filled of images and faraway places. Books introduce children to new ideas, cultures, and perspectives. Having readers in our classrooms not only sends a strong message to our scholars that reading is important to our success; but, that reading should be celebrated and it draws a connecting with our community and loved ones. You see the smiling faces of our students whether you walk

into a first-grade class and someone is reading Stella Luna or a sixth-grade classroom and a visitor is reading Green



Eggs and Ham, they are simply enchanted by the words on the page being read aloud to them. A special ‘shout-out’ to our gracious readers that donated their time and efforts, making our event a success. Special Guest Readers: Dr. Young, Mr. Stine, Mrs. Redira, Mr. Cabrera, Dr. Holloway, Mrs. Singh, Mrs. Gibbons, Mrs. Medellin, Mr. Matson, Ms. Luna, Mrs. Rivas (parent), and Mrs. Whitmore (parent).

Travis Ranch School (TK-8)

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



Kristen Petrovacki
Principal

Igniting Dreams, Empowering Futures

Travis Ranch Middle School recently hosted its annual Career Day, igniting excitement and inspiration among students as they explored myriad professional paths. The event featured a diverse lineup of speakers, including local entrepreneurs, professionals, and community leaders who generously shared their insights and experiences with eager

young minds.

From engineers to artists, dentists to chefs, students had the opportunity to engage in interactive workshops, ask questions, and gain valuable firsthand knowledge about various career options. The speakers captivated our students with anecdotes, practical advice, and invaluable tips for success in their respective fields.

The event not only broadened students' horizons but also

encouraged them to envision their future possibilities and set ambitious goals. By fostering a spirit of curiosity and ambition, Travis Ranch Middle School's Career Day undoubtedly empowered students to dream big and pursue their passions with determination and enthusiasm. We are incredibly grateful to our parent volunteers and community partners who made this event possible for our students.



Tuffree Middle School (7-8)

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



David Okamoto
Principal

Participate – LEVEL UP!

The word participate comes to mind when I think of Tuffree Middle School. Perhaps it is because we have 70 students from both ASB and WEB. Or maybe the word participate is on my mind because we have nearly 40% of our student enrollment participates in our music program here at Tuffree.

If that is not a strong example of what it means to participate, I am not sure what is!

It doesn't stop there, we had close to 80 students participated in the first ever middle school wrestling tournament for PYLUSD. Tuffree swept in all categories. We also are in the middle of track season and we currently have close to 100 athletes.

In May, our students will participate in state testing. I am excited for our students to demonstrate what they have learned this year and I am confident our theme to "LEVEL UP!" will be exemplified!



Tynes Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Tonya Gordillo
Principal

Anticipating Hatch Day

Tynes Elementary students participated in a hands-on experiment in hatching chicks. The hatching chicks school-wide experiment brought together all students, teachers, and the Tynes to celebrate the excitement and anticipation at school as it got closer and closer to hatch day.

Tynes' RBT, Jennifer Terry, led this adventure. She ensured every student, from preschool to grade 6th, had an opportunity to observe eggs before they hatched. Students were actively engaged which created the perfect stage to teach concepts across the curriculum. Students were excited to read about the eggs and understand the mathematics behind hatching eggs. They also wrote about and created art based on their experience and observations.

The chick-hatching experience introduced students to the fascinating process of how living things change and grow over time. Students at Tynes experienced firsthand by learning about the life cycle of the chicks. Seeing the excitement on students' faces was priceless and something they will never forget.



Valadez Middle School Academy (6-8)

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



Dr. Christa Borgese
Principal

Wrapping Up

It is already spring and that means time to start preparing for next year, even as we are wrapping up the end of this year! Valadez Middle School Academy's leadership students were excited to welcome and host the incoming 6th graders

from Melrose Elementary and Rio Vista Elementary this past April 10th. Seeing the 5th-grade Marlins and Leopards get their first taste of becoming middle school Eagles is so much fun! The 5th graders were treated to exhibitions by our music department, show choir, ASB, and many other groups. They engaged in community-building games and were given a campus tour. They met their 7th and 8th-grade future classmates and had an eye-opening

experience. We know they are as excited to start middle school as we are to welcome them! Thank you to our leadership team!



Valencia High School (9-12)

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



Chris Herzfeld
Principal

Success in All Aspects

Valencia High School has had another exceptional year so far in academics, the arts, and athletics!

Our Academic Decathlon team took third in Division 1 at the Orange County competition and was one of four teams that qualified for state. They reached new heights at state, winning Division 2 and finishing seventh overall, beating all Orange County

schools, with the exception of perennial powerhouse Woodbridge. Our Chemistry Olympiad team captured second place in Orange County. The Valencia chapter of Future Business Leaders of America sent 90 students to the state competition, where they finished fifth overall—50 students medaled, and 22 qualified for the national competition in June.

Our Building Industry Technology Academy (BITA) students won the Best Overall Craftsmanship Award in the Design-Build competition at Golden West College. The VHS E-Sports team was undefeated in CIF regular season and was ranked fourth going into CIF playoffs. VHS senior Gabrielle DeCuir was chosen as a national center for Women and Information Technology (NCWIT) Aspirations in Computing National Winner. Gabby is one of 40 young women nationwide who was recognized at a National Conference in North Carolina.

VHS jazz musicians just won the Fullerton College Jazz Festival in the Advanced High School Division. Athletic success continues as well with Empire League championships in boys and girls cross-country, boys soccer, and girls wrestling, with more to come. Wrestler Andrea Ramirez was named an All-American.

We are proud of our students, teachers, coaches, and staff for their dedication to pride, tradition, and excellence. Go Tigers!

Van Buren Elementary School (TK-6)

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



David Cammarato
Principal

Outdoor Science Camp

The tradition of Sixth Grade Outdoor Science Camp at Van Buren Elementary School is deeply ingrained in our school's history. For our sixth-grade students,

it becomes a cherished memory that resonates for years to come. This immersive experience

offers four days of mountain exploration, where they delve into the intricacies of science amidst the wilderness. This year's camp was particularly delightful as they were greeted with a perfect layer of snow on the ground, enhancing their learning in geology, ecology, and astronomy while observing the rich flora and fauna of the area. Guided by passionate instructors, they absorbed knowledge and forged connections with the natural world, each step fueling their curiosity. Laughter and camaraderie filled the air as students bonded with friends, creating cherished

moments. Beyond the thrill of exploration, the camp served as a platform for intellectual growth, igniting a lifelong fascination with science. Thank you to our parent committee that helped raise money to support our students' camp experience.



Wagner Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Kyleen Fennema
Principal

Young Entrepreneurs in Action in Wagner's 6th Grade Economy

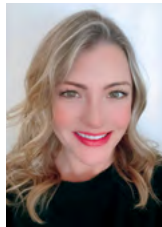
Experience the excitement of business at Wagner Elementary, where 6th grade teachers Sherri Cruz and Ashlee Duncan have built an immersive classroom economy. Beginning with basic economic principles, students create resumes, apply for jobs, and manage budgets, including paying “rent” and “utilities”.

In preparation for Business Day, students submit business plans, including funding sources and opting to run ventures solo or hire classmates. Business Day, occurring 4-6 times each year, sees student businesses go live! Students set up shop and also spend in classmate-run businesses. They reinvest earnings into their businesses or spend within the classroom economy. Students use their funds to participate in a year-end auction for prizes. Teacher Sherri Cruz says she loves “seeing how creative these students can be all while using real world applications of math and social skills!” This engaging experience teaches real world and academic skills and fosters teamwork, making learning dynamic and fun.



Woodsboro Elementary School (TK-6)

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



Melanie Carmona
Principal

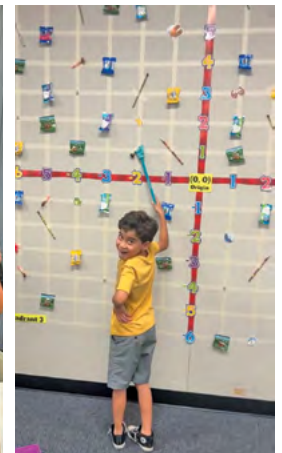
Woodsboro Elementary Hosts Family Math Night

Families at Woodsboro Elementary School recently enjoyed a night filled with math-inspired fun and learning. Parents and children teamed up for hands-on activities, games, and problem-solving challenges, fostering a joyful atmosphere of discovery.

The event featured a range of activities, including building a geometric city, participating in a measurement scavenger hunt,

and collaborating on a colorful community quilt. One of the standout activities was a life-sized graph, where students had to find their ordered pair to reveal a prize of sweet treats, stickers, toys, or pencils. Families also played Place Value Bingo for sweet prizes and received copies of the book “I’m Trying to Love Math” to promote a positive attitude towards mathematics.

Woodsboro’s Family Math Night was a new event filled with laughter and exploration that brought families together and strengthened our collective appreciation for math.



Yorba Linda *Middle School (6-8)*

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



Paige Stills
Principal

Inclusion: All Means All!

Yorba Linda Middle School hosted its annual Unified Dance, which included special and general education students from across the Placentia Yorba Linda Unified School District. This event serves as an initiative that fosters unity and inclusivity among our student body.

Students enjoyed music played by DJ Diamond and the many activities that our peer leaders from ASB, WEB, yearbook, unified and advanced art, and GEAR UP had facilitated, such as face-painting, balloon artistry, carnival-style games, and much more. This event exemplified our commitment to “Putting Students First” by embracing every student’s unique strengths and abilities.

In addition to hosting a Unified Dance, YLMS has also expanded its Unified Program course offerings. This is the first year of our Unified Art course, an inclusive art program for students with moderate to severe disabilities blended in a general education setting. This art course allows students to demonstrate creative expression and communication.

YLMS is also pleased to announce that we will be offering a Unified physical education course next school year. This course not only promotes physical activity and health, it also fosters social inclusion, teamwork, and empathy among students.

Yorba Linda Middle School’s mission is to empower students for future success. This represents our commitment to supporting all students in an inclusive environment!

Yorba Linda *High School (9-12)*

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



Dr. Richard Dinh
Principal

15-Year Celebration

The 2023–24 school year marks 15 years since the grand opening of Yorba Linda High School. For 15 years, students and staff at Yorba Linda High have “Run with the STAMPEDE” through service, teamwork, achievement, mastery, passion, ethics, dedication, and excellence. The excitement of our 15-year anniversary has given us the opportunity to reflect on the traditions and achievements of our school as we prepare for many successful years ahead.

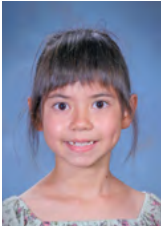
Since opening in 2009, our school has provided students with opportunities for success both inside and outside the classroom. Yorba Linda High School continues to be ranked in the top 6 percent of high schools nationwide by *U.S. News and World Report*, and the Mustangs have brought home X CIF Championship titles. We have opened five pathways, including our Mustang Business Academy and Mustang Culinary Academy. Students have many opportunities to get involved on campus, with over 50 clubs and organizations to join.

As we reflect on the past 15 years, we are grateful to our amazing students, staff, and community members who help make Yorba Linda High School such a special place. At the end of our 15th year, students will have an opportunity to contribute to a time capsule that will be opened in 15 years, in 2039. The time capsule will be presented to the senior class at graduation and kept on display in the library to celebrate this incredible milestone in our history.

This year has been full of celebrations and memories, and we look forward to continuing to “Run with the STAMPEDE” for many years. Go Mustangs!



Madeleine's Review



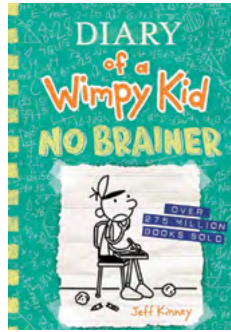
Madeleine J.

Greg's Hard Life

"No Brainer" is book #18 from the exciting series "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" by Jeff Kinney. The characters are always the same in this series — Greg,

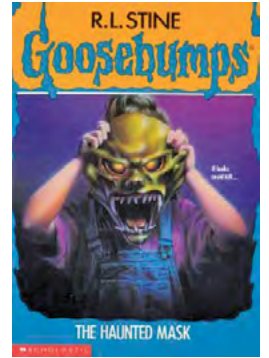
his parents, brothers Rodrick and Manny, and his best friend Rowley. Greg has a "hard life" because he had to change schools. His old school ran out of money and had to shut down. Greg wanted to go to a private school, but eventually he had to go to a public school worse than his old one.

The author's writing style is narrative because he describes a lot about characters and allows us to picture it in our minds. Also, the illustrations allow readers to better understand what's going on. I think you should read this book because it's funny and the characters do silly things.



Carly's Halloween Mask

The Haunted Mask is book #18 of the scary series *Goosebumps* by R.L. Stine. The characters from this book are Carly Beth, Sabrina, Carly Beth's mom, Sabrina's mom, Chuck, Steve, and a party store owner. Carly Beth bought a mask at the party store, because it is approaching Halloween and the mask is her costume. The mask is "haunted" because whoever wears it, it becomes their face! The author's writing style is horror, because he makes the book sound horrific and scary to readers, by twisting the story and adding lots of cliffhangers. In fact, at the end of every chapter, there is always a cliffhanger! You should read this book because it's scary but fun to read.



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

Word Search Contest

Words Associated with School

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 **PYLUSD** in the subject line)

We thank Barkate / Nehi Orthodontics for sponsoring our contests.

www.BarkateNehiSmiles.com

Entries must be received by June 15, 2024

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

- | | | |
|------------|-------------|------------|
| Achievers | Focused | Principal |
| Character | Homework | Recess |
| Classrooms | Instructors | Reunion |
| Curiosity | Integrity | Student |
| Discipline | Learning | Success |
| Educators | Mentors | Technology |
| Encourage | Nutrition | Thinkers |
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Dr. Al Mijares
Superintendent



Dr. Ramon Miramontes
Deputy Superintendent of Instructional Programs

Once confined to science fiction, artificial intelligence has broken through to our reality, flashing its potential to transform industries and our society in ways never before imagined. And schools are no exception.

AI isn't just knocking on classroom doors anymore, it's inside, and we are already discovering how it can make learning more engaging, interactive and tailored to the needs of each student. At the same time, it's clear that there must be safeguards in place, along with proper guidance from educators to ensure we're leading students along the path to becoming responsible digital citizens.

At the Orange County Department of Education, we are not spectators in the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence — we're active participants. Through strategic partnerships, pioneering initiatives and professional development, we're striving to harness AI's potential to uplift our schools, districts and communities. We've also committed to acting intentionally and responsibly to ensure the use of this powerful technology aligns with our core values and serves the best interests of students.

Our work in this digital arena began last year with the launch of OC AI Forward, a countywide initiative with support from Dr. Sabba Quidwai of Designing Schools and our local district superintendents. Monthly sessions have promoted the exchange of knowledge and best practices among local education leaders, creating a unified and collaborative approach to AI.

In 2023, OCDE also hired two new administrators of artificial intelligence and innovation. Wes Kriesel, a former high school English teacher, and Kunal Dalal, an education technology advocate from Silicon Valley, are working with our staff and the districts we

serve, envisioning a future where AI assists in customizing educational content to enhance engagement and improve learning outcomes.

As Kriesel and Dalal shared in a recent interview, their work goes beyond simply showing other educators how to use new tech. Instead, they want to shift perspectives by changing the way teachers view and embed AI into their lessons.

"We are in the business of humans," Dalal said. "That means we have the opportunity to reconnect with the human element of what we do and let the bits and bytes be managed by the AI model."

Looking ahead, OCDE is gearing up to host its first "Student AI Summit: For Youth, By Youth" on April 25 in Anaheim. This event, which will feature dynamic presentations and interactive sessions, is expected to draw more than 600 students who will get to share their views on AI's evolving role in their lives and education.

Through this surge of innovation, it's important that we are vigilant about the potential for misuse and abuse — and remember that these considerations aren't exclusive to AI. In fact, similar challenges emerged with the introduction of other educational tools, from calculators to computers. Even something as innocuous as notebook paper can become a distraction when folded into an airplane and sent aloft.

But here's the thing: These tools aren't going away. That means we must be deliberate and thoughtful in our approach to using and teaching them, relying on shared ethical values and standards for what is right and wrong.

Using AI wisely transcends merely learning new technical skills. It's about fostering good digital citizens who approach technology with integrity and character. While AI-enabled personalized learning has the potential to transform education, our responsibility extends beyond academics. We also have an obligation to keep students safe and help them grow into responsible and caring humans.

That vision is what drives us forward at the Orange County Department of Education, and it's a future we're committed to building together.