

# School News

*Education + Communication = A Better Nation*

**Covering the Centralia Elementary School District**



Volume 18, Issue 71

May 2025

## Great Things Happening at Centralia



**Centralia Elementary's Jeannette Aguilera named  
2026 Orange County Teacher of the Year.**

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**Gary G.**  
Music Professor



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**Norma E. Martinez**  
*Superintendent*

As we close the chapter on another remarkable school year, I want to take a moment to thank you—our students, families, staff, and community partners—for your continued trust, support, and collaboration.

This year has been filled with meaningful milestones, academic achievement, and celebrations of student growth and success. Whether it was our students engaging in

STEAM learning, arts and music, or community service, every experience has contributed to shaping well-rounded future leaders.

I am incredibly proud of the dedication shown by our educators and staff, whose tireless work ensures every child is seen, supported, and empowered. To our families, your partnership is invaluable. Your involvement and encouragement help create the strong foundation our students need to thrive.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to innovation and educational excellence for all students. With exciting initiatives and celebrations on the horizon—including our district's 150th anniversary—we will continue to honor our legacy while building toward a bright future.

Wishing you all a safe, restful, and joyful summer. We look forward to welcoming you back in the fall for another year of excellence together.



# JUNE 7

## 10 AM-2 PM

### DOWNTOWN ANAHEIM

201 W. Center Street Promenade

## FREE Family Event • Raffles & Prizes

[anaheim.net/greenexpo](http://anaheim.net/greenexpo)




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June 2 - Aug. 9 9 am - 3:30 pm

**Daily Academic Review**

**Arts & Crafts**

**Field Trips**

**STEAM Games**

**Weekly Chapel**

**Water Games**

**DAILY, WEEKLY & UNLIMITED RATES**  
Discounts Available for 2 or More Children in Family or Prepaid Unlimited Summer Program

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## Orange County Department of Education



### Finding My "Why" in the Wake of Operation Babylift

Fifty years ago last month, Operation Babylift brought thousands of orphaned children from South Vietnam to the United States. I was one of them.

Some of you already know my story.

**Dr. Stefan Bean**  
Superintendent

Born in Saigon during the Vietnam War, I contracted polio at age 2, leaving me paralyzed from the waist down. I was later found abandoned on the streets and taken in by an orphanage.

At age 4, I was placed on one of the last Babylift flights out of Vietnam. By mistake, I was directed to a different U.S.-bound plane than the one originally planned — a twist of fate that probably saved my life. The flight I was supposed to be on crashed just 12 minutes after takeoff, killing nearly everyone on board.

In the U.S., I entered foster care before being adopted by Gregory and Judy Bean, who welcomed me along with dozens of other children into their San Diego home. With their love and support — and the encouragement of teachers, church members and friends — I found not only stability but a sense of purpose.

That purpose has guided me ever since.

I chose a career in public education because I believe in the promise of every student, especially those who've faced barriers — including English learners and students with disabilities. My "why" is rooted in the belief that every student has potential that should never be overlooked. All deserve access to an inclusive, rigorous education and the support systems that will help them thrive.

Five decades later, events like Operation Babylift — and the lives they forever changed — are among the many powerful narratives featured in the Vietnamese American Experience Model Curriculum. Led by our staff at the Orange County Department of Education, this optional curriculum provides lesson plans, primary sources and professional learning tools that schools and districts can integrate into existing coursework or use to create new courses.

Back in 2022, OCDE was chosen to lead not only the Vietnamese American curriculum project but also two others focused on Cambodian and Hmong American histories. Created in partnership with educators, historians and community members, these efforts explore the journeys, the struggles and the lasting contributions of these communities and the individuals who shaped them.

On April 27, I'll return to San Diego to speak about Operation Babylift aboard the USS Midway Museum as part of an event marking the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon and the rescue of thousands of Vietnamese refugees. I'll be reflecting on the journey that brought me here — and sharing how our Vietnamese American Experience Model Curriculum is helping shape the way we tell these stories in our schools.

Because I know from experience: it only takes one person, one belief, one opportunity to change a life.



# Buena Terra *Elementary School*

8299 Holder St., Buena Park, CA 90620 • 714/228-3220 • [bt.cesd.k12.ca.us](http://bt.cesd.k12.ca.us)



**Bianca Marchese**  
*Principal*

## Buena Terra Elementary School Earns Civic Learning Award of Merit for Excellence in Civic Education

Buena Terra Elementary School has been honored with the Civic Learning Award with an Honorable Mention for 2025. This prestigious recognition, co-sponsored by California Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, celebrates schools that demonstrate a strong commitment to civic education and engagement.

The Civic Learning Awards acknowledge schools that provide students with meaningful opportunities to engage in civic learning, fostering informed and responsible citizenship. Buena Terra Elementary earned this honor for its innovative programs that integrate civic education into the curriculum, encouraging students to participate actively in their communities.



**Buena Terra Elementary School**  
Buena Park, California  
Centralia Elementary School District

Buena Terra Elementary has implemented various initiatives that promote civic responsibility among students. These include student-led projects addressing community issues, classroom discussions on current events, activities that encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and hosting a Judge in the Classroom to reenact The Salem Witch Trails.

“This recognition reflects our dedication to nurturing informed and engaged citizens from an early age,” said Principal Bianca Marchese. “Our students are learning the importance of their roles in society and how they can make a positive impact.”

Buena Terra’s commitment to civic education is part of a broader effort to prepare students for active participation in democracy. By integrating civic learning across various subjects and grade levels, the school ensures that students understand the relevance of civic knowledge in their daily lives.

The Civic Learning Award places Buena Terra Elementary among a select group of schools recognized for excellence in civic education. This honor underscores the school’s role in fostering a culture of civic engagement and responsibility among its students.





# Centralia Elementary School

195 N. Western Ave., Anaheim, CA 92801 • 714/228-3210 • [ct.cesd.k12.ca.us](http://ct.cesd.k12.ca.us)



**Patricia Ponce**  
Principal

## Bee-ing Teachers Who Spark Learning

At Centralia Elementary School, our teachers continuously grow as educators by working with students of all abilities. This diverse learning environment encourages teachers to think creatively and adapt their instruction to meet the unique needs of every learner. Whether through differentiated instruction, hands-on learning, or collaborative problem-solving, our educators develop

and apply engaging strategies that ensure all students thrive. More importantly, teaching in such a dynamic setting cultivates deep empathy, patience, and a strong sense of care for students, allowing teachers to connect meaningfully and guide each child toward their fullest potential. As a result, Centralia is a place where educators not only teach but also evolve and deepen their professional practice.

This year, we are thrilled to share with the Centralia community and all of Orange County that one of our own, Mrs. Aguilera, has been selected as Orange County's Teacher of the Year! Her recognition is a testament to the outstanding leadership, dedication, and compassion she brings to her classroom and school community.

Mrs. Aguilera embodies what it means to be an educator at Centralia—committed to supporting the diverse needs of students and advancing each child from their current level of development to their zone of proximal development. We are incredibly proud of her accomplishments and the lasting impact she has on her students, colleagues, and the entire Centralia family.





# Danbrook *Elementary School*

320 Danbrook St., Anaheim, CA 92804 • 714/228-3230 • [db.cesd.k12.ca.us](http://db.cesd.k12.ca.us)



**Hugo Rios**  
*Principal*

## Danbrook's Family Picnic Brings Community Together

Danbrook Elementary recently hosted its much-loved Traditional Family Picnic, and it was a tremendous success! The event brought together students, families, and staff for an afternoon filled with fun, food, and connection. Held on the school's grassy field, the picnic offered a chance for families to relax, and spend quality time together. Student's laughter filled the air as students played games, shared stories with friends, and proudly introduced their families to their teachers and classmates.

Danbrook's teachers and staff were thrilled to see such a strong turnout. Parents shared how meaningful it was to connect with staff in a casual setting outside the classroom. The event also gave parents a glimpse into their child's school environment, helping to strengthen the important bridge between home and school. Volunteers and PTA members worked hard to organize and support the event, contributing to a smooth event. Students especially enjoyed the opportunity to play, laugh, and share their school experiences with their families and friends.

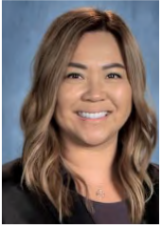
Danbrook's Traditional Family Picnic was more than just an afternoon of fun — it was a celebration of community and the deep connections that help students thrive. Thank you to all the families, staff, and volunteers who made this special day possible. We look forward to continuing this wonderful tradition for years to come!





# Dysinger *Elementary School*

7770 Camellia Dr., Buena Park, CA 90620 • 714/228-3240 • [dy.cesd.k12.ca.us](http://dy.cesd.k12.ca.us)



**Susan Ungaro**  
*Principal*

## Service with Heart

At Dysinger, exceptional customer service is at the heart of everything we do. Whether families visit for just a minute or stay longer, our office staff ensures every interaction is met with kindness, attentiveness, and care. We proudly model the values we want our students to embrace: respect, patience, and compassion.

Our families and community members are greeted warmly, and their questions and concerns are addressed with care and professionalism. Students in need of medical attention know they can turn to the health office, where their injuries and illnesses are treated with efficiency and empathy.

Leading the way in our front office are Lisa Pellicano, our School Office Manager; Jeanette Munoz, our Office Clerk; and Faith Gosselin, our Health Clerk. Together, they bring over 30 years of combined experience, along with a deep personal connection to our district — each is a parent of a student who currently attends or has attended a CESD school. Their commitment goes beyond their professional roles, reflecting a genuine dedication to the well-being of every child and family at Dysinger.

We are proud and blessed to have Lisa, Jeanette, and Faith serving our community. Their efforts ensure that every visitor, every call, and every student feels seen, heard, and valued.





# Los Coyotes *Elementary School*

8122 Moody St., La Palma, CA 90623 • 714/228-3260 • [lc.cesd.k12.ca.us](http://lc.cesd.k12.ca.us)



**Dr. Jenifer Mai**  
*Principal*

## Families Celebrate Writing Together

Los Coyotes was proud to host a Family Writing Night in February. The school's Family Engagement Team created the event to coincide with the school's signature focus on writing instruction this year. During the event families were given information about our school's approach to writing- focusing on the writing process, building student writing identities, and the value of finding joy in the work of writing. Caregivers and students worked side-by-side to learn how to generate ideas for stories, plan their writing, create a draft, and apply revising and editing skills to their work. At the end of the event, families were encouraged to celebrate their family stories by sharing them with each other. Ten Los

Coyotes teachers led the five classrooms full of families, both sharing their own writing and leading families in the conversations with each other as they engaged in the work. When visiting the classrooms, families could be seen talking, laughing, and telling stories together, a pillar of oral literacy that we encouraged families to practice at home as well. Funding for the event was provided by the Cotsen Foundation for the Art of Teaching Family Engagement Grant, and each family was given a blank journal to gather ideas, words, and sketches for future writing activities. Families were also provided additional ways to support oral literacies at home as a way to support the work being done in the Los Coyotes classrooms. We're excited to see the enthusiasm for writing from our Los Coyotes families and look forward to more writing celebrations during the school year!





# San Marino *Elementary School*

6215 San Rolando Way, Buena Park, CA 90620 • 714/228-3280 • [sm.cesd.k12.ca.us](http://sm.cesd.k12.ca.us)



**Danny Gonzalez**  
*Principal*

## Rams Shine On and Off the Field

Recently, our San Marino Rams proudly represented our school at two exciting events: the City of Buena Park Track and Field Meet and the Centralia School District Student Leadership Summit. At the track meet, our students showcased incredible sportsmanship, determination, and school spirit. Whether they were winning races, finishing in the middle of the pack, or coming in last, every Ram gave it their all—and they did it with smiles on their faces. Their true competitive spirit shone through, and we couldn't be prouder of how they supported one another and represented our school with pride. In addition, a select group of our Ram scholars had the opportunity to participate in our district's Student Leadership Summit. There, they engaged in inspiring learning sessions, listened to dynamic speakers, and some even stepped up to present themselves. They carried themselves with respect, enthusiasm, and maturity throughout the event. Both of these experiences

highlighted the remarkable qualities we see everyday in our students. Our San Marino Rams are perseverant, respectful, and eager to grow. As the principal of San Marino, I am truly grateful to work with such exceptional young individuals.







**Andy Long**  
Principal

## G.B. Miller Elementary School Students Embrace Goal Setting for Success

At G.B. Miller Elementary School, students are taking charge of their futures by embracing the practice of goal setting. This initiative, aimed at fostering a growth mindset and encouraging personal development, has become a cornerstone of the school's educational approach.

The goal-setting program at G.B. Miller Elementary is designed to help students identify their aspirations, both academic and personal, and create actionable plans to achieve them. Teachers and staff provide guidance and support, ensuring that each student understands the importance of setting realistic and achievable goals. By breaking down larger objectives into manageable steps, students learn to navigate challenges and celebrate their progress along the way.

One of the key components of the program is the emphasis on self-reflection. Students are encouraged to regularly assess their progress and adjust their goals as needed. This reflective practice helps them develop critical thinking skills and resilience, as they learn to adapt to changing circumstances and overcome obstacles.

The impact of goal setting at G.B. Miller Elementary is evident in the students' increased motivation and engagement. By having clear targets to strive for, students are more focused and driven in their studies. This has led to improved academic performance and a greater sense of accomplishment among the student body.

Parents and teachers have also noticed positive changes in the students' attitudes and behaviors. The goal-setting program has instilled a sense of responsibility and independence in the children, as they take ownership of their learning and personal growth. This proactive approach not only prepares them for future academic challenges but also equips them with valuable life skills.

As Tony Robbins famously said, "Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible."

Overall, the goal-setting initiative at G.B. Miller Elementary School is a testament to the power of intentional planning and perseverance. By empowering students to set and achieve their goals, the school is cultivating a generation of confident, capable, and resilient individuals ready to tackle whatever comes their way.





# Raymond Temple *Elementary School*

7800 Holder St., Buena Park, CA 90620 • 714/228-3290 • [rt.cesd.k12.ca.us](http://rt.cesd.k12.ca.us)



**Shawn Stuhlt**  
Principal

## Raymond Temple SOARS with Pride in our Programs

Raymond Temple fosters a school culture that ensures students, parents, teachers, and staff feel cared for, valued, and respected. For students, the school emphasizes celebrating individual and collective achievements through classroom recognition in areas of goals met and regular award assemblies. Within classrooms, students are encouraged to set and achieve personal and classroom goals in subjects like Math, English Language Arts, and attendance. Positive reinforcement, coupled with explicit feedback, ensures students feel recognized and capable of succeeding academically and socially. Student birthdays are also celebrated with a free book, promoting literacy. A cornerstone of student support is the integration of social-emotional learning. In addition to weekly Tier 1 and Tier 2 SEL curriculum and intervention support, we have a robust student support system with our Behavior Aid, School Climate Support Paraprofessional, or Administrator(s) who will respond to classrooms immediately when notified a student needs support. Students are also able to self identify the need for support through our electronic support system. The school's Positive Behavior Interventions and Support program reinforces a culture of respect and inclusion. Students, including those from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) program, participate fully in school activities, fostering understanding and collaboration among peers. Programs like Peer Assistance and Leadership (PAL) further empower students by developing leadership, empathy, and conflict resolution skills. Green Team Leaders foster a sustainable and

eco-conscious environment in a collective effort, learn how to and various forums are utilized to ensure that all stakeholders are actively engaged in the green initiatives, which named us as a Silver Level California Green School Award.

