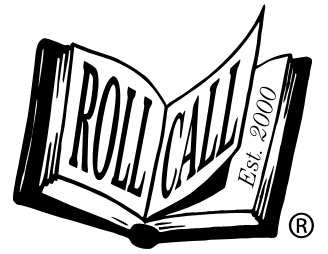


School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

Covering the Fountain Valley School District



Volume 21, Issue 126

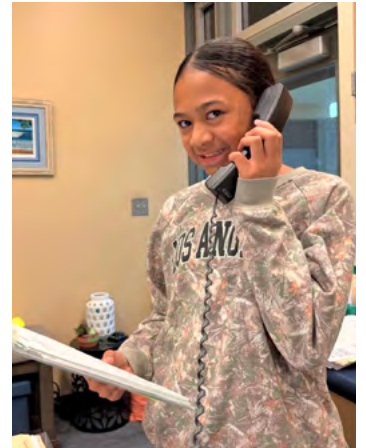
January 2026



Centered on Students



150 Years Strong





Nutrition: The Secret Ingredient for a Speedy Recovery

When your child is recovering from an illness like the flu or a stomach bug, good nutrition is one of the best ways to help them bounce back. The right foods and fluids can restore energy, support healing, and get kids feeling like themselves again.

After illness, children often lose fluids and nutrients. Rehydration is key — offer water, clear broths, or electrolyte drinks in small sips throughout the day. Popsicles made from diluted juice or oral rehydration solutions can make hydration fun. Watch for signs of dehydration such as dry mouth, fewer wet diapers, or unusual tiredness — and call your pediatrician if you notice them.

Once your child is ready to eat, don't limit them to the traditional BRAT diet (bananas, rice, applesauce, toast). Research shows that overly restrictive diets can actually prolong symptoms of gastroenteritis. Instead, resume an age-appropriate, balanced diet within 24 hours after rehydration. Early refeeding helps shorten illness duration and supports recovery.

As appetite improves, include foods rich in protein, such as eggs, lean meats, or beans. Offer fruits and vegetables high in vitamin C (oranges, strawberries, bell peppers) and vitamin D (fortified dairy, eggs) for immune support. Zinc and iron from meats or legumes can further aid recovery.

It's normal for kids to eat less for a few days after being sick. Encourage small, frequent meals and snacks. Avoid greasy, spicy, or sugary foods until they're fully recovered. If vomiting or diarrhea continues, or if poor appetite lasts more than a week, check with your pediatrician.

Persistent vomiting or diarrhea, high fever, or signs of dehydration are reasons to call your doctor right away. MemorialCare offers 24/7 virtual urgent care and QuickCare visits, so you can get help fast from the comfort of your home. You can also chat or call with a nurse for free, any time of day or night, to get answers about your child's symptoms or what foods and fluids are best during recovery.

Nutritious foods, plenty of fluids, and expert support can make all the difference in helping kids get back to school, play, and all the moments that matter.



Care is available anytime by calling
(877) 696-3622 or scan here.



Pablo, Age 6

At 11 months, Pablo was fighting for his life.

Today, he's got six candles on his cake.

Failing organs. Eight months in a coma. Fighting for every breath. At 11 months old, this is what Leukemia brought Pablo. The one bright spot, he was at MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital where a team of top doctors, nurses, and specialists helped save his life. For over a year in the PICU, our highly-trained staff never stopped caring for Pablo and his family. **Caring is our calling.**

Learn more at millerchildrens.org/care



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OUTPATIENT SPECIALTY CENTERS
FROM THE SOUTH BAY TO ORANGE COUNTY

Superintendent

A New Year's Reading Commitment



Dr. Katherine Stopp
Superintendent

As we settle into the new year, February is a great time to turn resolutions into lasting habits. We invite families to make a simple but powerful commitment: read together every day.

Just a few minutes of shared reading—whether it's a bedtime story, a chapter book over several evenings, or taking turns reading aloud—builds strong literacy skills while strengthening family connections. Reading together grows vocabulary, comprehension, curiosity, and imagination, and helps children see reading as both meaningful and enjoyable.



This month, we challenge families to carve out intentional time to read, talk about stories, and enjoy learning together. Small daily moments add up to a big impact. Thank you for partnering with us to nurture confident readers and lifelong learners—one story at a time.

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By Dennis Cole, Board President

A Message from Our New Board President

It is truly an honor to serve as the Board President of the Fountain Valley School District for the 2026 calendar year. I am grateful for the trust placed in me and for the strong foundation established by the Board leaders who have served before me.

At the heart of our work is a shared commitment to students—ensuring every child is supported, challenged, and inspired to reach their fullest potential. Our Board remains focused on high-quality teaching and learning, safe and welcoming schools, and thoughtful decision-making that reflects the values of our community.

I am proud of the incredible work happening across our district and deeply appreciative of the educators and staff who make it possible each day. I look forward to listening, learning, and serving alongside my fellow trustees, district leadership, and our community as we continue working together in support of student success.



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Fountain Valley Library

17635 Los Alamos St., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/962-1324 • www.ocpl.org

By Kimberly Tran-Hoang,
Children & Teen Librarian at Fountain Valley Library

The Fountain Valley Library is chugging away with new and exciting programs for the community. Check out our calendar for more information www.ocpl.org/libraries/fountain-valley

Program Highlights for Children & Families

Read to a Dog – 2nd Mondays at 4pm – February 9 & March 9. Ticketing begins at 3pm.

Chess Club – 4th Mondays at 4pm – January 26, February 23, & March 23. For all ages and skill levels.

Lion Dance Performance – Saturday, February 14 at 11am

Join us in starting off the Lunar New Year with a lion dance performance by the Southern California Youth Dragon & Lion Dance Team! This performance will be held in the front of the library.

Lunar New Year Craft: Stained Glass Horses – Tuesday, February 17 at 4pm

Make some faux stained glass horses to celebrate the Year of the Horse.

Program Highlights for Teens – Recommended for ages 13-18

Videogame Tournament – Saturday, January 31 at 2pm
Get off some steam by playing videogames!

DIY Chocolate Workshop – Saturday, February 14 at 2pm
Join us in this workshop making your own chocolate truffle bon bons.

Lunar New Year Lantern Workshop – Wednesday, February 18 at 4pm
Join us making paper lanterns to celebrate the Lunar New Year.

Adults

Saturday Movies – 3rd Saturdays at 3pm beginning February 2026. Movies rated G to PG-13.

Library of Things: Popcorn Maker Demo – Saturday, January 24 at 2pm

Learn about our Popcorn Maker, a part of our Library of Things collection! We'll be making flavored popcorn recipes. Supplies limited.

Music Appreciation Series: Bagpiper John McLean Allan – Friday, March 13 at 3pm

Listen to traditional and modern Scottish music with acclaimed bagpiper John McLean Allan! This program is for adults but families are welcome.



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Roch Courreges *Elementary (K-5)*

18313 Santa Carlotta, Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4280 • www.courreges.fvdsd.us



Lisa Tanita
Principal

Lights, Music, Action: A Season of Creativity at Courreges

This winter season has been full of creativity, expression, and joyful noise at Courreges! Our students truly shined during their musical performances at Winter Sing, led by our amazing music teacher, Ms. Allen, whose energy and passion brought out the best in every performer.

But the excitement didn't stop there. In Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA), students have been diving into theater and dance under the creative guidance of FVSD VAPA teacher, Ms. Crossett. Students are building confidence, exploring movement, and discovering the power of storytelling through performance.

In theater, students have been busy acting, pretending, and letting their imaginations run wild! TK-1st graders explored how to use their faces and bodies to show different emotions and even pretended to be all kinds of animals—everything from tiny



mice to giant elephants. 2nd-3rd graders practiced readers' theatre fables. They picked parts, made simple costumes, and put on mini-performances for their classmates. 4th-5th graders worked in small groups to come up with their own skits using silly prompts or fairy tales. Their creativity and teamwork made for some hilarious and impressive performances!

Students had a blast in the dance module this season! TK-1st graders explored moving different body parts, danced to the beat, and twirled colorful scarves and ribbons. Our 2nd-3rd graders brought tons of energy as they learned classic group dances like The Chicken Dance, The Macarena, The Cha Cha Slide, The Cupid Shuffle, and the Cotton-Eyed Joe. Meanwhile, 4th-5th graders created their own dance routines by building 8-count sequences

with 5-8 moves, and many were so proud of their work that they chose to perform their dances for the whole class.

We're so proud of our students for bringing their energy, imagination, and teamwork to VAPA—what a joyful season of music, theater, and dance!



James H. Cox *Elementary (K-5)*

17615 Los Jardines E., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4240 • www.cox.fvsd.us



Dr. Jennifer Ollila
Principal

Cox Elementary Celebrates “Holidays Around the World” at Winter Concert

Families gathered at Cox Elementary’s Nest to enjoy a vibrant winter concert featuring songs and performances celebrating global holiday traditions. The program opened with charming ASL renditions by TK students, followed by Kindergarten building a musical snowman and first graders sharing tunes about Hanukkah. Second graders collaborated

with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing team to perform classics like “Deck the Halls” in ASL. Third through fifth grades highlighted diverse celebrations including Kwanzaa, Ramadan, and the Winter Solstice, emphasizing community, goodwill, and unity.

The concert was a joyful reminder of the power of music to bring people together and celebrate cultural diversity. Cox Elementary is proud to showcase the talents of its “fantastic eagles” and foster a strong sense of community during this festive season.



Fourth grades students focused on singing their best.



Kinder and TK student and staff pose in their holiday gear.



Third grade students showing off their singing skills .

Harry C. Fulton *Middle School (6–8)*

8778 El Lago St., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/375-2816 • www.fulton.fvgsd.us



Jenny Salberg
Principal



Molly Kuykendall
Assistant Principal

Holiday Performances that Made Fulton Shine

Fulton Middle School was filled with music, laughter, and holiday spirit as our Visual and Performing Arts programs delivered a series of incredible performances this season. Guitar and

Rock Band kicked things off by setting the tone with high energy and impressive talent, getting audiences excited and ready to celebrate. Concert Band followed with beautiful music that captured the true spirit of the holidays, led by the ever-talented Mr. La Mantia.

Our choir brought joy to the stage with songs so cheerful they could make even the Grinch smile, under the direction of our wonderful Ms. MacDonald. Rounding out the season, our drama students created a festive and fun performance that reimagined Santa's move to California, filling the room with laughter and holiday cheer, led by Ms. Jen Rehling.

A heartfelt thank you to our families for your continued support, encouragement, and presence at these events. Your partnership helps make these meaningful experiences possible. We are incredibly proud of our VAPA programs and the joy they bring to our Fulton community.



Robert Gisler Elementary (K-5)

18720 Las Flores, Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4211 • www.gisler.fvsd.us



Dr. Katherine Pavidis
Principal

Gator Fundraiser a Smashing Success – Thanks to Our Community!

What a day to be a Gator! Our biggest fundraiser of the year was a tremendous success, and it happened because our whole community showed up — donating, decorating, cheering, and encouraging every runner to keep going.

Highlights

- Community spirit everywhere: families helped decorate classroom stations,

cheered on students, and encouraged everyone to reach their goals.

- Exciting prizes: students worked toward prizes like Disney tickets, LEGOLAND passes, Sky Zone sessions, Target gift cards, and a Great Wolf Lodge getaway.
- Fun contests: a guess-the-number contest on how many laps the principal would run — the winner earned “Principal for the Day.” Classrooms also competed for the top fundraiser; the winning room earned a movie and popcorn party.
- The crowd favorite: if we hit our goal, students would get to silly-string the principal. Did we hit it? Absolutely — and then some!

Big win: We set a goal of 37,000 and surpassed it, raising just over 40,000

Way to go, Gators!



We are so lucky to have an amazing community that pulls together for our kids!



Thank you parents for stepping up and making this event a success!

What's next? The PTO will use these funds to support field trips and transportation, bring engaging assemblies, fund enriching classroom activities, and more to benefit our students.

A heartfelt thanks to every family, staff member, and community partner who made this possible. Your generosity and energy made this year's fundraiser not only a success financially, but also an unforgettable community celebration.

Go Gators!



Stretching is an important part of any running activity!



Gator energy was strong and connected!



Snappy, the mascot getting some end of the run hugs

Kazuo Masuda *Middle School(6-8)*

17415 Las Jardines W., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4250 • www.masuda.fvsd.us



Dr. Patrick Ham
Principal



Jessica O'Malley
Assistant Principal

Something for Every Student!

Masuda Middle School offers a range of exciting opportunities for every student. Our performing arts programs, including Theater, Choir, and Band/Orchestra, showcased their talents at recent

community winter performances. Our students develop valuable leadership skills through our ASB, Digital Media, PAL, and WEB programs.

Enrichment clubs sponsored by PTSO include Family Career Consumer Leaders (FCCLA), Multicultural Club, E-sports, Computer Science, Art, Dance, Chess, Crafts & Knitting, Board Games, and more! We also offer after-school intramural sports - basketball, soccer, volleyball, track-and-field, and other activities. Math Lab

classes before school and Homework Help after school serve over 200 students on a daily basis. Masuda Middle School truly has something for everyone, encouraging student attendance each day through engaging programs and activities. We look forward to continuing this culture in 2026 and beyond!



William T. Newland *Elementary (K-5)*

8787 Dolphin St., Huntington Beach, CA 92646 • 714/378-4200 • www.newland.fvgsd.us



Matt Ploski
Principal

First Graders Spread Kindness through “Presents for Puppies” Drive

This December, students in Mrs. Holliday’s 1st grade class once again demonstrated the power of kindness through their annual Presents for Puppies donation drive.

Now in its seventh consecutive year, the project supports Dachshund Paws and Pals Rescue of Southern California, providing much-needed supplies for dogs living in foster care. Throughout the month, students donated items such as collars, food, bowls, and toys, which were placed under the classroom holiday tree in anticipation of a much-loved wrapping celebration.

The wrapping party is a highlight of the season. Students listen to festive music, proudly wear “Holliday’s Helpers” shirts created by room parent Ashley Sweeney, and independently wrap each gift with care. This year, the class wrapped more than 100 presents, each decorated with bows, colorful paper, and handwritten cards.



Beyond the donations themselves, the project serves a larger purpose. Experiences like Presents for Puppies help young children develop empathy, generosity, and a sense of responsibility for others. By actively giving to a cause beyond themselves, students learn that even small actions can make a meaningful difference. These early lessons in compassion and service help build character, strengthen social-emotional skills, and

reinforce the importance of caring for both people and animals in the community.

Started in 2019, Presents for Puppies has become a beloved classroom tradition and a cornerstone of the class’s “Kindness Counts” initiatives. Each year, the project continues to grow—not just in size, but in heart—leaving a lasting impression on students and creating many tail wags along the way.



Isojiro Oka *Elementary (K-5)*

9800 Yorktown Ave., Huntington Beach, CA 92646 • 714/378-4260 • www.oka.fvsd.us



Julie Ballesteros
Principal

Oka Superheroes Rise to the Challenge

Oka Elementary's 2025 Jog-A-Thon was a heroic success, bringing our entire school community together under the exciting theme "Oka Superheroes!" Students suited up as everyday heroes, showing strength, perseverance, and teamwork as they took part in this fun and meaningful event.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our families and community supporters, Oka raised over \$40,000! These funds will directly support enrichment opportunities that enhance our students' learning experiences, including field trips,

assemblies, art and music programs, coding, hands-on STEM activities, and more.

Jog-A-Thon day was filled with energy, encouragement, and school spirit as students ran proudly, cheered on by dedicated staff, amazing volunteers, and supportive families. The excitement on campus reflected the true power of working together for a shared goal.

We are deeply grateful to our PTO and the entire Oka community for making this event such a memorable and impactful experience. Our Oka Superheroes proved that when we come together, we can accomplish incredible things. Thank you for helping our students soar!



Urbain H. Plavan *Elementary (K-5)*

9675 Warner Ave., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/378-4230 • www.plavan.fvgsd.us



Kyle Ruiz
Principal

Panthers are WILD about Learning

Our youngest Panthers in Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten spent the first trimester learning all about animals. Students explored what animals need to live, where they live, and how to ask questions and think like scientists. With a big thank you to our PTO for supporting these hands-on learning experiences, our TK and Kindergarten classes were able to interact with live animals and deepen their understanding through real-world experiences.



Plavan TK students explore animals up close, using their senses of touch and sight through Inside the Outdoors.



Plavan kindergarten students enjoy hands-on learning as they learn about baby chicks at Centennial Farm.

TK students welcomed animals to campus and learned about a tortoise, chinchilla, snake, toad, and millipede. Using their eyes, ears, and hands, students listened to animal sounds, explored textures, and identified different animal features. Kindergarten students traveled by bus to a local farm, where they learned about pigs, cows, ox, peacocks, and even held baby chicks. During the visit, students practiced being scientists by asking questions, making observations, and comparing animals.

Samuel E. Talbert *Middle School (6-8)*

9101 Brabham Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92646 • 714/378-4220 • www.talbert.fvsd.us



Jay Adams
Principal



Caitlyn Gregory
Assistant Principal

Talbert PAL's are on the Move!

The Talbert PAL (Peer Assistance Leadership) Group is one of Talbert's most active electives. Advisor Shay Murray encourages PAL's and their peers to make healthy life decisions and to provide opportunities to create a supportive and safe school

environment. As she states, "It's so exciting to watch our kids get to be a part of making a difference in the school and to see them selflessly jumping at the chance to do kind things for others."

Students learn decision-making skills, refusal skills to counter negative influences, communication skills, conflict management skills, how to be positive role-models, how to embrace social responsibility, and how to plan and implement service-learning projects. During October, the PAL's sponsored "Red Ribbon Week" activities to ensure that their peers are aware of the dangers of drugs/alcohol/vaping/tobacco! They're planning a "Mental Health Awareness Week" for this spring. We're so grateful for the difference these PAL's make on our campus and in our community on a daily basis!



Hisamatsu Tamura *Elementary (K-5)*

17340 Santa Suzanne St., Fountain Valley, CA 92708 • 714/375-6226 • www.tamura.fvgsd.us



Chris Mullin
Principal

Holiday Concert

Ou school's holiday concert was a joyful celebration of music, community, and student talent. The choir, band, and orchestra filled the outdoor auditorium with festive spirit as students showcased the skills they have worked so hard to develop. From cheerful melodies to beautifully blended harmonies, each performance reflected dedication, teamwork, and a genuine love of music.

We were honored to welcome members of our school board, along with families and friends, whose presence made the evening even more special. The audience's warm applause and smiles reminded our students that their efforts truly matter and are deeply appreciated. Events like this highlight the importance of the arts in education and the powerful role music plays in bringing people together.

As Principal, I am incredibly proud of our students and grateful to our talented music teachers for inspiring excellence. This memorable performance was a wonderful way to celebrate the season and our school community.





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