

**FREE**

# School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation



## Covering the Orange Unified School District

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 19

DECEMBER 2008 & JANUARY 2009

### SUPERINTENDENT



Renae Dreier, Ed.D.

It's hard to believe that the winter holidays are nearly upon us, and in a few short weeks students, teachers and staff will be enjoying their winter break. I wish everyone a restful and happy holiday season.

### Thank You to Our Partners

In the spirit of giving thanks, I offer mine to the many partners we have throughout the district, such as the Assistance League of Orange, Kiwanis, PTA, Rotary International, and many more. In addition to local organizations, we have many corporate sponsors, community members and parents who provide assistance. Whether they are partners with the district or individual school sites, their help and support in providing time and resources to our students and staff is much appreciated.

### SARC Update

Our staff has been working diligently to insure that all School Accountability Report Cards (SARCs) are posted in a timely manner. A revised and translated 2006-2007 SARC is now available on the district's Web page, as well as at each school site. In addition, the district will make the 2007-2008 SARC available in the necessary languages by February 2009.

### Budget Update

As I'm sure you've seen on television or read in the news, the state continues to battle with the budget. The Orange Unified School District staff is constantly monitoring the status of the state budget and its effect on education and will continue to make adjustments within our own budget. More detailed information will be provided in a future issue.

## Building a Sense of Student Responsibility



Fall Social Reading Night.

By Sheila Thompson, Principal Crescent Elementary

### A Positive Force

This year, under the guidance of one of Crescent Elementary School's fourth-grade GATE teachers, Mr. Rich O'Connor, a peer assistance league program has been started with the upper-grade students. This organization has already had a positive effect by helping to develop a better integration between the two halves of our school. It has also provided a tremendous opportunity to build a sense of student responsibility.

PAL students have taken on the task of checking-out sports equipment for the upper-graders at lunch. This has allowed us to buy more equipment now that we are able to keep better track of things. Mr. O'Connor has also coordinated with the primary teachers to have PAL students serve as "buddy"

SEE BUILDING A SENSE • PAGE 6

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

By Katherine Topor, Executive Assistant to the Board/Superintendent

### Board of Education

The Orange Unified School District Board of Education is a seven-member Board, with each Board member living in one of seven geographic areas within the district. Each Board member serves a four-year term and represents all students within the district. The Board of Education is elected by the community to provide leadership and citizen oversight of the district. To that end, the Board ensures that the district is responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of the community. It is charged with providing a quality education program for students in grades kindergarten

SEE BOARD OF EDUCATION PAGE 7



Narinee Shahrikian, SACBE Richland High School

### Back-to-School Night

On October 8, we held Back-to-School Night, the first in several years. It would be an understatement to say that it was an overwhelming success. The evening started with a hot dog and soda barbeque in the Condor Quad, prepared by our wonderful staff. Afterwards, parents and students visited classrooms and the library.

During the barbeque, families and staff were introduced to one another through informal conversations. During classroom visits,

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Our next issue is February 18.



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# Orange Unified School District Services

1401 N. Handy St., Orange, CA 92867  
www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us

By Karen Hanson

Senior Executive Director of Pupil Services

## Celebrating Individuality

The Pupil Services Department coordinates the delivery of services for students in Orange Unified School District who have special needs.

As all students are entitled to a learning environment that fosters academic growth and progress, students who receive special education services do so in a range of settings chosen to meet their unique learning needs. A team, including the child's parents, teachers, administrators, and support staff, works together to determine the most appropriate combination of placement and educational services for the child. In many cases, this

requires the addition of support services, such as small specialized learning groups, speech therapy, occupational therapy, nursing services, and adapted physical education. Students who have physical challenges, such as blindness or deafness, benefit from technology suited to assist their learning. Programs for students with autism promote attendance at neighborhood schools, where they learn alongside peers.

Special education teachers, instructional assistants, service providers, and administrators work with principals and school staff to support student achievement. This team of professionals strives to develop positive relationships with families and maintain good communication throughout the special education decision-making process. They desire to share in the journey of the educational experience with families and together discover the individuality of each wonderful child.

Programs for students with autism promote attendance at neighborhood schools, where they learn alongside peers.



**Kay Coop**

Founder / Publisher



As I am writing this the temperature is about 60 degrees and feels a lot like winter. Our office is located inside Brita's Gardens and the crisp air mixed with the aroma of the pine Christmas trees is magical. Outside our door is the milkweed plant providing habitat for the Monarch butterflies who are emerging from their cocoon's to the delight of the customers. You can see why we don't mind coming to the office each day.

Our next issue is February 2009. Happy holidays from our staff to your family. Have a Happy New Year and thank you for including *School News* in your selected reading.

# School News

Education + Communication = A Better Nation

www.schoolnewsrollcall.com

COVERING THE ORANGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



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# Orange County Department of Education

200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92628  
714/966-4000 www.ocde.us

## Lessons from Nature's Classroom



**William M. Habermehl**  
Superintendent

As someone who loves being outdoors, I know how much there is to learn from nature's classroom. My grandson and I often go exploring in the woods. We look under rocks and discover a world of creatures hidden underneath. Our walk on the trail is filled with lessons about what plants and animals share Orange County with us. Being able to experience nature's living laboratory allows my grandson to actually see the insects he reads about in books. Through Inside the Outdoors, the Orange County Department of Education's outdoor environmental education programs, students, teachers, and families can connect nature's classroom.

Inside the Outdoors education programs provide both academic and social benefits. Programs are aligned with the California Science and Social Science Standards. The strong academic focus of Inside the Outdoors programs enhances classroom concepts important to fostering a true understanding of science. Imagine a fourth grade class as they discover firsthand the tides and rocks at the ocean. This memorable experience brings to life the concept of how waves shape the Earth's surface.

Jill Wilke, a teacher from Brea Olinda Unified School District, shared that the value of a firsthand experience at Inside the Outdoors improves student learning. Jill said that student "vocabulary has increased quickly through hands-on and visual methods. Verbal and kinesthetic learning methods have helped them gain a clear view, rather than a fantasy, of life long ago in our area." Brenda Forrester, a fifth grade teacher, shared that the test scores of the fifth graders increased significantly last year and that participating in Inside the Outdoors programs contributed to that success.

Jill and Brenda's words are backed up by research. In a report done for the California Department of Education, the American Institutes for Research found that after visits to outdoor science school, students' science scores increased at ranges between three and twenty-seven percent.

The social impact of Inside the Outdoors' programs is best evidenced in the words of the students. Melody, a sixth-grader from James Guinn Elementary School in the Anaheim City School District, spent a week in the San Bernardino Mountains at Inside the Outdoors Outdoor Science School. She not only learned about science, history, and art, she learned about herself. Melody shared, "I felt like I could actually help our world...I've become a new person by going to Outdoor Science School. I've become more aware of the environment, more responsible."

Melody's experience at an Inside the Outdoors program reinforces what my grandson teaches me. Each time we enter nature's classroom and experience a hidden world under a rock or explore a trail we share with the plants and animals that live there, we become more aware of the environment. What an exciting way to learn about science and about our place on the Earth!

To learn more about Inside the Outdoors Traveling Scientists, Field Trips, Outdoor Science School, and Community Programs, visit [www.insidetheoutdoors.org](http://www.insidetheoutdoors.org) or email Inside the Outdoors at [insidetheoutdoors@ocde.us](mailto:insidetheoutdoors@ocde.us).

<sup>1</sup> Effects of Outdoor Education Programs for Children in California Report. American Institutes for Research for the California Department of Education. January 31, 2005.



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# Anaheim Hills *Elementary*

6450 E. Serrano Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807  
714/997-6169



**Debra Larson**  
*Principal*

## Getting Into Detail

The third-grade has been hard at work learning about many new things. We began the year studying landforms and the types of regions in our great state of California. Students actually made special landforms books and mapped out the different local regions themselves.

We have also been working diligently on our multiplication tables, and will soon begin division. The students take regular times-tests. Many of them have already mastered their facts up to 10.

In science, we recently finished our unit on the solar system.

We learned about the planets and how one revolution around the sun equals one year. Students also learned about the moon and how it revolves around the Earth. Our unit culminated with a field trip to the Santa Ana College Observatory.

## Learning Native Tasks

Currently, third-graders are learning about the California Indians. They are exploring the tribal differences, and how natural resources influenced the types of shelters they lived in, the foods they ate and the tools and objects they crafted.

Many of the California Indians were master basket weavers, and the students are even getting a taste of weaving with simple looms. They love working on their weaving and many of them have already finished a small sampler.

In late October was Red Ribbon Week. We had many fun and informative activities. One event that was a hit was the landing of a National Guard helicopter on our field. The *Orange County Register* was there for the excitement, and some third-graders even made it into the newspaper!

# Cambridge *Elementary*

425 N. Cambridge St., Orange, CA 92866  
714/997-6103



**Karen Merkow**  
*Principal*

## Thinking Maps

Cambridge Elementary School teachers utilize thinking maps, visual representations students create to help solidify their abstract thinking. Kindergarteners created thinking maps with their parents at Kindergarten Date Night.

Date Night has been a tradition at Cambridge for the last eight years. Every year, the kindergarten team hosts two or three activities to bridge the gap between school and home, such as Fall Bingo, Favorite Board Game Night, and various art projects. Each student invites one adult to attend.

During the most recent event, Ms. Luu, Mrs. Miederhoff and Ms. Roney, introduced thinking maps. Mrs. Miederhoff explained, "First, we gave a little background on the concept of thinking maps and the brain research behind this learning tool. Everyone was given a handout with the eight thinking maps and their definitions. Those attending then worked on circle maps of themselves as the teachers gave suggestions. The results were wonderful!"



**Teachers Julie Roney and Samantha Luu show off thinking maps students created with their parents.**

# California *Elementary*

1080 N. California St., Orange, CA 92867  
714/997-6104



**Cyndi Paik**  
*Principal*

## By Patty Ruiz and Paul Hines, Teachers

California Elementary participated in a district wide Walk to School Day last month. The walk was in an effort to promote healthy living to encourage students and families to engage in a healthy lifestyle by participating in more physical activity. The walk began at 7:30 a.m. at our nearby Albertsons. The first 50 students to arrive received a balloon to show their California Bear pride. Our Walk to School event was in conjunction with nationwide Walk to School Day and supported by our district's Nutrition Network program. This is the fifth year California Elementary has participated in this event. Students were excited to have the opportunity to walk with friends, teachers and the principal. We hope this event will continue and inspire students to walk more and promote awareness for a healthy heart and body.



# Canyon Hills

260 S. Imperial Hwy., Anaheim, CA 92807  
714/998-5000



**William Gee,**  
**Ed.D.**  
*Principal*

## Three Goals

We have three goals that have been adopted by our school site council, our parent association and our staff.

The first goal is for students to effectively use electronic switches to help learn simple cause and effect. As these severely handicapped students begin to learn the use of simple on-and-off switches, they will become ready to move to higher levels of switches and use these to begin communicating their desires. The use of switches and games can be the first step toward developing communicative intent for our severely disabled students.

The second goal is for students to increase their use of software programs on the computers in their classrooms. As students leave Canyon Hills at the age of 22, they can use these computer skills for a variety of purposes. We hope that our students will use basic computer skills for leisure activities, for accessing information, for improving rudimentary reading and writing skills, and for developing vocational skills of sorting, matching, and so on. We are confident that our students' futures will be improved by their skills with computers and simple applications.

The primary goal for most of our students is to improve their ability to communicate with others. Many of the students at Canyon Hills do not have a system of communication that allows them to communicate what they may want to do or want to have. As a result, many students demonstrate great frustration with their inability to communicate. This may cause increased levels of anger and aggression toward the people they are with every day. To that end, our staff was recently trained on a specific communication system designed to assist the severely disabled population: the Picture Exchange Communication System.

# Canyon *High School*

220 S. Imperial Hwy., Anaheim, CA 92807  
714/532-8000 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/canyon



**Greg Bowden,**  
Ed. D.  
Principal

## Pathways Program

In line with providing a more relevant educational experience for our students, Canyon High School this year rolled out its Career Pathways program for the freshman class. California has adopted 15 career clusters, grouping jobs that require similar training in order to help make it easier to acquire skills to work in those clusters. Canyon High counselors identified sequences of classes that would help prepare students to enter these fields. All freshmen and their parents were presented this information before the annual Taking Care of Business day, and most students are taking courses this year that will help lead them to their desired careers.

Career clusters and the specific pathways offered at Canyon are Arts, Media, Entertainment, Manufacturing and Product Development, including animation, dance, digital art, music, theater arts, video game design and video production; Building Trades and Construction and Transportation, including automotive/building trades; Education, Child Development and Family Services, including careers in education; Fashion and Interior Design, including fashion design and merchandising; Health Science and Medical Technology, including medical careers such as doctor, nurse, physical therapist, emergency responder, medical office, X-ray technicians and so on; Hospitality, Tourism and Recreation, including culinary; Information Technology, including computer information systems (CIS); Marketing, Sales and Service, including business; and Public Services, including law careers and careers in writing.

## International Baccalaureate Program

Canyon High School offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program. The two-year IB curriculum provides students with an academically challenging course of study and allows them to earn an international diploma recognized by most competitive colleges in the United States, Canada and Europe.

The IB Diploma is granted to students who have successfully completed the course requirements, 150 hours of community service hours, an independent research paper and six internationally graded examinations. Universities around the world welcome the unique characteristics of the IB Diploma Program students and recognize the way in which the program helps to prepare students for university-level education. Students apply to the IB Program in the end of their sophomore year.

Interested students should be in the Honors Program as ninth- and tenth-graders and be in good academic standing. This program is open to academically motivated students regardless of current attendance area. The IB courses available at Canyon High School are English, history of the Americas, psychology, biology, physics, math studies—Honors Precalculus, French, Spanish and theory of knowledge.

# Cerro Villa *Middle School*

17852 Serrano Ave., Villa Park, CA 92861  
714/997-6251 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/cv



**Aileen Sterling**  
Principal

## Academic Tune-Ups

“You don’t have to be sick to get better.” “We are revving up for success.” “We believe that everyone can improve on something.”

These values are the foundation for our “Academic Tune-Ups” that every Cerro Villa student has been discussing with his or her homeroom teacher during October, November and December. The purpose is to review California Standards test scores and grade information with each student to identify strengths and set goals for improvement. The students will be sharing their results and goals with their parents immediately after their test chats and then

again during our February Student-Led Conferences. Additionally, our English-language learners participated in an earlier session in mid-September prior to the administration of the yearly California English Language Development Test. Students become keenly aware of the importance of the tests, their individual potentials and specific areas of improvement.

# Canyon Rim *Elementary*

1090 S. The Highlands, Anaheim, Ca 92808  
714/532-7027 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/cr



**Randi Leach**  
Principal

## Read! Read! Read!

Did you know that if a fifth-grade child reads an average of 20 minutes a day, he or she will read approximately a million words in a school year? By making a commitment to celebrate reading through Breakfast Book Clubs and special reading days, the Canyon Rim Elementary School staff and community work together to empower students with a love of reading.

Breakfast Book Clubs meet every quarter before school, providing students with an opportunity to discuss books with other students and staff members. Once a quarter, students are presented with specific book titles and are encouraged to read the book appropriate for their grade level. Students are given several weeks to complete the book so that they are ready to discuss it at the Breakfast Book Club.

Our December Birthday Book Club highlighted: *The Hat* by Jan Brett for kindergarten; the Arthur books by Marc Brown for first and second grades; *The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis for third and fourth grades; and *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo for fifth and sixth grades.

Beach and Nighttime Reading Days are also ways in which Canyon Rim celebrates reading. With beach chairs for “beach” reading and blankets and pillows for “nighttime” reading, and, of course, a favorite book in hand, students, staff and family members meet out on the grass field or in the multipurpose room for 30 minutes of Read Everything, Always Learning (REAL) time. Our slogan, “Get REAL” portrays our school’s commitment to reading.

# Chapman Hills *Elementary*

170 N. Aspen St., Orange, CA 92869  
714/532-8043 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/chapman



**Julie Lucas**  
Principal

## Winners All

In October, Chapman Hills held its first Pathfinder Awards Assembly for the year. Students in grades 1–6 were recognized in the following areas: citizenship, initiative, academics and the Pathfinder Award, which focuses on the grade-level character trait. Chapman Hills also had students participate in the PTA Reflections Art contest, and the following are the winners who will move on to the district-level competition: In visual arts, Ben Hepner, Paige Bascovich and Brooke Hepner; in photography, Joseph Vedell, Samantha Gladsen and Brooke Hepner; in literature, Matthew Tu and Celia Janes. This year’s theme was “Wow!” The students did an outstanding job creating projects in support of the theme. Congratulations to all our winners!

As always, our students and teachers are working hard in their classrooms and are making progress toward mastery of our grade-level standards. In December, many of the teachers participated in our first Internal Walk-Through of the year, in which teachers were looking for evidence of Best Practices. They had the opportunity to discuss great strategies and techniques they observed during their walk.

In walking the classrooms, it is easy to see that the whole school has embraced Thinking Maps, on which the teachers received training in November at our Staff Development Day. Our entire school is participating in the eight-week rollout of the Thinking Maps, which are cognitive organizers designed to help students frame knowledge.

Great things are happening at Chapman Hills!

# Crescent *Elementary*

5001 E. Gerda Drive, Anaheim, CA 92807  
714/997-6371 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/ci



**Sheila Thompson**  
Principal

## **BUILDING A SENSE OF STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY • FROM PAGE 1**

readers to younger pupils at the K-3 campus. The little ones love their buddies, and eagerly await their arrival each week.

### **Spooky Stories**

Since reading comprehension is one of our focus areas, Mr. O'Connor also jumped at the chance to work with the PTA. He had the upper-grade PAL students take on the responsibility of leading the little ones during the Fall Social. They had a lot of fun reading spooky stories to the primary children before the little ones ran off for trick or treating around the campus.

Those of us at Crescent sincerely appreciate the great effort that Mr. O'Connor has been making. We continue to look forward to being the beneficiary of all this good work as our year continues.

# El Rancho Charter

181 S. Del Giorgio Road, Anaheim, CA 92808  
714/997-6238 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/rancho

*Middle School*

*By Travis Thomsen, Management Team*

### **Experiencing Catalina Island**

Seventh-grade life science students recently embarked on a three-day Catalina Island adventure. El Rancho Charter School has had an ongoing relationship with the Catalina Island Marine Institute (CIMI). The goal of this camping experience was to create a learning environment that focused on marine life and environmental awareness.

While at Cherry Cove, students had the opportunity to snorkel in kelp forests, kayak, examine plankton, dissect squid and wade through natural tide pools. They were also able to touch some of the local ecosystem's vertebrates and invertebrates, including sharks, starfish and sea cucumbers.

Everyone traded their comfortable beds and climate-controlled homes for a tent and unpredictable weather. The wildlife of Cherry Cove made their presence known at night, as they foraged the campground for leftovers.

The students left with a deeper understanding of marine life, a sense of environmental awareness and a great appreciation for a hot shower and warm bed!



**John Besta**  
Principal



(Front) Sydney Kenyon, Samantha Roberts, Kelsey Dunkleman, Brittany Butler  
(Back) Kelsey Moore, Jacob Christensen, Hannah Fyke, Jacqueline Smith, Katie Miller.

# El Modena *High School*

3920 Spring St., Orange, CA 92869  
714/997-6331 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/emhs



**John Briquelet**  
Principal

### **Encouraging Communication**

We had a fantastic turnout for Back-to-School Night on October 1, and it was wonderful to see so many parents stopping by their children's classrooms to meet our teachers and learn what is taking place this year. Our Associated Student Body (ASB) students were a tremendous help with directing visitors, and our student interpreters did a commendable job of assisting our non-English-speaking parents.

To enhance communication with our parents and students, El Modena High School's teachers are using Aeries Gradebook and the ConnectEd automated calling system. The former permits students and their parents to review current grades online, and the latter assists teachers in making timely contacts regarding students' progress. Access to a student's grades can be obtained via the Student Portal or the Parent Portal; both of these can be found on the Orange Unified School District Web site at www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us under the "Quick Find" link. The username and password for entering the Student Portal are the student's six-digit student ID number and birth date (no zeroes or slashes), respectively. Access to the Parent Portal can be gained by contacting Linda Learned in the main office—a valid driver's license or other official identification is required.

Finally, I would like to congratulate El Modena's four National Merit Scholarship semifinalists, Alex Chamberlain, Justin Le, Michelle Lissner, and Max Saltarelli. I wish these Vanguarders the best of luck in the next phase of competition and hope they know how proud we are of them.

# Esplanade *Elementary*

381 N. Esplanade St., Orange, CA 92869  
714/997-6157



**Amy Hitt**  
Principal

### **Class-Size Reduction Plans**

Esplanade is one of 488 schools in the state to receive funding from the Quality Education Investment Act (QEIA) of 2006. In this program, California has dedicated \$3 billion to selected schools throughout the state over the next seven years. If requirements continue to be met, Esplanade will benefit from this funding through the year 2014!

These funds are intended to help schools close the achievement gap by reducing class sizes and improving teacher and principal training. They are also intended to develop exemplary school practices to create a learning environment that will help retain well-qualified teachers, administrators and other staff.

As a result of this funding, Esplanade School has benefited from class-size reduction not only in the first- and second-grades, but in the third- and fourth-grades as well. We now have 20-1 and 25-1 student/teacher ratios, respectively, in those two grades.

Each year, additional grade levels and classes will continue implementing the reduction. Additionally, our School Site Council members will be taking on the important responsibility of advising the school's leadership, as well as helping with the planning of not only the categorical funding, but of the QEIA as well.

**Happy New Year!**

*from the staff at School News Roll Call*

# Fairhaven *Elementary*

1415 E. Fairhaven Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92705  
714/997-6178



**Andrew Fisher**  
Principal

## Ready for The Big One

Fairhaven Elementary School participated in the statewide Earthquake Preparedness Drill in November. With the imaginary shaking of a 7.5 earthquake at 10 a.m., we jumped into action.

We did duck-and-cover, getting under the desks and holding on to stay protected no matter how violent the "shaking." When the shaking stopped, students went to the "Assembly Area" where roll was taken to make sure no students were missing. On the way, buddy teachers checked each other to make sure they were safe, and helped if needed.

Once every one was accounted for, the other school teams sprang into action. A "Command Center" was set up, "Search and Rescue" teams were deployed, "Security" went to their stations, "Damage Assessment" surveyed the campus, "First Aid" and "Triage" set out their supplies, and "Student Request" and "Student Release" areas were set up.

It was great seeing how well everyone performed and to refresh skills and evaluate resources and procedures. Should we have to do this for real, we're ready.



## BOARD OF EDUCATION • FROM PAGE 1

through 12 in accordance with the California Constitution, the laws of the state, adopted Board policies, and the desires of the community.

The Board of Education works with the superintendent to fulfill its major responsibilities, which include setting a direction for the district while focusing on student learning and achievement; establishing an effective and efficient organizational structure; establishing academic expectations; establishing budget priorities; and providing safe, adequate facilities. It is the policymaking body for the school district.

The Board of Education believes that its primary responsibility is to act in the best interests of every student in the district. To maximize Board effectiveness and public confidence in district governance, Board members are expected to govern responsibly and hold themselves to the highest standards of ethical conduct. Board members have no individual authority; they represent and act for the community as a whole. Action can only be taken when the Board is meeting in formal session with a majority of its members present.

Board members occupy unique roles because they are also citizens, and, in some cases, parents. Board members are elected by the public to work for the best education interest of all of its students. In the recent election on November 4, 2008, two new Board members were elected to the Orange Unified School District Board of Education, filling seats vacated by Wes Poutsma and Steve Rocco: Alexia L. Deligianni, Ed.D., representing Trustee Area 3, and Mark D. Wayland, representing Trustee Area 6.

## Anaheim Hills Kids Club

116 Nohl Canyon Road, Anaheim, CA 92807

Before and after school program for kids 5 & up  
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# Fletcher *Elementary*

515 W. Fletcher Ave., Orange, CA 92865  
714/997-6181



**Christina Varela**  
Principal

*By Lori Sheppard, Sixth-Grade Teacher*

## Sixth Grade Goes to UCLA

Our sixth-graders are excited about college thanks to the Adopt a School program sponsored by the UCLA athletics department. Katie Mills, a sophomore on the UCLA women's volleyball team, is writing letters to our sixth-graders so they can learn about college life and athletics.

Our students attended a UCLA volleyball game in November and watched Katie and her teammates defeat their opponents.

Katie signed autographs and took pictures with all of our excited students! Sixth-grader Haylie said, "It was amazing to see the women play so well. They made it look so easy!"

Our principal, a UCLA alumnus, led the students on a campus tour. Students were impressed when they saw Royce Hall, Powell Library and the John Wooden Center. Sixth-grader Mariby said, "UCLA was so big! It was a lot of fun walking around the campus to see all of the buildings!"

There is no doubt that many of our Fletcher Falcons will soon be attending college themselves!



# Handy *Elementary*

860 N. Handy St., Orange, CA 92867  
714/997-6183



**Sandra Schaffer**  
Principal

## Learning Today Makes a Brighter Tomorrow

This year, the teachers at Handy Elementary School are participating in Strategic Schools with Dr. Dennis Parker. Dr. Parker has worked with many schools in the surrounding counties, and even a few in the Orange Unified School District, to improve overall scores on the California Standards Tests (CSTs) given each spring.

Our teachers attended an evening workshop at Santiago Canyon College with Dr. Parker and learned many of the strategies and techniques that have proven to work in increasing student performance in English language arts and math. A few days after

this workshop, Dr. Parker visited Handy and did demonstration lessons in third- and fourth-grade classrooms. This allowed the teachers the opportunity to see his practices in action.

Following the lessons, our teachers debriefed and asked questions in order to begin implementation. Our Instructional Leadership Team has also attended several trainings with Dr. Parker, and will continue to do so throughout the year.

We have high hopes that our priority of highly focused professional development will result in substantial gains on the CSTs. We are always learning and want to be good examples for our students.

# Imperial *Elementary*

400 S. Imperial Hwy., Anaheim, CA 92807  
714/997-6282 [www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/imperial](http://www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/imperial)



**Tim Biland**  
Principal

## Partnerships of Prosperity

Great things are happening at Imperial Elementary School. The school community shares the goal of making learning richer and more relevant, creating relationships that are positive and rewarding and enhancing our school culture. Together, we are continuously working to make the experience at Imperial a happy one upon which a successful future can be built.

With the support of our PTA, students experience extended learning opportunities. Each quarter, students attend music, art, and science assemblies that are both entertaining and educational.

Students have learned about famous artists and their style, and they have created works of their own. Professional presenters and educators keep students actively participating in music, dance, art, and hands-on science. Our school garden is in construction, and classes will soon have the opportunity to experience learning through a growing, living garden.

Imperial is developing our vision for technology, and we are planning to add additional LCD projectors, ELMO document cameras, and other tools to enhance student engagement and learning. Finally, our school is always building a sense of community.

The many family nights our PTA has organized and the 2008–2009 Talent Show, "What's on TV?" scheduled for Friday December 5 at Canyon High School are opportunities for our school families to bond and to celebrate students' accomplishments.

The PTA, staff, community, and Orange Unified School District are continuously providing us the resources of funding, time, creativity, talent and effort to move Imperial into the 21st century. Through our partnerships, we are continuing to prosper, and the Imperial Eagles are continuing to soar.

# Lampson *Elementary*

13321 Lampson Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92840  
714/997-6153 [www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/lampson](http://www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/lampson)



**Laurie Dieppa**  
Principal

## Red Ribbon Success

Lampson Elementary School staff and students experienced one of the best Red Ribbon Weeks yet. Thank you to our committee, Mrs. Malone, Mr. Rosselli, and Mrs. Savela, as well as the student council: President Mimi Phan; Vice-President Jocelyn Sanchez;

Secretary Shanelle Miranda; Treasurer Arthur Lam; and Representatives Carlos Delgado, Binhan Doanvo, Eo Makomo, Edgar Chavez, Sydney Velasquez, Jason Sandoval, Jasmine Gonzalez, Laiba Yousaf, Melissa Uribe, Victor Nieto, My Ha Troung, David Nguyen, Itzelt Rodriguez, and Jose Guardado.

Red Ribbon Week activities included wearing crazy hats for Put a Lid on Drugs Day and wearing red or funny socks for Sock It to Drugs Day. Students in all grade levels made pledge chains to decorate the school office and the campus, marking the students' pledges to remain drug free. All students received red ribbon bracelets to wear each day and red licorice vines. Staff and faculty gave out special red lottery tickets for students demonstrating safe behaviors. Winners of the lottery each received a yard of red licorice.

Parents got involved in safety night, receiving valuable information from the Garden Grove Police Department, the Friendly Center, and the Migrant Education Center.





# Jordan *Elementary*

4319 E. Jordan Ave., Orange, CA 92869  
714/997-6187



**Bertie Anderson**  
Principal

## By Andrea Reid & Colleen Berry, Teachers – 2nd Grade Dedicated to Being Drug-Free

Jordan School was dressed in red for our annual Red Ribbon Week celebration October 27–31. Staff and students wore red bracelets and participated in a variety of activities that promoted making healthy choices and saying no to drugs.

We kicked off the week of healthy living with an assembly by Steve Granata. He showcased his basketball skills, while encouraging students to stay positive and always try their best in school and life. Throughout the remainder of the week, the students and

teachers participated in various drug-free-themed days. Everyone showed spirit by wearing silly socks, team jerseys, and backwards shirts.

The finale of the week was Jordan's annual Walk Around the Community Day, which included students, parents, and staff wearing red and showing our dedication and commitment to saying no to drugs.

Red Ribbon Week was a success! Jordan School is thankful to all those who participated in creating an exciting and memorable week.



**Steve Granata, presenter and second grade students Andrew Garnica and Eunice Castano.**

# La Veta *Elementary*

2800 E. La Veta Ave., Orange, CA 92869  
714/977-6155



**Jaymi Abusham**  
Principal

## A Student Work

Mrs. Beaumont's sixth-grade class has been busy writing news articles about the people who work at La Veta Elementary. The following story is about our new assistant principal, Mrs. Antoinette Coe. Its authors are Rema Angola, Alyson Ball, Denise Brito, Shayla Chavez and Cassidy Moreno.

We applaud the writing skills they are developing as they address California standards on expository writing.

## Welcome to La Veta, Mrs. Coe!

At La Veta Elementary, a new vice principal named Mrs. Coe has felt very welcomed by the staff. "I am very happy to be here. The students and teachers are very nice and helpful." She is very excited with her position and the school.

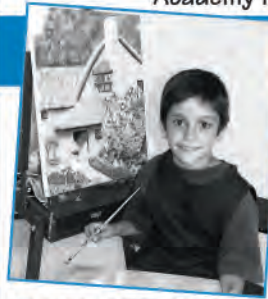
Mrs. Coe was born in Lynwood, California, but grew up in Anaheim. Easy to conclude, she prefers the Angels over the Dodgers! During her childhood she wanted to be a pediatrician, which is a doctor for kids.

Her favorite animal is a dog, which is part of the reason why she has two at home. She also has them because she has three kids: Taylor who is 15, Zack who is 14 and Maddie who is 12.

Mrs. Coe has also taught at other schools. She was a third-grade teacher and a reading coach at Handy Elementary, and also a reading coach at Fairhaven. She has been proud of those schools as well as La Veta Elementary.

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# Linda Vista *Elementary*

1200 N. Cannon, Orange, CA 92869  
714/977-6201



**Sally Hughson**  
Principal

## All Aboard!

In October, Linda Vista's fifth-grade students spent an exciting day in Dana Point. They learned first hand what it was like to be a sailor in the 19th Century. All of the students had an opportunity to complete chores like carrying hides from the ship to the beach, or loading and unloading cargo.

They even learned how to walk the mast! At the end of the day there were 60 tired sailors, each with an experience that will last a lifetime.

October also saw our students participate in this popular themed activity. At lunch, mini-assemblies were held to remind the students about making healthy choices. They were given pedometers to track their daily exercise regimens. A canned food drive was also held, and boxes and boxes of items were donated to The Friendly Center in Orange.

## Student Council

Elections for the student council were held in late October. Sixteen finalists gave well written and thoughtful speeches. After tallying the ballots, the winners were announced on the Linda Vista's Kids Network (LVKN) program on Monday morning.

Congratulations to this year's student council members. They are Gabrielle Frediana, sixth-grade president; Brigitte Park, sixth-grade vice president; Zane Rojas, fifth-grade secretary; Madyson Kline, fifth-grade public relations representative; and Ryan Marusin and Kaitlyn Meeder, fourth-grade communication specialists.

For the rest of the year, the Council will be focusing on a "No Bullying" campaign. In a few months they will be making bags and cards for the children at the Ronald McDonald house.

# Nohl Canyon *Elementary*

4100 E. Nohl Ranch Road, Anaheim, CA 92807  
714/997-6203



**Dominique Polchow**  
Principal

## Keeping Current

Staff development is important at Nohl Canyon. From time to time, teachers may be out, with substitute teachers filling in, to receive state-of-the-art training on instructional practices and new programs. Our students deserve the very best teaching, and we strive at Nohl Canyon to ensure that we are knowledgeable regarding current practices.

Professionals must stay abreast of new research. We wouldn't want to go to doctors

who are not up to date! So, if your child's teacher is out—or if the principal is, too—it may not be because they are ill but because they are getting the very latest training!

The most recent training that staff received was on Thinking Maps. Implementation in the classrooms has already started, and students are learning how to use the eight visual patterns that are based on a fundamental thinking process. These eight maps can be used across the content areas.



**Ms. Peterson's kindergarten class using a Circle Map.**

# McPherson Magnet

333 S. Prospect, Orange, CA 92869  
714/977-6384 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/mcpherson



**Jeanne Bentley**  
Principal

*By Judy Denenny, Teacher – Sixth Grade and students*

## PALs Pledge to Make a Difference

McPherson Magnet School's Red Ribbon week provided the perfect backdrop for students to participate in service learning at our school site. This year, our team of sixth- through eighth-grade Peer Assistance Leaders (PALs) orchestrated all aspects of our week-long commitment to promote drug-free youth!

Key events held October 21–24 focused on this year's theme: "Get up! Stand up! Speak out for a healthy life!" Beginning on

Monday, a team of PALs provided kindergarten through eighth-grade students with wristbands and red ribbons to tie on McPherson's fences as a pledge to live drug-free lifestyles. Red flowers were given to each staff member to remind them of their leadership role in promoting healthy living. As a guest speaker at our weekly flag salute, Officer Lee Valdez from the Orange Police Department spoke about the importance of making good choices.

PAL author-actors videotaped skits showcasing drug awareness and broadcast the videos over our school's news channel. PAL entrepreneurs earned \$160 by selling "red" baked goods to support local drug rehabilitation programs. Red and white posters with student slogans were colorfully displayed outside classrooms.

A dazzling highlight of the week's activities included a Wear Red Day, with students from each class winning prizes for being "the most red!" Friday lunch featured lively music as a salute to our weeklong campaign to be healthy and drug free!

Red Ribbon Week at McPherson not only created an atmosphere of school-wide awareness through the creative program designed by our PALs, but it also allowed them to collaborate together, as they gained new leadership skills and a deeper insight into ways of serving their community.

# Olive *Elementary*

3038 N. Magnolia Ave., Orange, CA 92865  
714/637-8218 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/olive



**Deborah Smith**  
Principal

## Teaching a New Language

In early November, teachers from Olive Elementary joined the staffs of Imperial and Silverado schools to participate in a day-long training session based upon "Thinking Maps." These are a "language" of eight visual patterns based on fundamental thinking process like brainstorming, classifying, describing, etc.

Trainers Barbara Sentell and Camille Racupito presented this exciting educational workshop. After the teachers have introduced all eight of the visual patterns to their classes, the hope is that their students will learn to discover which of these maps can be used for any particular academic task.

For example, students should recognize rather quickly that a "circle map" is what they would draw when asked to think of ideas related to a specific topic (we often call this brainstorming). When asked to compare and contrast, they will eventually know how to use a "double-bubble" map for this purpose.

## A Permanent Tool

The beauty of the Thinking Maps system is its flexibility and creativity. Students can put their thoughts and concepts on paper in any and all subject areas, at every grade level. This ability to visually represent thinking strategies in order to master academic concepts is an essential skill.

Teachers at schools that participate in Thinking Maps training are committed to teaching all eight of the maps within the first two months. It is hoped that within several years, all of the students from kindergarten- through sixth-grade will be able to use these visual representations in their learning.

# Orange *High School*

525 N Shaffer St., Orange, CA 92867  
714/997-6211 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/ohs



**SK Johnson**  
*Principal*

## Jr. Leadership Orange

Thanks to the gallant efforts of Orange Chamber of Commerce (OCC) member Chris Horton, Orange High School Class of 1985, the Jr. Leadership Orange program is back on campus. The goal of the chamber is to provide an educated workforce for the businesses within our community. Students will meet once a month for eight months. As a group, they will choose a service project that will benefit our community.

Students participating in the project are: Lester Andrade, Jose Anguiano, Cinitia Cuellar, Raiji Gaines, Jessica Gonzalez, Yesenia Gutierrez, Desiree Lopez, Jorge Macias, Rodrigo Ornelas, Angel Pelayo, Margarita Perez, Joshua Price, Jesus Resendiz, Bryan Rodriguez, David Shih, and Francisca Vazquez.

In the first session, students met Mayor Carolyn Cavecche, OCC President and Chief Executive Officer Heidi Larkin-Reed, and OCC Chairman of the Board Jeff Protzman. The students were then treated to lunch, hosted by Tita Smith, a member of the Orange City Council.

## Youth Motivation Task Force

Annually, the Youth Motivation Task Force (YMTF) brings representatives from major corporations to Orange High School to interact with our students. These corporate executives take time from their schedules to hold hour-long discussions with our students. They talk about their careers, their company history, and how education has impacted their lives, while promoting the value of education and how it applies to the workforce.

This year the event took place on November 12. We are pleased to announce that Superintendent Dr. Renae Dreier was on campus with Principal S.K. Johnson to welcome the YMTF to Orange High School.

# Panorama *Elementary*

10512 Crawford Canyon Road, Santa Ana, CA 92705  
714/997-6265



*By Dana Encheff, Fifth-Sixth Grade Teacher  
and Richard Ireland, Sixth Grade Teacher*

## Outdoor Science Adventures

Our sixth-graders' recent Outdoor Education trip to Cedar Crest left staff and students with backpacks full of memories. Many students entered the San Bernardino Mountains apprehensive about leaving home, while others were excited to be away from school! We experienced bitterly cold gusts of wind the first night. Five layers were not enough! But the frigid weather made

our students' spirits stronger and brought them closer to one another and their newfound friends—the wise, gregarious camp counselors.

We explored much of the amazing forest environment. Each morning, students hiked a different trail to learn about plate tectonics, rock hammering, wilderness survival, animal habitats, and the costs and benefits of tree cutting. Students performed skits, sang songs, learned line dancing, and bonded over our delicious—really!—food.

Outdoor Education has an outstanding legacy! Our students had an experience of a lifetime, and learned at least as much as what a textbook teaches in a whole year.



# Palmyra *Elementary*

1325 E Palmyra Ave., Orange, CA 92868  
714/997-6207



**Connie Smith**  
*Principal*

## Let's Think About Our Thinking

On November 4, Palmyra Elementary School teachers and the principal had the opportunity to learn about a fabulous teaching tool that will take our students to higher levels of learning. Thinking maps are eight visual patterns, each based on a fundamental thinking process. These patterns are used individually and in combination across every grade level and curriculum area as an integrated set of tools for lifelong learners. Thinking maps are based on current brain research, as well as the research on effective instruction.

We will be introducing one map a week to our students. Once the students and teachers have mastered their use and possible applications, the eight thinking maps will be used when and where appropriate to bring greater meaning and understanding to the content standards already being taught at Palmyra. So far the teachers and students are enjoying all the possibilities the maps can bring into the classroom.



**Miss Donahue's fifth-grade students  
Jesus Schettino, John La Crue, Gabriel Cicco and Savannah Dyer.**

# Parkside *Pre-K*

2345 E, Palmyra Ave., Orange, CA 92869  
714/997-6202



**Allison Smith**  
*Principal*

At Parkside, the children are preparing for Fall and the Thanksgiving Holiday. We are learning new songs, listening to stories, and completing activities/crafts relating to family, sharing, and things we are thankful for. We had a Thanksgiving Feast and invited friends and family. The students performed a variety of songs they have been learning.

## SACBE • FROM PAGE 1

families saw the different programs and curriculums offered by our teachers. Parents and students also asked questions about class expectations and shared information about themselves that would be useful to the teachers.

Well, over half of our Richland families and students attended, and the evening was so enjoyable and informative that the event lasted past our scheduled ending time of 8 p.m.—basically, no one really wanted to leave!

A big Richland thank you to everyone who made this night successful. We are considering having a similar event in the spring. Check back with us then!

# Portola *Middle School*

270 N. Palm St., Orange, CA 92868  
714/997-6361



**Debra Thompson**  
*Principal*

## Lights...Camera...Action

Singing...acting...places at the podium...inspirational words...unfurl the ribbon...pass the scissors...cut the ribbon! It's Portola's Modernization Ceremony!

We opened the ceremony with the pledge led by Portola alumni with the Orange High School Color Guard, under the direction of Lt. Col. Joe Ruthenberg. "The Star-Spangled Banner," played by our Portola Band under the direction of Jim Lorbeer, inspired song from the audience. Inspirational words from OUSD Board Member Kim Nichols, OUSD Superintendent Dr. Renae Dreier and Portola eighth-graders Jackie Martinez, Melissa Gomez and Rebecca Vigil brought smiles to everyone's faces. "The Rainbow Connection" sung by the Portola Choir and a performing a scene from *The Dolls Speak* by the Portola Players, with scenery by Portola artists and art teacher Rick Blake, brought thunderous applause from all. Special thanks to Mr. Jim Lorbeer for his direction of the Portola Choir, Band and Drama Class.

Before the ceremony, tours were led by students leaders from Academic Student Body (ASB) and Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID). During the tour, a Portola highlights video filled the room with teaching and learning moments with our Matadors. Thanks to Mr. Woods and Mr. Lorbeer for producing our highlights video.



**John Ortega OUSD Board Member, Carla Ceballos ASB President, Kim Nichols OUSD Board Member, Dr. Renae Dreier OUSD Superintendent, Debra Thompson Principal Rebecca Vigil, eighth-grade student speaker.**

# Richland *High School*

615 N. Lemon St., Orange, CA 92867  
714/997-6167



**Deborah Backstrom**  
*Continuation School Principal*

## Celebrity Digital Tutor

On Tuesday, Oct.28, Richland students meet with the Real Life version of their Celebrity Digital Tutor. Since August students have been working with the Computer Based Program BrainX. This program is available to all high school students in OUSD who not yet passed the Calif. High School Exit Exam. This program helps students improve their grades and tests scores by working with a digital tutor who molds their course material and the way that material is taught to them based on their individual needs.

Lisa Lewolt who has been on several TV shows is one of the Celebrity Digital Tutors. Richland students have had a 40% increase in passing the CAHSEE since using the program.



**Mrs. Brunner's BrainX math class, Mrs. Oves, Director of Alternative Ed, Mrs. Backstrom, Principal and Lisa Lewolt, Celebrity Tutor.**

# Prospect *Elementary*

379 N. Virage St., Orange, CA 92869  
714/997-6271



**Elena Stoces**  
*Principal*

## Thinking Maps!

In November, our teaching staff learned all about Thinking Maps. These are a new way for teachers to provide students with visual tools that they can use to become successful thinkers, problem solvers, decision makers and life-long learners.

The maps help students learn visually, because research shows that this ability is greater than any of our other senses. There are eight Thinking Maps for the students to learn and use in their everyday schoolwork. At Prospect, we just began to learn about the first one, called the Circle Map.

Our students and teachers have had a great time applying this particular map to their work. They spent a whole week using it to describe and/or define themselves, vocabulary words, math facts, objects, characters, special events, etc. In many instances, the teachers had students take their work "off the map" and use it for a writing activity.

Thinking Maps are quickly becoming a part of how we do business here at Prospect. They encourage our students to become better, more critical thinkers.

# Riverdale *Elementary*

4540 E. Riverdale Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807  
714/997-6273



**Pamela McFadden**  
*Principal*

*By Mrs. Heather Irwin, KinderKiddos Teacher*

## Ravens' Reading Buddies

This year, upper-grade students have "adopted" primary class buddies! The buddy classes will meet and work together toward projects or spend time reading together. Teachers and students agree that it is an exciting addition to the week, and benefits are seen in both the primary and upper-graders. Take, for example, Mr. Self's sixth-graders and Ms. Mary's preschoolers; the students meet once a week and work together on technology lessons as well gross-motor activities. The combination class of fifth- and sixth-graders in Mrs. Burkhart's class meets on Fridays with Mrs. Irwin's kindergarten class to read to them. In fact, as part of the DATE Curriculum goal setting, the fifth-graders voted and chose to write, produce, and perform a play for the kindergarten class.

It has been said that students learn from one another. At Riverdale, learning is taking place in all aspects!



# Running Springs *Elementary*

8670 E. Running Springs Drive, Anaheim, CA 92808  
714/281-45120



**Lydia Roach**  
Principal

## Building Leadership Skills

The Running Springs Peer Assistance Leadership group (PAL) coordinated many service projects this quarter. The group, which consists of 103 students in grades four to six, sponsored a "Jump for Heart" event in November that raised funds for the American Heart Association.

The PAL members also sponsored an after-school Homework Club this quarter. Students were invited to stay twice a week to receive assistance with their homework. They rotated in shifts to work with small groups and individual students.

In addition to these two service projects, members are continuing the PAL recycling program that was started last year. Materials are collected from classrooms and deposited in special containers on a regular basis.

PAL members consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership skills in these projects, due to the dedication and effort of their sponsors, Mrs. Hemerson, Mr. Tarang and Mrs. Donovic. Many more projects are in the works that will enable these students to continue to develop strong leadership skills.



# Serrano *Elementary*

17741 E. Serrano Ave., Villa Park, CA 92861  
714/997-6275



**Bobbie Lansman EdD**  
Principal

## 'I Can Make a Difference' Week

This year, students at Serrano Elementary School added a new dimension to the traditional Red Ribbon Week. Students learned about how important it is to make a difference in their community, and so through service learning, "I Can Make a Difference" week was initiated. Each classroom received a copy of the award-winning book *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Cooney, through which students learned that it is important to do something to make a difference that will make the world a better place. Just as Miss Rumphius planted lupine seeds so that beautiful flowers bloomed annually, each student received a packet of seeds with the logo "It's Our World! Let's Plant a Tree & Live Drug-Free" in order to make the world a better and greener place.

To make a difference in the community, Serrano students collected more than \$1,000 worth of canned food to donate to the Friendly Center, made and donated 44 blankets for the Binky Patrol that were delivered to CHOC hospital, and estimated, weighed, and collected a ton of pennies for drug prevention.

The highlight of the week was that all K-6 Serrano students participated in the schoolwide "I Can Make a Difference" essay contest. Two essay winners from each classroom were selected for the final judging. A winner from each grade level was chosen, along with two grand-prize finalists, one primary and one upper-grade. Certificates and gift cards were awarded.

A special thank-you goes to the real estate service group that generously donated the prizes. All of the staff and parents at Serrano were so proud of these terrific children, knowing that they will do what it takes to make a difference in their community in order to make the world a better place.

# Santiago Charter *Middle School*

515 N. Rancho Santiago Blvd., Orange, CA 92869  
714/997-6366 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/santiago



**Mary Henry**  
Principal

## Stepping Up and Saying No

Santiago stepped up this month to "say no to drugs!" The observance of Red Ribbon Week began with the principal, Mrs. Henry, sharing her special connection with the history of Red Ribbon Week. Enrique Camarena, the slain drug agent for whom Red Ribbon week was started, was a classmate of hers in Calexico, California.

From here, the school joined in with several activities that were coordinated by counselor Mrs. Erickson and parent volunteer Jennifer Willingham. Raffle prizes were won by those wearing their red wristbands. PRIME Time classes collected "Coins for Change," raising close to \$700 for the school's Bike Helmet Drive as well as for the Mariposa Women and Family Center. Lunch and PRIME Time activities included a door-decorating contest. In decorating Ms. Robert's door, the students wrote their own pledge and followed this year's theme: "Step It Up and Live Drug-Free."

# Silverado *Elementary*

7531 Santiago Canyon Road, Silverado, CA 92676  
714/997-6000



**David Reynolds**  
Principal

## Different Strategies

Silverado teachers have been trained on how to use "Step Up to Writing" and "Thinking Maps" with their students. Step Up to Writing is a color-coded system that helps students organize their writing for publication. Thinking Maps include several types of graphic organizers to help students organize their writing or learning activities to best master a content standard.

Thinking Maps help students with cause and effect, comparison and contrast, defining in context, describing, classifying, sequencing and analogies. Recently, teachers have used both strategies to prepare students for the Imagination Machine. Student entries are selected for performance in a play format, and then the Imagination Machine comes to the school to perform these selected pieces.

Congratulations to the following students for their writing pieces being selected this year. In the first-grade, *Island Adventure* is by Jair Barajas, Juan Hernandez, Luke Pearson and Ian Stelhorn. Also being performed is *Frank the Monster*, by Maddie Bell, Benjamin Kromman, Nicole Lueschen, Grant Wilson and Tyler Wilson.

In the second-grade, *Billy the Dragon* is by Eloi Barajas, Carly Colgan, Austin Esquera, Aiden Scott, Aleah Sepulveda and Hayley Valentine. The fourth-grade winners were *The Change-O-Nater* by Myles Lucas and *Hammer Goes Crazy for Flower* by Emily Bryer and Samantha Vollaerts.

The fifth-grade performance will be *Scary Halloween Night* by Liliana Hernandez, and the sixth-grade winner is *Ninja Taco vs. Grilled Cheese Sandwich* by Griffin Stelhorn. Congratulations again to our Silverado students!

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# Sycamore *Elementary*

340 N. Main St., Orange, CA 92868  
714/997-6277 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/sycamore



**Kathy Bruce**  
Principal

## By Elizabeth Gellatly, Candi Hutchinson & Theresa Olsen Building Success

Dr. Kathleen Bruce arranged for the Sycamore faculty to meet off-site for our November Professional Development Day. In the beautifully renovated Orange Public Library, Dr. Bruce opened with a video from the TeacherTube website. This contained an inspirational message from the Dallas School District kickoff. It was quite impressive, and a good site for all the teachers to view!

We took their challenge to focus on power standards. These were shared through vertical planning and grade-level collaborations within our own blossoming professional learning community.

As part of the lesson, we were given an eye-opening article on how to summarize, using the Jigsaw Model. We synthesized the information gleaned from the article by utilizing one example of a Cornell Note template.

Our final activity had us construct a model of a brick, upon which was written our individual commitments for building success at school. It was a fun analogy to our own campus being under modernization this year.



# Taft *Elementary*

1829 N. Cambridge St., Orange, CA 92865  
714/997-6254



**Vicki James**  
Principal

## Studying Butterflies

Second-graders at Taft Elementary School love to study butterflies! Each student was given their own butterfly larva in a small plastic cup with food, and the learning began. Daily, the students observed their larva with a hand lens. They recorded their findings in their journals, constantly documenting what they saw with words and pictures.

They learned all about the different body parts and how the bristles on caterpillars protect them from being eaten by birds.

They saw how the caterpillar actually uses its silk to hang its chrysalis. Soon this chrysalis transforms itself into a beautiful monarch butterfly, thus completing the life cycle.

With great excitement and a lot of sadness, those beautiful butterflies were released so that the whole cycle could begin over again. With their descriptive journals and fun memories, the students will always cherish this learning experience.



# Villa Park *Elementary*

10551 Center Drive, Villa Park, CA 92861  
714/997-6281



**Larry Hausner**  
Principal

## Strong Character Ed Program

Last spring, VPE students in grades three through six took part in a school survey. Many positives were evident. However, students said that they do not treat each other with as much respect as they would like. Therefore, our Charter Ed Committee, made up of Mrs. Coleman, Mrs. Granger and Mrs. Taylor, decided to focus on a specific character ed trait each month. The list is as follows:

September: Positive Attitude; October: Courage, which aligns with Red Ribbon Week; November: Cooperation, which aligns with Thanksgiving; December: Sportsmanship; January: Compassion, which aligns with Martin Luther King Jr.; February: Integrity, which aligns with Presidents Day; March: Initiative; April: Perseverance, which aligns with Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR); May: Respect

Each month, the new character trait is taught by teachers in the classroom. Also, our VPE-TV News shows a quote of the week, along with student interviews on what that trait means to them. In addition, students earn coupons for demonstrating the trait, and many are publicly recognized at our Student of the Month Assemblies. Our library marquee displays a quote of the month as well. Finally, at the conclusion of every month, each class writes what that month's trait means to them. Numerous student samples are then posted in the library. It is our belief that when students write to these traits, they have ownership of them.

Finally, take a drive by VPE and you will notice the character trait banners that celebrate this focus on what helps our students not only be successful in the classroom but as members of our society as well.

# Villa Park *High School*

18042 Taft Ave., Villa Park, CA 92861  
714/532-8020



**Ed Howard**  
Principal

## A Wonderful Time of Year

As we see our way through the holiday season, we think it is important to stop for a second and look at all of the great things that are happening in our lives.

At Villa Park High School we have so many students doing so many wonderful activities. On our Web site you can link directly to the school news magazine, The Oracle. In this publication you will be introduced to the Villa Park and Orange communities directly through the creative and powerful eyes of our students.



Go to the athletics page, and after reading about the school's many sports activities, be sure to make plans to come out and catch our teams in competition. The winter season will be getting underway soon, so we hope you can make it to a basketball, soccer, wrestling or girls water polo contest.

We are especially proud of our students when they gain recognition for their academic efforts. Our Spartans currently have six National Merit semifinalists and 149 AP scholars on campus. These students are considered to be the best and the brightest in the nation!

We do have so much to be grateful for. The Villa Park Spartans are looking forward to a wonderful winter.

# West Orange *Elementary*

243 S. Bush St., Orange, CA 92868  
714/997-6283 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/wo



**Michael Olander**  
Principal

## Democracy at Work

Students at West Orange Elementary School took advantage of the recent historical elections by expanding their understanding of how our democratic system works. Throughout the election process, fifth-grade students studied the political parties, engaged in political debates, and wrote research papers about the political process and the candidates. Students were learning about the political process from the caucuses to Election Day.

The entire process culminated with a mock election on November 3, where students first registered to vote, received ballots, and then went to a voting booth to cast their votes. They even received "I Voted" stickers for their participation. The votes were tallied and the results from the West Orange Mock Election were announced to the anxious students.

This process was possible thanks to the hard work, passion, and dedication of the fifth-grade team, spearheaded by Vicki Anderson. Students at West Orange were excited to learn about the privilege of living in a country where there opinions matter and their voices are heard!



Students participated in the election process.

# Yorba *Middle School*

935 N. Cambridge St., Orange, CA 92867  
714/997-6161 www.orangeusd.k12.ca.us/yorba



**Tara Saraye**  
Principal

## Yorba Goes to College

Yorba students attended the "I Go to College" day at UCLA. Sixty Yorba band members were greeted by the UCLA marching band, which included their alumni band of 190 musicians. Student Kellon remarked that, "They were really great. It was fun to see the tubas play and dance at the same time." Cheerleaders were also in attendance to teach the students different cheers and claps.

The Yorba students went to the college fair, where they toured and learned about the UCLA campus. Cassie noted that the clear message was, "Don't say no to college. Get a good education." The students even got to meet the football players from both teams.

After that, it was off to the football game, where Yorba students got to watch UCLA vs. Oregon at the Rose Bowl. Daniel said that, "This is the first College football game I've ever been to and it was great."

All of the attendees agreed that they had fun with friends, saw a great football game, watched the college band perform, cheered with the mascots and cheerleaders, and, most importantly, thought about a big future in college.



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